HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 14 November 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.

Resolutions

VETERINARY INDUSTRY

Consideration of message No. 192 from the Legislative Council.

(Continued from 30 October 2024.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:02): I am pleased to speak on this motion to set up the joint committee, as introduced by the Hon. Sarah Game in the other place, looking at not just the health and welfare of veterinarians but also veterinary nurses and looking at the realities of expectations of what people desire when they go to visit their vet. I am from the country and we look after our stock, as I have done over the years, especially way back in the day when I was just growing up on the farm. We had Poll Herefords and we had great service from vets like David Franks and Jack Redden looking after our cattle in various situations.

But when it comes to pets, people are very close to their pets. People expect the utmost care, and I know that that care can be quite expensive. It is not common knowledge that one of the reasons that veterinary services are so expensive is that each veterinary practice needs to have all the equipment and that the vet is on call, essentially, if not most of the day then all day. There are a lot of workplace pressures on them, and sometimes people can be unreasonable when they hear the sad news about the treatment for their pet or when that pet, for humane reasons, cannot be saved. It can be tough. I have family members whose pets are their children because they did not have kids and I can understand that. It can be a very challenging time and an expensive time.

Part of the work that this committee will do will be to look at how perhaps especially people on lower incomes can access veterinary care for their loved animals and also how pet insurance works, and to make it affordable and have affordable schemes so that it is worthwhile having pet insurance. As we have seen over the years with other insurances, especially in light of events like the River Murray flood, insurance premiums go through the roof. Even down at my place in Coomandook those things happen.

I think it is a vital committee because pretty well everyone through their life has contact with a vet or a veterinary clinic. They do great work, and sometimes that work is after hours and it can be all hours. The sad reality is that too many vets have taken their own lives. The practical thing about their job, just like many other jobs—just like pretty well most people involved in agriculture—is that they have access to firearms for obvious use, if they need to, in their line of work. They also have access to drugs and what is colloquially called 'the green dream' in case they need to put an animal down for its own good.

As I said before, that is an incredibly stressful time for a pet owner, and I can understand how people get upset. However, people in those dark situations somehow need to respect the work that both the veterinary nurses and the veterinarians are doing to assist their family.

Vets are highly skilled people who do great work in servicing animals right across the spectrum, not only pets and agricultural animals but also wild animals. I know that is part of the terms of reference, and we must pay respect to the work that vets do in looking after wild animals as well. I fully support this joint committee across both houses, and I look forward to being a part of it.

Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (11:08): I, too, really would like to talk today in support of this committee. I am going to talk about it as someone who, like the member for Hammond said before, has pets as their children. I am someone who does not have kids, but I do have a dog and a cat, and I well and truly treat that dog and that cat as if they were very spoilt little kids. I would like to take you through my experience this year in spending almost every week at the vet.

I have, as many would know, an 11-month-old puppy. My 11-month-old puppy, Honey, has had no end of medical issues this year, which have likely been caused by a genetic issue that she may have. I have spent more time at the vet than I would ever have imagined spending in my life, and that is not just her regular vet but a number of specialist vets and behavioural vets. It has honestly been a really eye-opening experience for me in understanding the value of vets, particularly when things are incredibly difficult for someone at home who is trying to manage a sick animal.

As someone who is really busy and does not necessarily have other individuals to help with the support of that animal, it has been a really challenging year. Honey has needed a whole lot of different supports, including quite urgent supports at times when she was sick all through the night, when she was in pain all through the night. For myself, as a busy person with a busy job, not sleeping for days at a time because of how sick she was, I think the impact of that on my life but also what it has shown me about the necessity of a vet has been really important.

Something I think I will say as well is that it has shown me just how easy it is to be upset and desperate in a vet clinic and not knowing what to do, desperate for answers to help that animal but also to help yourself. I have never necessarily considered it in the past, but the impact that a sick animal has on the life of someone who is very busy can be quite significant, and there has been more than one occurrence this year where I have become very emotional in a vet clinic, not knowing what to do, knowing that I have not slept in quite a few days because the dog has been that unwell, and really relying on the support of those vets in those circumstances.

That is something that has really shone a light for me on how difficult it must be to be in an industry like that when not just one person but so many people are there in really vulnerable moments, particularly those who do have their pets as members of their family or as companion animals, because you would of course do anything to make them better. Most importantly as well, your pets of course cannot tell you what is wrong with them or how they are feeling, and not understanding what the issues actually are is such a significant pressure on individuals who would like their pets to be better.

Honey, for example, presented having behavioural issues, and I spent months going through behavioural vet services before actually finding out that it was a physical issue that she had. Again, when somebody cannot tell you what hurts or tell you what the pain is, that process can be a lot longer. The patience that a number of different vet clinics have had with me and our situation, which has been quite complex, has been really wonderful, really supportive, but has also shown to me just how far people in this industry are willing to go to support individuals, their families and their pets.

I think that that is really important, particularly when a lot of those costs can be very expensive, when you are wanting nothing more than your pet to get better or your animal to get better, when you are needing it to happen for your own quality of life for them not to be sick anymore, but those costs can of course often be quite prohibitive.

I can only imagine just how often a vet has to have a difficult conversation with a pet owner about a fee or a charge that they know that pet owner cannot actually afford in order to get that treatment that they need and the impact that may have on the vets, the vet nurses, the support staff, knowing that (a) somebody cannot get the outcome that they need and want for their own physical and mental wellbeing for their pet but also (b) they may be on the receiving end of a really emotional response from individuals who want nothing more than to make their pet better and to be able to afford those services. I think that is really important to talk about.

There is no question in my mind that there would be vets across South Australia or across Australia generally who do try their best to limit costs because they know or they feel that emotional connection and they see how much it means to someone to have that animal, particularly in cases where it is the only thing that a person has. We do know so many examples of individuals who have those companion animals.

Even when you look at housing, for example, we know that a lot of the issues that we have experienced over many years, whether it be looking for public housing or whether it be looking for a private rental, have been because individuals have a companion animal and have struggled to find a place where they can take that animal, who may be their only or their closest family member or friend, and we know how important it is for someone's mental and emotional wellbeing to have that support.

I think that this is a valuable committee. I really do. I think that vets are often on the receiving end of some really emotional and distressing moments for individuals as they go through the process of finding those supports for their pets. I think that it is something that really does encourage a greater degree of analysis and thought as to what we can do to better support those professionals when they are dealing with what can be a really difficult time in people's lives for an extended family member, particularly in relation to the response to those costs.

I can only imagine just how difficult or just how emotional and involved some individuals can get, knowing that they are going to have a bill to help their pet or their animal that they cannot afford and knowing that some people are actually making those decisions to part with their animal because they cannot afford the upkeep of the medical costs.

That, I think, is a really tough thing as well: being in this industry where you watch people say goodbye to their loved ones on a regular basis and knowing that, some of the time at least, individuals are making those decisions because the continued upkeep or the continued care of that pet is altogether too high a task. That is a really tough one as well.

I think that this work is really important in terms of the really high rates of mental health concerns and suicide in the veterinary industry, but I also think that it will play a big role in supporting pet owners as they access those vet services. I do want to today acknowledge all the work of the countless vets that I have been to this year.

Honey has been taken between four different vets in terms of vet specialists, vet imaging and her regular vets. I know that that has been a really difficult process, but we have had the most supportive vets, whether they be behavioural, whether they be specialist, whether they be orthopaedic or whether they be vet imagers and radiographers. They have been the most supportive, wonderful, loving people in the world—not just for me, a stressed, busy individual trying to fix their puppy in between meetings, but also for Honey and the love that I feel that she has been shown in that circumstance. This is really important to me because she is, like for many, a member of my family.

I am very much looking forward to unpacking this work here and also hearing firsthand about the experiences of individuals in the industry. I think it is well worth doing and I do commend the Hon. Sarah Game for bringing this to our attention as a vet herself.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (11:16): I move:

That this house—

(a) concurs with part 1 of the resolution of the Legislative Council contained in message No. 192 for the appointment of a joint committee on the mental health and wellbeing of veterinarians in South Australia;

(b) concurs with the proposal for the committee to be authorised to disclose or publish, as it thinks fit, any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being reported to the parliament; and

(c) concurs with the proposal to enable members of the committee to participate in the proceedings by way of telephone or videoconference or other electronic means and shall be deemed to be present and counted for purposes of a quorum, subject to such means of participation remaining effective and not disadvantaging any member.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I move:

That this house be represented on the committee by three members of whom two shall form a quorum of assembly members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee and that the members to represent the House of Assembly on the committee be Mr Pederick, Ms Savvas and Ms Thompson.

Motion carried.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MORPHETT VALE ODOUR MANAGEMENT

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:19): It is with great pleasure that I move:

That the 100th report of the committee, entitled Morphett Vale Odour Management Project, be noted.

Over the last decade SA Water, also known as the agency, has received 18 complaints regarding unpleasant odours emanating from the Morphett Vale wastewater network. The agency has since identified this network, which services approximately 30,000 customers, as an odour hotspot. The proposed works will construct a new odour control unit, also known as OCU, in Morphett Vale to provide a long-term preventative solution for the local wastewater network, removing the odour source for the local community.

An investigation into the network identified a short list of options to address the problem, with the agency considering multiple options, including:

- to proceed minimally as things currently stood; that is, relying on regular cleaning and the replacement of two small filters every six months;
- replacing the two small filters with larger, ground-based carbon filters;
- installing a ferrous chloride chemical dosing station;
- installing a magnesium hydroxide liquid dosing station; or
- installing an odour control unit.

After assessing these options against technical, social and environmental categories, the agency determined the construction of an OCU was the preferred intervening measure. The OCU functions by drawing in the air from the local wastewater network and treating it using various filters to allow adequate cleaning before releasing the purified air through a discharge vent stack. By constructing the unit, the agency will provide an outcome in line with SA Water's business strategy and reduce the odour to a level that meets the service requirements committed to by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia.

The OCU will also reduce levels of hydrogen sulphide gas in the sewer, lowering risks of corrosion to the sewer mains. The unit will be strategically located on a nature strip off Main South Road behind the Emu Hotel in Morphett Vale on land recently acquired by SA Water. An additional induct will be constructed in the council reserve off Barbara Avenue, which will require some enabling works to connect the OCU to the existing sewer. Construction is anticipated to commence in the first quarter of next year and is scheduled for practical completion in late 2025.

The agency expects the project to cost up to $6.6 million, with operational costs of approximately $630,000 over 30 years. Both these costs will be funded through the regulatory determination, and there will be no impact on SA Water's overall borrowings or contributions to government. The agency states that as the works are a continuation of an existing service an economic benefit cost ratio is not required, as the primary driver is not for economic benefit to the state.

SA Water utilises procurement frameworks that enable the sequential award of works, incentivising suppliers to perform well to secure future contracts. These frameworks deliver significant benefits through collaboration, innovation, consistency, planning and programming. This project has been included in the Wastewater Major Framework program, and procurement has been conducted in accordance with SA Water procedures and applicable government policies. While the option analysis and concept design was completed by SA Water engineering, a design and construct model was selected to deliver the project, and framework partner Fulton Hogan Utilities submitted a proposal.

The agency affirms the design and construct package will be awarded in accordance with SA Water's delegation of financial and procurement authority and applicable government policies. A project manager will be responsible for delivering the project in accordance with SA Water's corporate project management methodology. This project manager is accountable for the development and delivery of the overall project, including seeking the necessary approvals and management of the selected contractor and works.

SA Water uses a risk management policy to identify project risks and develop mitigation strategies. These risk management guidelines will apply over the course of the project and be undertaken on an ongoing basis. The agency has identified the following key risks:

- contaminated soil, for which soil testing has been conducted, finding no exceedance of appropriate waste fill criteria;
- unknown or unexpected services during construction, for which the contractor has been engaged to complete potholing to locate underground services; and
- groundwater, for which a geotechnical investigation of the area has been undertaken, with no groundwater encountered.

SA Water's corporate-wide policies reinforce its business commitment to operating sustainably. The selected contractor will be encouraged to develop processes, with due regard for short and long-term, local and global, environmental, social and economic considerations, including conservation and efficient use of resources, engaging local subcontractors, reducing carbon emissions, the development of flexible processes and products, and implementing recycling and re-use.

The contractor will have an established construction and environmental management plan, and a site environmental management plan will be developed to address these specific requirements and associated approval conditions. No regulated or significant trees have been identified for removal, but some native vegetation removal will be required and SA Water states that this vegetation clearance has been granted approval.

Initial assessment indicates that the site is in proximity to sensitive noise receivers, including the Emu Hotel and residential housing, and the design will incorporate acoustic enclosures to minimise noise. Following construction, the agency will conduct noise monitoring to ensure that the site meets requirements outlined in the environmental protection policy.

The project site is within the Kaurna People Native Title Settlement Indigenous Land Use Agreement area, and SA Water states that the subject parcel of land is not identified as native title land within this agreement. The agency has identified a medium risk of impacting or encountering Aboriginal objects or remains; therefore, during construction SA Water will comply with its standard operating procedure for the discovery of Aboriginal heritage and that all on-site employees are to attend a site-specific Aboriginal cultural heritage induction. If any Aboriginal sites or objects are found, work should cease immediately, and an Aboriginal heritage and engagement advisor be contacted. SA Water's environment and heritage expertise has identified no European heritage items on the site.

The agency has appointed a dedicated stakeholder management representative to keep all relevant stakeholders informed regarding project developments. Consultation with local council has not raised any issues or concerns. SA Water is also in consultation with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport and the City of Onkaparinga regarding the potential need of a traffic management plan. An internal property, planning and environmental team has confirmed no development approval is required. The project submission has been circulated with relevant government departments that have indicated broad support for the project.

The committee has examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Morphett Vale Odour Management Project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were: Peter Seltsikas, Senior Manager, Capital Delivery, SA Water, and Tracy Buchanan, 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.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Mr Matt Clemow, well known to many people in this place, a doer of good things in the social housing sector, and well known for being the long-suffering Chief of Staff of former Minister Pat Conlon.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: NEW MOUNT BARKER HOSPITAL

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

That the 101st report of the committee, entitled New Mount Barker Hospital Project—Enabling and Early Works Package, be noted.

The Mount Barker District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital, commonly known as the Mount Barker Hospital, is operated by the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network and provides care for more than 200,000 people in the catchment area. The hospital currently comprises a 34-bed facility, with services including 24-hour accident and emergency, inpatient and day patient surgical and medical, obstetrics and gynaecology, chemotherapy, renal dialysis, palliative care, allied health, and community-based services.

It serves a critical role in stabilising patient flow to Adelaide's metropolitan hospitals and is presently experiencing pressure from rapid population growth in Mount Barker and the Adelaide Hills—growth which is forecast to continue over the next 10 years. In response, the government has committed $320 million to vital redevelopment of the hospital through the new Mount Barker hospital project. The new hospital will significantly increase the local health network's capacity and services by tripling inpatient beds, expanding the capacity of specialist beds, delivering new outpatient facilities, and establishing a new mental health unit.

The proposed enabling and early works package will support the efficient delivery of the project's main works while enabling ongoing clinical and support functions, temporarily reconfiguring on-site facilities to maintain operation, developing offsite resources for decanting and relocating staff, and improved parking, site entry and traffic flow.

The early works package has an allocated budget of $22.5 million drawn from the overall project budget for the new Mount Barker hospital project. These early works will construct onsite building service upgrades and install temporary facilities to allow for the eventual main works package with the proposed scope of works including:

- demolition and site preparation;
- providing continuity of operational services and storage;
- providing continuity of engineering services, as well as a temporary emergency generator;
- replacing hot water services;
- relocating the medical suction plant;
- replacing a gas humidifier;
- building new sewer connections and installing a new main distribution board;
- creating a new access road to maintain car park access and a temporary link road and loading dock;

- providing offsite facilities for staff who are required to decant from the hospital during construction; and
- providing alternative parking solutions to maximise car parking on site during construction works.

The main aim of these works includes strategies to ensure that the decanting of hospital services to temporary settings does not interrupt their operation, as well as prepare for their return upon completion of the new hospital building. Additionally, it will ensure that the delivery of care to the community is maintained during the new hospital's construction.

The early works are anticipated to begin by the end of this year and are scheduled for completion in October next year. The main works package is intended to commence following completion of this early works project.

SA Health has assembled a team of professional service contractors including architects, planners and engineers who will engage secondary professional service contractors as necessary for specific aspects of the project. The managing contractor is being engaged with assistance from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport using established evaluation and contracting processes.

Project delivery will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management, as advocated by the state government and construction authorities, including:

- extensive consultation to ensure incorporation of new and emerging health strategies;
- evaluation and review of solutions against the brief;
- development of a formal communication channel between end users, stakeholders, the local health network and SA Health;
- preparation of a project program that reflects the project's scope;
- establishing a cost plan;
- the appointment of professional service contractors; and
- scheduling regular reviews of design, documentation and construction.

The project team is also responsible for risk management and mitigation strategies. Key risks identified for the project include:

- construction carried out in proximity to an operational clinical environment, which will require clear, ongoing communication with site management and the hospital;
- construction undertaken near an ambulance arrivals point, which will require clear, ongoing communication with the South Australian Ambulance Service;
- the possibility of potential service disruptions, for which service cutovers and planned service diversions will minimise disruption; and
- the management of traffic.

Given the limited scope of the early works, SA Health states there are few opportunities to integrate sustainable development initiatives into the early works package. However, the works have been designed to facilitate the integration of such measures during the main works. The project team has established processes to ensure sustainability issues are incorporated during all phases of the project, and SA Health notes the importance of incorporating these principles into this early works package as a key design consideration.

The team has also recognised sustainability opportunities through recycling suitable waste products during demolition, procuring materials from certified environmentally responsible sources, using materials with recycled content, and selecting materials which are highly durable.

SA Health states that the Central Archive in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation division has no record of discovered Aboriginal sites in the proposed works locations. Additionally, there is no record for this site on the state Heritage Register.

The new Mount Barker hospital project team have been in ongoing consultation with stakeholders and the community regarding the design and construction of the new hospital as well as the management of ongoing health service delivery and long-term operational considerations. To ensure that safe hospital operations continue throughout the project life cycle, specific consultation has occurred with facilities management personnel from the local health network. The health network will also manage required communications concerning site planning and logistics, with a targeted communication strategy to be deployed once relocation works and service changeover dates are finalised.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the new Mount Barker hospital project—enabling and early works package. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were: Tim Packer, Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Infrastructure Division, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Bronwyn Masters, Chief Executive Officer, Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network; Layton Waters, Manager Major Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; and Jason Timberlake, Senior Associate, Swanbury Penglase Architects. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the member for Kavel for his written statement in support of this project in his electorate.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: NARACOORTE HEALTH SERVICE UPGRADE

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:35): I move:

That the 102nd report of the committee, entitled Naracoorte Health Service Upgrade, be noted.

The Naracoorte Health Service is one of seven hospitals and health service locations operating in the Limestone Coast Local Health Network catchment. The hospital provides acute inpatient care, emergency, surgical, maternity and chemotherapy, as well as co-located residential aged care, community health and mental health services. Other services within the broader hospital site include physiotherapy, radiology, general practice, Country Health Connect and the Naracoorte Ambulance Station.

During the 2021-22 period, the emergency department (ED) received 5,690 presentations. SA Health modelling anticipates those numbers to increase to 6,250 presentations by 2032, with 35 per cent of these presentations anticipated to be either paediatric or geriatric. The first stage of works will support the projected consumer growth, renew ageing and end-of-life infrastructure and meet contemporary Australasian Health Facility Guidelines.

The proposed $8 million program of works is part of the state government's 2022 health services election commitment in the Limestone Coast region and will include upgrading the ED as well as building a new central lift with associated extensions and making service upgrades to the site's infrastructure. The program will improve the quality and safety of care, address service compliance such as infection control and health service needs and address site asset sustainment, including risks of breakdowns and asset failure.

After identifying that the existing hospital's infrastructure and services are insufficient to meet current standards and accommodate anticipated growth, SA Health recommended that the priority for the first stage of redevelopment is the refurbishment of the ED and installation of a new central lift. The project will:

- extend the existing patient bay room, allowing for three high-observation bays to comply with Australasian Health Facility Guidelines;
- refurbish the resuscitation bay;

- construct a new waiting area and two new consulting rooms;
- build the new lift, as well as a lift foyer, office and store area;
- refurbish the foyer and construct a new corridor link to the rebuilt stairwell;
- upgrade electrical infrastructure and replace the suction plant;
- refurbish three dirty utility rooms; and
- construct fire and smoke zones to comply with the National Construction Code.

Main construction is anticipated to commence prior to the end of this year, with the works scheduled for completion in July of next year. The project will be delivered following best practice principles for project procurement and management as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. The project's management team will:

- engage in extensive consultation to ensure the development and adoption of new and emerging strategies;
- evaluate and review potential solutions against the brief;
- develop formal communication channels between end users, stakeholders, the local health network and SA Health;
- prepare and manage a project program that reflects the project's scope and procurement requirements;
- establish a cost plan and manage project cost effectively;
- schedule regular reviews of design, documentation and construction;
- appoint professional service contractors; and
- identify and manage risks, as well as implement appropriate mitigation strategies.

The project's professional services contractors have been engaged by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, who will also engage the general building contractor. The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport will act as principal for all contractors.

The project team has established formal processes to ensure that sustainable development factors are incorporated throughout the project life cycle. A design workgroup is tasked with ensuring sustainability principles are integrated into all work undertaken and an independent advocate will assist with the successful delivery of these considerations. Proposed sustainability measures include:

- incorporation of flexible engineering spaces that support future changes in technology;
- mechanical systems designed for potential increases in temperature and adverse weather;
- effective management and protocols to reduce environmental impact over the building's lifespan;
- use of responsibly sourced and versatile materials that improve efficiency and environmental outcomes;
- energy-efficient lighting and appliances; and
- water-efficient tapware and plumbing, as well as initiatives that optimise the use of rainwater.

Furthermore, the department states that significant trees within any of the development zones will be addressed in accordance with the significant trees legislation.

The Central Archive in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation division has identified no record of Aboriginal sites within the proposed works location, and there is no other recorded heritage value located on the site.

SA Health is engaged in ongoing consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders, including clinical and non-clinical medical staff, consumer reference groups, and appropriate industrial bodies. The local community has been engaged through a two-way process at various levels, including via public notices and key stakeholder group consultation. The project has also undertaken specialised expert reviews with various units and agencies within SA Health and the local health network. SA Health's media communications unit will manage required external communication throughout the life of the project.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Naracoorte Health Service upgrade. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were: Tim Packer, Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate and Infrastructure Division, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Tjaart Van Der Westhuizen, Project Manager, Limestone Coast Local Health Network; and Rachela Snewin, Senior Architect and Team Leader, GHD Design. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the member for MacKillop who presented to the committee regarding this project in his electorate.

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

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (11:41): It gives me great pleasure to speak to the 102nd report of the Public Works Committee entitled, Naracoorte Health Service Upgrade, and that it be noted. It is with great appreciation that I thank not only the Public Works Committee and the Presiding Member, the member for Florey, but also the government in general, the Labor government, for their advocacy towards Naracoorte of $8 million.

In the first four years of my political career under the Liberal government, we saw $3.6 million rolled out to Naracoorte, and now we are seeing a further $8 million. In the first $3.6 million there were some really good upgrades made, or let's say participating in old infrastructure of the Naracoorte hospital, and now with this further $8 million it is starting to be quite noted and very much well appreciated. I am sure by the time this $8 million is rolled out and all the upgrades are completed, those using the Naracoorte hospital will appreciate some changes, although I would not say major changes because I think from the outside it is not going to be a total overhaul. It is certainly a very large complex, but it is also a very old complex.

I just bring to the attention of the parliament that this hospital has foundations and beginnings that go back to 1863, 1880, 1920s, 1950s and sixties, then 1970s, and even 1984 I see here, and then another wing in 2002. It is a very fragmented, old building and facility in Naracoorte, and probably one of the things I have to say is that it has been said—and I found out in the first couple of years in politics—that we could go back to 2000 and there have been two attempts of actually building and planning for a whole new hospital because of its age. I have to say that that proposal has probably not been written off, but it certainly will not be part of this $8 million upgrade.

In this $8 million upgrade, I have to just make note of what some of the basics are that we are going to see at the Naracoorte hospital. These are providing new clinical and patient spaces, significant improvements in the accident and emergency, and another one that really comes to mind is installing a new lift. I do pick up on the rhetoric and the language that our health minister used the other day when I took him down and we had a look at what has been done at Naracoorte, and what is going to be done, and he called it the world's slowest lift from one floor to the next. I think the lift is not very reliable either, so it might not work on the day. It has certainly been really tough on everyone at Naracoorte, be it staff or patients, using this old infrastructure. We are going to see some major improvements in the areas that this $8 million is going to cover off on.

I am not only a strong advocate for the Naracoorte hospital but also Naracoorte as a regional hub. We have just heard from the member for Adelaide supporting me. She has a very strong history of bringing friends and family and the like down to the Naracoorte community. She knows what the Naracoorte hospital has been and where it is potentially going.

While supporting the government in this investment of $8 million, I note they have also indicated they are going to spend another $1 million on a review and I am supportive of that like you would not believe, along with the Limestone Coast Local Health Network, which is very supportive as to how that might look for this hospital with the upgrades of $8 million, as the Public Works Committee Presiding Member has just indicated, but also what it could mean for Naracoorte and the region.

That is the exciting part here. It is like, 'We are not sure what we have got and we are not sure when it will happen,' but there are some really good conversations going on there with some investments around planning and understanding the needs of the community not only in Naracoorte but also the surrounds, towns, small clinics, hospitals and the like. It is looking at what Naracoorte can do, rather than what it is doing.

One of the things that came to mind is that I have heard that specialists can turn up at Mount Gambier, work with the infrastructure and some of the difficulties of a health system that is under pressure, and they may be able to get up to four operations in the day surgery per day, but they can go to Naracoorte and they can get eight or nine of these same surgeries done in Naracoorte because the facilities there will allow this to occur. That may be because it does not have the inundation that Mount Gambier has or there might be more room for recovery and those sorts of things.

What this means is that the specialists want to turn up at Naracoorte and get the eight or nine per day rather than going down to Mount Gambier and getting only three done per day. Obviously, this gives Naracoorte one of its strengths in backing up the major regional centre of Mount Gambier. With Naracoorte only being an hour away from Mount Gambier, we could see these sorts of investments that the Public Works Committee is indicating reinforce, strengthen the Naracoorte facilities and make Naracoorte a real medical hub that would support the towns of Bordertown, Padthaway, Lucindale, Kingston, Robe and then obviously down towards Penola and potentially Millicent. However, I recognise that once you are in Penola and Millicent, it is only half an hour south of there and you are in Mount Gambier, which has a new complex and a bigger one.

Naracoorte is really in the centre, but on the eastern side of the Limestone Coast. It is nearly in the centre of MacKillop as well and we are not far from the Victorian border. We saw this really clearly through COVID when that line in the sand became almost like the Great Wall of China: you could not go through it for love nor money. We had Victorians locked out of South Australia seeking expertise in health and outcomes around the Naracoorte hospital, so we know we service the Victorian side and Victorians. Not only that but we know there are specialists coming across from Victoria as well, which could be nurses or midwives or others, coming in to work at the Naracoorte hospital and obviously adding to all the needs that go on there.

So, without any further ado, I am just going to say that I really appreciate the Public Works Committee. I have loved the opportunity to present, like I did, to the Public Works Committee about this build. I know that I am very collaborative working with the Limestone Coast Local Health Network board and the builders and the designers. I am grateful for the advocacy from the Marshall years of $3.6 million that started this ball rolling. I am certainly very grateful to the Malinauskas state Labor government and their promise of $8 million at the last state election—and they are honouring it, with an extra $1 million to look at what else Naracoorte can be. Fingers crossed, we will address all that is wrong with Naracoorte. We will pick up on what we can make Naracoorte into and hopefully it can turn into the real precinct that Naracoorte and the region deserves.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:49): I take this opportunity to thank the member for MacKillop for his contribution to the debate and for his kind words about how much he enjoys presenting to the committee. I can certainly say on behalf of the committee that the committee enjoys it when he comes to present to us. There is no other member who has presented to the committee, as long as I have been on there, who has been as comprehensive and passionate about projects in his electorate as the member for MacKillop. I thank him and I look forward to seeing him give submissions on future projects.

The SPEAKER: Very well put, member for Florey. He is the lion of Naracoorte.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HEALTHY COORONG, HEALTHY BASIN PROGRAM, TOLDEROL GAME RESERVE WETLANDS ON-GROUND WORKS

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:50): I move:

That the 103rd report of the committee, entitled Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin Program—Tolderol Game Reserve Wetlands On-Ground Works Project, be noted.

The Coorong is a national treasure, a unique environment that is widely regarded to be the most important waterbird wetland in the Murray-Darling Basin. The lakes and waterways are a Ramsar-listed Wetland of International Importance, subject to several international migratory bird agreements as well as numerous state and federal government initiatives. Sadly, the area has been in ecological decline for some time, with dwindling numbers of waterbird species, including fairy terns and some migratory shorebirds.

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) proposes to undertake on-ground works at Tolderol Game Reserve wetlands to increase available habitat for key species of migratory and resident non-migratory shorebirds. This project is part of the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin program and aims to benefit waterbird populations by increasing their preferred foraging habitat as well as supporting natural dispersal and range shifts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Tolderol Game Reserve spans over 200 hectares and comprises 21 man-made wetland basins that are gravity fed via a series of channels. Under the current system, only 18 of the 21 basins are watered, which provides habitat for only 45 per cent of the waterbird season. By increasing the number of basins watered, upgrading infrastructure and modifying basin levels, the proposed works aim to increase the foraging habitat for waterbirds by 50 hectares. The works will also increase habitat availability during the shorebird season by 40 per cent, providing 150 hectares of preferred habitat at Tolderol for 85 per cent of the season.

The project will water all 21 basins, enabling the modification of water levels to increase foraging area; upgrade the infrastructure to increase safety and efficiency of operations; allow wetting and drying cycles of wetlands to boost the growth of ecosystems; and increase the total preferred habitat for waterbirds of the Coorong, Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert.

DEW has engaged the services of civil engineering company Infrastructure Consulting to prepare a detailed design for the proposed works, which will construct and modify channels to increase management control of the water supply to the basins; install new pipes and isolation sluice gates to deliver flexible management of water; upgrade the pump distribution system through the installation of manifold pipework; upgrade the existing pump inlet screen for effective removal, stockpiling and management of in-stream vegetation; remove some basin banks to improve management efficiency; modify several basins to achieve desired water depths; and upgrade existing tracks and embankments to improve public safety, operations and maintenance access.

Construction is anticipated to begin in January next year and will aim to maximise use of the summer months to minimise potential delays caused by poor weather. The works are expected to take approximately six months, with completion expected in June 2025. The project is expected to cost up to $5 million and will be funded under the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin program, provided on a 90:10 basis from the Australian and state governments. This funding is part of the original program commitment of approximately $70 million for state priority projects, and the associated 10 per cent state contribution is budgeted in the Department of Treasury and Finance contingencies. Following project completion, no change is expected to existing operating costs.

An economic impact analysis undertaken by DEW indicates the project will benefit local businesses in the short to medium term through capital investment during construction, operations and maintenance. The department also anticipates an increase in tourism to the area through increased use by birdwatchers, duck hunters, campers, bushwalkers and volunteers.

Due to the unique challenges of the works, DEW will seek accreditation from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport to self-manage construction. Project delivery will be undertaken through a construct-only contract to be undertaken by private contractors appointed through a tender process, and DEW proposes an open tender with four separate packages that can be prioritised based on project outcome significance as well as final budget projections at commencement.

The department noted that a tender call was released in September, with the contract expected to be awarded this December in preparation for construction to begin early next year. All procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the state government's procurement management framework and will comply with relevant guidelines. The project will be managed in accordance with DEW's project management framework and governed under the existing Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin governance framework. DEW will be responsible for risk management on an ongoing basis to ensure appropriate mitigation strategies are incorporated throughout the project delivery.

Potential environmental impacts are of particular significance with the Tolderol wetlands project. The department states that a number of environmental assessments have been undertaken throughout the planning and design process. This includes considerations regarding vegetation, fauna, site contamination, groundwater, water quality, erosion and sedimentation, fuel storage, spillage and contamination, and geotechnical surveys.

The selected contractor will be required to develop an environmental management plan, and an onsite engineer will be engaged to oversee the works. While all efforts have been made to minimise the construction footprint, some native vegetation removal is, unfortunately, unavoidable and appropriate approvals will be sought prior to commencement.

Tolderol is within the Ngarrindjeri and Others Native Title Claim and subject to the Ngarrindjeri Indigenous Land Use Agreement. DEW has engaged the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation throughout the project's development. The traditional owners have identified that the Tolderol Game Reserve wetlands have significant cultural and ecological value and have expressed support for interventions which cause minimal impact by improving the health of their lands and waters. The corporation approved the works in March 2021, and a cultural heritage plan will be implemented during construction if requested.

DEW has created a community engagement plan, which outlines an engagement strategy following the approach provided in the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin guidelines. First Nations engagement will be carried out through a separate process guided by the Work it Out First Nations partnership team. Stakeholders and interested community members will be regularly informed and updated about project aims and progress as well as environmental benefits, and there has been significant consultation throughout the planning and design stages of the Tolderol wetlands project, including state government departments and agencies, the Australian government Minister for the Environment and Water, the Coorong District Council and First Nations representatives.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin Program—Tolderol Game Reserve Wetlands On-Ground Works Project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were: Sue Hutchings, Acting Executive Director, Water and River Murray, Department for Environment and Water; Sarah Murphy, Manager, Program Delivery, Water Infrastructure and Operations, Department for Environment and Water; and Stephen Whitehead, Program Leader, Coorong Infrastructure Investigations, Water Infrastructure and Operations, Department for Environment and Water. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:58): I rise to support this project at the Tolderol wetlands, which are just outside Langhorne Creek next to Lake Alexandrina. I want to acknowledge the volunteers who work in this Ramsar site to make sure we get the betterment of more waterbirds and better outcomes for the environment in this area. I note that this project will increase the water amount by 50 hectares of availability from 100 hectares as part of a 200-hectare site. I think, from everything that has been put in the briefing on this project, it will certainly do great work in enhancing the environment in the area, and I fully support the project.

Motion carried.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENTS) BILL

Second Reading

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) (11:59): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am really pleased to introduce to this house the Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024. The bill amends the Sentencing Act 2017 and the Victims of Crime Act 2001 in response to concerns that have been raised regarding the experiences of victims during the sentencing process. Through this bill, we are rightly supporting victims and ensuring that in the really often heartbreakingly difficult journey they traverse the process is as supportive and effective as it possibly can be.

Section 10 of the Victims of Crime Act 2001 provides that a victim is entitled to have any injury, loss or damage suffered as a result of the offence considered by the sentencing court before it passes sentence. This entitlement is exercised by providing the court with a written personal statement, known as a victim impact statement.

Section 14 of the Sentencing Act gives victims of an indictable offence or a prescribed summary offence a right to provide the court with a victim impact statement. There are further provisions in section 13 of the Sentencing Act to enable victims of other offences to provide a victim impact statement unless the court determines it would not be appropriate in the circumstances of that particular case. The court may allow the victim the opportunity to read the statement aloud to the court, cause the statement to be read aloud by another person such as the prosecutor, or otherwise may consider the statement without it being read aloud.

Providing victims with an opportunity to provide a victim impact statement is a vital aspect of the criminal justice process and often of a person's healing process. We know that for victims and their loved ones, having their voices heard can have a significant therapeutic and restorative value. We know that having a chance to have your voice heard, to tell your story, to speak about your loved one can feel like a step forward, a chance to express yourself and, as I said, to take a step forward on that journey of healing.

The bill contains four amendments which aim to improve the experience of victims in the sentencing process by ensuring that they are provided with adequate opportunity to tell the court and the defendant about the impact of their offending and to do so, so importantly, in their own words. Legal words are of course an absolutely crucial and necessary part of court processes, but they alone do not give a victim a chance to tell their story nor how particular offending made them feel. In the long journeys ahead that many victims face, a journey of loss and healing, this ability to be heard, to tell your story, to speak about how particular offending made you feel, what it meant for your family, is absolutely crucial.

The first three amendments in the bill, contained in part 2 clauses 3 and 4, amend the Sentencing Act. Firstly, the bill addresses a concern raised by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights, Bronwyn Killmier, that victims are sometimes denied that opportunity to prepare a victim impact statement, particularly where a guilty plea is unexpectedly entered and the court proceeds immediately to sentencing submissions and the imposition of a sentence.

It is understood that this concern primarily arises in the Magistrates Court, which hears the highest volume of criminal matters and where there is significant pressure to deal expeditiously with matters. The bill inserts new sections 16(1a) and 16(1b) in the Sentencing Act to ensure that victims who are entitled to provide a victim impact statement are given adequate opportunity to do so, to exercise that right.

New section 16(1a) provides that where a victim has not had that reasonable opportunity to provide a victim impact statement or has requested more time to prepare one the court must, on application by the prosecutor, adjourn sentencing proceedings to give the victim that reasonable

opportunity to prepare their statement. Pursuant to new section 16(1b), the court can refuse to grant the adjournment only if satisfied that special reasons exist that justify that refusal.

Secondly, the bill responds to a concern that was raised regarding the editing of victim impact statements by prosecutors prior to them being provided to the court. It was suggested that whilst well-intentioned the practice can cause victims to perceive that they are being censored and can leave them feeling dissatisfied with the criminal justice process and, again, possibly not able to tell their story using their words drawn from their experiences.

The government considered and consulted on a recommendation made by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights to prohibit this type of editing. However, the feedback provided by the Director of Public Prosecutions and South Australia Police suggested that editing of a victim impact statement by prosecutors is not common practice in South Australia.

Changes to a victim impact statement may on occasion be suggested by a prosecutor where it contains irrelevant material, including unproven allegations or language that is gratuitously insulting or abusive. This feedback is reflected in the DPP's prosecutorial guidelines, which make it clear that prosecutors should not edit or censor a victim impact statement in any way contrary to the wishes of the victim even where the statement includes gratuitously insulting or abusive language or information that is irrelevant to sentencing. The guidelines emphasise that it is the responsibility of prosecutors to provide reasonable assistance to victims, which might include explaining the risks of including irrelevant or abusive material, but that it is for the victim to consider what course of action, if any, they might then take.

Some concern does remain, however, that prosecutors may provide inconsistent advice to victims about the need to remove irrelevant or inflammatory content from a victim impact statement or that there may be a perceived need to suggest editing for fear that the court would refuse to receive it in its entirety. To address this remaining concern the bill inserts new section 16(1c) in the Sentencing Act which provides that a court must not refuse to receive a victim impact statement on the grounds that it includes material that is irrelevant or otherwise should not be included in the statement. The bill makes clear that nothing in section 16(1c) requires the court to have regard to any such material in determining sentence.

Thirdly, the bill contains an amendment from the Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC that remedies a gap that was exposed in the law after the mother of a victim who was killed on our roads was denied the opportunity to provide a victim impact statement to the court.

Tragically, on 19 February 2022 Jason Edwards was travelling along Brighton Road when a vehicle collided with his wheelchair and ran him over. The driver of the vehicle ultimately pleaded guilty to one count of driving without due care. The magistrate sentenced the driver on the factual basis, as agreed by the parties, that the driver's failure to drive without due care did not cause the collision.

Jason's mother, Jeanette, was present in court and was rightly prepared to read her victim impact statement. However, the magistrate found that the court was not empowered to allow a victim impact statement to be provided in the circumstances because there was no causative link between the injury and loss suffered by Jason's family and the offending before the court for determination. I imagine this was absolutely devastating for Jeanette and all who loved Jason.

The entitlement in the Sentencing Act to provide a victim impact statement only extends to those who have suffered injury, loss or damage resulting from the offending before the court. The bill inserts new section 15A in the Sentencing Act, to rightly ensure that in the future those in a tragic position similar to Jason's family are no longer denied the opportunity to have their voices heard about the impact of their loss on their lives.

The amendment will give the court a discretion to permit the loved ones of a person who has died or suffered an injury resulting in total incapacity to provide a written personal statement to the court, where that death or injury resulted from any conduct occurring in connection with the commission of the offence. The amendment further clarifies what is meant by conduct occurring in connection with an offence. However, given the statement would be provided in circumstances where

the court has not accepted causation between the offending and injury, section 15A(3) clarifies that the court is not required to have regard to the statement in determining sentence.

I wholeheartedly thank the Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC for introducing this really important amendment to the bill in the other place and the family of Jason Edwards for their incredibly courageous advocacy in Jason's honour—advocacy that they took amongst utter heartbreak.

Finally, the bill contains an amendment to the Victims of Crime Act to enshrine the right of victims to be informed about their entitlement to provide a victim impact statement. Currently, section 10 of the Victims of Crime Act provides that a victim is entitled to have any injury, loss or damage suffered as a result of an offence considered by the sentencing court before it passes sentence.

Division 2 of part 2 of the Victims of Crime Act contains a declaration of principles governing the treatment of victims by public agencies and officials. This includes an express entitlement to certain information, such as information about the progress of criminal investigations, court processes, the availability of services and how to obtain compensation for harm suffered as a result of an offence.

The bill inserts new section 9C into the Victims of Crime Act, which falls within the declaration of principles in division 2 of part 2. The amendment gives victims an express entitlement to be informed about, firstly, their entitlement to provide a victim impact statement and, secondly, the manner in which the court may use the material, including the circumstances in which certain material may be disregarded by the court or not read aloud to the court.

I can indicate that the government will be moving two amendments to this bill at the committee stage. The purpose of those amendments will be to, firstly, extend the time limitation for making an initial application for statutory compensation under the Victims of Crime Act. They have been developed in response to concerns that were raised by the current Commissioner for Victims' Rights, Sarah Quick, about the impact of the existing time limitations.

Currently, the timeframe limitation for an application made by the victim of the offence is three years after the commission of the offence. An application arising from the death of a victim must be made within 12 months after the date of death. The amendment would extend the timeframe limitation for both an application from a victim, or for an application arising from the death of a victim, to five years.

Whilst the amendments do not relate to victim impact statements, given the overarching objective of this bill to improve the experience of victims of crime in our justice system, this bill is an opportune vehicle for those amendments to be progressed and, as such, the name of the bill also needs to be changed. I commend this bill to members and seek leave to insert the explanation of clauses in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Sentencing Act 2017*

3—Insertion of section 15A

This clause inserts a new section 15A allowing a sentencing court to accept a written personal statement from a broader category of people.

4—Amendment of section 16—Statements to be provided in accordance with rules

This clause requires the court to adjourn sentencing proceedings in certain circumstances to allow a person who has suffered injury, loss or damage resulting from an indictable offence or a prescribed summary offence to prepare a victim impact statement. However, the court is not required to do so if satisfied that special reasons exist. This clause also prevents the court from refusing to receive a victim impact statement on the grounds that the statement includes irrelevant or other material and makes some consequential amendments.

Part 3—Amendment of *Victims of Crime Act 2001*

5—Insertion of section 9C

This clause requires that a victim be informed about their right to have any injury, loss or damage suffered as a result of an offence considered by the sentencing court before it passes sentence, and the manner in which the court may use any material provided to the court in exercise of that right.

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (12:16): I, too, rise to speak on the Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024. As has been said, this bill makes amendments to the Sentencing Act 2017 and the Victims of Crime Act 2001 as a means of responding to the concerns raised by the Commissioner for Victims' Rights about the experiences of victims during the sentencing process. The bill has been designed mindful of the feedback given on both the draft bill and a discussion paper and has received broad support from stakeholders.

Victim impact statements give the victim of a crime the opportunity to tell the court how a crime has impacted them. The victim can speak to the injury, both physical and psychological, the loss or damage they have suffered as a result of the crime perpetrated against them. A victim impact statement can help the court understand how a crime has affected the victim and may be considered by the judge or magistrate as they determine the penalty to be given to the offender.

In my work as a mediator, I frequently witnessed the restorative value of finally just being heard. Not being heard leaves a burning frustration that not only has a perpetrator had the complete disregard or, at the very least, careless indifference for a person's humanity to inflict a crime against them in the first place, but they also then have no interest in taking responsibility for their actions and hearing how they have affected the victim, further dehumanising them.

The victim impact statement forces the perpetrator to listen or, at the very least, hear how their actions have, at a human level, impacted the victim. Even if a crime is accidental, the consequences can be no less damaging, traumatic or permanent, and the victim impact statement no less important as well, giving the victim the opportunity to place on the record the injury they have suffered as a result. The outcome is the same: the victim is heard.

This bill provides that, where a victim has not had a reasonable opportunity to provide a victim impact statement or has requested more time, the court must, on application by the prosecutor, adjourn sentencing proceedings to give the victim a reasonable opportunity to prepare their statement. Currently, a decision as to whether to adjourn sentencing proceedings is a discretionary matter for the court, with no specific factors for consideration.

It was raised by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights that some matters can proceed to sentencing earlier than expected, risking the victim missing out on preparing a victim impact statement, particularly in the Magistrates Court, which, as we have heard, hears the highest volume of criminal matters. This change is modelled on the ACT practice.

Secondly, the bill makes clear that the court must not refuse to receive a victim impact statement on the grounds that it contains irrelevant or inflammatory material. Currently, courts have discretion as to whether to accept a victim impact statement, meaning there is a risk the court could refuse to accept a statement. While editing of victim impact statements does not appear to be a common practice, this amendment is intended to minimise the chance that editing may occur by prosecutors due to perceived issues of admissibility. The statement will be given in the victim's words, even where the statement is perceived as insulting or abusive or contains information that is irrelevant to sentencing; however, any such material cannot be taken into consideration for sentencing purposes.

Finally, the bill amends the Victims of Crime Act 2001 to give victims an express right to be informed about their entitlement to provide a victim impact statement and about the manner in which the court may use the statement, including the circumstances in which certain material may be disregarded or not read aloud to the court. This change focuses on keeping the victim informed about how a victim impact statement may be used.

As has been heard, the Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC lodged an amendment in the other place that will provide the court with discretion to permit the family of the person killed or suffering total incapacity to provide a victim impact statement where that death or incapacity occurred as a result

of conduct occurring in connection with the charged offence. The government supported that amendment.

Currently, the entitlement to provide a victim impact statement only extends to those who have actually suffered injury, loss or damage resulting from the particular offending before the court. The government amendment is the result of a change recommended by the Commissioner for Victims' Rights in relation to current limitation periods for certain statutory claims under the Victims of Crime Act 2001.

Currently, the timeframe limitation for an application made by the victim of the offence is three years after the commission of the offence. An application arising from the death of the victim must be made within 12 months after the date of death. The amendment would extend the timeframe limitation for both an application of a victim, or for an application arising from the death of a victim, to five years. However, it is important to note that claims arising from child abuse and certain other forms of abuse are not subject to any limitation period. As this change does not relate to victim impact statements, the name of the bill consequently needs to be changed to Statutes Amendment (Victims of Crime) Bill 2024.

On a personal note, I would like to add that the primary person who committed crimes against me is no longer alive and so I will never have the opportunity to see them charged or to deliver a victim impact statement. But I think because of this I have a very strong sense of the restorative effect of having the opportunity to face your perpetrator and be heard.

I would like to thank the minister for his ceaseless advocacy for victims of crime, for justice and for creating a safer community. I also want to acknowledge the importance of the contributions made by stakeholders and the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights. This is yet another example of the deliberative, collaborative and thorough way in which this Malinauskas Labor government operates, something I know the members of my community of Dunstan value. I am pleased to support this bill and commend it to the house.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (12:22): It is a privilege to have the opportunity to speak in support of the Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024. The experience of being a victim of crime can often create long-term impacts upon an individual's life. Every person may be affected differently by their experiences, but it is fair to say, especially where the crime is violent or is serious in nature, that the majority of people who become victims of crime are likely to be affected in a significant and enduring way.

Impacts may manifest in a range of different ways and across different areas of individual experience. People who are affected by crime may experience emotional responses, such as feelings of anger, of sadness or of fear and anxiety. They may experience feelings of grief or loss, or feelings of shame and guilt. They may experience a loss of self-esteem and self-worth. They may even experience a range of physiological responses to the stress and the stress associated with the experience of being a victim of crime or of being affected by a crime.

All of these impacts can be experienced together or they can be experienced at different stages in the following days, months and years. The journey of recovery and healing can be long. Indeed, for some people, the impacts associated with becoming a victim of crime or of being impacted by a crime may be permanently life altering.

The principle that underlies the purpose of the Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024 relates to the fact that victim impact statements offer an opportunity for persons who have become a victim of crime, or who have been impacted by crime, to provide the sentencing court with a personal statement about the nature and extent of the impact on their lives. They may speak of the injury, the loss or the damage they have suffered. They can explain how the crime has affected them physically, emotionally, socially or financially, or all of these together.

Victim impact statements give people a chance to talk about their individual experience, experience that we cannot ourselves assume or imagine until we hear from the person who has been impacted. Every person's experience will be unique. The notion that underlies the victim impact statement is that a person impacted by being a victim of crime should have the opportunity to make representation about that unique experience to the court.

Importantly, the intent of the victim impact statement is not to provide the person making the statement with an opportunity to vilify the offender; it is about giving a person impacted by a crime the opportunity to feel heard and the opportunity to have their unique and individual experience acknowledged and recognised. Providing a victim impact statement has the potential to offer meaningful, restorative and therapeutic value for victims as part of their process of psychological and emotional healing and recovery.

Victim impact statements do not replace court testimony. They serve the purpose of giving victims a sense of agency and involvement in the proceedings. It is unfortunately the case that victims can sometimes feel like outsiders in the judicial process, and a victim impact statement offers an avenue of engagement that enables victims of crime and persons affected by crime to make a contribution to the proceedings. What this bill seeks to ensure is that they are not, through the circumstances of a particular matter, denied the opportunity to do so. It can be the case, under current arrangements, that victims may miss out on the opportunity to present victim impact statements in the event that matters proceed to sentencing earlier than anticipated.

This bill and the conversation surrounding it have been significantly influenced by the advocacy of a particular family, that of Mr Jason Edwards, a man whose life was taken in early 2022 by a vehicle exiting a service station on Brighton Road in our southern suburbs. Court documents indicated that Jason had fallen out of his wheelchair and onto the road as the vehicle approached, and he was subsequently hit. Jason later died of his injuries. The court found that the 27-year-old driver of the vehicle had failed to look left as she entered the road and therefore failed to see Jason. The driver pleaded guilty to driving without due care and was convicted.

At sentencing in the Christies Beach Magistrates Court in February this year, Jason's mother, Jan Edwards, was in attendance and had her victim impact statement with her, ready to present. However, she was not granted the opportunity to read it out or to have it read out on her behalf. The magistrate gave reasons, of which I offer an excerpt. The magistrate said:

> I acknowledge that the family of Mr Jason Edwards has suffered an immeasurable loss and that it would assist them to read statements in court.
>
> However, the Sentencing Act prescribes the circumstances in which the court has a discretion to allow Victim Impact Statements to either be submitted to the court or read in court by the victim or another person.
>
> I find that the discretion to allow that to occur does not arise because, as submitted by defence counsel, there is no causative link between the injury and loss suffered by the victims and the offending that is before the court for determination.
>
> So, while I appreciate it may be difficult for the family of Mr Edwards to hear, it is my understanding, as I have said, that the discretion to allow the Victim Impact Statements to be read does not arise and, therefore, the request by prosecution is declined.

It is the view of this government that the voice of a victim deserves and merits a place in the judicial process. The Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024 proposes amendments to the Sentencing Act 2017 and the Victims of Crime Act 2001. The intention of these amendments is to address concerns that have been put forward not only but particularly by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights Bronwyn Killmier in relation to the experiences of victims of crime during the sentencing process.

The bill aims to strengthen and to expand the right of victims to have their victim impact statements heard and considered. First, the bill provides that, where a victim has not had a reasonable opportunity to provide a victim impact statement or has requested more time to prepare it, on application by the prosecutor the court must adjourn sentencing proceedings to provide the individual a reasonable opportunity to prepare and provide their statement.

Under current provisions, the decision in relation to when to adjourn sentencing proceedings is at the discretion of the court. There are no specific factors that must be taken into consideration. The change proposed in this bill is modelled after provisions that are in place in the ACT.

Under existing arrangements, it is also the case that courts may exercise discretion in relation to accepting a victim impact statement. The bill provides that the court may not refuse to receive a victim impact statement on the basis of concerns around its inclusion of material that is irrelevant or inflammatory. The editing of victim impact statements is not understood to be a common practice;

however, this bill aims to prevent the circumstance that prosecutors may perceive a need to edit statements due to concerns around admissibility or around material that is of an inflammatory or irrelevant nature.

Irrelevant or inflammatory material cannot be taken into consideration for sentencing purposes. That is the case under current provisions, and it will remain the case under the proposed arrangements. But victims of crime deserve to have the opportunity to be heard authentically. That is what this bill seeks to enable to happen on a consistent basis.

Finally, the bill proposes to amend the Victims of Crime Act 2001 to enshrine the right of victims to be informed in relation to their entitlement to provide a victim impact statement, as well as about the ways in which the court may use the statement.

The reforms contained in this bill were subject to two stages of consultation: firstly, with a discussion paper, and secondly, on the draft bill. The version of the bill we now consider has been shaped by the feedback that arose out of those processes. I commend those who have engaged with that process and whose input has helped to inform the bill that is before the house. Through these reforms, the Malinauskas Labor government continues its efforts to put victims and justice at the heart of our response to crime.

It is the government's view that this bill strikes an appropriate balance between ensuring that matters before the court can be dealt with in an expeditious manner and ensuring that victims can access fair and reasonable opportunities to participate in the judicial process. With the provisions of this bill, we aim to strengthen and protect the opportunity for victim impact statements to be given, and in so doing we can ensure that they are able to play their important role in facilitating healing and recovery for those who have been impacted by crime. I am pleased to commend the bill to the house.

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (12:30): I, too, rise in support of the Statutes Amendment (Victim Impact Statements) Bill 2024. I cannot imagine the difficult circumstances that an individual or a family must have gone through that lead them to giving a victim impact statement. To be in that position means you have experienced great trauma, pain, suffering or grief, and in so many cases you would not wish it on your worst enemy.

Despite how difficult it must be for these individuals, victim impact statements serve an incredibly important purpose. They give victims of crime the opportunity to provide the sentencing court with a personal statement about the impact of injury, loss or damage suffered by them as a result of certain offences. Importantly, victim impact statements may be considered by the court when determining the sentence for an offence and often have restorative and therapeutic value for victims.

This bill makes amendments to the Sentencing Act 2017 and the Victims of Crime Act 2001 in response to concerns that have been raised regarding the experiences of victims during the sentencing process, particularly by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights. I understand the bill has largely been shaped by feedback received during two stages of consultation: a discussion paper and then the draft bill, and I thank everybody who has engaged in this process.

Firstly, I am extremely pleased that this bill seeks to provide victims with reasonable opportunity to prepare a victim impact statement. Where a victim has not had a reasonable opportunity to provide a victim impact statement or has requested more time, the court must, on application by the prosecutor, adjourn sentencing proceedings to give the victim a reasonable opportunity to prepare their statement.

This reform is in response to concerns, as I previously mentioned, raised by the former Commissioner for Victims' Rights that victims can miss out on preparing a victim impact statement as matters can proceed to sentencing earlier than expected, particularly in the Magistrates Court, which hears the highest volume of criminal matters.

Ensuring victims' voices are heard is crucial, particularly given a victim impact statement may be considered by the court when determining sentencing. This speaks to the second point of the bill. Currently courts have a discretion whether to accept a victim impact statement, so there is a risk that courts could refuse to accept a certain statement. Again, I strongly believe a victim's voice must be

heard regardless of whether it contains irrelevant or inflammatory material. The bill clarifies that the court must not refuse to receive a victim impact statement on these grounds.

While editing a victim impact statement does not appear to be a common practice, this amendment is intended to minimise the chance that editing may occur by prosecutors due to perceived issues of admissibility. On 9 August last year, the DPP also updated its prosecutorial guidelines relating to victim impact statements. The updated guidelines make clear that prosecutors should not edit or censor a victim impact statement in any way contrary to the wishes of the victim, even where the statement includes gratuitously insulting or abusive language or information that is irrelevant to sentencing.

Finally, the bill amends the Victims of Crime Act to give victims an express right to be informed about their entitlement to provide a victim impact statement. It also informs them about the manner in which the court may use the statement, including the circumstances in which certain material may be disregarded or not read aloud by the court. This change focuses on expectation management of victims around potential editing and how a victim impact statement may be used.

I also acknowledge the Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC in the other place who lodged an amendment in the Legislative Council which passed with the support of the government. The amendment would provide the court with discretion to permit the family of a person killed or suffering total incapacity to provide a victim impact statement where that death or incapacity occurred as a result of conduct occurring in connection with the charged offence. Currently, the entitlement to provide a victim impact statement only extends to those who have suffered injury, loss or damage resulting from the offending before the court.

Once again, this all leads to the fact that victims' voices can be heard. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Attorney-General, the Hon. Kyam Maher MLC, in the other place, along with his staff and his department for their work on these reforms. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:34): I rise to indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition and indicate the opposition's support for the bill. I will commend it to the house. It is perhaps an opportunity to remind ourselves that the history of the role of victims in the justice system is a really quite recent one in many ways, and South Australia has a leading exemplar role in this regard.

Just to place it in terms of the context of history, when South Australia introduced victims of crime victim impact statements in 1985, it was the first jurisdiction to do so in the country, and that was the case then for many years thereafter. Victim impact statements are now applied in different ways throughout the country and around the world in lots of jurisdictions.

The role of victims in the justice system, however, is one that occupies considerable thought and that goes back decades, even back very much to the origins of concepts of rights—really, all the way back to the Magna Carta in some ways, as Michael O'Connell has written carefully about in the course of his consideration of the history of victims and their rights and their participation in the prosecutorial process.

I take the opportunity to thank the three victims of crime commissioners that South Australia has had over the history. Michael O'Connell, of course, was the first Commissioner for Victims' Rights anywhere when he was first appointed. He was in that role for a very long time and, as I say, has been a scholar in this area and continues to be. I acknowledge him and his contribution, as I do the immediate past Commissioner for Victims' Rights, Bronwyn Killmier. She is also a towering advocate and contributed to the capacity for the support of victims, including in relation to the opportunity to provide victim impact statements but then across the board in terms of their participation in the criminal justice process. Her contribution has been extraordinary over a lifetime of service. The current Commissioner for Victims' Rights is Sarah Quick.

I acknowledge them all, relevantly, because this bill has had a gestation period of time and it has had the support and input of both Bronwyn Killmier, the immediate past commissioner, and Sarah Quick, the current commissioner. They are both in support of the bill.

Just providing some broader context, I commend Michael O'Connell's contribution to *Crime, victims and policy*. His chapter 10 contribution to that text spells out the modern history of

engagement activism on behalf of victims over the decades. Having signalled those reforms in the early to mid eighties in South Australia that led the way, it might be instructive to reflect that in terms of the decades broadly it is fair to characterise victim advocacy in the sixties as being globally focused on compensation schemes, the advent of state compensation processes for victims of crime.

That then became, in the 1970s, broadly, a movement-based approach to support for victims, and we have seen that now really being amplified through the decades. We recently mourned the loss of Helen Oxenham, whose first studies in women's studies, then practical work in terms of provision of women's shelters, and so on, were very much in line with the broadly predominant focus of advocacy and work for victims that characterised the 1970s, that movement-based approach. I will just refer briefly to what Michael O'Connell had to say about that. I quote:

> Insofar as victimology is also said to be a social movement, it received its impetus from the women's movement in the 1970s that was spurred on by the civil rights movement in the 1960s. The former began to draw attention to the unenviable and essentially powerless position of victims of sexual crimes and domestic violence in particular…They exerted pressure on governments that resulted in the establishment of crisis centres for victims of rape and other sexual assault and shelters or refuges for women escaping domestic violence.
>
> In South Australia in the mid-1970s, for instance, a rape and sexual assault service was set up in a public hospital, a women's shelter was opened and a Crisis Care Service was open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, which was funded to, among other functions, assist police attending domestic violence incidents…

So you see there what we recognise now in so much of the work that is ongoing in terms of work against violence and in support of victims. As Michael O'Connell has described, that very much also characterised the debate around victims and support for victims in the 1970s.

We then moved to the 1980s and what Michael O'Connell describes as a reintegration of victims in the justice system. In this regard, it is a view I share, the work at that stage then really began to turn its focus thoughtfully to what a majority of victims sought, which was assistance to receive support with their role in the criminal justice process, including assistance in preparing for court and, as Michael O'Connell describes, help with understanding the court process in particular. Many of these victims had no experience with the criminal justice system, so they wanted information on their role and responsibilities; and so, to that, what Michael O'Connell describes as reintegrating victims into the justice system.

I recognise the work of the Tonkin government. In the course of that parliament, in 1981, the committee of inquiry into victims of crime in South Australia led the way in terms of what were 67 recommendations about reforms comprehensively to reintegrate victims into the justice system. As I said, that led to what remained groundbreaking leadership in South Australia, led by then Attorney-General Chris Sumner, who was recognised for that groundbreaking work, going on 20 years later.

It has been referred to in the course of the debate about what purpose and role victim impact statements have. It is important to observe that there is an ongoing debate, and there needs to be carefulness, about what in fact the purpose of the victim impact statement is.

The amendments that are the subject particularly of clause 4 and the new subsection (1c) of section 16 are a point at which it is convenient to be clear about this. The amendment will permit the provision of a statement that includes material that is irrelevant or otherwise should not be included in a statement, and the heading of the section is changed accordingly from one that requires a statement to be in accordance with the rules to be saying that it is a statement that the victim can make, and it will be received regardless of whether or not it contains such irrelevant material.

The focus in the debate might be on material that is said to be inflammatory or scandalous or otherwise reflecting a victim's view of the circumstances, whatever they might be. It is important to zero in on what is also not relevant for the purposes of a victim impact statement, and that is broadly—and with a few exceptions—an opinion as to sentence. That is actually a freeing aspect so far as victims are concerned.

Victims are not cast in the role of decision-maker, they are not bearing a burden of having to somehow be part of that determinative process. There are jurisdictions in the US, for example, where victims are invited to include in their response some indication of a view about sentence. That, in my opinion, remains wholly outside the scope and purpose of a victim impact statement. It is, with very

few exceptions, unhelpful for the court process and the determination of sentence, which must remain one of the court applying the court process to the particular circumstances.

In this regard, I refer with appreciation, in the course of that broader history, to the contribution to the Australian Institute of Criminology's *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* No. 33 on victim impact statements by Edna Erez. That was written back in 1991 expressing the then broadly open debate about the application of victim impact statements at a time when South Australia was effectively six years into leading the way, and there were still very much expressions of concern about whether or not they had a role in the justice system.

The author there makes clear one of those aspects that has remained true throughout, and that is that the implementation of victim impact statements does not transform sentencing to a three-way contest. The input might be described as an additional factor for the judge to consider in a sentencing disposition, but it should not be confused with that proper role of the court.

To cite just one more reference, the paper 'Victim impact statements and sentencing' by Associate Professor Sam Garkawe when referring to this question of the issue of victims' opinions cites the practice direction that accompanied the introduction of the UK Victim Personal Statement Scheme, as follows:

> The opinions of the victim or the victim's close relatives as to what the sentence should be are…not relevant, unlike the consequences of the offence upon them. Victims should be advised of this. If despite the advice, opinions as to sentence are included in a statement, the court should pay no attention to them.

That is that observation. With very few exceptions there will be occasion where there are particular reasons why the court might pay them due, and I know that is more likely to occur in terms of scholarly consideration of this in circumstances where there is a statement of the victim explaining the circumstances why there should be a more merciful, lenient sentence in particular circumstances. However, it cuts both ways.

To cite that particular reference further, when considering a victim's view about a sentence the other way, I will just quote this observation:

> Forgiveness has no place in an independent and impartial legal system; offenders should be judged on the basis of the crime they have committed by reference to predetermined legal standards, and not have their fate left to the chance factor of the particular feelings of their victims.

It is important, as the bill insofar as the amendment relates to it at (1c) is concerned, to be clear what victim impact statements are for and what they are not for. Insofar as the bill provides for practical measures that will facilitate the making of the statement, there are several that are straightforward, both in terms of adjournment of proceedings and extension of time for these to be possible.

There is ultimately a balancing act about the administration of justice. We know there are all sorts of reasons why justice delayed is justice denied. That applies to everybody, so of course it is in the interests of justice that matters are progressed and concluded as efficiently as they can be. These provisions, in the interests of ensuring victims have that capacity to participate in that way, are sensible and are supported.

In terms of a conclusion, I emphasise that observation of Michael O'Connell that in many ways the primary concern of many victims will be that there are ways in which victims can understand the process of prosecution, the process before the courts, and not be left, as it were, perplexed by the judicial process much less re-victimised by that process. It is important to continue to understand the proper role and function of the court and to look, in a thoroughgoing way, at what will, in fact, assist victims in terms of both that aspect of restorative justice and also their own confidence that the court process is being undertaken properly and in a way they are entitled to understand.

I have one final observation, but from those who are remaining frustrated about what they might see as the inadequacy of the criminal justice system in terms of providing justice to victims. There are many who will say that while we retain an adversarial process, then there is some fundamental constraint on the role of victims in the process; and there are those who argue that until we move to an inquisitorial process of criminal justice or a process that is based upon restorative justice, then there are real limits on what can be achieved.

We retain an adversarial system of criminal justice that is an important part of our heritage. Considerations of reform, therefore, in this regard can go very deep and very fundamental. We have, however, for the time being, now 40 years of history of leadership when it comes to the provision of victim impact statements in South Australia. This is a discrete but continuing step in that regard. As I say, it is supported. I commend the bill and look forward to its passage through the house.

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) (12:55): I will make my remarks very brief. I would just like to say thank you very much to the Attorney-General in the other place, his staff and the staff of the department for their work on this bill, and also to again thank the commissioners for their crucial insight into what could help the victims of particular offending to feel that their voices are heard and that their stories are told in a way that helps them to begin or to continue through that journey of healing.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: I move:

Amendment No 1 [DeputyPremier–1]—

Page 2, line 4—Delete 'Victim Impact Statements' and substitute 'Victims of Crime'

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 2 to 5 passed.

New clause 6.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: I move:

Amendment No 2 [DeputyPremier–1]—

Page 4, after line 12—Insert:

6—Amendment of section 18—Application for compensation

(1) Section 18(2)(a)—delete '3 years' and substitute '5 years'

(2) Section 18(2)(b)—delete '12 months' and substitute '5 years'

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Third Reading

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) (12:59): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Parliament of South Australia—Sitting Schedule 2025

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

Annual Report 2023-24
Health Performance Council
Local Health Network—Southern Adelaide

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

Annual Reports 2023-24—
Carclew Inc
Children and Young People, South Australian Commissioner for
Early Childhood Development, Office for
Education Standards Board (Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia)
History Trust of South Australia
Skills Commission, South Australian

By the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services (Hon. D.R. Cregan)—

Annual Reports 2023-24—
Correctional Services, Department for
Fire and Emergency Services Commission, South Australian

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to welcome to parliament today students from 17 different schools throughout South Australia who are guests of the Minister for Education and myself. They are all winners of Muriel Matters Awards after showing great leadership and advocacy for topics that are very near and dear to their hearts. It was terrific to spend the lunchbreak with them hearing some of their stories and to hand out their awards alongside the Minister for Education. Some people might call you future leaders; I think you already are quite clearly the leaders of today in your school community and wider community. I congratulate you all on the great work that you have done.

I would also like to thank Frances Bedford, the former member for Florey, for the 25 years she spent in this place, never wasting a day or an hour in educating the rest of us about how important Muriel Matters was to not only South Australia but the world. I think these awards have been handed out for the past four years. We have the former education minister to my left, and the Speakers who went before me who agreed to bestow these awards on great leaders in local school communities also need to be congratulated on the hard work that they have put in.

Nat is here from the Parliamentary Education Office, and everyone from the education department and from the schools who have made this possible: well done. We expect to see at least a few of you 17 in here some time in the near future as members of parliament.

Question Time

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:04): My question is to the Premier. What does the Premier say to South Australians who are struggling to get the hours of work that they need to survive in the current cost-of-living crisis? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Today the ABS Labour Force Survey revealed that South Australia had the highest rate of underemployment on mainland Australia.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:04): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Certainly, as far as the labour force data being released today is concerned, obviously there is a lot of good news in there for the South Australian economy, and the

people of South Australia more broadly. The number of jobs that grew over the last 12-month period is something that is quite to behold and speaks to an economy that continues to power along and generate so much opportunity for South Australians, particularly young South Australians, which I think the Leader of the Opposition specifically referred to in the context of his question.

We currently see more people employed in South Australia, essentially almost more than at any other point in our history, which is quite extraordinary. I think it's fair to say that in our recent memory is the closure of Holden some 10 or 12-odd years ago, when people were predicting that South Australia would hit double-digit unemployment and no-one really knew where the growth was going to come from. Fast forward to today and more people are employed than at any other point in our history.

We have an unemployment rate that sits at 4.2 per cent. The national unemployment rate is 4.1 per cent. This speaks to our exceptionally strong labour market, and of course at other periods throughout the course of this calendar year we have seen an unemployment rate in South Australia with a three in front of it. These are strong numbers.

Of course, today's data and the reduction in the unemployment rate in the state of South Australia in the most recent period also come on top of the fact that the participation rate went up for South Australia in these numbers. The participation rate went up, I think, by 0.3 per cent, from memory, when I looked at the numbers this morning. The participation rate went up and the unemployment rate went down. That is the best of both worlds. We want more people participating in our labour market. We want young people—and older people, for that matter—choosing to put their hand up to go out and grab the opportunities that we know are coming our way.

Just this morning, I was with the Minister for Housing and Urban Development at Port Stanvac. Port Stanvac, the site of an oil refinery in the past, closed some 20 years ago, and this government has been the government that after 20 years has finally unlocked the Port Stanvac site for development for the people of South Australia. We are going to see 3,600 homes provided on that site, with the first homes made available to South Australians in 2028.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Leader of the Opposition is interjecting. He keeps asking when. I am telling him: in 2028 the first people are expected to be able to move into that site. More than that, what we know is that of those 230 hectares being made available we are also going to see the return of 400,000 square metres of land to the people of South Australia for a coastal park. A beach that was once locked up is now going to be opened up. This is a result—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I was very proud—in response to the interjections of those opposite—very proud to be able to stand next to Mr Andrew Buxton this morning, a Victorian developer. He said their business is increasingly calling South Australia home, because they know this is the state where the action is. This is the state where the government is providing a stable land tax regime which stands in stark contrast to what we saw only three or four years ago.

These are the types of stable policy settings that are unlocking growth and unlocking more new homes for young South Australians. More young South Australians are choosing to stay in South Australia, because this is where the work is. We have a whole synergy coming together in ways that are welcome, and today's labour force data was yet another representation of that.

AMBULANCE RAMPING

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:08): My question again is to the Premier. Has the government fixed ramping? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: It was reported that our southern suburbs hospitals were dangerously overcrowded last night. Noarlunga Hospital was 212 per cent overcrowded and Flinders Medical Centre was 175 per cent overcrowded. The government has now delivered over

110,000 hours of ramping since March 2022, over 30,000 more than the entire term of the former Liberal government.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:08): I am very, very pleased to be able to inform the house and the people of South Australia that ramping has gone down 46 per cent over the last three months—46 per cent over the last three months—which probably explains why this is the first time in a little while we have heard a question on this matter from the Leader of the Opposition. I welcome the question. Let's start talking about a bit of the data.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The shadow minister for education, the students are watching!

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Leader of the Opposition interjected referring to the Chairman's Lounge. We know how enthusiastic he was to get that membership. We know how enthusiastic he was. We understand that within hours of his ascension—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —he had people on the phone. Not according to us, but according to his mates; potentially his mates who are no longer with us—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Who knows?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: That's right! But on far more important matters than the Leader of the Opposition's interest in those subjects, we know that we have seen over the course of the last three months there has been significant improvement, but there is nothing about the data that we have seen in recent weeks that has given this government a moment of complacency. We are not prematurely celebrating victory. We know there is a lot more that needs to be done.

To see the reductions, though, is welcome. I particularly think of the Lyell McEwin Hospital. In the last couple of months in the Lyell McEwin Hospital we have been able to open up a lot of new beds that were commissioned as a result of decisions that this government took quickly after forming office: 48 new beds have come online at the Lyell McEwin Hospital. We opened them up, I think, in August/September. As soon as those beds were opened, we started to see bed block alleviate at NALHN. Patient flow improved on the back of that and then ramping declined, particularly at the Lyell Mac but also at Modbury Hospital as well.

The reason why I reference that is because it is evidence that building more capacity in the system is actually making a difference. It is not that alone, but it is making a difference. That does give us a degree of hope because we know that as well as the 48 beds that have opened up at the Lyell Mac, we are going to see 300 beds open up over a relatively short period, from the middle of this year to the end of next year. We have more beds at Noarlunga coming online next year; we are seeing beds coming online at The QEH; we have seen beds come online at the Lyell Mac, at Modbury, there are plans at Flinders, and, of course, there is the massive redevelopment at the member for Kavel's community up at Mount Barker.

We made the big decisions—and some sacrifices—to invest a lot of money into our health system to build its capacity up. Where that capacity has been able to be brought online within 2½ years of forming government, it has delivered an outcome and ramping has come down, but like I said, there's a long way to go.

Also yesterday we were able to release—I think it was yesterday or the day before—the ramping data as well and the ambulance response time data and that has also improved. Ambulances are getting to patients on time, a lot more than what was the case only 2½ years ago, ramping has been able to reduce and there is a connectivity to those statistics and the capacity we put into the system. But, like I said, I can't stress enough, no-one is claiming victory. We have a lot more to do.

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION BULLYING

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): My question is to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Is the minister aware of accusations of bullying by members of the Australian Education Union and can he guarantee that none of these accusations represent impacts on our schools?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:13): I thank the member for Morialta for his question. I only became aware of these accusations when I read them in, I think, the newspaper today. Obviously, any suggestion or accusations made about bullying in any setting, whether it's this place or outside this place, and that includes unions and other workplaces as well, are serious and should be taken as such, but the short answer to the member for Morialta's question is I became aware of those accusations when I read them, I think, today.

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION BULLYING

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:13): Supplementary, sir.

The SPEAKER: We will see.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will the minister make investigations as to whether any of the accusations are against staff of the education department or people who remain on staff of the education department if potentially on secondment, and, if so, will the Department for Education investigate and take action?

The SPEAKER: That is a separate question—maybe a separate two questions. The Minister for Education.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:14): I thank the member for Morialta for his question. I have already had some discussions with my own staff based on that article and the accusations that are made within it. I am happy to make further investigations specifically around I think the nub of the question that the member for Morialta asked, which is: are any of those staff involved in the allegations of bullying at the AEU employees of the education department and, therefore, if those allegations are substantiated and if they do turn out to be employees of the education department, whether or not the department needs to take any action?

REGIONAL ROADS

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:15): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister please advise my outback constituents of the number of road maintenance gangs that should be operating in zone 4 under the current contract? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I have been contacted by several people regarding the very long periods for road maintenance by the contractor, with the information being given to me that there are only two gangs operating in the whole of zone 4, which covers the northern part of the state, and that covers the whole of the unincorporated areas of South Australia.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:15): Zone 4 has six crews, so I just get that out of the way quickly. I want to thank the member for Stuart for his question. He is passionate about regional South Australia. He knows regional roads better than most, being a former regional roads minister. The work that he did to set the state up not only in Port Pirie but regional roads in and around the Mid North of our state and outback areas is a testament to his commitment to his local community, and I want to thank him for it.

Zone 3, the regional north contract, covers the Far West, Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Mid North and sealed roads under the department's care, control and management in the out of councils area, plus Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs council areas—it is a massive area. This includes roads along the Stuart Highway and the Lincoln Highway. Zone 3 is contracted to DM Roads. Zone 4,

outback contracts, covers all unsealed roads under the department's care, control and management within the out of councils area in the outback. That zone is contracted to Service Stream.

Across both zones, crew numbers vary during the year depending on seasonal work demands. Zone 4 has six crews: three dry grading crews, two wet grading crews, one routine maintenance crew, which does signs, cleaning grids, etc. As I mentioned earlier, additional contract crews are put on as required. Zone 3 has 11 crews: four based in Port Pirie, four based in Port Augusta, two based in Port Lincoln and one based in Ceduna. Again, additional crews are contracted as required.

Road maintenance is of critical importance to our government. Labor knows that our roads are the arteries of our economy, and we are investing heavily. In the most recent budget, Treasury increased road maintenance funding across the forward estimates, which is welcomed. But as I have said previously in this place, we have only 7 per cent of the nation's population, 10 per cent of the nation's roads, and about 5 per cent of the funding required to maintain them and upgrade them. We are doing as much as we can with every valuable dollar we have to try to make that road maintenance dollar go further, and it is difficult.

We do make sure and the department and its contractors continue to undertake regular inspections of these zones, with any critical defects repaired as soon as possible to ensure that the roads are kept in a safe condition, especially for road users in outback communities. But the inspections are only as good as the frequency of them, and we do that as often as we can. It is important that people do report defects as well, and we will act on them.

I want to thank the member for Stuart for his advocacy and his hard work. What people don't see is the work he does behind the scenes in advocating to the government and to the department on behalf of regional communities. In fact, the entire crossbench does an exceptional amount of work—

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, unlike you, he didn't have to resign in disgrace. Remember that, when you resigned in disgrace because of an ICAC inquiry? Remember that?

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, that's right. I have never resigned in disgrace. You have. Thank you for pointing out the obvious. You have resigned due to an ICAC investigation. Minister Brock is held in high regard by everyone in this parliament, unlike the member for Chaffey, who is held in very low regard by everyone in the parliament. I want to thank the member for Stuart for his advocacy on behalf of the people of Stuart and of course the broader outback communities.

AUSTRALIA-UNITED STATES TRADE

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (14:19): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise the house on the importance of the Australian-US trade relationship for South Australia?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:20): I thank the member for Adelaide for her question because no doubt there would be a significant number of her constituents who would have a great interest in the strength of the South Australian-United States relationship when it comes to trade.

Over the last 12 months I have been advised by the Minister for Trade and Investment that trade with the US is up by 34.1 per cent, and that is an extraordinary amount of growth that we have seen with this particular relationship and that is because this government has a strong economic agenda that is delivering and yielding results for the people of our state.

This evening a significant event in Sydney is being held with Amgen. They are hosting a conference that I have been invited to attend and I am taking the opportunity to do that to make sure that growth trajectory is a strong one. I am looking forward to attending that event and playing a small speaking role. That was an event that I was invited to and I wanted to grab the opportunity, and for that in some respects I apologise by virtue of the fact I will not be at the conclusion of question time.

But this is an important exercise, particularly given the growth trajectory that we have been on that we have every chance to be able to sustain.

One of the principal reasons why we will be able to sustain that is because of the increasing degree of collaboration that we are seeing in the defence and space industries in particular between our state and the United States.

Earlier this year I had the chance to be in the US, on the East Coast in particular, being able to visit sites at Newport News with Huntington Ingalls, but also further north in Maryland and Connecticut talking about how the South Australian defence sector would like to be able to get access to the supply chain, particularly in regard to the Virginia class submarines. That work is now very much in train. We have signed agreements with Huntington Ingalls who, of course, are the builder of the Virginia class submarines at Newport News in Virginia and we are starting to see evidence that South Australian businesses are able to get access to that supply chain.

Now think about the size of the opportunity. South Australian businesses participating in the supply chain of US nuclear submarines, which of course is critical as we seek to build up the industrial capacity in our own state to be able to supply the SSN-AUKUS program. Only yesterday I had again the opportunity to meet with Vice Admiral Mead—earlier in the day the Minister for Defence and Space Industries was with the Australian defence minister—as we see the mobilisation agreement signed associating between ASC and BAE. So, increasingly we are starting to see critical milestones being reached for the advancement of the AUKUS program.

But the reason why this state government is so keen on the AUKUS program is not just the fact it means more work, it is the opportunity to be able to increase the economic complexity, which is something I know the Deputy Premier is also doing a lot of work on in her industry portfolio. This is a significant enterprise, it has got to be an all-of-government effort, but that US trade relationship is going to be particularly important.

We know that the US is home to so many of the defence businesses that have already seen great advancement on the back of their nuclear navy program. We want access to that same opportunity. That is only going to be done through collaboration between the private sector here and in the US but also government-to-government relationships and government with industry, and that is what we are committed to doing and I am looking forward to an opportunity to be able to engage in that respect tonight.

This is an arrangement that I know enjoys bipartisan support with those opposite, and at a federal level, which we commend and welcome, because these are the relationships that will sustain governments over many generations to come.

REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:24): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Will the minister nominate additional regional centres for an exemption under the Modified Monash Model to better support access to rural mental health? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: In two letters sent to the minister, a regional psychologist reports that patients on Eyre Peninsula are cancelling their mental health treatment because they cannot afford the full cost of the consult. A letter from Dr Amanda Rogers says, and I quote:

> All clients who have been referred to an Allied Health Service from one of these Medical Centres since June 2024 have had their Allied Health Rebates rejected. This crisis is severely disadvantaging people residing in a remote community, where access to health services is already incredibly difficult.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:25): I thank the member for Frome for her question. This relates to where the state government provides the services to meet what is really a federal government responsibility in terms of providing doctors on Eyre Peninsula. We operate a number of clinics through the Eyre and Far North Local Health Network, and those clinics often use locum doctors to be able to provide services to those communities and

we have been working with the commonwealth to try to resolve the Medicare situation for those clinics.

The member references a number of psychology visits that people have through their mental health plans through the federal government services. They require doctors to refer them with a Medicare number, and because we are trying to resolve that issue with the federal government that hasn't been able to occur.

This is an issue that I have been raising with the federal government and, specifically, with Minister Mark Butler. We need them to make sure that those doctors who are providing those services, where the state government is stepping in to really do what is a federal government responsibility, have the ability to make those services under Medicare and therefore allow those flow-on services, whether they be psychological services or other services, to be able to be billed appropriately.

Just this week, I had a meeting with the local health network and I understand there have been meetings with the commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care where there has been progress in relation to this matter. We believe, at the very least, there will hopefully be an interim solution, that the federal government will allow that to occur and will allow those appointments to be made and allow those item numbers to be put on those references through schemes like the Better Access scheme and others.

So I am hopeful that this matter will be resolved at the very least on an interim basis within coming weeks. Ultimately, we would like to see the federal government step up to the mark in terms of their need to provide those primary care services for those communities on Eyre Peninsula where unfortunately the state government and our local health network—and predominantly our role is to provide acute services—are having to provide those primary care services. I am hopeful and optimistic that we will see a resolution to this matter.

NURSE RELOCATION REIMBURSEMENT

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:27): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Have any interstate nurses had their relocation reimbursement request declined and, if so, how many? With your leave sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: In October last year, New South Wales nurse Chantelle Menzies was encouraged by SA Health to complete the forms and successfully relocated to South Australia to work in our public health system. Five months later, SA Health advised her that her application was declined. Ms Menzies has written directly to the Labor Party and has heard nothing back.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:28): I will certainly make contact with the Labor Party if somebody has made contact with them. I am not sure if she has made contact with the state government or not, but we will certainly look into that matter. Whether there were eligibility issues in terms of that position, or whatever the case was, I am happy to look into it. Certainly, I am not sure if the member has raised that or written to me about it but I—

Ms Pratt: She has written to you.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: You said she wrote to the Labor Party. I am—

Ms Pratt: That's not you?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: No.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order, and the minister—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: And members on my right as well! Member for Elder! The minister is right. He has—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Minister for Education, don't make me throw you out with all those students in the gallery; and the shadow minister for education, you might join him. The students are watching. The minister is right in that he's not responsible to this house for anything that the Labor Party does, and that was the question, that someone had written to the Labor Party. I will continue to listen to the minister.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My son Alex has a book called *Government and politics in Australia* that he got from the library. I am happy to get a copy for the member for Frome. There is a whole page there on how parliaments work. There's a whole page there on how political parties work—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Frome! The member for Colton!

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: —and we are standing in the parliament.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders!

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: This is not a political party. So I am happy to clarify those matters for the member for Frome.

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders, you can leave the chamber until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Flinders having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: I am also happy to check if the member for Frome has written to me about this issue. She knows where to contact me, she knows my number, she knows my address. We have previously had—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: You're very busy?

An honourable member: She's very busy.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: Have you written to me? We have previously had the member for Schubert sending letters to my ministerial address three minutes before question time, so we will see if the same thing has happened in terms of the member for Frome's correspondence to us. I am always happy to look into matters that have been raised by our hardworking nurses as well as doctors, allied health professionals and those across the health system. We thank them. We have been adding many, many hundreds of extra nurses across our system. We have added 1,400 additional clinicians across our system—full-time equivalent, above attrition—and we are very thankful for all those people who have joined SA Health as part of our efforts to create a bigger health system.

SA AMBULANCE SERVICE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:31): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Did the CEO of SA Ambulance Service seek a six-month extension on current accreditation under the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and, if so, can the minister explain why that was granted? Mr Speaker, with your leave and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: In a September newsletter, CEO Rob Elliott stated, and I quote:

To ensure we are better prepared for the third accreditation we have sought an extension from SA Health of our current accreditation for approximately six months.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:32): I think the member's explanation of the question actually answered her own question as to the reason why the CEO of SA Ambulance sought that extension.

CRUISE SHIP INDUSTRY

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:32): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Can the minister advise how the Limestone Coast will benefit from this year's cruise season? Mr Speaker, with your leave and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: Along our Limestone Coast there are a number of outstanding coastal destinations which can't be visited by large cruise ships but are perfect for smaller expedition-style ships. What work is being done to ensure that towns like Robe and others can benefit from being included on cruise itineraries now and into the future?

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:32): I thank the member for MacKillop for his question. We know that cruises are an incredibly important part of our visitor economy, bringing both international and domestic visitors to our shores and injecting tourism dollars. What I particularly enjoy about cruising is the regional dispersal around South Australia, benefiting retail and hospitality and of course those local economies.

We are very excited that Robe is going to be included in these itineraries coming up. Let's just reflect on how important cruising is. In this last season, cruising in South Australia was worth a record-breaking $227 million, an incredibly important part of our tourism infrastructure but also about that visitor expenditure. I always like to say that when people come on a cruise they get a taste of South Australia and they come back and they book a longer trip. Currently, in the 2024-25 season, we are looking forward to 119 cruise and expedition ships scheduled to visit.

We know there are opportunities for South Australian cruise itineraries in our region, and it's really important that we see those great opportunities. We are not just looking at those large cruise vessels that require larger ports like Port Lincoln and of course Port Adelaide but also the smaller vessels that can reach out to those coastal towns.

The benefit of these smaller vessels is that generally they have a lower impact, with only about 600 people on board, and the expedition ships sometimes have only 300 people or less. They are also more likely to be luxury travellers and passengers interested in sustainable and regenerative tourism, an area with the potential for a lot of growth here in South Australia. They want shore excursions that are immersive and sensitive to a region's unique offerings, and they want intimate local adventures and adventurous itineraries, including remote locations like Port MacDonnell and Coffin Bay, which have become incredibly important.

On 24 November 2022 Robe received its first expedition visit since the pandemic, with the *Coral Adventurer* calling into the Robe marina carrying 100 passengers. There have been some challenges with larger vessels coming into the Limestone Coast due to the wild weather, but we did have some very successful famil trips, with reps from luxury cruise lines Seabourn and Silversea in 2023 and 2024. Both cruise lines have scheduled visits to several South Australian destinations, and I am pleased to report that they have booked in those cruises coming to Robe for the next three years.

Those famils were fantastic, because it let them see exactly what we have on offer. These are small vessels that are more manoeuvrable that can anchor close-up, which allows more flexibility when catering for those windy conditions.

We want to maximise this opportunity, so the SA Tourism Commission is working with the Limestone Coast tour operators to create this premium shore excursion offering for those high-end vessels. One of them coming this year is about $3,000 a day to be part of, and is very focused on food and wine, which is perfect for what we have in South Australia.

We are very dedicated and focused on growing cruising. We have many new ships for the very first time, but there is work to do. Today I had my very first meeting of the South Australian

Cruise Attraction Working Group. People such as Phil Hoffman came along, who is very well regarded, as well as Flinders Ports, and we were delighted that people from the ACA and the CLIA joined that. We want to be ambitious in this area, not just for the Limestone Coast but for the whole of South Australia.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (14:36): My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the South Australian jobs market?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:37): I am very grateful to the member for Elder for the question because, as the Premier was saying before, there has been some good news today on South Australia's jobs market. Not only, as the Premier recounted, has our unemployment rate fallen to 4.2 per cent but there are now 56,000 more South Australians employed in our state than at the time of the last state election. Just think about that: that is more than enough people to fill Adelaide Oval in approximately 2½ years who have gained work.

That just shows the extraordinary strength of the state's economy. Even more pleasingly, just over half of those jobs, 29,000 of those jobs, are full-time jobs. So when the Leader of the Opposition asks about people getting more hours, it is pleasing to see that of that extraordinary number of new jobs added since the election of the Malinauskas government, more than half of them are full-time jobs—really good news.

It is also good to point out that while the unemployment rate is only 0.1 of a percentage point above the national average—which is 4.1 per cent—our unemployment rate remains well below the decade average of 5.8 per cent and, I think, the unemployment rate of the last election, which was originally 5 per cent and subsequently revised down to 4.9. It is a really substantial improvement in the state's job market since the change of government.

There are a number of reasons for that. Many people are commenting, both within South Australia and also around the country, that there is a newfound sense of optimism and momentum to South Australia that simply was not evident before March 2022, that there is more inbound investment coming into our state. Not only is that because the government has made good on its commitment not to increase taxes but, by providing certainty and clarity to the business community, not foisting unannounced—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: —massive tax hikes on South Australians like those opposite did when they were in government, we are seeing more and more investment. As the Premier said, only he and the Minister for Housing and Urban Development were out there this morning, demonstrating once again another company from outside of our state choosing to invest many millions of dollars to grow our economy and to—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: I note that the new Liberal leader here in South Australia, the fledgling Liberal leader, the latest in the line—it is not a zinger: it is actually depressing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader and deputy leader will come to order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader will leave the chamber until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Hartley having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Off for the new compulsory tests they are introducing at long last, it seems. Thousands of houses are to be delivered, and despite the Leader of the Opposition

and his protectionism, which he was calling out across the chamber, we welcome inbound investment and the jobs that it grows, as evidenced in today's labour market statistics.

LAKE BONNEY CONCRETE SLAB

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:41): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Does the minister stand by her advice in relation to Nappers creek? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr WHETSTONE: Despite a decade of concerns from the Riverland community, the minister's department, on 20 May 2024, stated: 'The department has no evidence of significant material remaining in the creek following removal of the regulator.' This week, contractors uncovered a 30 feet by 30 feet reinforced concrete slab at just 1.3 metres.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:41): I am a little puzzled by 'Do I stand by my advice?' and then the department's advice was read out; nonetheless, I will go to the substance of the question. It is indeed the case that a slab has been found. This was one that was looked for some years ago and not determined to be there and has now been located. The department is working very closely with the council in order to have that removed at an appropriate time.

LAKE BONNEY CONCRETE SLAB

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:42): Supplementary, sir.

The SPEAKER: We will see if it is a supplementary.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, has the slab of concrete contributed to recent blue-green algae outbreaks in Lake Bonney?

The SPEAKER: Given you were reading the question, I will take it as a new question.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:42): I have no reason to think or evidence to suggest that that would be the case, but I am very happy to receive advice in order to determine whether that had any connection.

LAKE BONNEY CONCRETE SLAB

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (14:42): A further supplementary.

The SPEAKER: It is not a further supplementary if the last one was not a supplementary, but have a go.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, has the slab of concrete contributed to serious fish kill in Lake Bonney in recent times?

The SPEAKER: I think if the original question talked about this slab, then it is actually a third question and not a second supplementary. It is not even a first supplementary.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:43): Again, I have not had any evidence presented to me that would suggest there was any connection between any fish kills nor any blue-green algae blooms and a slab of concrete, but I am happy to seek further advice, and I am anticipating receiving some in any case.

TARGETED LEAD ABATEMENT PROGRAM

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Energy. Can the minister update my community on the current situation of the agreement for the Targeted Lead Abatement Program (TLAP) in Port Pirie? With your leave, I can explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: The agreement was established in 2014 between the state government and Nyrstar for 10 years to assist with dust suppression programs across Port Pirie. As the 10 years has now reached expiry, can I get an update on the continuation?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:44): In his usual humble way, what he omits in the explanation is that the reason we have a TLAP agreement and the reason we have lead abatement at all in Port Pirie is because of his advocacy in 2014, when he held the balance of power and put his city and community before any political consideration. That is the reason we are here today to talk about lead abatement, and his continued advocacy on behalf of his community.

The TLAP commenced in 2014 to reduce blood levels in children in Port Pirie. It is a noble ambition. For the benefit of those in the house, TLAP is a partnership between Nyrstar and the South Australian government with support of the Port Pirie Regional Council. It has been 10 years since it was instigated, and TLAP arrangements have not ended. The parties have agreed to extend the existing arrangements whilst they work on a broader plan to affect the greatest impact on the Port Pirie community, specifically targeting lowering blood levels in Port Pirie's children.

The TLAP board, of which the government is a party, continue to meet on a regular basis. The work of TLAP is incredibly important and, as the member is aware, is complemented by the government's Lead Action Plan (GLAP). The government will continue the important work of GLAP over the next two years, and has committed to delivering large-scale greening measures and capital improvements at public education sites to minimise children's exposure to lead and dust, which is very, very important.

Our continued support for these programs is certain, and I will endeavour to keep the member informed of any developments as they relate to TLAP or GLAP, but I want to reassure the house we are doing everything we can to minimise lead in blood in our children in Port Pirie. It is something that the Port Pirie community take very, very seriously. It is something that they want us to deal with. It is something that governments have attempted to deal with, and we are dealing with it. There are a lot of legacy issues in Port Pirie that we have to deal with. We are working collaboratively. I want to thank my colleagues in cabinet for the support they have given me in this program. There is no more important measure than this of the health of our children in Port Pirie, to make sure that they get every opportunity in life.

I have to say this, as the member for Stuart would not say it: thank God they have him. Thank God they have him, because he is an advocate for their community, and he won't let issues like TLAP fall off the radar. He continually advocates behind the scenes so that Port Pirie and the Upper Spencer Gulf are not forgotten. He is always arguing internally for more resources. He wants more done. He wants it done faster because the people of Port Pirie do deserve it, and we are working at pace to get these outcomes. I can tell you for certain, if we fall short, the first person who will stand up in this place and call any government out will be the member for Stuart.

SOUTHERN SUBURBS HOUSING SUPPLY

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (14:47): My question is for the Minister for Housing and Urban Development. How will the Malinauskas government unlock critical housing supply in the southern suburbs?

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:47): I thank the member for her question. This morning we were down at Port Stanvac on a beach that you can't get public access to. The Premier and I were doing a press conference, the first press conference I have done on a beach. What you are left with when you stand on that beach is just an appreciation of how incredibly beautiful and iconic this site is at Port Stanvac. It seems incredible that from 2003 to now—20 years—this vital piece of land has just sort of sat there underutilised, unutilised. It does seem somewhat shocking when you are standing at that point.

The really critical thing today is that we have a development partner in MAB, who have done a deal with ExxonMobil to acquire the site, so now we can see action happening: 3,600 homes, 540 of which will be affordable sale. That is an incredibly important housing outcome for the southern

suburbs, where we know housing is under pressure. Employment lands, again really constrained in the southern suburbs, so important employment lands, a good mixed-use precinct right next to Lonsdale Railway Station, right next to public transport, right next to good roads but, most importantly, 40 hectares of coastline, of beach coming back into the public realm.

What a magnificent outcome, not just for the southern suburbs, but for the whole state, because we all use those coastal parks which governments of all persuasions have invested in over the last 10 years. Some $50 million over the last 10 years has gone into those coastal parks up and down that coast. So there will be incredibly important housing outcomes and employment outcomes on this site, a 230-hectare site, sporting fields. This will be a really magnificent outcome for the people of South Australia.

This land has been identified in the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan. It is important for that reason. The Premier met with ExxonMobil in May last year. We are really committed to engaging with landholders and engaging with developers to make sure we push supply into the pipeline, because we know that land supply is not easy. It is complex, it is difficult, it is hard, it takes time to do it properly and get good communities. To do good planning, to do good infrastructure takes time, and so we are always pushing these projects into the system.

I can tell you the government that didn't push projects into the system. It is interesting that I should quote the former member for Black just at this time. The former member for Black—these are his words on 17 August, just last year, 2023. Just last year, he said:

> I don't think when we—

the Marshall Liberal government—

> were in government we necessarily got the land release side of things right and the availability of land for housing is a big problem around Adelaide and in the regions as well.

What that was was a candid admission by the former member for Black that the former government never got housing supply right.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: The minister will sit down. The deputy leader?

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

The SPEAKER: I uphold that point of order and I do remind the minister, as I have before, that those people on my left were very quiet until you started poking and prodding the bear. If you could maybe just stick to the work that you have done and the government has done, it is probably going to be a little calmer in here. Thank you, minister.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Speaker, I always take your advice, sensibly. When I was younger, I ignored Speakers, but now I always take account of what they tell me. The only thing that I was trying to endeavour to inform the house was that housing supply is a pipeline and we have to keep on pushing projects into it. Whether it's Franklin Street, whether it's West End or whether it's Bowden, these are projects which often last over the decades and so it is important if we are to deliver housing for the people of South Australia that we keep doing that.

NUYTS ARCHIPELAGO

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:52): My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. When will the minister release the finalised management plan for the Nuyts Archipelago? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr COWDREY: The YourSAy website references that adoption of the finalised plan would occur in early 2024.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Workforce

and Population Strategy) (14:52): Yes, I have yet to receive the finalised plan from the department, but I am expecting it shortly. I am aware that the member is likely to be asking in the context of a particular operator who had for a few years—I think starting from 2020, possibly a little earlier—an annual agreement to be able to go and take people overnight onto one of the islands and is concerned that the adoption of a management plan might prevent their continuing to do that.

They, in fact, have not taken up any recent licence to be able to do that and have been interacting with the department significantly on an alternative tourism offering to do with whale watching. In terms of the actual management plan, I have yet to receive that from the department.

POLICE MOUNTED OPERATIONS UNIT

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:53): My question is to the Minister for Police. Is the SAPOL Mounted Operations Unit city staging area project complete? If not, what location is being used as a staging area in the interim?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:53): I thank the shadow minister for this important question. It is necessary to provide a degree of context, and I note too that the shadow minister had asked a similar question in the context of the Auditor-General's examination. Of course, in that context it roamed terrain which was well outside of the time period for the examination of those matters.

The new permanent home for the Mounted Operations Unit and, of course, also for the Dog Operations Unit—the Dog Operations Unit is relevant, for reasons which I will touch on momentarily—is, of course, at Gepps Cross. The delivery of construction works at Gepps Cross has been delivered in stages. The important investment there has been necessary in consequence of the fact that this is a government that is delivering a very necessary and very important health project to ensure that there is adequate health infrastructure for South Australia for many years to come.

The Mounted Operations Unit relocated from the Thebarton barracks to Gepps Cross over the period of 19 September 2024 to 24 September 2024, I am advised. The unit commenced—I must say I have had the opportunity to inspect the Gepps Cross location. It is fit for purpose. It is an important investment, one that I must say would seem to be more fit for purpose than the arrangements that were in place, of course, at the site which is now being redeveloped for health purposes.

I think it is right to provide a little bit of colour and detail, that the police commissioner had indicated that the previous arrangements for the Mounted Operations Unit were like holding a—

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Point of order: standing order 98 requires the minister get to the substance of the question, which was about the staging area.

The SPEAKER: I think he's getting there. I am quite interested in the answer. There's some dogs, some horses. I think we are going to be at that staging area pretty quickly, I think. If members on my left can just remain silent for a little bit longer, hopefully the minister will get to the point.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I understand that members of the opposition are so enthusiastic about this subject that it would be remiss of me not to observe that, of course, accommodation will be provided for other business units at Gepps Cross as well. I think by way of context it's necessary for me to remark that in fact there are 15—

The Hon. N.D. Champion: Fifteen business units.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Fifteen business units, says my cabinet colleague observer, that are part of the reinvestment.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I have been encouraged to reflect on certain of those business units.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I do understand that the shadow minister for emergency services is, indeed, very enthusiastic about certain of these other business units, but with respect to the overall project, it is necessary for me to observe that DIT is managing the construction. Scope refinement and value management is continuing to occur as these projects progress into the construction phase. I know that—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Don't tempt me. I am following very closely the Speaker's direction. I know that these matters are important to all present in terms of the commissioning and final construction. I undertake to bring an answer back.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Time is up, minister. Resume your seat. You're starting to sound like Daryl Braithwaite on the left.

PORT AUGUSTA DECLARED PUBLIC PRECINCT

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (14:58): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Does the Deputy Premier agree with Adnyamathanha elder Uncle Charles Jackson. With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, sir. How can a question be in order without the explanation? Because the house must give leave to make the question in any way intelligible, so surely it can't be in order.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am asking the question.

The SPEAKER: Are you saying you don't want leave for a personal explanation?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Without the house granting a member leave, the question is not understandable.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: On the point of order, sir.

The SPEAKER: Yes, deputy leader.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: It is entirely orthodox to frame questions in such a way otherwise we wouldn't need explanations.

The SPEAKER: The government can say no to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We won't refuse leave.

The SPEAKER: We might see where the explanation goes and see if it pads out the context of the question, the substance of the question, because I agree there was no reference to a particular quote.

Mr TEAGUE: South Australia's Senior Australian of the Year and Adnyamathanha elder, Uncle Charles Jackson, says the government's declared public precinct in Port Augusta disproportionately impacts First Nations people. In the ABC news report this morning he says:

> It's not targeted to every individual in Port Augusta, it's directed at the First Nations people, and in particular people coming from remote communities into Port Augusta...but they're not dealing with the core problem of it.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (15:00): A number of people have advice to give on this one and so we have all been eager to answer, but the question was directed to me. I listened with great interest to what the South Australian Senior Australian of the Year had to say, and I completely understand why anyone, and an Aboriginal elder in particular of such distinguished record, would be concerned about any disproportionate impact on one community.

A disproportionate impact is not the same thing, though, as a law or a regime only applying to one group of people. Aboriginal people are, sadly, disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system, for example. It is a mark of disadvantage and of the circumstances in which too many Aboriginal people find themselves.

I thought that the response that was given by the Hon. Kyam Maher, the Attorney-General from the other place, this morning on radio was a very thoughtful one in terms of appreciating why one might express and feel that way, but nonetheless acknowledging that the policy is not specifically targeted at any one group of people. Indeed, there are a number of programs that are being established specifically for Aboriginal people, such as return to country to be able to go back to the lands, to facilitate that for where people are seeking that assistance. That will help alleviate the conditions in which some people find themselves, which then becomes caught up in the social dislocation that we are seeing in that town.

PORT AUGUSTA DECLARED PUBLIC PRECINCT

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (15:01): Supplementary in light of that answer: in terms of those programs that the Deputy Premier has just referred to, is there any other action that the government is taking that is addressed towards community safety at Port Augusta specifically?

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (15:02): We have spoken in this place previously about the deep and intensive work that we have done in community which involves the citizens of Port Augusta broadly and also people from many regions across South Australia to bring together a community change project. This is a different way of working throughout communities, where there are at times escalations in the challenge around behaviours brought to those communities because of a number of people having to journey there, who have really not got the requisite supports that they need to be able to remain safe and supported.

DHS has been working really deeply over the last couple of years in Port Augusta with community organisations, Aboriginal elders and leaders, as well as particularly young leaders, in the community; with other service providers—that is, government and non-government service providers; with SAPOL, Health and a whole range of others right alongside at the table. So we have a deep investment and engagement in the early intervention approach, accessing and working with youth organisations to try to provide alternate pathways for activity for young people.

We are working with the schools to try to identify how it is that we can provide and offer alternate spaces for learning within the community at those times when it is difficult for young people to remain engaged at school for whatever reason. We have been working really deeply with housing, the public housing and community housing providers within Port Augusta, who provide and are investing millions of dollars to provide extra and additional homes.

This is a well-coordinated response that has been going on now for two years, which has culminated in the matched $6 million and $6 million state and federal partnership with the NIAA, which is being informed by a leadership group representative of many people across Port Augusta and which will lead to excellent outcomes in the future, I am sure.

Grievance Debate

MALINAUSKAS LABOR GOVERNMENT

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:04): What have we learnt today, only days out from the Black by-election? What we have learnt is that this Premier, instead of being interested in Seacliff, is more interested in Sydney. He is about to leave the state, abandoning the people of Black and his parliamentary duties to attend, alas, a twelve and a half thousand dollar a table glitzy gala dinner in Sydney. There we have it, party Pete is at it again. He says, 'Forget the people of Seacliff, this Premier will be in Sydney,' rubbing shoulders with east coast elites, working the crowd for the job that he really wants, because we know his eyes are focused on Kirribilli House and not the people of Trott Park.

The South Australian Labor Party have completely lost touch with the very people they are meant to represent. We have seen that through upgrade Albo, who has shown Australians exactly what the modern Labor Party is all about and what they stand for.

This week in the chamber we heard the Minister for Energy say that energy prices are down. What planet is this minister on? We know that power prices have never been at the levels as high as they have been under this Labor government. In fact, do not just take my word for it. Why don't we look at the Australian Energy Regulator's 'Wholesale markets quarterly' report, which shows that power prices in South Australia have actually skyrocketed by some 35 per cent in the last three months alone and are again the highest in the nation this quarter under this Malinauskas Labor government.

What we are seeing is just sheer arrogance from this minister in the face of so many South Australians who are struggling to pay their own bills. They are struggling and we are all hearing about it in our electoral offices. We know South Australians are struggling the hardest because the Australian Energy Regulator's 'State of the energy market' report actually shows the proportion of electricity and also gas customers that are on hardship programs. When you look at the hardship data, guess what? South Australia unfortunately has risen to 2.3 and 1.9 per cent respectively, which are actually the highest levels in the country. So South Australia has the highest levels of hardship in the country.

What an affront to the people of South Australia. 'What cost-of-living crisis?' says the member for Enfield as not that long ago she jetted off to Cannes to the festival in France while small businesses in South Australia are having to close their doors due to rising costs. This is the party of the people until they actually have to live with them and deal with them.

We know about small businesses. Every day at the moment it seems that businesses are coming forward and people are coming forward who have not been paid—including today—and who have allegedly been left high and dry by a company that this government has partnered with one of its signature events in VAILO. We heard from Matt Kowald on the weekend. He has been waiting for six months to be paid for the most basic of invoices: a simple invoice to be paid for work that was completed for this company, but he still has not been paid.

This government has shown zero empathy for these people. That is the complete arrogance and hubris of this government. They are too busy living it up in their corporate suites to care about people like Mr Kowald, who has been left without payment for tens of thousands of dollars. Why? Because this government is not here to serve the people; it is simply in power to serve themselves and their mates. That is why they have already spent around $2 million on international and domestic travel just over halfway through their term in government. When you look at that it is around $15,000 per week being spent on ministerial travel. That is just eye-watering in a cost-of-living crisis.

I have been out in the electorate of Black most days and we know that cost of living is the number one issue facing households. We know the cost of doing business is making it harder and harder for businesses to also stay afloat. This government just does not get it—or worse, it just does not care about the struggles of the people in Black and the struggles of everyday South Australians.

That is why even this week we had to call on the government to get a move on in developing housing at Port Stanvac, because in the middle of a housing crisis they are just sitting on their hands. They are too busy living the high life to care about those in our community who are struggling to put a roof over their head.

Today, we also learn that South Australia remains the state with the third-highest unemployment and the highest under-employment rate on mainland Australia, which means South Australians are not getting the hours of work they want and need to to survive in this cost-of-living crisis. It is time for this Labor government to put the people of South Australia first. How can this Premier serve the people of Croydon when he is too busy pining for Canberra. It is time for Labor to get their heads out of the Qantas clouds and serve the people who elected them.

STUART ELECTORATE

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (15:09): Today, I would like to bring the attention of the house to some of the discussions I have had across my electorate over the last few weeks regarding

the impacts that are evident and already being felt across the grain industry with the growing season we have just experienced.

Whilst we all know the state government is working hard with the commonwealth government and various organisations in various locations, I think it is very important that we keep the impacts, and views of many of our farmers, in the public domain. During this period, I have visited and spoken to various farmers and small business operators in the following locations: Pekina, Orroroo, Booleroo Centre, Willowie, Jamestown, Peterborough, Laura, Carrieton, Wandearah, Appila and Wirrabara. In many cases, farmers have either no crops to harvest or very low-yielding crops, and in many cases many will not have any seed for next year's sowing season.

I had the opportunity to talk to many farmers who have had to destock their animals, because they need to sell their animals at whatever price to get some cash flow. In many cases, they just do not have the feed to be able to provide for their animals and, therefore, they must get rid of their stock to be able to survive and also to make certain of the viability and wellbeing of what stock is left. In one case, a farmer had just loaded onto a transport about a quarter of his 3,000 stock and went inside where he was met by his six-year-old child who asked a question: 'Are you okay, dad?' This was the most emotional statement I had heard during my visits over the last few weeks. Here we have a six-year-old child already experiencing the anguish that the parents are trying to hide from their children.

However, in addition to their own concerns for their own personal direction, there are lots of concerns for those small businesses in their communities as they are already feeling the pinch and, as we know, if a township business cannot survive then that could be the beginning of the exiting of these communities as we know it. Most of all, I saw that the survival of their communities was one of the greatest concerns that was explained to me over the last few weeks when visiting these farmers. However, these communities are very resilient and know one another, and there are supports in these situations to ensure that their future and, in particular, their mental health conditions are being monitored by their own people.

I attended a community barbecue at the very small community of Willowie last Friday—a very small community where there was an open invitation to come and enjoy a barbecue and a few drinks, to talk and to get out of their normal environment, even for a very short period of time. This was very well attended and from discussions I was able to get a far more intimate knowledge of their feelings and emotions, and I came away with some good suggestions from these people.

At Jamestown, I have been coordinating with Mr Mark Blake from the Jamestown Apex Club, whose club has taken on the initiative to hold a community event called '24 Drought Resilience at its Best, where there will be a meal, free kids' activities and live entertainment. This event is being supported by the Jamestown Apex Club, the Jamestown and Rocky River Lions clubs, development communities within Gladstone, Spalding, Yacka, Laura, Stone Hut, Tarcowie, the Mid North Suicide Prevention Network, and associated agricultural services within Jamestown itself.

At this event, which is generally supported by various farming agents, plus Northern Areas Council, there will be people from PIRSA, Rural Business Support, Rural Aid and other associated organisations that will be able to assist those travelling this journey, particularly the children of those families involved. They envisage that there will be around about 2,000 people attending. The event will be free and they have a budget of around $80,000. They have already raised around $69,000 due to the support from various organisations, including Northern Areas Council.

People are asking what can councils do. With this in mind, the Flinders Alliance councils—being Port Pirie, Mount Remarkable, Northern Areas, Orroroo-Carrieton, Peterborough and Flinders Ranges councils—are working together to see what they can do as a group to assist those in this grave situation.

I pay my respects, consideration and admiration to the people out there. Country people, regional people, are very resilient. I know that we will get through this. The thing is, we all need to work together in the one direction and not get this out of perspective. We need to make certain we get the opportunities to support these people in this trying time and make certain we come out of it with the best opportunities for the new season.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:14): Earlier in question time this week the skills minister put on the record matters relating to a press release, which he had earlier put out into the public domain, highlighting what he thought was a most pressing use of his time, that being to do a parsing, an analysis, of NCVER data from the time of the previous government in which he and his office found, he claims, that the former Liberal government—when we delivered more than 20,000 extra apprenticeships and traineeships over a period of time, as judged by the NCVER data, and was in fact not the full story—delivered 15,000 extra apprenticeships and traineeships over and above what the former Labor government had been delivering over the period of our government.

Notwithstanding that that former Labor government had created a skills crisis in South Australia, coupled with a catastrophic quality and reputational crisis for the TAFE SA brand, he claims that that increase of 15,000 apprentices and trainees over and above what the former Labor government were delivering was not good enough. I would say that if that was the case not only would it have been 15,000 extra but it would have fallen short of our promise of 20,000.

The good news for South Australians is that we did achieve 20,000, so said the NCVER, so said the federal government, whose analysis also backs up our claims. But more than that, the minister claimed that we had done a deal with the federal government in areas of skills that was not in the best interests of the people of South Australia, using these manipulated figures to do so.

I would make two points. Firstly, he has missed the main game. His job is to deliver skills for South Australia and that is now. Secondly, it beggars belief that in the midst of a skills crisis, with ever-widening gaps between our workforce need and the workforce that we have, our skills minister feels that it is appropriate for him and his office to spend time manipulating spreadsheets, shuffling data, from seven years ago in order to have a go at the former government.

I would say, despite the so-called analysis that the minister's office has cooked up, the NCVER is a source of truth on which Australians rely in this area. It is judging the current and the former governments by the same rules. What the data shows is crystal clear, that ever since the Labor Party took office in March 2022 in South Australia and May 2022 in Australia there has been a dramatic decline in apprenticeships and traineeships, in commencements and in training numbers. While the completions are improving as a result of the commencements that started four years ago, that too is set to decline in the years ahead when those who commenced in smaller numbers since his office took power become the ones completing.

Labor's criticism, in my view, shows a complete lack of understanding of what is required to build a skilled workforce here in South Australia. The Liberal approach encouraged businesses to take on apprentices and trainees, encouraged them to meet skills shortages with training that paid. The Labor government spends a lot of time talking about fee-free TAFE places. I tell you what: do you know what is better than the fee-free TAFE place? It is an apprenticeship, which not only, as far as the apprentice is concerned, is fee-free for the training, but they will even pay you while you are doing the training. It is the original fee-free TAFE place, and it is better than that.

But, of course, this government decided to move the emphasis away from apprenticeships and traineeships and on-the-job training and towards this free-fee TAFE model that requires so many of the people doing the courses to attend the bricks-and-mortar TAFE organisation, not working potentially for those hours, not gaining an income for those hours, and then hope that there is a job for them at the end, as opposed to an apprenticeship when they are already in a job. That is what is sucking all of the energy out of the apprenticeship growth that we had had year on year throughout the former government.

The minister, in the last sitting week, boasted a 45 per cent completion rate for those fee-free TAFE places. Imagine, sir, if all of those people, rather than being encouraged into one of those fee-free TAFE places, had instead been encouraged directly into an apprenticeship or traineeship, where they would be doing a job that needed doing, where they would be paid to do it and, indeed, where they would be making a significant impact on our skills needs into the future. Labor's dramatic decline in apprenticeships and traineeships over the two years is a disgrace. This government should

learn from it and re-emphasise the importance of apprenticeships and traineeships instead of the marketing exercise they have preferred.

ACROSS GOVERNMENT FACILITIES MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:19): Earlier this year I met with every principal of public schools in my electorate to look at and discuss the challenges they are facing, especially concerning their facilities and maintenance needs. A common theme emerged in these discussions, that being the frustration of having to use Ventia-approved contractors for all maintenance.

One notable example involved a school where a local contractor had been cleaning its gutters annually for about $500. Five months later an unrequested work order was issued for an Adelaide contractor to perform the same service, resulting in an invoice for $5,437.39. That was $4,438.80 for labour and $902 for travelling expenses. The travel costs alone were enough to fund two years of gutter cleaning with a local contractor.

This, along with many similar cases, led me to propose a motion on 10 April in this house trying to address the disadvantages that our regional schools, particularly Mount Gambier, are facing under the current Across Government Facilities Management Arrangement. The motion requested:

(a) that this house recognises the disadvantages for regional schools imposed by the AGFMA, which mandates the use of Ventia-approved contractors for all maintenance;

(b) acknowledges the shortage of Ventia-approved contractors in regional areas, leading to increased project costs and additional stress on principals; and

(c) called on the state government to allow principals to manage projects up to $100,000 and engage their local tradespeople as contractors.

This motion was passed with the government amending part (c), as follows:

(c) calls on the state government to review the AGFMA contract to determine if it can allow principals to manage maintenance projects up to $100,000 and engage local contractors, and any potential unintended consequences of that course of action.

I am yet to receive any updates in regard to this review or whether any actions have taken place as a result, so you can imagine my interest in reading this week's report that the Auditor-General has also taken issue with the way Ventia contracts are being carried out.

Some of the Auditor-General's findings include incidents of Ventia charging above the maximum trade rates set by the agreement, preventative and legislative maintenance not being completed within the agreed timelines, and breakdown maintenance response and resolution times not being met as per the contract. These examples reflect many of the concerns raised by the principal I had spoken to.

In addition to maintenance on existing infrastructure, problems with new buildings were also highlighted. One school had numerous issues with their building that included a leaking roof and a noncompliant fence—and this was a brand-new building. The principal was spending countless hours following up with Ventia and the contractor to try to rectify these issues, all to no avail.

Adelaide-based contractors are unwilling to travel 4½ hours to repair something as minor as a roof leak—repairs that are required as part of their contract, I might add. This frequently results in schools using their maintenance budgets a second time simply to keep their buildings safe. Another school received a $700,000 quote for a single transportable. This is a sum that could build you a four-bedroom, two-bathroom house—and all we are talking about is a transportable, a rectangle. No bathrooms, no running water; just a rectangular box as a transportable classroom.

This situation is, quite frankly, unsustainable. We need solutions and we need them quickly to prevent further wasteful spending at the expense of our students and our public schools. One solution that I did propose is allowing schools the authority to manage projects valued at up to $100,000. Once the education department has approved the school's maintenance needs, the principal could obtain three quotes, which would then be reviewed and approved by the school's governing council. Whilst this might not resolve every issue, it certainly empowers the principals to make decisions in the best interests of our schools by hiring local tradespeople and securing competitive quotes.

COLTON ELECTORATE

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (15:25): I rise today to recognise and honour the life of Andrew Lanyon. Andrew was a member of the Henley Surf Life Saving Club for many years and unfortunately passed away recently. On the most recent weekend, on Saturday, the club held a celebratory swim in his honour out the front of the Henley surf club. It was so well attended by many members, not just by life members of the Henley surf club but also more broadly by others his life had touched from other surf clubs around South Australia and many from the open water swimming community as well.

Andrew was a much-loved member of the club and had organised the club swim for many, many years. It was something that was a significant passion of his, each and every time, to have the opportunity to work the Excel sheet, work out who should be going off where and working out who was lining up and swimming PBs. His one thing that he always prided himself on was the number of participants who were taking part in the swim. Seeing the reaction of the surf club and the reaction of the broader community in honouring his life, I thought it was worthy to ensure that legacy was read into *Hansard* today and put on the public record. Vale Andrew Lanyon.

Last week, I also had the opportunity to attend the opening of an art exhibition in Henley Beach on Marlborough Street at a reasonably new business called Up In Frames and Creative Soul Prints, the brainchild of Rhi and Marek, who have really made themselves central to the Henley Beach community. The exhibition was called *Set Her Free*, and it involved Rhi and Marek pulling together 30 artists, some of them local and some of them from a little bit further afar, to paint 30 by 30 centimetre canvases.

Each of those, on the opening night and more broadly across the time that the exhibition will be open, will be sold off to raise funds for a charity called Destiny Rescue, who dedicate themselves to reducing and hopefully eliminating child trafficking. It was a fantastic event, expertly MC'd. I was lucky enough to join them and the artists who were there, who had obviously dedicated their time and talents to paint those canvases. It was a fantastic event, and I congratulate them on the work they have done and their community spirit in raising funds for that fantastic organisation.

As we get to this time of year when we get closer and closer to the Christmas season and as we start to enter summer, it is one of the most exciting times of the year as the beach and coastal community really starts to come alive with summer sport openings and Christmas events. Just today, I had the opportunity to pop down to the Airport Over 50s Club for their annual Christmas event. It was fantastic to see and spend time with many of their members: Rick, Nancy and Sheila and the rest of the committee and members more broadly of the Airport Over 50s Club. I thoroughly enjoy having the opportunity to go down there and spend time with them each and every year.

In the coming weeks, there is also an event that is almost an event that cannot be missed in the Henley Beach area, which is the carols in the square. On 1 December, we have the opportunity, in the most picturesque setting in the whole of suburban Adelaide, to have the square transformed with a stage, Christmas carols, young people and more senior alike filling the square, having the opportunity to come down and share some Christmas carols and broader Christmas cheer in one of the places that cannot be missed, to be completely honest. I encourage everyone to get along.

That event will take place on 1 December, and I look forward to seeing as many members of our community down there as possible getting into the Christmas cheer and enjoying what is one of the most fabulous times of the year. As I said, I look forward to seeing everybody over the coming couple of weeks as our community really gets up and underway as the sun starts to come out, the beach starts to enjoy a few more patrons, and we start to really enjoy the summer period.

WESTE, DR J.

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (15:29): I rise to acknowledge the 10th anniversary of our South Australian Parliamentary Librarian, Dr John Weste, congratulate him on his significant milestone, and thank him for his many years of excellent service to our parliamentary library.

Dr Weste was born on Christmas Eve at Glenelg Community Hospital. He was well overdue and, according to his mother, his reluctance to appear earthside reflected eternal laziness. But with all due respect to Dr Weste's mother, I have to disagree. He works tremendously hard to manage

our parliamentary library and staff, build the library's unique collection, and inform the many thousands of school students and members of the public through his entertaining tours of the library.

I can say this because Dr Weste himself jokes that he is in fact a mock librarian and did not study the profession; it is simply a title. He is instead a Doctor of Japanese Studies. So how does one go from undertaking a PhD in Cambridge on the military industrial capacity in Japan following World War II to the steward of our state's Parliament Research Library?

Dr Weste attended Seaview Downs Primary School and Seacombe High School before studying Japanese and history at the University of Adelaide. He was the first in his family to not take up an apprenticeship and head to a factory or workshop. He remembers this was quite confusing in that he had no idea how universities worked and he had no-one to ask. Even his concerned grandmother appeared at the family home to express concerns that he was leaving his societal class that he had been given and that all the posh kids at university would not want to know him.

Not taking the apprenticeship route turned out to be a blessing, as when he was a little boy his father would insist he spent time in the garden shed being exposed to tools. But they had to wrap a thick cloth nappy around Dr Weste's forehead as every time he lifted the hammer he would bang it into his head. His avoidance of such activities, Dr Weste is sure, rests in his subconscious memory of the pain of that hammer and led him to his ultimately academic career.

In 1985, Dr Weste was in Japan for a year on a working holiday. He lived in Kumamoto and ended up working in a bar. There he made quite a mess of standard Japanese, and fleshed it out with a mishmash of dialect and, he suspects, a number of obscenities couched as something else to everyone's amusement. He enjoyed it greatly.

Between 1989 and 1991, Dr Weste was undertaking a Japanese Ministry of Education scholarship at the University of Tsukuba, Japan, where he commenced research into what would become his PhD topic. In 1993-96 in Cambridge is where Dr Weste completed his PhD which, as I mentioned earlier, focused on the redevelopment of military industrial capacity in Japan following its defeat in 1945.

In 1996-2004, Dr Weste was a lecturer in Japanese Studies at Durham University, and then between 2004-06 a lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Leeds. Truthfully, Dr Weste does not miss academia, but he learnt so much and he also realised he loves public speaking. In my opinion, he is rather good at it. It never occurred to him that he would enjoy it, and he still does.

In late 2006, Dr Weste returned to Australia, and between then and August 2007 spent a lot of time reconnecting with family. He had both his maternal grandparents still at that point, and his sister had produced four boys, so he spent a lot of time with them and changed endless nappies. Wherever possible, he would sneak off to Hardwicke Bay where his grandmother came from. As he says, it is the best place in the world.

In August 2007, we were very lucky in the fact that he joined us here at the parliament. He got a one-year maternity fill-in contract as a research officer. Dr Weste then tells people he selectively murdered his way to the top, and in October 2014 was appointed Parliamentary Librarian. The truth is, he was very lucky in that a number of positions had become vacant, which allowed him the promotion.

Having visitor numbers through the library go from zero to more than 10,000 over his decade as Parliamentary Librarian is something Dr Weste is most happy about. There is always someone, regardless of age, who will react or say something in a way that is new, and he likes that. No parliament tour is complete without a visit to the library, where I do introduce the real star of the show—Dr Weste. It would not be the same without his tales of Jean Bottomley, the parliamentary waitress who served the late Queen Elizabeth II mock turtle soup—which cues sounds of disgust from the students—the stories of the lost bust of Sir Torrens, the reason the Orrery does not have Pluto and why one of the globes has a crater where Adelaide should be.

Dr Weste opens up our parliamentary library and in turn opens up the minds and imaginations of thousands of South Australians who come through its doors, all while, alongside his staff, providing parliamentarians and their advisers with impartial, relevant, timely, confidential research and reference services. Thank you, Dr Weste, for your service to our state's parliament,

alongside your fashionable suits and colour combinations, your clever turn of phrase, your enthusiasm and wit. It is a pleasure working with you.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:36): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 11am.

Motion carried.

Bills

ELECTORAL (ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council with a message drawing the attention of the House of Assembly to clauses 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 31 printed in erased type, which clauses being money clauses cannot originate in the Legislative Council but which are deemed necessary to the bill. Read a first time.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

Standing Orders Suspension

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:38): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the bill to pass through all remaining stages without delay.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: An absolute majority not being present, ring the bells.

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

Motion carried.

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:40): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today, I introduce the Independent Commission Against Corruption (Miscellaneous) Bill 2024, first introduced by the Attorney-General in the other place. As members would be aware, in 2021 significant changes were made to the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012 with the passage and commencement of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Amendment Act 2021.

This bill is designed to address a small number of omissions or unintended consequences from that amendment act. At the outset, I want to make clear that this bill is in no way designed to significantly change or reform the way the integrity scheme in South Australia currently works. Many of the amendments in the 2021 amendment act, such as the creation of the Office of Inspector, have only been in operation for a relatively short time. The government would like to see these amendments in operation and allow time for agencies to develop their practices and procedures, as they have been doing.

Further, I understand the Crime and Public Integrity Policy Committee of the parliament intends to commence a review of the operation of the ICAC Act as it is required to do by the Parliamentary Committees Act towards the end of this year. That will be an appropriate forum for

exploration of other ideas to amend the integrity legislation. The government is not closed off to the possibility of further amendments in the future, but today we seek to progress a small number of issues.

The bill will amend schedule 5 of the ICAC Act to change the criteria for the reimbursement of legal costs under the ICAC Act. The amendment will ensure a public officer who has been convicted of any offence is precluded from reimbursement. There have been differing views expressed regarding the application of the fee reimbursement provisions of the 2021 amendments and this bill aims to put these matters beyond doubt.

The 2021 amendment act inserted section 39A into the ICAC Act which requires a disclosure of certain information following the completion of an investigation under the ICAC Act to the person who was the subject of that investigation. Concerns have been raised about the mandatory operation of this section being too restrictive. The bill will amend section 39A to allow an application to be made to the Supreme Court for an authorisation not to disclose that information. The Supreme Court can grant an application if it is satisfied that informing the person who was the subject of an investigation will be likely to compromise another investigation by the ICAC, a law enforcement agency or a public authority or give rise to an imminent risk to the safety of a person or persons and the making of the order is reasonable in all the circumstances.

The amendment act abolished the office of ICAC reviewer and created the Office of Inspector under schedule 4 of the ICAC Act. The inspector's functions include conducting reviews of the operations of the Office for Public Integrity and the ICAC and other reviews at the request of the Attorney-General. There is currently no ability for the inspector to delegate their powers or functions. This omission is impractical and inconsistent with other statutory officers. It could also undermine the inspector's integrity oversight role if the inspector had a conflict of interest in undertaking their powers or functions.

The bill, therefore, inserts a delegation power in relation to the inspector's powers and functions. The bill also clarifies the inspector's ability to investigate the exercise of power under the ICAC Act as it existed prior to 25 August 2021. The amendment act changed the title of the act from the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 to the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012. The bill inserts additional provisions into schedule 4 of the ICAC Act to make the scope of the inspector's jurisdiction clear in light of the change in name of the act, such that the inspector may examine exercises of power occurring prior to 25 August 2021.

The bill will also amend schedule 1 of the Ombudsman Act to change the criteria for reimbursement in relation to ministers and members of parliament, to align with the changes made to the ICAC Act to preclude reimbursement for a minister or member of parliament who has been convicted of any offence. This is intended to reflect the unique decision-making role often played by members of parliament and ministers.

The bill will amend schedule 5 of the ICAC Act and schedule 1 of the Ombudsman Act to ensure that legal costs may be reimbursed in relation to any criminal proceedings following an investigation under those acts, as well as costs associated with investigations under those acts, provided the other criteria set out in the ICAC Act and the Ombudsman Act, as the case may be, are satisfied. Importantly, those criteria include that no criminal conviction has occurred as a result of the relevant investigation.

A related amendment is also made to the Public Finance and Audit Act 1987 to provide a regulation-making power to deal with the reimbursement of costs incurred by public officers in engaging independent legal practitioners.

Except to the extent that the ICAC Act and Ombudsman Act deal with the costs incurred where there have been investigations under those acts, reimbursement of legal costs incurred in responding to or participating in certain civil and criminal proceedings, including coronial inquiries, is currently dealt with by Legal Bulletin 5—the government's policy for approval of reimbursement of legal fees by the Attorney-General in accordance with the Treasurer's Instruction 14: Ex Gratia Payments. It is intended that the matters dealt with by Legal Bulletin 5 will be instead dealt with by regulation under the Public Finance and Audit Act.

Concerns have been raised about leaving the ultimate discretion to a minister on the question of the reimbursement of legal costs incurred by current or former members of parliament and ministers—as is currently the case with Legal Bulletin 5. In effect, the framework as it stands today means political decision-makers have discretion over the reimbursement of legal fees to their political opponents. To address this concern, the bill restricts the exercise of ministerial discretion over such decisions involving reimbursement to current and former ministers and members of parliament.

As I said at the outset, this bill is designed to address a small number of operational and technical issues identified in the ICAC Act, as well as making related amendments to other acts. While the government is not opposed to considering further amendments in the future, we believe this small set of issues should be addressed as a priority. I commend the bill to members and seek leave to insert the explanation of clauses in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal. Clause 4(2) and (3) are to be taken to have come into operation on 5 December 2022.

Part 2—Amendment of *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012*

3—Amendment of section 39A—Information to be provided

Section 39A of the Act requires the Commission, or an agency or authority (as the case may be), to take reasonable steps to ensure that a person who was the subject of the investigation is informed of a determination to take no further action. This clause amends the section to allow the Supreme Court to authorise the withholding of such information in certain circumstances.

4—Amendment of Schedule 4—Inspector and reviews

This clause inserts a delegation power for the Inspector and also provides clarity in relation to some transitional arrangements arising out of the enactment of the *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (CPIPC Recommendations) Amendment Act 2021*.

5—Amendment of Schedule 5—Reimbursement of Legal Fees Policy

This clause makes some minor clarifying amendments and limits the right to reimbursement of legal fees by providing that a Government employee, Government Board appointee, Minister or Member of Parliament that is convicted of any offence as a result of the relevant ICAC investigation will not be entitled to reimbursement.

Schedule 1—Related amendments and transitional provisions

Part 1—Related amendment of *Ombudsman Act 1972*

1—Amendment of Schedule 1—Reimbursement of Legal Fees Policy

This clause makes amendments for consistency with the changes being made to Schedule 5 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012*.

Part 2—Related amendment of *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*

2—Amendment of heading to Part 2 Division 4

This clause makes a consequential change to a heading.

3—Insertion of section 20B

This clause inserts a new section as follows:

20B—Legal assistance costs

This clause provides for the making of regulations to prescribe a scheme for the reimbursement of costs associated with the engagement of an independent legal practitioner by a Government employee, Government Board appointee, Minister or Member of Parliament.

Part 3—Transitional provisions

4—Application of amendment to Schedule 5 of *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012*

This transitional provision ensures that the new rule on reimbursement of legal fees in Schedule 5 clause 3(a) of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 2012* will apply in relation to any claim for reimbursement of costs that is certified by the Crown Solicitor (or another authorised person) after commencement of the relevant amendments contained in the measure.

5—Application of amendment to Schedule 1 of *Ombudsman Act 1972*

This transitional provision ensures that the new rule on reimbursement of legal fees in Schedule 1 clauses 3(a) and 6(1)(a) of the *Ombudsman Act 1972* will only apply in relation to any claim for reimbursement of costs that have been incurred after commencement of the relevant amendments contained in the measure.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (15:47): I rise to indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition. I indicate the opposition's support for the bill and note the minister's rehearsal of the Attorney's speech in another place just now for the purpose of the record in the House of Assembly.

Perhaps to start at the end and work back, the bill certainly contains a change of arrangements for the reimbursement of costs on application for members of parliament and ministers. The point has been made about the discretionary nature of that and the risk of the situation in which government ministers are exercising discretion in relation to political opponents and so on. I just highlight at the outset that that is so. Happily, it has not been characterised by politicisation. It is one of those areas of ministerial responsibility that ought to remain something that can be exercised absent use as some sort of political lever, and it has not been.

The step to make it even more removed from some sort of risk of politicisation seems to be perfectly feasible. You do not want to run away from every discretionary exercise of ministerial power. There are still plenty of examples in the day-to-day conduct of executives that you have a discretion precisely so that unforeseen circumstances can be dealt with and so that you are not unnecessarily creating rods for your back in all sorts of directions. That said, it is a process that at its core has the purpose to provide certainty and to remove any possibility of it being politically weaponised.

There is some provision in relation to the inspector's capacity to delegate tasks. It is timely that I acknowledge the appointment of the new inspector, a matter that has been gazetted earlier today. Mr Abbott KC is an eminent member of the legal profession and I offer my congratulations to him on his important work in that role. Those amendments in relation to the inspector's office are welcome.

The amendment that is there to the Ombudsman Act creates a parity of the level at which reimbursement of costs will not be available to members of parliament and ministers. That is set at conviction so there is a rationale of consistency there. I have queried in the course of the development of the bill—and I thank the Attorney for the opportunity for a briefing prior to its introduction—the threshold for those members of the Public Service that kicks in at 'material adverse finding' still in relation to the Ombudsman inquiry and I am content there is a rationale for it.

There are in significant ways unique exposure—particularly for members of parliament, ministers are in somewhat of a different position—for which there is no recourse, or the likes that members of the Public Service otherwise might have recourse in the circumstances of such investigation. I flagged I would work backwards and I think I am continuing to do that consistently.

In terms of the changes to the prohibition—so at the other end—there has been a setting of the standard of conviction at which costs will not be recovered. At the other end of the scale, the 21 changes to the act had set a particularly high bar to that prohibition against reimbursement of costs; that is, the ICAC was essentially put to the test of not only investigating a matter within its jurisdiction going to corruption, but also having to achieve that high-level conviction in order for the prohibition against cost recovery to apply.

The ICAC still have that constrained jurisdiction pursuant to the 21 changes, but in the event that a prosecution ensues and, rather than that high-level conviction occurring, a conviction for a lesser offence results, these changes will mean that costs are not recoverable where they otherwise would have been at that higher level.

The ICAC has complained that it has a chilling effect on ICAC's activities. The recently retired ICAC commissioner, the Hon. Ann Vanstone, expressed this frustration in various ways including in the media and public pronouncements and so on that not only is there narrow jurisdiction but there is also this risk that the commission might be exposed to costs in all but the most narrow of

circumstances; that is, when conviction for the highest level of offence is achieved. The ICAC has said, 'That will effectively mean that we do not pursue really much at all, because of that high exposure.' So it was a chilling effect.

I just have to note for the public record that there has been some reflection about that in the time since about it being an inadvertent, unintended result of those changes. That is not my recollection. My recollection is—and the provisions are what they are anyway, so we can all read what they have been since 2021—it was, in fact, to set the bar at that high level to ensure that the ICAC was investigating matters of, to put it gently, high-level corruption and achieving convictions of high-level corruption and not, as it were, investigating high-level corruption but achieving a conviction for albeit a serious offence but not at that high level that would act as a disqualifier to the recovery of costs.

So the change is really a normalisation. It brings us back to what occurs, really, in the ordinary sort of circumstance. The ICAC's jurisdiction to investigate is still at that more serious level, the result of the 2021 amendments, but it will not be liable to a reimbursement of costs where a conviction results even albeit a lower level conviction. I just note that for context. That is my view of it and others might maintain that it was more inadvertent than that, but I think there was a certain amount of deliberateness in the 2021 changes. This is similarly deliberate in ameliorating those circumstances to that extent.

The only other matter that I mention is the clause 3 amendments to section 39A. Again, this has been the subject of quite a deal of back and forth: the pros and cons of mandating that the ICAC, after concluding an investigation, go and tell the subject: 'Guess what? Without your knowledge we were investigating you.' I think it is fair to say that the ICAC would probably maintain a view that that could be counterproductive for all sorts of reasons, including all sorts of benign reasons, where it may not be necessary at all to bring such a thing, as it were, slavishly to the attention of everybody who might have come within the purview of the ICAC's activities. Be that as it may, this is far from a reversal.

The amendment to section 39A will provide a pathway, and a fairly serious formal narrow pathway, by which ICAC may if it sees fit approach the Supreme Court and endeavour to satisfy the court that there are good reasons for the non-disclosure, and those have all been set out by the minister in the course of that setting of the government's speech just now; so that is alright. Again, I stress that that is a pretty narrow pathway. The general rule will remain. The subject of the 21 changes, that disclosure, the informing of a person who is subject to investigation, will be the general rule, and this will be the narrow-path exception available to ICAC in those circumstances.

The government has been at pains to say that this is a discrete number of amendments that come at a time when, as the government puts it, not all that much time has passed since the 21 amendments were enacted. The Crime and Public Integrity Policy Committee is on its way, conducting a wideranging review, and the government has indicated its intention to keep an eye on that and to see the further working of the act. In the meantime, it is open to change, including what might emerge from that committee inquiry that is in the offing.

I indicate to the house that, as a member of that committee, that is something I am aware of as well, and I will be expecting to participate in the committee inquiry. I certainly hope that the inquiry will inform the changes, the further reform, that might be appropriate at some stage in the future. In that regard, the CPIP is nearly at the point of concluding its work in reviewing the operation of the Ombudsman Act. That gets a mention in this bill, of course. It also, importantly, interacts with the triumvirate of the OPI and the ICAC. If not an overlap, there is likely to be relevant connection between outcomes of the working of the Ombudsman and the forthcoming consideration of the ICAC Act.

With those observations, which I hope might serve as some reference for the purposes, including any future revisiting of the act, I commend the bill to the house and support its passage through this place.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:03): I thank the member for Heysen for his contribution. I think it is safe to say that we all know that issues around areas of reform, when they traverse ICAC and issues about how those laws apply to people

who work in this place and the other place, always attract a great deal of public attention and scrutiny, as indeed they should. However, I would like to think that the contributions made by the Hon. Kyam Maher in the other place and the two contributions just made in this place show that these matters have been given very thoughtful consideration, very thorough consideration.

They are not changes that we make lightly but I think, given the significance of the changes in 2021, it is perhaps not unreasonable that there might be some unintended consequences that may have arisen from those changes. It is only right that we now address those, and I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3.

Mr TEAGUE: Clause 3 is the amendment to Section 39A—Information to be provided, and that relates to the requirement to inform a person who is the subject of an investigation that that has occurred, once it has occurred. The amendment provides a pathway by which the ICAC can go to the court and seek permission not to have to do that.

It is a relatively narrow pathway. I have said in the course of the second reading—and there is another view—that my understanding is that the ICAC would probably suggest that it is something that at a high level could be left to the discretion of the ICAC as to whether it is in the interests of a subject. I will put it this way: a wider discretion just to determine whether that is a good idea or not is one broader way of dealing with this.

The government has elected for an approach that is both formal and narrow in that the ICAC is going to have to approach the court and satisfy the court of some particular, fairly serious and narrow circumstances. What consultation, including feedback from the ICAC, was undertaken by the government? Is the government satisfied that the ICAC's views have been taken into account? Is there anything else that might shed light—for the benefit of the committee—on how we have reached this particular process of exception?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Heysen for those questions. Yes, this is a rather complicated part of the proposed changes. Of course, what we have accepted here is that while we do believe there are circumstances in which there is requirement for the ICAC to inform persons who may have been under investigation that those investigations are no longer under way, we are accepting that there may be circumstances in which that should not be the case.

As I think the member for Heysen alluded to, it is the ICAC's view that the discretion to not meet that requirement of the 2021 changes should be broader than the ones that we are proposing in section 39A, but a great deal of consultation has been done. The ICAC has seen a copy of the bill, and there was about 12 months or thereabouts of back and forth between the ICAC and the government around those 2021 changes and what the ICAC thinks should be amended here today. I am also reminded that, should this pass this place and this parliament and come into effect, before it does, further meetings with the ICAC will take place around what the practical application of these changes may be.

The briefest answer I can give to the question from the member for Heysen is that, although we are not proposing to go as far perhaps as the ICAC would wish us to do in terms of a broader ability for it to not provide that communication to persons under investigation if that investigation is no longer underway, we are proposing what is not an insignificant change to the 2021 amendments where, through the application process the member for Heysen referred to regarding the Supreme Court, the ICAC can make an application seeking to lay out grounds for why it believes that is not necessary.

We feel that is a fair compromise, but as I foreshadowed in my second reading contribution and as did the Hon. Kyam Maher in the other place, we are open to further amendments and will

watch this very closely. We are not here saying that this is now a closed book, because it is a complex area and we would need to see how it works, but this is still I think nonetheless a not insignificant change that is meeting the ICAC at least part of the way in terms of the changes it is seeking.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (4 and 5), schedule and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (OVERSIGHT AND ADVOCACY BODIES) (CHILD DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY REVIEW COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (16:13): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to make a short second reading contribution here around this bill, which on the face of it may appear to be small in nature, but this has been a very long time coming. I say that as someone who, although more intimately involved in these proposed amendments in my role now as the Minister for Education—and child development is in there as well—has been involved in previous roles that I filled working for former ministers in the areas of child protection and education.

It will be known to many members of this place and certainly outside it as well that we have long faced a conundrum in this state around the ability for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee to commence their investigation into the death of a child—it is very important work, I must say, too—before the Coroner has completed their work. Because of the technical and detailed nature of the Coroner's work, it can often take a great deal of time, which of course delays the ability for Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee (CDSIRC) to commence their investigation.

Both investigations are important. Obviously, the Coroner's is incredibly important in terms of often coming to a finding around how the death occurred, and the causative facts there or the causative reasons for that, but so too is the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee's work in terms of what policy changes—often legal in nature and needing to be made in this place—need to be made post that tragic death to avoid circumstances where it might happen again.

I want to just give a little bit of background, perhaps, about the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, which was established in 2006 and, as I said, played a very important role in this state's work to prevent the death of children. We know that for the families and friends of a child who has died, their death must be incomprehensible and will have an impact on the rest of their lives and the people around them as well. For the community more broadly, we cannot know fully what we have lost or what else those children may have contributed to our society had they been afforded more time.

The work of the committee, through the collection of data on child deaths and serious injuries, their circumstances and their causes, enables it to analyse and gain an understanding of child death and serious injuries across the state, and trends over time. This places it in a unique position to recommend legislative or administrative means to prevent similar cases in the future. The tragedy of a child's death is no less by the nature of its cause, whether that be by illness or by disease, by accident or from the abhorrent actions of another individual. However, we have seen in more recent years some shocking cases of child death through acts of violence and serious neglect and, in light of such cases, timely reviews of such deaths are necessary for the protection of the state's children.

To this end, the bill seeks to provide the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee with more flexibility as to when it can commence a review into a particular child death or serious injury by enabling the committee where appropriate to commence a review earlier than is currently permissible. Provisions of the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 currently place limitations on the circumstances in which a review of a child's death or serious injury by the committee can commence.

Section 37(5), in particular, provides that the committee must not review a case of child death or serious injury unless a coronial inquiry has been completed, or the State Coroner requests the committee to carry out a review, or the State Coroner indicates that there is no present intention to carry out a coronial inquiry. The practical effect of the current provisions is that it can be a significant amount of time after a child's death or serious injury before the committee can start its review, which affects the potential impact the committee may have to improve child safety.

The bill provides the committee may commence a review into a child death or a serious injury that is the subject of an ongoing coronial inquest or inquiry or criminal investigation. However, the bill includes appropriate safeguards to protect against any compromise to an investigation, inquiry or inquest, including by:

- requiring that in such a case the committee consult with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police (as the case may require);
- providing the committee must take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising the inquest, inquiry or investigation; and
- enabling the Coroner or the commissioner to give directions to the committee as to the things they should or should not do in the course of the review if the Coroner or the commissioner is of the opinion that such a direction is necessary to avoid compromise to an inquest, inquiry or investigation.

To support these changes, the bill includes express provisions for the committee, the South Australia Police and the State Coroner to share information for the purposes of determining whether to commence a review or in the carrying out of a review. The bill includes additional provisions for the protection of information held by the committee, including by providing that a person cannot be compelled to:

- give evidence of matters becoming known to them as a member or staff of the committee;
- produce a document that was prepared or made in the course of, or for the purposes of, a review of a case of child death or serious injury through their work with the committee; or
- provide information that became known to them in the course of a review.

While the committee is currently an exempt agency for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, the bill further provides that a document prepared by the committee will be an exempt document for the purposes of the act, including where it is held by, or in the possession of, an agency other than the committee. The bill will also expand the circumstances in which the committee should commence a review to include where the case has been referred to the committee by the minister.

I just want to finish my remarks by saying I am really proud of the piece of work that has been done here. It has been a very, very long time coming. I remember all too well cases where the public, and indeed people in this place as well, very much wanted the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee to be able to commence its work quickly so that we could have recommendations around things that should be put in place to prevent that death occurring again, and we were not able to do that.

It was not because there were not good reasons for that, I must say. Often, the Coroner or the police commissioner might have very good reasons why that should not occur, but of course I think there are cases, as we have identified here through this bill, where it can occur quickly, or simultaneously with a coronial investigation, without in some way compromising the integrity of the coronial inquest.

I really want to thank all those involved from CDSIRC (the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) and also SAPOL and the Coroner's office for the way in which they have worked with us on this. It is, I think, an excellent example of different parts of government working together for a great outcome. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (16:20): The bill enables the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee to commence its reviews earlier, even before other investigations have concluded. This was previously seen as a risk when the committee was originally conceived, but in practice we have found the delays to sometimes be frustrating. I believe the safeguards in the bill that we have heard articulated by the minister in his second reading speech provide safeguards against those risks and are satisfactory. Therefore, the change is logical. The opposition therefore supports the bill.

Ms HOOD: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (16:24): I am really pleased to make a contribution to the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) Amendment Bill 2024. This important legislation is part of a suite of reforms that our government is undertaking to help keep South Australian children safe and supported.

While the death of a child, as I know more than most, is an unspeakable tragedy, the important work of the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee helps the government put in place a range of policies, precautions and checks and balances to ensure that it is not a repeated event.

We all know too well that history can teach us some really powerful and strong lessons and taking note of what has happened and what has led to an event happening is part of the learning and the experience that we use in order to prevent things from happening in the future. I certainly have lived by that ideology in terms of the work that I have done in both health and community work. Preventative health activities are often founded on the lessons learnt by cause and effect, and I used that understanding and those skills when I went into working in the community sector following the death of my son.

When we share those stories and we listen to people who have been through those journeys, we can learn lessons and those lessons can be a powerful tool for prevention in the future. Especially when we think about children and the loss of a child and the causative factors, we would be careless and as a society deemed pretty ignorant and incompetent if we did not take into account some of those learnings that we have yielded from experience.

Certainly working in our area with the Department of Human Services and the Child and Family Support System that we deliver, I know the hundreds of practitioners who work in that space daily share stories and talk about the cases that they are dealing with and some of the experiences that they are going through in order to learn from one another and build a much stronger, safer system to support children and families at risk.

Only yesterday, I went to one of the Community of Practice-type events where we were talking specifically around the occurrence or the commonality and common causative factors that lead to these dangerous and volatile households that can cause pretty terrible outcomes for children, families and communities in general. We know that around 75 per cent of the families in particular that we support in our Child and Family Support System service are exposed to current and ongoing domestic, family and sexual violence.

When we think about those behaviours and that violence and disrespect happening in a household with little ones and then with teenagers, it is those learned behaviours that go from generation to generation that make it essential for us to use review and reflection as a way to intervene and help vulnerable families and communities learn from each other.

We know that children at risk, children at risk of harm, children in dangerous situations, often are exposed to these violent and inappropriate behaviours in their own home. We know that

sometimes that, sadly, then carries into the community and into the school community by these children and young people. Their learned behaviours can then be subject to some really difficult conversations in the school environment, and the earlier the better.

We know that, if that is not dealt with, that manifests often as a bullying and violent behaviour in older age groups. It then translates to violence as a teenager. The learned behaviours are taken from one environment to another. Our observation and the observation of expert practitioners and clinicians therefore become absolutely vital in order to learn from an event of the past to prevent the events of the future.

While I have focused on violence and bullying and learned behaviours, this is absolutely able to be translated into learning about environmental factors that can be the causation of a critical incident of sorts in a family or school or community or health environment.

All of these things are things that we must and do learn from, and the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee puts an expert lens on incidents. It looks at what has happened, it reads about how this happened and it listens to the powerful narrative from the testimony of people who have been witness to or involved in such critical incidents. The CDSIRC, as it is known, has been an important tool for 18 years in South Australia. I will read out the functions under the act. They are:

(a) to review cases in which children die or suffer serious injury with a view to identifying legislative or administrative means of preventing similar cases of death or serious injury in the future; and

(b) to make, and monitor the implementation of, recommendations for avoiding preventable child death or serious injury; and

(c) to maintain a database of child deaths and serious injuries and their circumstances and causes.

Again, I express how important the work is of the departments and the people who gather this information, store this information and, with expertise, translate this information to data so that it can be compared from one point in time to another, and we all as a community and as deliverers of policy can learn from that.

This bill seeks to empower the absolutely incredible work of the existing committee to take a broader lens to when they commence a review, and it does not seek to limit their capacity to undertake a review at a time of their choosing. It may mean that the committee is empowered to commence their review while a coronial inquiry is underway and we know that that often takes time. Having worked in health for many years I know it can be several years while information is being collected. When it comes to the pain of people involved who are close, it takes time for them to heal to a point to be able to tell their stories. So this will mean that that delay does not flow on to the good work of the policy machine where changes can be made to prevent something else from happening. The commencement of the review will in no way persuade, influence, amend or stymie the proceedings of the coronial inquiry. It just will help to progress the advancement of reform.

The three key elements that will not allow the committee to compromise, but will proceed in a way, is that it will require that in such a case the committee consult with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police, as the case may require. It also provides that the committee must take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising the inquest, inquiry or investigation and, thirdly, in enabling the Coroner or the commissioner to give directions to the committee as to the things they should or should not do in the course of the review, if the Coroner or the commissioner is of the opinion that such a direction is necessary to avoid compromise to an inquest, inquiry or investigation.

So this should give us confidence that we can commence the review, the listening and the reform process earlier and in such a way that it may make a difference. I do not have an example at hand—I do not know whether the minister does—but it can provide us with the opportunity to put in place safeguards that potentially will save a life.

The provisions are practical and they allow for earlier recommendations to help prevent future deaths and serious injuries amongst children and young people. The Malinauskas Labor government recognises the vital role of the CDSIRC in preventing deaths and serious injuries and for this reason the committee should have the opportunity with appropriate safeguards to begin that review, that reform process across systems, across health, education, community and legal systems.

The bill also provides necessary protections for information held by the committee ensuring it can carry out its work independently and without concern. The bill includes additional protections for information held by the committee, stipulating that individuals cannot be compelled to either give evidence on matters they learned as members of staff or as part of the committee, or produce documents prepared or created during a review of a child death or serious injury, or disclose information acquired during the course of the review. This does not mean that the committee cannot choose to provide such information if it could be helpful or important, but it is not compelled to do so.

While the committee is currently an exempt agency for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 1991, the bill does further provide that a document prepared by the committee will be an exempt document for the purposes of the act, including where it was held by or in possession of an agency other than the committee. This is a current gap in the act that the government believes is important to resolve. Overall these changes are sensible and centred around the government doing more to protect children and young people. We are committed to listening and making ongoing improvements to ensure every child and young person is able to live safely and thrive.

I will use this opportunity to mention a wonderful person who is in the DHS staff and will be known by many in this place. I believe my friend the Minister for Child Protection presented Kerry Beck with a social worker award at last year's social worker awards, if I remember rightly. Kerry Beck has over 30 years' experience as a social scientist and social worker.

Kerry has held many roles in management, in executive roles for the government and in a range of settings. She has skills in the homelessness, mental health, drug and alcohol, child protection, family preservation and public housing sectors and she now is a director in DHS, in our child and family support system. Her title is Director of Safer Family Services. If I need sound, sage, fearless advice about services that have been delivered, Kerry is a go-to. She is someone that we as a government can trust because she absolutely wants a safer community and wants children to thrive.

I am sure there are people on both sides of the house who have worked with Kerry Beck. She is now part of the CDSIRC committee. I have been pleased to see that appointment and that is another reason why we should do as much as we can to ensure that this work can continue in the most progressive, expedient and safe way as possible. I think the bill delivers on this ambition. We are committed to listening and making ongoing improvements to ensure every child and young person is able to live safely and to thrive. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:41): I am pleased to support the bill, and I am grateful to the member for Unley who earlier was the lead speaker for the opposition as I was detained in a meeting and was not sure if I would have time to get here before the end of the bill. I endorse his remarks in support of the bill. I want to place on the record my gratitude to the members of the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee who gave me important advice during the time that I was the education minister.

I offer my thanks to Jane Abbey, who I had the privilege to assist in the appointment of as chair. She is a highly regarded legal professional in South Australia and I am sure she is providing the new government with great service. She and the team have provided this recommendation to the government for a mechanism to conduct reviews, even though a coronial inquest or other investigation may not yet have concluded. It is logical. The good people of the education department in their legal team—and I always recognise and appreciate their work—have identified a mechanism that satisfies the police commissioner and satisfies the Coroner, and that is good to see. I believe that the risk of any duplicate review happening while their considerations take place has been averted by the mechanism of the bill, as the member for Unley expressed.

I also want to place on the record—because I am not sure I took the opportunity to do so at the time—my thanks to Dr Mark Fuller who stepped up during an interregnum between chairs as the Acting Chair of the CDSIRC for a period of time despite his absolutely extraordinarily busy schedule in his professional life where he works with very, very difficult jobs supporting particularly children. He took a lot of his personal time to serve the people of South Australia as acting chair of this committee over a period of six months from memory, but I could be off there. I place on the record my thanks to him as well and note his continued work with the committee. This is a committee made

up of some extraordinarily highly credentialled professionals who serve the people of South Australia well. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (16:44): I rise today in support of the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) Amendment Bill 2024, which seeks to amend the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016. I think we can all agree in this chamber that the most important role of any government or any parliament is to provide for the security and protection of the people who provide us with the privilege to represent them. While we all know that death is inevitable, we can always strive to provide for a more prosperous South Australia by reducing injury and preventable deaths.

The death or injury of a child is always a terrible tragedy, and we can and we must always do more to prevent serious harm to children in our state. The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee plays an integral role in the prevention of death and injury of South Australian children. Established in 2006, the core functions of this committee are: to review cases in which children die or suffer serious injury, with a view to identifying legislative or administrative means of preventing similar cases of death or serious injury in the future; to make and monitor the implementation of recommendations for avoidable, preventable child death or serious injury; and to maintain a database of child death and serious injuries and their circumstances and causes.

This is heartbreaking and difficult work, but it is necessary work. I am sure everyone in this place and indeed the broader South Australian community are immensely appreciative of the committee's work to make South Australia a safer place. The bill before us today seeks to give the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee more flexibility as to when it can commence a review into a particular child death or serious injury in our state.

As it currently reads, provisions of the existing Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act place limitations on the circumstances in which a review by the committee can commence. For example, the committee cannot review the case of a child death or serious injury unless a coronial inquiry has been completed, the State Coroner requests the committee to carry out a review, or the State Coroner indicates there is no present intention to carry out a coronial inquiry. As a result, the committee is often unable to begin its review until a significant amount of time has passed since a child's death or serious injury. We cannot continue to limit the capacity of the committee in this way. With appropriate checks and balances, the committee should be allowed to review deaths and serious injuries earlier, just as this bill provides.

However, it is also important that safeguards are put in place to not compromise an existing investigation, inquiry or inquest. Such safeguards will include: requiring that in such a case the committee consult with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police, as the case requires; providing that the committee must take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising the inquest, inquiry or investigation; and enabling the Coroner or the commissioner to give directions to the committee as to the things they should or should not do in the course of the review if the Coroner or the commissioner is of the opinion that such a decision is necessary to avoid compromise to an inquest, inquiry or investigation.

This is sensible reform that also empowers the committee to make earlier recommendations to prevent future death or serious injury of South Australian children. To make effective recommendations and prevent future death and serious injury, the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee must be empowered to go about its work independently and without fear.

This bill includes a number of provisions for the protection of information held by the committee, including providing that a person cannot be compelled to give evidence of matters becoming known to them as a member or staff of the committee, to produce a document that was prepared or made in the course of or for the purposes of a review of a case of a child death or serious injury through the work of the committee, or to provide information that became known to them in the course of a review.

To clarify, the committee can choose to provide this information; this bill just means that they cannot be compelled to do so. The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee is currently an exempt agency for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 1991, and this bill further provides

that a document prepared by the committee will be an exempt document for the purposes of the act, including where it was held by or in the possession of an agency other than the committee.

One death or injury of a child is one too many. We can and we must do more to prevent these tragedies in South Australia, and the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee plays an integral role to our collective efforts. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (16:50): I rise to speak on the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) Amendment Bill. This legislation is of paramount importance, as it addresses a critical issue that affects the most vulnerable members of our society, our children and young people.

As a parent I think you give birth, you finally have that joy, and then you worry every single day that something might happen to them. I cannot imagine what it is like to lose a child, and to then need to go through all the processes sometimes to find out what happened. I think about my child every day. He is 21 now, and broke his foot the other day at work, and I think about how that could have been much worse. While he is not a child anymore, he is always my child.

At its core this bill is about preventing death and serious injury in South Australia, and we must acknowledge that one death, any child's death—you hear about them on the news, they might be right near where you live—you feel it. It is a lot for the family obviously, but the community feels it as well, and it is always incredibly sad when those unfortunate situations arise.

The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, which was established in 2006, has been instrumental in reviewing cases of child death and serious injuries, identifying preventive measures as well, and maintaining a database of such incidents. Currently the legislation imposes some limitations on when that committee can commence its reviews, and this bill seeks to give that committee more flexibility in this regard.

Presently the committee must wait for the completion of a coronial inquiry or receive specific requests or indications from the State Coroner before initiating a review. This delay can be significant, potentially hindering our ability to implement timely preventive measures, and the quicker you can assess what has happened and work on how you can make things better for next time, put things in place to protect our children, can only be a good thing. Having to wait such a long time when these preventive measures could be put in place just inhibits the ability to keep our children safe.

The Malinauskas Labor government recognises the crucial role of the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee in helping prevent such tragic incidents. We believe that the committee should have the opportunity to review deaths and serious injuries earlier with appropriate checks and balances in place. To this end the bill introduces important safeguards to ensure that the committee's work does not compromise existing investigations, inquiries and inquests.

These include a mandatory consultation with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police, a requirement for the committee to take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising ongoing inquests, inquiries or investigations, and provisions for the Coroner or commissioner to give directions to the committee to prevent any potential compromise to their work. These provisions strike a balance between enabling earlier reviews and respecting the integrity of other investigative processes.

Furthermore, the bill strengthens the protection of information held by the committee. This is crucial for maintaining the independence and fearlessness of the committee's work. The legislation introduces additional provisions that prevent compelling committee members or staff to disclose information or documents related to their reviews. It is important to note that while the committee cannot be compelled to provide information, it retains the discretion to do so when deemed appropriate.

The bill also addresses a current gap in the Freedom of Information Act 1991, ensuring that documents prepared by the committee remain exempt, even when held by other agencies. These changes are sensible and centred around our government's commitment to better protect children and young people. We are dedicated to listening and making ongoing improvements to ensure every child and young person in South Australia can live safely and thrive.

In conclusion, this bill delivers on our ambition to create a safer environment for our kids. It empowers the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee to act more swiftly and effectively while maintaining necessary safeguards. It is an important bill, and the committee is important. I cannot stress enough how I feel when I hear news of children passing, especially when we are not sure how it happens or why it happens, or when a child is injured really seriously and their life is changed forever. Their families' lives are changed forever. The more we can do to help that process, help find out what is going on, help find ways to prevent these things from happening in the future, it can only be a good thing. I commend the bill to the house.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (16:55): I rise to speak on the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) Amendment Bill 2024. At its core, this bill is about preventing death and serious injury for South Australians. Any death or injury is always one too many, and I concur with other speakers on this bill with regard to how terrified we would all be if this happened to one of our own and what it would do to the community that surrounds us. I, too, have terrible intrusive thoughts about what might happen one day to my children. It does not matter that they are now adults, living their own lives; those thoughts still remain.

The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee was established in 2006, and its functions under the act are:

(a) to review cases in which children die or suffer serious injury with a view to identifying legislative or administrative means of preventing similar cases of death or serious injury in the future; and

(b) to make, and monitor the implementation of, recommendations for avoiding preventable child death or serious injury; and

(c) to maintain a database of child deaths and serious injuries and their circumstances and causes.

This bill seeks to give the committee more flexibility as to when it can commence a review into a particular child death or serious injury. Currently, provisions of the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 place limitations on the circumstances in which a review by the committee of a child's death or serious injury can commence, and those limitations, I suspect, must endure heartache.

Subsection 37(5) in particular provides that the committee must not review a case of child death or serious injury unless a coronial inquiry has been completed, or the State Coroner requests the committee to carry out a review, or the State Coroner indicates that there is no present intention to carry out a coronial inquiry. This results in a significant amount of time passing after a child's death or serious injury before the committee can start its review and, no doubt, before families can even consider closure.

The Malinauskas Labor government believes there is a crucial role for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee in helping to prevent death and serious injury. It is for that reason that the committee should have the opportunity, with appropriate checks and balances, to review deaths and serious injuries earlier. However, it is important that safeguards are also put in place as not to compromise an existing investigation, inquiry or inquest. These include:

1. Requiring that in such a case the committee consult with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police, as the case requires;

2. Providing that the committee must take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising the inquest, inquiry or investigation; and

3. Enabling the Coroner or the commissioner to give directions to the committee as to the things they should or should not do in the course of the review if the Coroner or the commissioner is of the opinion that such a direction is necessary to avoid compromise to an inquest, inquiry or investigation.

These are sensible provisions, whilst also providing the opportunity for earlier recommendations to prevent future deaths and serious injury of children and young people.

The bill also ensures appropriate protections of information held by the committee. This is important, as the committee must be able to go about its work independently and without fear. The

bill includes additional provisions for the protection of information held by the committee, including providing that a person cannot be compelled to:

1. Give evidence of matters becoming known to them as a member or staff of the committee;

2. Produce a document that was prepared or made in the course of or for the purposes of a review of a case of a child death or serious injury through the work of the committee; or

3. Provide information that became known to them in the course of a review.

This does not mean that the committee cannot choose to provide information, but it is not compelled to do so. While the committee is currently an exempt agency for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 1991, the bill further provides that a document prepared by the committee will be an exempt document for the purposes of the act, including where it is held by or in the possession of an agency other than the committee. There is a current gap in the act that the government believes is important to resolve.

Overall, these changes are sensible and centred around the government doing more to protect children and young people. We are committed to listening and making ongoing improvements to ensure every child and young person is able to live safely and able to thrive. This bill delivers on this ambition. I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (17:01): I, too, rise to speak in support of this Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) Amendment Bill 2024. I thank the Minister for Education for bringing this bill to the house, and I also thank those people who over the past 18 years have sat on the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, who have done so with compassion, bringing such expertise and wisdom to this incredibly important function of government.

At its core, this bill is rightly about helping to prevent death and serious injury here in South Australia. One death or one injury is one too many and, indeed, any death of a child or young person, any harm to them, is utterly tragic. The loss of a child for a family and, indeed, an entire community is devastating, and I think with love of all of those who are mourning the loss of a precious young person.

When such an utterly devastating event occurs, it is incumbent upon all of us to learn all that we can by carefully examining the circumstances of that death or injury, whether it be an accidental death or injury or a death or injury that is perpetrated at the hands of a horrific offender, so that we can then take steps forward toward prevention.

The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee was established, as we have heard, in 2006—18 years ago—with its functions under the act rightly including the reviewing of cases in which children die or suffer serious injury. This review function works with a view to identifying legislative or administrative means and possible changes that could prevent other deaths or serious injuries into the future. This work is absolutely integral to ensuring that as well as this prevention being appropriately considered we also appropriately consider all ways that we can help children and young people across our community to grow up safe, loved, cared for, healthy and enabled to thrive.

The other functions of this committee are to make and to monitor the implementation of recommendations for avoiding preventable child death or serious injury and to maintain a database of child deaths and serious injuries and their circumstances and causes. Currently, the provisions of the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 place limitations on the circumstances in which a review by the committee of a child's death or serious injury can commence.

Through the legislative changes we progress today, rightly, this bill seeks to give the committee more flexibility as to when it can commence a review into a particular child death or serious injury, flexibility that is crucial to learning well and to acting and learning and changing practice as needed as quickly and effectively as we possibly can.

Subsection 37(5) in particular provides that the committee must not review a case of child death or serious injury unless a coronial inquiry has been completed, or the State Coroner requests the committee to carry out a review, or the State Coroner indicates that there is no present intention to carry out a coronial inquiry. This currently results in a significant amount of precious time passing after a child's death or serious injury before the committee can start its review, before it can do that work to help seek answers about possible change.

Our government believes that there is a crucial role for the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee in helping to prevent death and serious injury. It is for that reason that the committee should absolutely have the opportunity, of course with appropriate checks and balances, to review deaths and serious injury at an earlier time that provides us the best possible opportunity to consider effective change.

However, it is of course important that safeguards are also put in place so as to not compromise an existing investigation, inquiry or inquest. These include requiring that in such a case the committee consult with the State Coroner or the Commissioner of Police, as the case requires, providing that the committee must take all reasonable steps to avoid compromising the inquest, inquiry or investigation and also enabling the Coroner or the commissioner to give directions to the committee as to the things they should or should not do in the course of the review if the Coroner or the commissioner is of the opinion that such a direction is necessary to avoid compromise to an inquest, inquiry or investigation.

These are really sensible provisions, which also provide the opportunity for earlier recommendations to help prevent future deaths and serious injury of children and young people. The bill also rightfully ensures appropriate protections around information held by the committee. This is really important, as the committee must be enabled to go about its work independently and without any concern about their data, about that information they hold about a precious child or young person and the circumstances which led to the death or serious injury of that precious child or young person. The changes that we progress in this bill are sensible and centred around the steps our government is taking to do more to help ensure the safety of children and young people.

We are also doing other crucial work in this space. Alongside this change we discuss in this house today, the government has committed to establish an interagency child death review model as part of its detailed response to the child protection reviews and specifically observations made by Ms Kate Alexander in her important report entitled Trust in Culture.

Ms Alexander's report recognises the complexity absolutely inherent, the complexity and the risk inherent in child protection and family support work and the well-qualified and highly skilled people who work in child protection and family support, who turn up every single day to help keep children and young people safe, well, loved, cared for and nurtured.

Her report also acknowledges the significant progress that has been made by governments since the Nyland royal commission and calls for trust in that process. However, her report also calls for improvement for close consideration of our processes around how we examine things when things go wrong and hence through a $1.3 million funding commitment as part of the 2022-23 state budget the establishment and delivery of the interagency child death review model.

I will come back to that model, but I also want to say that since that report, Trust in Culture, which recommended the establishment and the funding of the interagency child death review model, other positive steps have been taken to learn from and respond to the Alexander report, including the appointment of a child protection expert group to help improve the quality of practice across the sector to review child death review models and to look into neglect, squalor and cumulative harm and how those particular complex deeply interconnected issues that families are experiencing are dealt with and how families are supported.

The group is chaired by the national leader in this field, Professor Leah Bromfield, who is also the Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection who just last week was rightly awarded South Australian Australian of the Year. Professor Bromfield is an extraordinary woman and I am deeply grateful that she shares her wisdom and expertise through her partnership with this government, with the Australian Centre for Child Protection (of which she is the Director) and also through our Child Protection Expert Group which we have established.

The Child Protection Expert Group sits alongside other groups that we have rightly established. It sits alongside our chief executive governance group, which brings together every chief executive across government who has a role to play in the child protection and family support system. This is another way alongside the changes we make today, alongside the interagency child death review panel that together across government we intend to drive deep, effective system change that genuinely helps to improve the lives of children and young people.

Alongside again the interagency child death review panel that has been funded and is being established, alongside our Child Protection Expert Group and our chief executive governance group, we have also rightly established our Direct Experience Group, which brings together brave families who have an experience with the child protection and family support system to provide advice to me as the minister, to provide advice through me to those groups about that experience of the system.

We have also established the Carer Council, which again is made up of those people who have a direct experience of being a foster or kinship carer. These people are extraordinary, and they are also adding to this system change that we are pursuing. We are pursuing it because we want to do everything that we can in a joined up way across government to drive change that makes a positive difference in the lives of children and young people.

As I said, one of those groups that is being established through that $1.3 million of funding is the interagency child death review model. This review model will sit alongside the existing child death review functions of CDSIRC. It was absolutely crucial in terms of how those two groups will work together.

It is absolutely crucial that, alongside this bill, this change that we enact today that ensures a much more timely and effective mechanism for CDSIRC to review those terrible instances of harm to children, we also have this broader infrastructure and ecosystem right across the child protection and family support system to make sure that we have a learning system, a system that examines, that fronts up when things go wrong and absolutely works across government and with community, with those with direct experience of the system, to drive change that makes a difference.

This is not an easy task, but our government is absolutely up to it. We will not shy away from this deeply complex challenge. Everything that we are putting in place is driving us toward that long-term vision for change. This bill is an incredibly important part of that system change, and I commend this bill to the house.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (17:17): I would like to thank all those members of this place who have made a second reading contribution, including just then the member for Reynell, the Minister for Child Protection, who has been around in government circles both as a member of parliament and minister but in her careers before she entered this place. She understands very well that this has been an issue for a very long time and one that we have not been able to resolve, unfortunately. That has been to the pretty acute frustration of a lot of people in this place, out of this place, the media but, most importantly, family members of the deceased children.

The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee investigates those deaths with a view to suggesting public policy changes, often changes that need to be made in this parliament, to prevent that kind of death from happening again, which is incredibly important work.

We often say that the wheels of government move very slowly, and they do, and things can often on the face of it sound simple and straightforward, and people shake their heads outside of this place around why the pace of change can be slow and why sometimes it feels as though we cannot get out of our own way to make simple changes. Although it has been slow, the truth is that when you read the advice that you are given from the agencies involved in the potential decision—in this case, for instance, South Australia Police or the Coroner, as well as the advice provided from the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee—you quickly understand the complexities that are involved, particularly around the risk to undermining an inquiry, a coronial one or otherwise, by having a concurrent investigation, which of course would be the absolute worst outcome.

If we can put ourselves in the shoes of the family of the deceased child for a moment, it is unimaginable the grief that you would deal with you if you lost a child in the first place, but if it was in

circumstances where foul play or neglect was potentially involved, and you very much wanted to find out what or who may have been responsible for that, the last thing, of course, you would want in a situation like that is to have that coronial inquest compromised, or perhaps in some way invalidated because of a conflict that might arise with a concurrent investigation.

There are reasons, often once you scratch the surface, for why there are these kinds of idiosyncrasies in place, but nonetheless I am really pleased that this government has stuck at the issue and kept working with those agencies and, upon forming government in March 2022, revisited the idea of how we can find a way through this impasse with those agencies.

I would just like to place on the record again my thanks to not just the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee and all the members of that committee who do marvellous work—they are passionate people about the area of the public policy in which they work—but also the Coroner and the Coroner's office and SAPOL and the commissioner as well. They have really shown a willingness to find a way through this impasse, to find a way in the circumstances that are deemed to be appropriate. It is important I think that we have some exceptions to the rule, because the other kind of defining factor of investigations like this into the death of a child is that very regularly no two cases are the same.

It is impossible to take a pro forma approach to it, because the circumstances of the passing of the child are usually different, or the family's circumstances might be and that means that there does need to be a degree of oversight and the ability for those other agencies such as SAPOL and the commissioner, who may be dealing with criminal proceedings against an accused, and the Coroner and their office, who might be dealing with the coronial inquest into the death, to be able to step in and say that they think in this circumstance, or in the case of this child death, that having the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee conduct its inquiry, either concurrently or before—most likely concurrently with the coronial inquest—is not appropriate, because it would give a genuine rise to the risk of invalidating, compromising or undermining that coronial inquest.

That is, of course, incredibly important for a whole heap of reasons, as well as the SAPOL one, in terms of justice for the family of the child, which is an incredibly important thing, finding out what or whom was responsible and being certain about the circumstances of that child's death. Nonetheless, I think what we have in front of us here is an excellent piece of work and I am very pleased that we heard members opposite speak in support of it as well.

People are quick to criticise this place—and sometimes not without reason—when we tend to argue about all manner of things, but there are often occasions where we come together in a bipartisan way, and if we cannot do that on an issue of child death serious injury then there is little hope for us. I think it is great that we have found a bipartisan position here today to support this. I think it speaks to not only the willingness of people in this place to put differences aside on the really important issues but also of course to the integrity of what we are putting forward here.

So it is something that the parliament stands together in saying is a good thing and then when it comes to issues like this we will set aside political differences and work together for the betterment of the whole state. We have heard members of this place in their second reading contribution speak in a way I was really impressed by, because there was genuine empathy and passion for the topic, but particularly empathy for those who would have lost a child in those circumstances.

I think almost the most important characteristic of an effective parliamentarian is the ability to show empathy and put yourself in the shoes of the people that you represent because when you do that it does really actually strongly motivate you to take action and to pursue things in a dogged, stubborn, determined kind of fashion, which often you need to.

This change is one of the best examples of that, because we have been talking about this for more than 10 years, and we were not able to find a way through it. It would have been very easy just to set down tools and give up, but we did not do that, because at the end of the day you think about those people—and some of us know people who have been in the situation of losing a child, and we understand the devastating effect that has on the family, the siblings, the parents, the grandparents, and the wider community.

I see it in the school communities in the role I have as the Minister for Education. We are, too regularly, I am afraid, notified if a child passes away. It might be at the Women's and Children's Hospital School SA or a child elsewhere who has had a long-term illness who passes away. I take that opportunity wherever I am able and wherever it is appropriate to speak to the school principal or the preschool director to pass on my sympathies. It is always a real insight into the broader, wider effect that a child death can have that stays with people—for instance, their schoolfriends, particularly if the young person was at primary or secondary school—and the effect that that can have.

So I think these changes are overdue, but also I am pleased that we have managed to find a way here, where we have kept the integrity of the changes in terms of finding a way wherein I am sure in a lot of cases it will be appropriate or found to be appropriate by coroners and commissioners for an inquiry by the CDSIRC to commence while there might be something on foot from the Coroner.

Of course, what that will mean is that in those expert recommendations that the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee make—and I labour the point 'expert', because I have known both past and present members of that committee very well in some cases, and they are expert in their field. And the work in a lot of cases, too, is actually very technical in nature.

There is one that springs to mind that I might just mention. I think I recall this correctly from a long time ago. It was the tragic death in a swimming pool of a child, I think. There may even have been a bit of a spate of that. Recommendations by the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, I recall, were around pool fencing and what, actually, was in effect very specific and technical recommendations by the committee around regulations governing what a pool fence needed to look like.

That was brought into sharp relief for me when I was talking to a family member who had been through the process of having pool fencing set up and having the council come out to make sure that it was certified so it could go ahead. It was an incredibly detailed process in which they came and physically inspected the pool fencing, pointed out inadequacies—areas in which kids could be able to get access to the pool over the fence—that resulted in changes that needed to be made.

As technical as that is, that results in young lives being saved through expert and technical work by a committee. I think it is a powerful example around why providing the committee with the ability to do its important work as early as we deem it possible and appropriate is the right thing to do, because what often flows from that investigation by the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee are very specific recommendations that are brought to a minister and perhaps ultimately brought to cabinet and, indeed, often wind up in this place where, if they pass, they form law. Of course, the sooner we do that the sooner we identify gaps in our systems that might endanger the lives of young people. We need to act.

We know the truth is that as time goes past and change is not made, what it does is increase the risk of a death of the same nature occurring again. Any death of course is a tragedy, but I think we would all agree it would be somewhat a failing of us in this place and this parliament not to use the power that is afforded to us to act when we can to prevent something like that from happening.

If this successfully passes this place—and if I am still in the role that I am lucky enough to enjoy now—I hope that we can provide some real and concrete examples once a case comes up, which of course would follow a tragedy unfortunately. Where a case would come up where the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee is able to commence an early investigation or inquiry, we can use that as an example of why these changes are so important and again highlight to the South Australian public as well, who might not have heard of CDSIRC (Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee) about the important work that they do and their service to our state in that role.

There are many people, some of whom are still members of the committee, some of whom are no longer members of the committee, who will feel a great sense of personal satisfaction should this pass, because they have been the ones in there championing a way of getting through this impasse, changing the law so they can do their work because they are passionate about their work. They do not want to be sitting on their hands when they feel like they could be starting their inquiry, making recommendations to government, seeing the law change and doing what they are all so passionately motivated to do, which is to prevent preventable deaths.

Again, I thank those who made a contribution, some of whom are still in this place. Again, I say I am pleased that we have had support from both sides of the chamber. The member for Morialta mentioned those fantastic people from the Public Service who have done all the hard yards here and the heavy lifting in terms of drafting legislation and doing the consultation work with SAPOL and the Coroner to get to a point where we have agreement. That has taken some time.

We have been working on this, I must say, for some time now. We really should pay tribute to those who have done the technical work and the consultation and those who are experts in their field of crafting legislation in a way that does not give rise to unintended consequences and does, for instance, what the police and the Coroner want the legislation to do, which is to properly provide them with the means of putting their hand up and saying that in this case it is not appropriate to have concurrent investigations to make sure the integrity of whatever investigation is already on foot, whether that be criminal proceedings through the South Australia Police or a coronial inquest, and to make sure that that integrity is maintained. I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (17:33):

I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I think I have traversed this ground pretty well now, but this is a very good example of what might seem like small and technical changes to a bill, which are not particularly long or complex but are really significant changes. I have no doubt at some stage, when they come into effect and are used or enlivened, that they will save the life of a child or children in South Australia.

Again, I just reiterate my thanks to those who did the work. So often we are critical or others outside this place are not without reason critical of governments inability to work together across agencies and across departments. This is a fantastic example of where we found a way through after impasse which lasted many, many years.

We have found a way where the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee can do its important work, with safeguards in place to allow coroners and police commissioners to step in if it is not appropriate, but to have concurrent investigations potentially running so that, if recommendations are to be made into how a child's death occurred, and something that could be put in place potentially by this parliament to prevent that from happening again, that can be done as soon as possible.

I thank all those people who did the technical work in bringing these changes to this place and who did a significant amount of consultation with those agencies I just mentioned to get their really important support. I reiterate that we would not be here today and I would not have brought this to this place if we had not had that agreement. Nonetheless, I commend the bill to the house. This is a piece of legislation of which we can all be proud.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES (MOTOR DRIVING INSTRUCTORS AND AUTHORISED EXAMINERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

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

No. 1. Clause 12, page 20, after line 39—Insert:

98AAZ—Review of Part

(1) The Minister must, as soon as possible after the relevant day, cause a review of this Part to be undertaken.

(2) A report on the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 1 year after the relevant day.

(3) In this section—

relevant day means the day that is 2 years after the relevant day (within the meaning of Schedule 1 clause 1 of the *Motor Vehicles (Motor Driving Instructors and Authorised Examiners) Amendment Act 2024*)

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PARLIAMENT—EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND CLERKS) BILL

Final Stages

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

No. 1. Clause 4, page 3, after line 36—After its present contents (now to be designated as subclause (1)) insert:

(2) Section 7—after subsection (2) insert:

(3) The purpose of the joint parliamentary service is to provide support and facilities to members of Parliament in undertaking their parliamentary duties.

No. 2. New clause, page 4, after line 17—Insert:

8A—Review

(1) The Executive Officer must, not later than 10 months after the relevant day, provide to the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly a report that includes an assessment of the way in which the workplace of the joint parliamentary service is managed (including, for example, management of workplace health and safety and performance management).

(2) The President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly must, not later than 12 months after the relevant day, jointly cause a review to be undertaken of the matters outlined in the report received under subsection (1) and a report on the review to be prepared and submitted to them.

(3) The review must consider and make recommendations in relation to ensuring the parliamentary workplace is managed consistently with contemporary standards.

(4) The President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the House of Assembly must, as soon as practicable after receiving a report under this section, cause a copy of the report to be laid before their respective Houses.

(5) In this section—

Executive Officer and joint parliamentary service have the same respective meanings as in the Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985;

relevant day means the day on which an Executive Officer for the joint parliamentary service is first appointed under Part 2 Division 1A of the *Parliament (Joint Services) Act 1985*.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

At 17:38 the house adjourned until Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 11:00.