

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 28 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.

Parliamentary Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENDOMETRIOSIS

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:02): By leave, I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the committee be extended until Thursday 20 March 2025.

Motion carried.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON STILLBIRTH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:03): By leave, I move:

That the time for bringing up the report of the committee be extended until Thursday 21 August 2025.

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LEGALISATION OF MEDICINAL CANNABIS

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (11:03): I move:

That the interim report of the committee be noted.

The history of this particular committee will see the Hon. Tammy Franks, in the other place, move to set up an inquiry into the use of medicinal cannabis. The inquiry's terms of reference were couched in fairly general terms and it has been to date a very comprehensive inquiry. The report here to be noted is an interim report. The body of work that the committee needs to do has not concluded; it will conclude next year. Indeed, the additional body of work has more of a focus on the industry, the production of cannabis and the economic opportunities that might arise as a state.

The witnesses who were called for this first part of the inquiry were incredibly comprehensive: obviously, the police and medical practitioners; a whole raft of scientists; people involved in the whole area of traffic accidents; interstate people, where there had been some legislative changes; and a whole host of others, especially some of the people who use medicinal cannabis and find it very useful. The work of the committee ended up focusing on a number of particular areas. They were core areas. One was the use of medicinal cannabis which has been prescribed by a general practitioner, the use of medicinal cannabis when it comes to the legislation surrounding offences in relation to driving. That was one of the big issues.

The core argument is that there is a whole bunch of medication—opiates amongst them, but other heavy-duty medication as well—that is prescribed, and people drive and go to work and it is not an offence. When it comes to medicinal cannabis we have decided in this place—and other places throughout the country and indeed at a federal level—and we now acknowledge that it has efficacy in a number of areas. It could be pain management, insomnia or some particular types of epilepsy, but there is a range of other conditions as well where medicinal cannabis has a useful role to play.

The issue for the users is that if they drive a car with any THC content in their blood they are guilty of an offence. That is something that looks incredibly arbitrary. Here we have a whole range of

medicinal products that are clearly stronger in their effect than the use of medicinal cannabis, and yet that is all okay. When it comes to medicinal cannabis, it is not okay.

As a country member, I have a particular interest in this because some people I have spoken to in the country can no longer drive. They can no longer get to work, given the distances that they have to drive. I do not have to tell the member for Narungga about the paucity of public transport and the lack of linkages when it comes to public transport or even private operators in country areas. I would argue that country people, when it comes to the use of medicinal cannabis, are especially being discriminated against. I have met with people who have lost their jobs as a result of the legislation as it currently stands.

The committee did have that real focus on this particular aspect of medicinal cannabis. Indeed, the recommendations that the committee came up with when it comes to the Road Traffic Act 1961 were to provide that it will not be an offence to drive whilst THC is present in oral fluid or blood where a person (1) has been prescribed a medicinal cannabis product containing THC, (2) is using the product in accordance with the prescription, (3) has a zero blood alcohol concentration, and (4) is not impaired.

It is one of the things about the use of cannabis, and I am incredibly up-front: in my younger years, I would have the occasional toke, and I am sure there is a whole bunch of people in this parliament who would have done likewise. We have seen some people use heavier duty stuff of late, but I will not go there—I will not go there.

The thing about the use of cannabis is the whole issue about impairment. THC is present in a number of ways that can be measured. It is present days and sometimes weeks after the use of cannabis, yet there is absolutely no impairment whatsoever, but it does not matter. It is still an offence, so that whole issue about impairment is an important one. What we are seeking to do with a further recommendation—and I should add that this is a recommendation, and obviously it is up to the parliament what ultimately happens—is for the minister to undertake a community consultation process in respect of the draft amendments inviting further commentary than was considered by the committee. Like I said, the committee's deliberations were very comprehensive.

That was out of this part, and I will come to the industrial use of cannabis in a minute. This was the core recommendation. We noted that some other jurisdictions had already moved in that direction and, in fact, had moved a long time ago. When you look at Tasmania, I am not aware of any additional influx or increase in accidents in Tasmania. They have had these changes in place now for quite a number of years. I think the ACT has gone down this track. Just a few weeks ago, an interim measure was adopted in Victoria to give magistrates the discretion, taking into account all of the factors. In Victoria they are looking down the track to longer term changes based upon some scientific work that is being done at the moment.

As I said, at the moment there is a whole raft of far more serious medication that is being used by people who are driving, who are at work, that cannabis potentially could substitute for. Indeed, there is some research coming out of the United States, because a whole bunch of different jurisdictions have different approaches in the United States. In some states there is full legalisation; in others it is medicinal cannabis.

It is interesting, looking at some of those states and the changes that were introduced and those baseline measures, to look at accident rates beforehand. In some of the states where it is not an offence to use medicinal cannabis, the accident rate came down. The argument that was put was that it came down because people substituted cannabis for heavier medication. We know that the United States have a major opiate and a number of other drug issues, but this actually helped when it came to road accidents. So we do need to seriously look at this, and there is this consultation element that we are recommending to government to initiate.

Another important element is that we spoke to unions, to people who have been using cannabis at work, and quite rightly there is drug testing at work. I was around when they introduced drug testing at work. I used to work at the steelworks, and it was interesting what happened in communities like Whyalla, exposed to heavy industry. It is where heavy industry and mining were occurring that a lot of the early drug testing was introduced, for very understandable reasons.

One of the issues is that in probably all of those communities, we saw a shift from the use of just cannabis in general to heavier duty drugs. It was the start of the greater use of amphetamine related drugs, and it was an unintended consequence of the introduction of drug testing frameworks in heavy industry. This scourge has been with us because we have progressed to meth now, and the impact has been far more serious. These are far more serious drugs than the use of someone having a toke on the weekend, which will be in their system for days and days.

So we need to look at the industrial aspect as well. The recommendations are essentially the same. When it comes to the framework in relation to driving and these various conditions are met, it no longer becomes an offence. It should be likewise in heavy industry. But once again, this is about medicinal cannabis, this is about a drug that has been prescribed. It is an important issue. The consequences for the current breaches for people can be incredibly serious.

People have lost their capacity to work. There are people who have lost their houses. Relations have broken down because of this very arbitrary approach to what drugs you can use when you are driving and what drugs you can use when you are working in heavy industry especially. If there is a prescription, if a number of other conditions are met, it is time that we seriously looked at introducing sensible amendments when it comes to the use of medicinal cannabis.

Motion carried.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I want to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of Zar and Elena Brooks, good friends of mine, here to receive a special award today at parliament. They have just been named at the Great Wine Capitals international wine show in Verona, as having the best architecture in the world in a wine region. Anyone who has not been down to the Wonder Room in McLaren Vale, it is well worth a visit. Zar and Elena have Dandelion Vineyards and are makers of very good wines from several regions around South Australia, but they have their heart in McLaren Vale. Anyone thinking of getting down to see us over the summer break, you are all more than welcome: Kangaroo Island, McLaren Vale, the wines of the Fleurieu. It is a great place to live. Congratulations to Zar and Elena.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: SANFL WEST LAKES TALENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITY

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:17): I move:

That the 104th report of the committee, entitled SANFL West Lakes Talent and Community Facility, be noted.

The submission from the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing, and the South Australian National Football League (SANFL) proposes to build a facility that will provide a modern, inclusive and responsive environment to support coaching and develop athletes for SANFL and other state and national teams. Additionally, the facility will provide individual and community athletic programs.

Following the sale of Football Park to Commercial and General, the SANFL moved its operations to Thebarton Oval in the City of West Torrens. Receiving the head lease, SANFL plan to build a new high-performance and community facility at this location and had commenced negotiations to replace the current lease which was due to expire in 2031. However, in early 2022, the City of West Torrens council decided against a new long-term lease, instead prioritising the Adelaide Football Club's plans to build its headquarters at the oval. Following these events, SANFL engaged the City of Charles Sturt and Commercial and General to investigate options for the organisation to return to the old Football Park location at West Lakes.

The site is on land owned by SANFL and fronts onto Turner Drive, Philip Street and Troubridge Drive. Planning approval is in process to separate a new eight and a half thousand square-metre allotment for the project. SANFL has also obtained a non-exclusive licence from the City of Charles Sturt to use the adjacent football oval. The project will deliver a fit-for-purpose training and development environment, including change rooms, gymnasium, strength and conditioning,

athlete recovery and health and wellbeing infrastructure. The facilities will also complement existing council and community assets in the precinct.

Expected outcomes from the project are: helping young athletes realise their potential and reach their AFL, AFLW and SANFL careers; enhancing the wellbeing of athletes and officials by enabling a balance between sport and studies; effective injury prevention and support for injury management; access to allied health services; and community access to the facility for functions and private events. The project will construct a two-storey building with athletic performance infrastructure on the ground floor and administrative and social facilities on the upper floor. An adjoining on-ground car park will accommodate 133 vehicles and service the training facility as well as the neighbouring SANFL-owned Mosaic Hotel.

The architectural design provides a fresh, modern and functional space comprised of sandblasted concrete, floor-to-ceiling glass windows and off-form finished panels. The ground-floor layout contains two large change rooms with amenities and hot and cold baths; a double-height gym and training area; strength and conditioning spaces; sports science, medical and physiotherapy rooms; as well as storage areas and laundry. The upper floor will be comprised of SANFL administration; a players' lounge; coaches, media and statistics boxes; and a 100-person function room with a balcony overlooking the oval.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$25.3 million, with a \$5 million contribution from the state government. The remaining \$20.3 million is funded through an Australian government Community Development Grants Programme, including accrued interest and contributions from the SANFL and the AFL. Upon completion, the project anticipates annual operating costs of \$150,000, which will be borne by the SANFL. The project is expected to provide 103 jobs throughout construction, as well as three ongoing support roles at the precinct.

The SANFL has appointed a project manager and a lead professional consultant. Tandem Building have been engaged for construction due to its significant knowledge of the site and surrounding development from its previous work in the West Lakes' location. Since the schematic design was produced, several contractors have been engaged through a tender process, including landscape architects, urban planning, an arborist consultant, a certification consultant and civil, consulting, traffic, acoustic and facade engineers. The SANFL has created a project control group that is responsible for the delivery of the project, as well as overseeing the project team, and states that additional expertise will be drawn upon as required.

A project steering committee has been established to set policy, ensure special interest group requirements are met and to alleviate any barriers for progression between the control group and SANFL. Early works construction has commenced, with the facility anticipated to be complete by October next year. The project team will be responsible for managing technical risks in conjunction with the control group, which is responsible for coordinating and signing off on the project team's recommendations. Key risks identified include:

- the appointment of a sole builder without undertaking a tender process for which mitigation strategies include quantifying the cost of the builder's preliminaries and margin prior to the appointment of the contractor;
- challenges with constructing a two-storey, three-hour, fire-rated wall, for which the solutions include the use of precast concrete and lightweight structures; and
- the considerable drop in earth levels from Phillips Street, for which a retaining wall will be constructed, and the hole backfilled with compacted layers.

The building design incorporates a number of ecological and sustainable initiatives, including high-performance double glazing; the maximisation of natural light; low-energy, heat-recovery air conditioning systems; efficient LED lighting, water-efficient tapware and wet spaces; durable materials; and a roof structure designed to accommodate solar panels. Greening initiatives on the plaza and car park areas will also reduce heat load as well as improve water drainage and stormwater management.

The Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects confirms there are no entries for Aboriginal heritage associated within the project site. The project team has also discovered no record of state heritage places at this location.

The SANFL has been in thorough consultation with key stakeholders and the community, and confirms the dialogue is ongoing. The project has been through well-publicised conversations with the City of Charles Sturt regarding the use of the oval next to the proposed facility and, in June this year, the council voted in favour of granting a non-exclusive licence to Football Park at West Lakes. This follows two rounds of extensive community consultation in November last year and May of this year.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the SANFL West Lakes Talent and Community Facility. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Darren Chandler, Chief Executive Officer, SANFL; Ian Hore, Consultant, Walter Brooke and Associates; John Kantilaftas, Project Manager, Australian Construction Services; and Tim Nicholas, Director, Corporate Strategy and Investment, Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the member for Lee 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: MOUNT BARKER AND VERDUN INTERCHANGE UPGRADES

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:25): I move:

That the 105th report of the committee, entitled Mount Barker and Verdun Interchange Upgrades, be noted.

The Mount Barker and Verdun interchanges provide vital connections to the South Eastern Freeway for the Mount Barker and Adelaide Hills area. Due to the existing and projected population growth in the region, the current road infrastructure is no longer sufficient for the increased traffic demands.

The existing Mount Barker interchange experiences 23,000 vehicles per day and has reached capacity, with significant congestion caused by the lack of separated turning functions onto the South Eastern Freeway. To alleviate this congestion the Department for Infrastructure and Transport—which I will refer to as 'the department'—proposes to construct a new three-lane bridge over the freeway for northbound traffic as well as increase the capacity of existing ramps to and from Adelaide. The Verdun interchange, which experiences 13,000 vehicles per day, currently has no direct access for the southbound traffic to enter the freeway toward Mount Barker and beyond. Similarly, there is no westbound exit ramp for traffic to exit the freeway at this location. To improve access, the department proposes to construct a new eastbound entry ramp and westbound exit ramp to improve traffic flow through the interchange.

More broadly, the upgrades to both interchanges aim to improve network efficiency and connectivity to the South Eastern Freeway; increase capacity to accommodate further housing growth in the region; increase network resilience by improving emergency vehicle access; and improve safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed works at the Mount Barker interchange will build a new three-lane bridge over the South Eastern Freeway for northbound traffic; install a dedicated right-turn lane for access toward Murray Bridge; convert the existing bridge to accommodate southbound traffic; create a dedicated right-turn lane for access toward Adelaide; incorporate a shared-use path on the existing bridge and create a northbound on-road bike lane; upgrade all existing ramps; build a new signalled intersection for Adelaide Road and the freeway exit ramp at Murray Bridge; create a new priority bus lane at the existing Adelaide Road intersection; upgrade Adelaide Road to include a U-turn facility as well as a passive pedestrian crossing; and construct and install new drainage, LED lighting, safety barriers, anti-throw screens, pavement surfacing and line marking.

The proposed works at the Verdun interchange will build new eastbound entry and westbound exit ramps; construct a new bridge on the existing westbound entry ramp; install a new

single-lane roundabout at the junction of Mount Barker Road and Silver Road; and construct and install new drainage, LED lighting, safety barriers, pavement surfacing and line marking.

The project is funded by a joint commitment of \$150 million on an 80:20 ratio between the Australian and South Australian governments and is expected to support approximately 260 full-time equivalent jobs annually over the life of the construction period. Ongoing operational costs will be sourced from the department's annual operating budget. Concept design identified the need to acquire full and partial acquisition of several properties, with the department stating that all acquisitions are complete and were executed in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act.

The project is being delivered through separate design and construct contracts and procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the state government's procurement management framework, complying with South Australian government guidelines. The construction works will be managed in accordance with the General Conditions of Contract and external resources may be engaged where required. Construction of both sites is scheduled to commence in late 2025, with the aim of both interchanges being operationally complete in the second half of 2027. Risk management will be an integral part of the project, with the following potential risks identified:

- impacts to the road network and local businesses, for which the department will work with local councils and develop traffic management plans to minimise impacts where possible;
- delays in obtaining approvals, for which early engagement aims to accommodate potential delays; and
- construction delays caused by service relocations, for which early engagement with service authorities aims to implement relocations in advance of the main construction works.

The department has prepared a sustainable development report approved by the Department for Environment and Water, with initiatives that include:

- consideration of resources including recycled asphalt, crushed concrete and crumb rubber, as well as high rates of cement replacement in concrete;
- use of biodiesel or alternative fuels;
- a contamination remediation management plan;
- a soil erosion and drainage management plan; and
- the requirement that the contractor develop and implement a contractor's environmental management plan.

The works require the removal of a combination of native and amenity vegetation, and appropriate approvals will be sought as required in accordance with the department's Vegetation Impact Assessment Guideline. The department notes that the project will be required to deliver landscaping that ensures a 20 per cent increase of tree canopy across the site compared with existing levels.

The Mount Barker and Verdun interchanges are located within traditional lands. The Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects indicates no record of Aboriginal sites, objects or remains at either site. The project area lies within or adjacent to the Kurna people native title claim area, but the department states they do not anticipate any native title implications for the project sites. A non-Aboriginal heritage assessment indicates the project will not directly impact any commonwealth, state or local heritage-listed places.

A community and stakeholder management plan has been prepared, outlining the communication and engagement activities with relevant stakeholders, residents, property owners, and businesses. The department states all relevant stakeholders and the community have been informed and updated about the project throughout the concept design phase, and this communication will continue throughout the project's life span.

Similarly, adjacent landowners and affected businesses are being engaged to minimise construction impacts. Early identification of potentially impacted businesses and commercial property owners will be undertaken in line with the department's Small Business Support Framework.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Mount Barker and Verdun interchange upgrades. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Andrew Excell, Executive Director, Transport, Strategy and Planning, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; and Dariusz Fenok, Delivery Manager, Infrastructure Delivery, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the member for Heysen, who provided a statement to the committee regarding the part of this project that is 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 TEAGUE (Heysen) (11:32): I rise to commend the motion. I thank the Chair for his report of the work of the Public Works Committee necessarily in relation to these important works. For reasons that I hope the house will find understandable, I will focus my remarks on the Verdun end of what is now a combination of works involving Mount Barker and also further down the line as well.

It is important to note that we have just heard a timeline being described as commencement I think late next year and then completion at the end of 2027. There are two things to bear in mind about that.

One is that we have unfortunately seen a really quite considerable delay now as the result of, on the one hand, all of the money—state and federal—having first been withdrawn. I think that was led by the Albanese Labor government doing its assessment of projects nationally and somehow coming up with an assessment initially that this work was unmeritorious and should not be funded. It took a fair amount of arm-twisting in the review to say, 'Far from being unmeritorious, this is work that had been the subject of state and federal Liberal commitments to the tune of \$250 million,' precisely because it is urgently required to improve access to the freeway and amenity, particularly for the residents and the community of Hahndorf and south of Hahndorf.

What we have seen in the restoration of federal money is that the state has been dragged back to the table. They have had to say, 'Alright, well, if the federal money is back on, we'd better chip in.' As the Chair said, it is an 80:20 arrangement, so there has been the state money restored to that extent but it is nothing like the \$250 million that was on the table previously for those works, and the result is that we are only seeing one end of the Hahndorf bypass, the Verdun end. The Verdun end is welcome and it is necessary and it will improve the whole situation, but there is more that needs to be done and we have still had a walking away from the commitment to do the other end of Hahndorf.

So we are still going to see the congestion problems that beset Hahndorf, particularly on weekends and at its absolute height through the summer period that is just ahead of us. It is not lost on the community of Hahndorf that state Labor in particular was completely prepared to walk away from this altogether. What we have now seen is a partial restoration of money that is led by the federal Labor government having been dragged back to it and then state Labor saying, 'Alright, we've got to put something towards it,' so we are going to see Verdun done, and that is good.

We have heard the Chair say that there is necessary acquisition ready for the construction. That is precisely because preparation works were done way back when the Liberal money was there. I have dealt with constituents affected by that necessity; that has been a work in itself, and that is all laid out and ready to go. So let's get on with Verdun just as quickly as we possibly can.

What also does not get a mention—and there is no criticism particularly of the Chair, but it is important context—is that as part of doing the Verdun works, it will be an absolute no-brainer and a brilliant opportunity that Mount Barker council and Adelaide Hills Council are well and truly on board with. Mount Barker in particular is responsible for the particular site, but it is very close to the Adelaide Hills Council boundary. There is an excellent opportunity for there to be a during and post-works construction of, effectively, a park-and-ride facility at Verdun, a visitation landing point and, together

with initiatives that can easily happen in conjunction with all this, the possibility for there to be a shuttle bus service and so on from that landing point at Verdun into and through Hahndorf.

There is a lot of community and local government engagement with all this. There has been for now some years. There is a great deal of pent-up expectation that this be done just as soon as it can possibly be done, and the work remains to ensure that the Hahndorf bypass is constructed as well. That is going to need more money and no-one is holding their breath that state or federal Labor is in the least bit interested in going there. What we now see is that the Verdun works are going to go some of the way to assisting those residents of Hahndorf, but the poor old folks on River Road are still left to suffer through what half-measures look like.

We have seen the government do everything it can to avoid Public Works Committee scrutiny of changes that it has made to shovel trucks down River Road. We have seen the debacle that has played out. The community has been up in arms for now the last couple of years in that regard. Verdun is an important building block. There is not enough money that is committed. More needs to be done in order to get the Hahndorf bypass complete.

My residents, the Heysen residents in the Hills, will have a red-hot opportunity to send a message to federal Labor just as soon as a federal election comes around sometime early in the new year. We continue to watch this space. In the meantime, these works are welcome. I welcome the fact that it has come through the Public Works Committee. Let us just get on with doing the work.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:40): I rise to speak to this motion in regard to the Verdun and Mount Barker interchanges. Although I acknowledge this work, it is essentially a halfway house to what could have been. As the member for Heysen lamented, I, too, lament the opportunity lost. We did not see the leadership from state and federal Labor to do the full Hahndorf bypass project. It also relates to what could have been done on the Truro freight bypass project to assist in getting heavy freight out of Adelaide.

State and federal Labor turned their backs on these very good projects that would have alleviated a whole lot of freight stress and also commuter stress on either side of the Hills. It is just deplorable that the Albanese Labor government, alongside the Malinauskas Labor government, has cut the guts out of both these projects. It just does not assist the communities, especially the communities around Hahndorf, in regard to this project, as it should have and could have done.

We have seen freeway upgrades over the years. As a kid, I saw it happen over time. We used to have to come up the old road all the way into Adelaide. It probably added an extra hour at least to the travelling time from Coomandook to get into Adelaide. I saw the upgrades unveil as the dual lane extended all the way to Murray Bridge and then to Tailem Bend, but that took many years. With population growth, as we have heard, we are going to need more roadworks into the future.

Certainly, with this project there has been a real missed opportunity in getting that Hahndorf bypass right. I think it could have been done; I think it should have been done. Working alongside the leader and the member for Heysen, speaking with the locals up there about the impact it has had on residents of River Road, logging trucks have to go through there. I have ridden in a logging truck. To take a right-hand turn off that main through road into Hahndorf from Verdun, you cannot be sitting in the right-hand turn lane because you just will not get round. You have to sit out in the through lane and block all the traffic.

We get native vegetation block up a heap of projects with the Native Vegetation Council. We heard yesterday of how a phone tower at Ceduna, vital communication infrastructure that takes up next to no space in the scheme of things, which would really have helped in the member for Flinders' area with communication, has been blocked by the Native Vegetation Council—how completely outrageous. When it comes to River Road, there were many significant trees along there, and quite a few—I think it was over 20—had to be ripped down to at least try to make River Road safer for the residents and the people who normally used that road before the heavy freight was diverted along it.

It is a real opportunity lost with the Hahndorf bypass. That was a \$250 million project that would have really boosted connectivity. It would have really boosted tourism in the main street of Hahndorf. Hahndorf gets about a million visitors a year. It is a beautiful town to visit, and it would

have made the town much more accessible, especially for that visitor dollar and also for the traders of that town.

Getting back to the intersections that are going to be worked on here, the Verdun intersection, that would have been part of the Hahndorf project, certainly needs to be done to alleviate the stresses at that end of what would have been the overall Hahndorf bypass project. The one I am most familiar with is the exit from the Murray Bridge end of the freeway coming into Mount Barker. It has been a dog's breakfast for many years, quite like the development of Mount Barker, to be frank. When you come off the freeway, if you are running into Mount Barker to the left, that is all right, but if you want to turn right across the freeway towards Totness, or the other side of the freeway, it is quite painful just waiting, trying to get a clear line to get around the traffic congestion coming from the Totness side of the freeway through to Mount Barker.

Quite a few times I have decided that it is just too hard and I will just swing left and go part way into Mount Barker and rip around the roundabout and get to where I need to go. I think there is a new three-lane bridge going in there and traffic lights, which will do a lot to alleviate the stress of people coming from my end of the state into Mount Barker or wanting to head over to the Totness side of the freeway, which has quite a few big industries and big store locations along there, and car dealers, etc. That will certainly alleviate a lot of issues.

The problem is that it is an opportunity lost and it is a real shame that that opportunity has been lost. I would like to think that sometime in the not-too-distant future we can just have the reality of what we need to complete this project, to, alongside these two interchanges, complete the full Hahndorf project, the bypass, as proposed by the former federal Liberal government alongside the former state Liberal government. I certainly commend these works, but it is a full opportunity missed.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:47): I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members for Heysen and Hammond for their contributions. They were nothing if not forthright in their views expressed in the chamber, as is their right as members of parliament. We do not necessarily have to agree with everything they said. I think there might have been a few facts in there that might be contested, but we will leave that for another day. I recommend that we support this motion.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: KANGAROO ISLAND HEALTH SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:48): I move:

That the 106th report of the committee, entitled Kangaroo Island Health Service Infrastructure Upgrade and New Workforce Accommodation, be noted.

The submission from the Department for Health and Wellbeing (SA Health) proposes to upgrade the infrastructure by creating a new non-clinical support facility to support the delivery of high-quality services at the Kangaroo Island Health Service as well as build new co-located workforce accommodation to support sustainable workforce models. The health service falls within the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network and is the only hospital on Kangaroo Island.

The island has a resident population of nearly 5,000 people as well as a significantly greater variable population due to visitors, primarily driven by tourism. The facility provides a range of acute services, including in-hospital care, surgical, general practice, obstetrics, outpatient services and residential care for people with dementia and the elderly. The original building was constructed in 1929, with various extensions and refurbishments undertaken since, including the most recent major facility upgrade in 2004.

In 2020, SA Health, the local health network and the Kangaroo Island Health Advisory Council agreed on the necessity of a master plan to guide the island's health services. The plan provides a clear map to develop infrastructure assets to support health services for the entire Kangaroo Island community. A review of the existing facility identified that the kitchen is reaching its end-of-service life and is inadequate to service the increased capacity predicted in the master plan. Additionally, the health service is currently not equipped with an onsite laundry, requiring outsourcing to a third party, presenting operational complications and financial burdens.

Lastly, to support the required infrastructure upgrades the hospital requires additional staff amenities. After these findings, the review recommended the building of a nonclinical support facility to adjoin the current building, including a new kitchen, laundry and supply services department. To support these operations, the project will also require two loading docks and a new connecting roadway.

Additionally, the review identified that short-term accommodation has been problematic for fly-in fly-out workers during popular tourist periods and that public services are challenged by a lack of accommodation for both visiting staff and specialists and government agency personnel. Beyond the ordinary hurdles this presents to the health service, it also critically challenges emergency responses, like those seen in the 2019-20 bushfires. As part of the upgrades, this project aims to ease this shortage through the construction of permanent onsite single-bed apartments that provide short-term accommodation for visiting medical and ancillary workers and professionals. By adopting a similar modular design, the project allows for fabrication to occur on the mainland, thereby reducing construction costs.

The nonclinical support facility works include an external structure adjoining the existing facility; three service risers from the basement to the ground floor, including connections for power, water and waste; emergency lighting and ventilation; loading docks, lifts and emergency stairs; and infrastructure that is flexible for future upgrades. The onsite accommodation works will include eight modular single-bedroom apartments, bathrooms, kitchen and living space, and a private outdoor area. Lastly, the civil works as part of the project include the demolition of the former Island Resort Motel, the undertaking of earthworks, the construction of access roads, and the installation of stormwater, sewerage, waste and service infrastructure.

Construction is expected to begin in January of next year, and the new infrastructure is anticipated to be operational in early 2026. The total cost of the works is \$15½ million, comprised of \$10 million from the state government, \$5 million through the commonwealth government infrastructure department Regional Recovery Partnership grants program, and the remaining \$500,000 from a state-funded regional assets sustainment program. A portion of the works will be built on land recently purchased by SA Health.

SA Health states that the delivery of the project will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management, as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. Professional service contractors have been engaged by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, which will also procure the construction contractor. To qualify for invitation to tender, all contractors are to maintain the department's prequalification levels for design and delivery of state government infrastructure projects. The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport will act as principal for all contracts.

The project will develop formal communication channels between end users, stakeholders, the local health network and SA Health to ensure government requirements are met, including the implementation of gateway approvals at key milestones. An executive leadership team and a project control group will form a two-tier governance structure to manage planning and delivery of the project. The project team has identified the following project risks: managing the scope of the project to align with the approved budget, for which planning will aim for appropriate design and construction contingencies; carrying out construction works in proximity to an operational clinical environment, for which the project will maintain clear and ongoing communications with site management and consumers; and the potential that unknown site conditions may impact contingencies.

The project team has established formal processes to ensure sustainable principles are incorporated in all phases of the project's life cycle. These include the configuration of mechanical systems and modular construction to adapt to adverse conditions; innovative design and the maximisation of building monitoring and management to increase efficiency of energy and water usage; optimisation of the building form and orientation to leverage natural heating and cooling; use of water-efficient tapware and rainwater storage; installation of heating, cooling and hot water services to minimise emissions; and the selection of environmentally responsible materials.

The central archive has identified no record of Aboriginal sites in the proposed locations. An examination of local heritage at the site has identified Carnarvon House, which displays historical,

economic and social themes of importance to Kingscote. Discussions are underway with local heritage and council to confirm the proposed design does not impact this historic house.

The project team has been in consultation with corporate services staff while developing facility concepts and design details, and further interested stakeholders have been engaged regarding the planning and concept phase. The project contractor has liaised with the local Kangaroo Island Council, Heritage and the Department for Infrastructure and Transport regarding development and site constraints. Furthermore, the local health network has commenced consultation with relevant industrial groups and will manage required communications concerning site planning and logistics.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Kangaroo Island Health Service Infrastructure Upgrade and New Workforce Accommodation project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Max Sankauskas, Acting Director, Capital Projects Infrastructure, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Bronwyn Masters, Chief Executive Officer, Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network; Chris Steele, Project Manager, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; and Shae Taylor, Associate, Grieve Gillett Architects. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the written statement that you provided in support of the project in your 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 PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:56): I would like to commend this motion regarding the Kangaroo Island Health Service Infrastructure Upgrade and New Workforce Accommodation project. I think this sounds like very sensible spending in country health, which we never see enough of. Something like this, especially in a place like Kangaroo Island, which is naturally isolated from the mainland, is going to be a real lift for the area. I am sure the Mayor of Kangaroo Island, Michael Pengilly, the former member for Finniss, will be quite pleased that this is happening. I think it will be a real boost for the residents of Kangaroo Island to have this vital infrastructure upgrade so that they can get a lot more of their health services nearer to home. Certainly, in regard to the accommodation, I think that is a vital upgrade as well so that people who do need to fly in to deliver those services can be accommodated appropriately to do that, so I support the works.

The SPEAKER (11:57): Before I go back to the member for Florey, I would also like to thank the committee for their work on behalf of the people of Kangaroo Island. I would like to thank the government as well that took a \$10 million pledge to the election to upgrade Kangaroo Island hospital.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (11:57): I just want to take this opportunity to thank the member for Hammond for his contribution and also to recognise your ongoing support, Mr Speaker, for this important project in your electorate. From speaking to people in the government about this particular project, I know that your assistance has been absolutely vital in making sure that it is properly planned, so thank you.

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF VETERINARIANS

The Legislative Council informed the House of Assembly that it had appointed the Hon. N.J. Centofanti, the Hon. M. El Dannawi and the Hon. S.L. Game to the committee.

Bills

ELECTORAL (ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) (ORDERLY EXIT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK) AMENDMENT BILL*Final Stages*

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

JUDICIAL CONDUCT COMMISSIONER (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

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) (12:00): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015 established the office of the Judicial Conduct Commissioner to provide an independent, fair and transparent way to deal with complaints about judicial officers. In 2021, the first judicial conduct panel was appointed under the act to inquire into and report on eight complaints against the then magistrate Mr Milazzo. The judicial conduct panel found the complaints against Mr Milazzo proved and recommended his removal as a magistrate. The Governor acted upon that opinion and removed Mr Milazzo from office.

As this was the first judicial conduct panel constituted under the act, the Attorney-General took the opportunity to review the operation of the act, including personally meeting with some of the complainants and witnesses involved in the judicial conduct panel inquiry. It was clear from the report of the judicial conduct panel, the judicial review proceedings undertaken by Mr Milazzo and the experiences of the complainants and witnesses, that the operation of the act would be improved by legislative reform. The proposed amendments to the act will provide greater clarity for the participants around procedural matters and ensure that there is some consistency in how future judicial conduct panel inquiries are conducted, whilst still giving the judicial conduct panel flexibility to determine additional procedures based on the requirements of a particular inquiry.

I now turn to the detail of the bill. The definition of complainant in section 4 of the act is amended by clause 3 of the bill so that a person will be considered to be a complainant under the act despite not being the maker of the formal complaint where the misconduct that was the subject of the inquiry was directed at them. This will mean that such category of people will have the benefit of existing provisions in the act currently relevant only to complainants, such as the right to be informed about the progression of the complaint.

Clause 4 of the bill inserts new section 6A into the act. This section requires the commissioner to prepare and publish guidelines relating to how meetings of judicial conduct panels are to be called, how business is to be conducted at judicial conduct panel meetings and how judicial conduct panels are to conduct inquiries and examinations of complainants under the act. A consequential amendment is made to section 23 of the act by clause 6 of the bill. Clause 5 amends section 14 of the act.

These amendments give the commissioner the power to postpone consideration of a complaint if they consider it appropriate to do so, where the complaint is made during the course of a hearing conducted by the judicial officer the subject of the complaint. Postponement can be for a specified period or until the hearing has been completed.

Clauses 7 and 8 of the bill insert five new sections into part 4 of the act to provide greater certainty around procedures that apply when a judicial conduct panel is established. New sections 23A and 23B set out the process for the appointment of counsel to assist in an inquiry and create a statutory entitlement to legal representation for the judicial officer, the subject of the complaint, and any witness or complainant appearing before the inquiry.

New section 23C ensures that persons appearing before a judicial conduct panel inquiry have the same access to witness protections that are available to witnesses in other legal proceedings under section 13 of the Evidence Act 1929. Such witness protections might include that the court can make an order that the witness be accompanied by a relative or friend for the purpose of providing emotional support.

New section 24A requires a judicial conduct panel to take certain actions before asking questions of a witness, including informing the witness of their rights and obligations as a witness, and of any requirements under the act relating to the publication, confidentiality and non-disclosure of information and evidence.

Finally, a new section 24B deals with the examination, cross-examination and re-examination of witnesses and complainants. The section makes it clear that a complainant or witness can be examined by counsel assisting the inquiry, the legal representative of the judicial officer to whom the inquiry relates and any other person granted permission to do so by the judicial conduct panel.

Importantly, subsection (2) of new section 24B protects witnesses and complainants from being personally cross-examined by the judicial officer, the subject of the complaint. Instead, where the judicial officer is not legally represented, the cross-examination must be undertaken either by submitting questions to the judicial conduct panel or as otherwise directed by the judicial conduct panel. This provision is modelled on section 13B of the Evidence Act 1929.

I am pleased to be able to introduce this bill today and wish to express the government's sincere thanks and appreciation for the brave and thoughtful feedback received by past complainants, which helped shape this reform. I hope that it will have a positive impact for participants in future judicial conduct panels through providing greater certainty about the procedures of such a panel. I commend the bill to the members and seek leave to insert the explanation of clauses into *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015*

3—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

This clause amends section 4 of the Act to extend the definition of complainant to include certain other persons against whom judicial conduct is directed.

4—Insertion of section 6A

This clause inserts new section 6A into the Act, requiring the Commissioner to publish guidelines for the purposes of the Act.

5—Amendment of section 14—Request to postpone consideration of complaint

This clause amends section 14 of the Act to set out circumstances in which the Commissioner may postpone consideration of a complaint.

6—Amendment of section 23—Functions and procedures of panel

This clause makes a consequential amendment.

7—Insertion of sections 23A, 23B and 23C

This clause inserts new sections into the Act as follows:

23A—Appointment of counsel to assist inquiry

This section allows the Attorney-General to appoint counsel assisting at the request of a judicial conduct panel.

23B—Representation and participation

This section sets out when judicial officers and others must be allowed legal representation in an inquiry.

23C—Special arrangements for protecting witnesses from embarrassment, distress etc when giving evidence

This section applies section 13 of the *Evidence Act 1929* to an inquiry, providing protections for witnesses when giving evidence.

8—Insertion of sections 24A and 24B

This clause inserts new sections into the Act as follows:

24A—Actions to be taken by panel before questioning witness etc

This section sets out requirements of a judicial conduct panel to inform witnesses and legal representatives of certain rights and obligations.

24B—Examination etc of complainant and witnesses

This section makes provision regarding who can examine, cross examine or re-examine witnesses, and makes special provisions regarding cross examination of a witness by the judicial officer to whom the inquiry relates.

9—Amendment of section 30—Immunity from liability

This clause amends section 30 of the Act to extend immunity from liability to members of a judicial conduct panel and counsel assisting the panel.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:05): I rise to indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition and to indicate the opposition's support for the bill. I share the sentiments of the Deputy Premier in terms of the second reading setting out the scope and purpose of the function of the changes, the subject of the bill. I might just reflect briefly.

The act provides for the office of the commissioner and in turn provides for the process by which a panel may be required to be convened to deal with the circumstances of a complaint. Commissioner Michael Boylan KC recognised and acknowledged the important work the commissioner does. The changes, however, the subject of this bill, are very much concerned with the processes of the panel.

It is perhaps opportune to highlight that the Judicial Conduct Commissioner performs an important function in terms of receiving complaints about judicial conduct and can take a variety of actions in response, including requiring the provision of documents, conducting some preliminary examination and determining then what ought to happen. Importantly, the commissioner does not delve into matters properly that ought to be the subject of an appeal—things like decisions of judges; the legality of those decisions, and so on—nor does the commissioner, through the office, make determinations about any judicial misconduct. What the commissioner does is to recommend to the Attorney-General that a panel ought to be established where circumstances are appropriate, and that is where we get to the subject matter of this bill.

I hasten to add to all of that that we have seen panels established, and that has led to learnings and, as a result, the amendments that are now before the house, the subject of the bill. It is my hope that these are vanishingly rare circumstances. I endorse and agree with the Deputy Premier's observations about appreciating what can be learned—the result of these unfortunate circumstances in which complainants have been moved to bring matters to the attention of the commissioner—and for a panel to be established and then appropriate sanction to be applied following a panel investigation. There ought to be such processes, and they ought to be readily available to complainants and those others who are the subject of misconduct.

These amendments will ensure that all of those interested parties are now more thoroughly able to be kept informed, to be represented by counsel, as may be appropriate, and for the panel, similarly, to be supported in that way. In saying that, I hope that the circumstances of establishing a panel might be vanishingly rare. That is simply expressing the expectation that judicial officers ought to be conducting themselves according to the highest ethical levels—leaving aside the exercise of the necessary skills in the job, but with total integrity at all times. They should be held to the highest of standards. Where that does not occur, the work of the commissioner and the panel is then available, the subject of the act as it will be amended now in a meritorious way. So I commend these changes and commend the bill, again indicating, I hope, that the panel in particular is something that is deployed vanishingly rarely.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (12:11): I am pleased to rise in support of the Judicial Conduct Commissioner (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024. The Office of the Judicial Conduct

Commissioner was established by the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015 to provide a means for dealing with complaints arising in relation to judicial officers in South Australia. The aim in establishing the Office of the Judicial Conduct Commissioner was to create an independent, transparent and fair process that would be followed in considering and acting upon such complaints.

In 2021, the first judicial conduct panel was appointed under the act. Its purpose was to inquire and report into eight complaints that were made against one particular—now former—magistrate. This judicial complaint panel was the first to be constituted under the act. The Attorney-General in the other place took the opportunity to meet with some of the complainants and witnesses who were involved in the judicial conduct panel inquiry. Having gained firsthand experience with the panel's processes, the complainants and witnesses were in a unique position to identify areas for improvement. It was clear from their experiences that the operation of the act could be improved by legislative reform. It was also apparent from the report of the judicial conduct panel that reform was warranted.

Feedback received in relation to their experience of giving evidence to the judicial conduct panel during the inquiry has informed the development of the proposed reforms we now consider. These amendments to the act intend to provide greater clarity for participants around procedural matters and to ensure that there is consistency in how the future judicial conduct panel's inquiries are conducted, while still affording the judicial conduct panel the necessary flexibility to determine additional procedures based on the requirements of a particular inquiry.

A draft bill was prepared and was the subject of targeted consultation in September 2023. A consultation bill proposed a number of procedural changes to the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015. Clause 3 of the bill proposed to amend the definition of 'complainant' so that a person will be considered to be a complainant, despite not being the maker of the formal complaint, where the misconduct, the subject of the inquiry, was directed at them. A complainant, for example, has special rights to receive information about the progress of the inquiry.

At clause 5 the consultation bill proposed to give the Judicial Conduct Commissioner the power to postpone consideration of a complaint, where the complaint is made during the course of a hearing conducted by the judicial officer who was the subject of the complaint. In such a circumstance the Judicial Conduct Commissioner must notify that judicial officer of the complaint straightaway, which would hopefully result in the cessation of any inappropriate behaviour. If the Judicial Conduct Commissioner wishes to delay the conduct of a preliminary examination until after a trial, under previous provisions they would have to wait for the judicial officer to request a postponement or carry on. If they determined it was desirable to wait until the trial was over, it is arguable that they are not conducting the preliminary examination as expeditiously as possible, which is not consistent with the requirement of the act.

Clause 7 of the consultation bill sets out the process for the appointment of counsel to assist in an inquiry and create a statutory entitlement to legal representation. It provided that section 13 of the Evidence Act 1929 will apply to an inquiry so as to provide the same access to witness protections for persons giving evidence to a judicial conduct panel that are available to witnesses in other legal proceedings—for example, having a support person or appearing by audiovisual link.

Clause 8 of the bill required a judicial conduct panel to take certain actions before questioning witnesses, including informing legal representatives of the witness at hearings of any requirements under the act relating to confidentiality, publication and non-disclosure of information and evidence. Clause 8 further made it clear that complainants and witnesses can be cross-examined by counsel assisting the inquiry, the judicial officer to whom the inquiry relates, the legal representative of the judicial officer, or any other person who is granted permission to do so by the judicial conduct panel.

Stakeholders were generally supportive of the changes proposed in the consultation bill. However, a number of issues were raised that have resulted in several changes to the version of the bill that we now consider. Those key changes include an amendment to proposed new section 24B, which is modelled on section 13B of the Evidence Act 1929. That amendment prevents the judicial officer who is the subject of the complaint from personally cross-examining witnesses and complainants during the panel's proceedings, restricting them to cross-examinations through

counsel, or through submitting questions to the judicial conduct panel or counsel assisting the judicial conduct panel.

A further change is the insertion of a new section 6A to require the commissioner to publish guidelines to provide direction for future members of judicial conduct panels and provide future participants with a strengthened understanding of how a judicial conduct panel will deal with complaints.

In addition to the procedural changes proposed in the draft version of the bill, stakeholder views were sought on broader changes relating to the application of the act, the powers of the commissioner and judicial conduct panels, and the application of clearer procedures to the resignation and retirement of judicial officers. As further targeted consultation will be required on these more complex changes, they will be progressed in a separate bill in the interest of avoiding any further delays to the introduction of the stage 1 procedural reforms. Further technical changes that could be contemplated for a later bill may include:

- extending the application of the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015 to former judicial officers;
- expressly providing for the disclosure of information obtained during a preliminary investigation under the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015 to the Supreme Court and the Legal Profession Conduct Commissioner;
- providing for the suspension of judicial officers while subject to an investigation under the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015;
- providing greater clarity on the operation of the secrecy provisions in the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015;
- applying clearer procedures to the resignation and retirement of judicial officers; and
- amending section 5(1) of the Legal Practitioners Act 1981 to expand the definition of a 'show cause event' to capture a circumstance where an adverse finding is made against the former judicial officer under the Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act 2015.

The amendments to the act proposed by this bill aim to ensure better consistency in how future judicial conduct panel inquiries are conducted, whilst still giving the judicial conduct panel flexibility to make determinations around procedures based on the requirements of an inquiry.

The true test of any piece of legislation, or indeed any newly established entity, can be found in its operation. The opportunity to learn from the real experiences of those who have personally engaged with a judicial conduct panel inquiry as complainants and witnesses has proved a valuable one, and the feedback they provided was of important assistance in developing the reforms that are put forward in this bill.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and commend the complainants and witnesses whose feedback has helped to instigate, and also significantly assist in shaping these reforms. It is the sincere hope of the government that their willingness to provide feedback to assist in developing these reforms will lead to better experiences and outcomes for future participants in judicial conduct panels. I commend the bill to the house.

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) (12:18): I am very pleased to close the debate of the second reading. I thank the participants in the debate—'discussion' might be a better way of describing it—and also all the advisers and the people who have contributed to the drafting of the legislation. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

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) (12:19): I move:

That the bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Mr ODENWALDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (STALKING AND HARASSMENT) AMENDMENT 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) (12:21): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am really pleased to introduce to this house the Criminal Law Consolidation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill 2024. This bill will expand the existing offence of unlawful stalking in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 to cover a broader range of stalking conduct to ensure that the awful new methods of cyberstalking engaged in are adequately reflected and that those who engage in it can be appropriately dealt with.

The reforms acknowledge the increased prevalence of stalkers using digital technologies and social media to stalk their victims and cause them harm. We all rightly marvel at how new digital technologies have been beneficial in many diverse ways. We also, however, are appalled by how they have also created new avenues for abuse and harassment predominantly directed toward women. I think many of us have images in our minds of what constitutes stalking: a person physically following you, intimidating you, harassing you, scaring you, making you fear for your safety, never leaving you alone. Physical stalking, harassment and abuse, sadly, continue, but there are new, insidious ways for those who seek to harass and abuse you to stalk you and cause that fear and harm.

A person, sadly, can now be stalked not just by being physically followed but by the stalker insidiously following them in the virtual world: leaving offensive comments on their social media posts, bombarding them with unwanted messages, repeatedly sending unwanted pictures, attempting to contact them on multiple platforms relentlessly. Digital technologies also provide new mechanisms to track a person and their movements, to listen to them and to keep them under constant surveillance. Being stalked physically or online is really scary. Either vehicle to do so causes the same stress, angst, fear and apprehension about who is watching you or what they will do to you or to the people you love. It is awful.

To prove the offence of stalking, it must be proved that the defendant engaged in stalking behaviours on at least two occasions. The provision sets out a list of stalking behaviours, including giving or sending offensive material to the other person, communicating with the other person or to others about the other person in a way that could reasonably be expected to cause apprehension or fear, or acting in any other way that could reasonably be expected to arouse the other person's apprehension or fear.

Whilst some of these examples include references to digital communications, they are inconsistent and outdated. These references, through this bill, are replaced with a blanket provision stating that any of the behaviours listed in section 19AA(1)(a)(iv) to (vi) can include conduct engaged in by way of the internet, electronic communication or social media as well as by telephone, email, mail or in person.

The bill will expand the listed stalking behaviour of keeping a person under surveillance. This will be replaced with the much broader phrase 'monitors, tracks or surveils the other person or the person's movements, activities or associations'. This reflects the broader types of surveillance

allowed by digital technology. The bill will insert a list of examples of digital monitoring and surveillance, including using tracking devices, accessing a person's internet browser history or monitoring their email communications.

The bill will also expressly provide that stalking can include impersonating someone by publishing material that appears to have been published or authored by that person, for example, by creating a fake social media account in their name and posting content that purports to be written by them. This will be considered stalking if it could reasonably cause the impersonated person apprehension or fear.

This bill will also expand the mental element for the offence of stalking. Currently, to convict someone for stalking, a court must be satisfied that the stalker intended to cause the person subject to the stalking serious physical or mental harm or serious apprehension or fear. However, this represents a very narrow subset of the broad range of motivations for stalking behaviour. There are stalkers who are fuelled by narcissism and hubris and genuinely believe that their conduct might lead to a relationship with the person being kindled or rekindled. Some stalkers might see themselves as being protective, particularly in domestic abuse situations.

Currently, it is really difficult to convict these persons of stalking as they do not subjectively intend to cause harm. However, their behaviour is still really frightening, invasive and unwanted. They still violate a person's right to privacy and peaceful enjoyment of their lives. They still cause fear, and they do not respect the person's right to say no to continued contact.

The bill will add an alternative mental element for the offence of stalking, namely that the defendant knew or ought reasonably to have known that their conduct would cause physical or mental harm or serious apprehension or fear. This will cover situations in which a stalker does not subjectively intend to frighten the person but any reasonable person could tell that the behaviour would be objectively frightening. The existing intent element will also be modified to provide that if the defendant did intend to cause physical or mental harm, the prosecution need not prove that the intended harm was serious. Intent to cause any harm will be sufficient to prove the offence. The seriousness of the intended harm can be considered in relation to sentencing.

Lastly, the offence will rightly be renamed 'stalking and harassment'. This much better reflects what the offence already covers. Several existing items on the list of stalking behaviours could alternatively be described as serious harassment, including repeated communication with the person subject to the behaviour, giving offensive material to the person or publishing offensive material about them. Renaming the offence will enhance public understanding of what is unlawful and encourage people subject to these behaviours to report them to police.

This raising of awareness and understanding is really important. If we are to be successful in our ongoing desire as a government and as a community to stamp out all forms of violence against women and indeed all people, we need everybody to understand what all those forms of violence are and we need to send a really strong message that all of those forms of violence are utterly unacceptable, have no place in our community and will be firmly responded to.

This bill is about doing that. It will hold to account those who perpetrate this particular form of violence, stalking and harassment, using physical or non-physical means, and it shifts community perception and understanding. This is crucial because, unfortunately, these new places and means through which people are being stalked and harassed are also the places where terrible, misogynistic material that breeds harmful attitudes about women are also being propagated. As I have said now on several occasions in this house, as fast as we can run respectful relationship and behaviour education and awareness, the likes of Andrew Tate are attempting to undo our efforts, and as they do so online it is only a short click away to channelling these harmful attitudes into harmful, stalking harassing behaviours online.

As we tackle this scary, growing problem, we need policy and educative and legislative tools at our disposal. This bill is another strong piece of legislation that our government is advancing to help drive change. It of course also sits alongside the strong stance our government is taking on social media and young people. This bill will help to make a difference. I commend it to the house. I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935*

3—Amendment of heading to Part 3 Division 5

This clause alters a heading and is consequential to the proposed changes to section 19AA.

4—Amendment of section 19AA—Unlawful stalking

This clause amends section 19AA to include reference to 'harassment', expands the list of conduct that constitutes stalking and harassment and adds an alternative mental element for the offence.

Schedule 1—Related amendments

The Schedule makes related amendments to the *Evidence Act 1929*, the *Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009*, the *Sentencing Act 2017* and the *Summary Offences Act 1953* to include reference to 'harassment'.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (12:32): I rise to indicate my support for the Criminal Law Consolidation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill 2024. It is a bill that reforms our legislation to increase the awareness and reporting of stalking behaviour, whether it be physical or digital stalking. It is never acceptable for anyone to harass or stalk another in person or online, whether this be mildly or seriously. We need to spread the word to our community that this behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. This bill strengthens that message.

Stalking is significantly more likely to affect women than men. The 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey conducted by the ABS across over 10,000 randomised respondents indicated that 3.4 per cent of women and 0.6 per cent of men had experienced stalking behaviours in the year prior, with one in five women experiencing stalking behaviours across their lifetime. Of those one in five women, 94 per cent indicated their stalking was perpetrated by a man; 75 per cent of female stalking victims had been stalked by a person known to them, with 30 per cent of those being a current or former partner; and 25 per cent of women reported being stalked by a stranger.

This bill will rename the offence in the act from 'unlawful stalking' to 'unlawful stalking and harassment'. This is intended to promote better public understanding of the crime and better demonstrate what the section already criminalises. There were 106 stalking charges laid in South Australia in 2022, though we know the nature of this offence means that this offence is likely to be significantly under-reported to police, although the cases that are reported can be extremely serious.

In one case, an offender was convicted of 26 counts of stalking, with each count relating to a different female victim and with behaviours including communicating in a threatening manner over dating apps; attending victims' homes when they had never disclosed their address; relentlessly calling their workplaces, families and friends; graffitiing their homes; unwanted floral and gift deliveries; and interfering with their post mail.

Stalking, as noted by the Commissioner for Victims' Rights and the above case, goes beyond the physical act of following a person, but many people in the community perceive stalking to be constituted by physical following and therefore may not report behaviour they perceive to be harassment. We need to talk about stalking and harassment as part of the conversation regarding family, domestic and sexual violence, as we know that this violence is often not only physical but mentally damaging, emotionally sapping and controlling behaviour, which we are addressing through our coercive control legislation.

A report on intimate partner violence homicides, published by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, found 42 per cent of victims in intimate partner homicides had previously been stalked by the male perpetrator. To prove the offence of stalking, it must be proved that the defendant engaged in stalking behaviours on at least two occasions. Sadly, as we know from

many examples that have come before the courts, the offences can occur multiple times per day and to multiple victims.

The provision sets out a list of stalking behaviours, including giving or sending offensive material to the other person; communicating with the other person or to others about the other person in a way that could reasonably be expected to cause that person apprehension or fear; or acting in any other way that could reasonably be expected to arouse the other person's apprehension or fear.

The changes proposed in this bill reflect the fact that these unlawful behaviours are increasingly moving across to online platforms, including dating apps. It is important that our laws clearly reflect that wherever these behaviours occur, whether online or in person, the behaviour is not tolerated. This bill includes updating the list of stalking behaviours to more expressly cover stalking and harassment using technology, social media and other online platforms, as cyberstalking is an ever-increasing type of this offence.

Whilst we all might think the internet has been fantastic in so many ways, it has also provided new avenues for abuse and harassment, through social media messaging, text messaging, dating apps and social media posts. A blanket provision states that any of these behaviours listed in the act can include conduct engaged in by the way of internet, electronic communication or social media, as well as by telephone, email or in person.

The bill will expand the listed stalking behaviour of 'keeping a person under surveillance' and replace it with the much broader phrase, 'monitors, tracks or surveils the other person or the person's movements, activities or associations'. This reflects the broader types of surveillance enabled by digital technology. The bill will insert a list of examples of digital monitoring and surveillance, including using tracking devices, accessing a person's internet browser history or monitoring their email communications, all examples that were not readily available previously but can now be accessed by most people. No person has a right to monitor or control another. In another shocking example, an offender stalked his former colleague online, bombarded her with messages and later murdered her. It cannot get more serious.

The bill will also expressly provide that stalking can include impersonating someone by publishing material that appears to have been published or authored by that person—for example, creating a fake social media account in their name and posting content that purports to be written by them. This will be considered stalking if it could reasonably cause the impersonated person apprehension or fear.

This bill also broadens the mental element of the offence. Currently, the offence requires proof that the defendant intended to cause serious physical or mental harm, or serious apprehension or fear. The proposed changes in this bill include removing the reference to serious harm, apprehension or fear. As highlighted by the Acting Chief Justice in his initial submission, it should not be considered acceptable that stalking or harassing behaviours are lawful on the basis that the defendant only intended to cause moderate harm or fear.

An alternative objective test will also be added for circumstances where the defendant may not have intended to cause harm, apprehension or fear, but ought reasonably to have known their conduct would do so. This is intended to address circumstances where defendants, perhaps driven by narcissistic behaviours or delusions, may see themselves as being protective, helpful or more connected with the victim than they actually are. These defendants should reasonably have known how frightening their behaviour is.

These proposed reforms send a clear message that, whoever you are, communicating with someone, monitoring them or behaving in a way that you know, or ought to know, causes them fear or harm is not acceptable and you should feel the full force of the law. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (12:40): I am pleased to rise in support of the Criminal Law Consolidation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill 2024. The provisions of this bill seek to expand the existing offence of unlawful stalking in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 such that a broader range of conduct will be covered. It also seeks to ensure that some newer methods of

stalking, namely that which occurs through the use of digital technologies and social media, are adequately reflected and addressed by our laws.

While a range of new technologies which have evolved rapidly, and continue to do so, have been beneficial to our community in a variety of ways, they have unfortunately also facilitated new means for engaging in abuse and harassment. Acknowledging the greater prevalence of people who engage in stalking behaviour through the use of digital technologies and social media is important. We must ensure that our laws are responsive to the changing realities of our lives in many regards—socially, economically, technologically—and the reforms contained in this bill recognise that the behaviours which should be captured in both public and legal understanding of stalking have further evolved with the advent of new digital technologies.

Today, a person may be stalked not only by having their physical whereabouts monitored or by being followed in the physical realm but also by the stalker following or harassing them in the virtual world—for example, by leaving offensive comments on their social media posts or inundating them with offensive or unwanted messages.

It is also worth recognising that digital technologies have provided new mechanisms by which a person's movements can be tracked and by which a person's activity and movements can be kept under surveillance. It is important that our laws be fit for purpose in recognition of the existence and the impact of new behaviours that reasonable South Australians would agree constitute stalking.

Some of the examples in current provisions that include references to digital communications are inconsistent and outdated. These references will be replaced with a blanket provision stating that any of the behaviours listed in section 19AA(1)(a)(iv) to (v) can include conduct engaged in by way of the internet, electronic communication or social media, as well as by telephone, email or in person.

The bill seeks to expand the list of stalking behaviour of 'keeping a person under surveillance'. This will be replaced with a significantly broader phrase: 'monitors, tracks or surveils the other person, or the person's movements, activities or associations'. This expanded phrase reflects the types of surveillances that are made possible in part by the evolving capabilities of digital technologies. The bill seeks to insert a list of examples of digital monitoring and surveillance, including using tracking devices, accessing a person's browser history or monitoring their email communications.

The bill will also provide that stalking can include impersonating a person by publishing material that appears to have been published or authored by that person—for example, by creating a fake social media account in a person's name and posting content that is intended to appear to have been posted by that person. This will be considered stalking if it could reasonably cause apprehension or fear for the impersonated individual. Broadly considering apprehension, fear and the other potential emotional and mental impacts experienced by victims of stalking, the bill seeks to expand the mental element for the offence of stalking. Under the current provisions, in order to record a conviction for stalking, a court must be satisfied that the person who engaged in stalking behaviour intended to cause the victim serious physical or mental harm, or serious apprehension or fear.

The changes contained in the bill propose to remove the reference to 'serious' harm, apprehension or fear. It was astutely pointed out by the Acting Chief Justice in this initial submission that stalking or harassing behaviours should not be lawful on the basis that the person engaging in the behaviours merely intended to cause moderate harm or fear.

Currently, it is difficult to convict persons of stalking who cannot be proven to having intended to cause harm. Even in the absence of intent to cause harm that can be proven, stalking behaviours may be frightening, invasive and unwanted, and their behaviours may violate various of the victim's rights. That is why this bill seeks to add an alternative mental element for the offence of stalking, namely that the defendant either knew or reasonably ought to have known that their behaviour would cause physical or mental harm, apprehension or fear. It is intended that this will cover situations in which a stalker may not subjectively intend to cause harm, apprehension or fear to the victim, but a reasonable person could tell that the behaviour would cause harm, apprehension or fear.

It is worth noting that all other Australian states and territories have mental elements for stalking offences other than actual intent. The objective test that is proposed here is the same as

exists in Victoria, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania. The existing intent element will also be adjusted to provide that in the event that a defendant did intend to cause physical or mental harm, the prosecution need not prove that the intended harm was serious in nature. Intent to cause harm of any nature will be sufficient to prove the offence and the degree of seriousness of the intended harm can then be considered in relation to sentencing.

Finally, the bill provides that the offence will be renamed 'stalking and harassment' rather than simply 'stalking'. This change will better reflect what the offence already covers. Several items that appear on the list of stalking behaviours could be described alternatively as harassment, including repeated communications with the victim, giving offensive material to the victim or publishing offensive material about the victim.

During consultation, the Commissioner for Victims' Rights raised the point that many people in the community perceived stalking to mean physical following and therefore they may not recognise it is appropriate to report behaviour that they perceive to be harassment but which in fact already constitutes the offence of unlawful stalking. Renaming the offence aims to strengthen public understanding of what is unlawful, as well as to encourage people who unfortunately find themselves subject to these behaviours to report them to the police.

These reforms send a clear message that engaging in stalking and harassment behaviours, whether that is by communicating with a person, monitoring or surveilling them, or behaving in any way that a reasonable person knows or ought to know will cause fear or harm, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen) (12:47): I rise to indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition and I indicate the opposition's support for the bill. In the course of the debate, there has been some reference—and I listened carefully to the members for Gibson and Florey after the minister's contribution—to the more particular role that an objective test is to play in the formulation of these offences.

It is important to mention that there are concerns, including those raised by the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and the Law Society, about the so-called reasonable person test, the objective test, in relation to these offences. Like all matters that are going to need to be the subject of the working up of evidence and decisions to be made by prosecutors, the question of what constitutes the meeting of that objective test to constitute the offence in the absence of intent will be a matter to be carefully monitored.

There are also necessarily in this space, like there are in so many other walks of life where ordinary conduct can constitute an offence in relevant circumstances, plenty of examples of monitoring, for example, that are in the interests of safety, communication and other things and so it is important to ensure that there is clarity of approach. The Law Society has gone so far as to propose that there be an explicit defence in relation to the tracking side in this regard of a reasonable excuse. So the caution is expressed, and I particularly want to highlight that aspect.

Of course, this is legislation that does not overlap with the legislation as it is framed in relation to coercive control—coercive control applying specifically to circumstances of an intimate partner relationship. There are two areas of criminal conduct where it is not straightforward to identify and particularly to prove up offences and where there is at least material risk of unintended consequences such that these concerns have been raised.

It is important that, in navigating this territory, there is awareness of these issues, and I raise that particularly in the context of the reasonable person test. There might be some opportunity to inquire in that regard in the course, briefly, of the committee stage. So I otherwise indicate the opposition's support, and proceed with the expectation that this will do as it is intended to enhance the security of those who otherwise might be the subject of what is undoubtedly heinous criminal conduct.

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) (12:52): I thank the member for Gibson, the member for Florey and the member for Heysen for their important contributions. I particularly acknowledge the incredibly devastating

example that the member for Gibson provided and just reflect that this morning I was together with Embolden and the Domestic and Family Violence Safety Alliance, and our conversation focused on the importance of ensuring that the stories and the voices of those whom we have tragically lost, but also of survivors, are—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just to clarify, my understanding is that you will not be going into committee?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: That is right.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I suggest that—

Mr Teague: It's going into committee.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You want to go into committee?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: I thought you said we were not, sorry.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand there are no advisers present.

The Hon. S.E. Close: I believe you are not going into committee now because the adviser is not able to be here; is that right?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: Yes.

The Hon. S.E. Close: So you may go into committee in the future but not today because the adviser is not available.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: That is right, yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is what I am just clarifying. In that case, can I suggest you seek leave to continue your remarks?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD: I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

NATIVE VEGETATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 16 October 2024.)

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

A quorum having been formed:

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (12:55): I rise to indicate my support for the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024, a bill that supports achieving the Malinauskas Labor government's election commitment to increase the legislative protection, monitoring and compliance of the act, including ruling out any reduction in the level of legislative protection for native vegetation and biodiversity.

Native vegetation comprises the native flora of our state, including beautiful trees such as our mighty river red gums—my personal favourite—hardy shrubs, our grass-like sedges, bush foods like finger limes and lemon myrtle, and grasses such as bottlebrush and weeping rice grass, and incorporates simpler life forms such as mosses, lichens and fungi, providing essential ecosystem services and a crucial component of our state's biodiversity.

Minister Close mentioned that it also provides ecological benefits such as stabilising stream banks and improving water quality, as well as addressing climate change through absorbing carbon dioxide and acting as carbon sinks. These carbon sinks are of significant and growing financial value for farming communities. Native vegetation can also be used to control and reverse forms of land degradation, such as erosion and salinity, potentially saving the agricultural sector millions of dollars.

The Native Vegetation Act 1991 and Native Vegetation Regulations 2017 are the legislative basis for the management and protection of native vegetation in the state, with the act applying to

the majority of the state, excluding parts of metropolitan Adelaide. The act provides incentives and assistance to landowners in relation to the preservation and enhancement of native vegetation and controls the clearance of native vegetation in the state.

The act was a significant reform when first introduced and has prevented mass vegetation clearance; however, like in so many other areas we have seen a need for reform and made a number of environmental election commitments and this bill supports our Labor government's efforts to achieve these commitments to improve our state. The act is being amended to clarify, streamline and improve assessment and compliance processes.

The changes will allow for more appropriate mid-range compliance options to be utilised. Contemporary compliance tools will be introduced, along with emergency orders where urgent action is required. The bill will provide consistent and fit-for-purpose clearance requirements with the Native Vegetation Council and provide more options with regard to the conditions for offsetting, which can be attached to a consent to clear native vegetation. The proposed additional conditions include payment to a third-party provider or applicant, following the achievement of milestones relating to the attainment of that significant environmental benefit. The applicant can also pay an amount for the purpose of supporting the administration, monitoring and enforcement of measures, actions or requirements that relate to the requirement of achieving a significant environmental benefit.

Additionally, the bill proposes to move some permitted activities from the regulations into the act. This includes applications for new buildings, dwellings, infrastructure and residential subdivisions. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

ANSWERS TABLED

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

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to acknowledge and welcome to parliament today John Hill, former Minister for Environment, former Minister for Health and also the former member for Kaurna. It is great to have you back, Hilly. You are looking extremely fit and healthy. I reckon you have probably noticed a few changes in this place since you left. It is great to have you here.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. P.B. Malinauskas)—

Constitution Act 1934—Review of Section 83—Report
Remuneration Tribunal—

Determination No. 5 of 2024—Members of the Judiciary, Presidential Members of
the SAET, Presidential Members of the SACAT, the State Coroner, and
Commissioners of the Environment, Resources and Development
Court

Report No. 5 of 2024—Members of the Judiciary, Presidential Members of the
SAET, Presidential Members of the SACAT, the State Coroner, and
Commissioners of the Environment, Resources and Development
Court, 2024 Review of

Determination No. 6 of 2024—Allowances for Members of the Parole Board of
South Australia

Report No. 6 of 2024—Allowances for Members of the Parole Board of
South Australia, 2024 Review of

Determination No. 7 of 2024—Common Allowance for Members of the Parliament
of South Australia

Report No. 7 of 2024—Common Allowance for Members of the Parliament of
South Australia, 2024 Review of

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

Annual Reports 2023-24—

Controlled Substances Act 1984—

Return of authorisations issued under section 52C

Coroner's Court

Courts Administration Authority

Law Society of South Australia—Legal Practitioner's Fidelity Fund

Legal Practitioner's Disciplinary Tribunal

Legal Profession Conduct Commissioner

Public Sector Employment, Office of Commissioner

State Records Act 1997, Administration of the

Training Centre Review Board

Victims of Crime

Public Sector Employment, Office of Commissioner—State of the Sector—Report 2024

Summary Offences Act 1953—Road Block Authorisations return pursuant to section 74B

Report for Period 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024

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

Petition—From Mrs Delphine Mugridge from 19,602 petitioners about heavy vehicle
licensing requirements in Australia

By the Minister for Energy and Mining (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Annual Reports 2023-24—

Energy and Mining, Department for

Energy Market Commission, Australian

Hydrogen Power South Australia, Office of

Power Line Environment Committee

Technical Regulator, Office of the South Australian

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

Annual Reports 2023-24—

Compulsory Third Party Insurance Regulator

Distribution Lessor Corporation

Electricity Industry Superannuation Scheme

Essential Services Commission of South Australia

Funds SA

Generation Lessor Corporation

Government Financing Authority, South Australian

HomeStart Finance

Industry Advocate

Lifetime Support Authority of South Australia

Local Government Finance Authority

Lotteries Commission of South Australia

Motor Accident Commission

Parliamentary Superannuation Board, South Australian

Police Superannuation Board

Southern Select Superannuation Corporation

State Owned Generators Leasing Co Pty Ltd

Superannuation Board, South Australian

Transmission Lessor Corporation

Treasury and Finance, Department of

By the Minister for Defence and Space Industries (Hon. S.C. Mullighan)—

Defence SA—Annual Report 2023-24

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

Annual Report 2023-24—

Chief Psychiatrist, Office of the South Australian
Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health

Controlled Substances Advisory Council

Health Services Charitable Gifts Board

National Health Funding Pool

Pharmacy Regulation Authority

Public Health Council, South Australian

Suicide Prevention Council

Health Advisory Council Annual Reports 2023-24—

Barossa and Districts

Eastern Eyre

Eudunda Kapunda

Far North

Gawler and District

Hills Area

Kangaroo Island

Port Lincoln

South Australian Ambulance Service Volunteer

Southern Fleurieu

Local Health Network Annual Reports 2023-24—

Riverland Mallee Coorong Annual Report 2023-24

Women's and Children's Annual Report 2023-24

By the Minister for Human Services (Hon. N.F. Cook)—

Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016—Independent Review of the Central
Assessment Unit Report

Human Services, Department of—Annual Report 2023-24

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

Aboriginal Children and Young People, South Australian Commissioner for—'Holding on to
Our Future': inquiry into the application of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Child Placement Principle in the removal and placement of Aboriginal

Children in South Australia—Government Response

Annual Reports 2023-24—

Aboriginal Children and Young People, South Australian Commissioner for
Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee

Child Development Council

Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, Australian

Construction Industry Training Board

TAFE SA

Teachers Registration Board

By the Minister for Small and Family Business (Hon. A. Michaels)—

Small Business Commissioner, South Australian—Annual Report 2023-24

By the Minister for Arts (Hon. A. Michaels)—

Annual Reports 2023-24—
Adelaide Festival Centre Trust
Adelaide Festival Corporation
Adelaide Film Festival
Art Gallery of South Australia
Country Arts SA
Film Corporation, South Australian
Libraries Board of South Australia
Museum, South Australian
Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. J.K. Szakacs)—

Annual Report 2023-24
Behavioural Standards Panel
Local Government Grants Commission
Outback Communities Authority

By the Minister for Veterans Affairs (Hon. J.K. Szakacs)—

Veterans SA—Annual Report 2023-24

By the Minister for Housing and Urban Development (Hon. N.D. Champion)—

Annual Reports 2023-24—
Housing Trust, South Australian
Urban Renewal Authority

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

SA Water Corporation—Annual Report 2023-24

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

Annual Reports 2023-24—
Surveyors Board SA
Trade and Investment, Department for

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

Official Visitor Annual Reports 2023-24—
Aaron Cooke
Joanne Battersby
La Nina Clayton
Lauren Messmer
Tristan Colmer
Parole Board—Annual Report 2023-24

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before we move on to questions, I acknowledge the presence in the house of Michael Pratt, former federal member for Adelaide. You are still the second-best politician in your family, with a nod to the member for Frome, who is doing a very good job in her first term in here.

It is almost Christmas; the last sitting day. The member for Unley, the whip, has given me the opposition list of questions in a gift-wrapped little scroll today. Let us see what gifts they have to serve up to the Parliament of South Australia.

*Question Time***MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:12): My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier have confidence in the Minister for Primary Industries? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Today, tomato growers, many of them here today with us, have stood on the steps of parliament to protest against the government's handling of the crisis. Hundreds of jobs have been lost. Our growers have lost millions of dollars in revenue and have faced, frustratingly, long test delays since tomato brown rugose fruit virus was first detected in August.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:13): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. The short answer to his question is: absolutely, without qualification. Minister Scriven is a diligent and hardworking minister. I feel very grateful that she is part of the cabinet.

In respect to the substantive issue of the tomato virus, which has been causing a great degree of pain and loss to a number of people who have been affected, the government is very conscious of the fact that the adverse outcomes of this disease have been very real. I must say that sympathies might be shallow on one level, but my thoughts are very much with the hardworking people in this industry. They are hardworking family businesses. They employ people, who themselves are individually quite hardworking. We have seen a number of workers redistributed who have lost their jobs, particularly at the three sites that have been most adversely affected.

So, I do not diminish for a moment the legitimate suffering these organisations, these people, are going through. To that end, it is important that the government's response to the virus is commensurate with the degree of difficulty that those people are experiencing. The government has sought to take a number of actions ever since this virus first emerged. There have been elements that have gone well and elements that have been more frustrating.

One of the things that became clear early on is that the lack of a domestic testing regime in the state of South Australia for this particular virus was a deficiency. The samples had to be sent to interstate jurisdictions, particularly Victoria and New South Wales, and that brought some complexity. As a result, SARDI got to work as quickly as possible to establish our own testing compatibility at the Waite campus; that has now been stood up. That is the first of its type. Naturally, the analogy of flying the plane and putting it together at the same time I think is appropriate here. They had to establish a testing capacity. They had to establish a testing capacity, and then start to process as many tests as possible.

Currently, I am advised, there is an average waiting period for the testing period—and it's an average, so there will be some that are more than this and there will be some that are less than this—of anything from 14 to 16 days. That's an eternity. That's an eternity because a 14 to 16-day wait in order to be able to get access to the two markets that require this additional testing, being Western Australia and Queensland, is a long time because two weeks in fresh produce is everything; that's business.

We know that the other markets are now open and able to send their produce too, which is good. Queensland and Western Australia retain this requirement, so the need for that testing regime to be sped up is acute. I know that's what the team at Waite are working hard on. The testing options available in Victoria and New South Wales are maintained, but we do need to see that testing turnaround time improve. The test itself actually only takes around about 48 hours. The problem is the backlog and the capacity, and it takes a while to churn that through. We do need to address that.

There are other areas that the government is seeking to address, not least of which is seeking to advocate to both Queensland and Western Australia that they adopt a more progressive approach to the restrictions in the same way that we've seen from other jurisdictions in Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: Before I call the leader, I would like to acknowledge and welcome to parliament tomato growers from the Adelaide Plains, who are here with us today as guests of the member for Frome.

*Question Time***TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS**

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question again is to the Premier. Will the Premier provide compensation to growers and workers affected by the government's handling of the tomato brown rugose fruit virus? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: This week, the government announced \$18 million in relief for drought-affected farmers but has not yet paid any compensation to affected tomato, chilli and capsicum growers.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:17): The Plant Health Act of 2009 establishes the capacity for governments to impose quarantine arrangements on growers or producers in the event of outbreaks of various viruses. In this particular instance, PIRSA executed their capacity to be able to do that. Within those provisions within the act it is specifically contemplated that there is a capacity for compensation to be provided for, although that is not an absolute requirement within the act. What we have said as a government is that we are willing to engage on the subject of compensation. We haven't made an absolute commitment to compensate but we are open to engagement on these matters. I think the focus of the government—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will listen to the Premier in silence. There are many people in this chamber, both here on the floor and in the gallery, who are keen to hear the answer.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The focus of the government in the first and most immediate instances has been to establish the science around this regime. I acknowledge that there are those who might have differing opinions around the science. You would expect and anticipate that the responsible thing for any government to do is to act on the advice of the appropriate authorities, in this instance being PIRSA.

I accept that there will be some people who don't agree with the determinations of PIRSA. We have adopted the same approach on this side of the chamber as we did throughout the COVID pandemic. A lot of people were criticising the science; we did not do that during the COVID pandemic. We put our faith in the science and the regulators who adjudicate around that.

People in a robust liberal democracy are entitled to take a different approach. They then, of course, need to prove the merit of their arguments on a scientific basis. We have accepted the basis of the science. We have acted in accordance with that. We have advocated to other jurisdictions accordingly. We do think it is perverse that Queensland and Western Australia maintain these restrictions while other jurisdictions don't. We think that there is an inequity in that arrangement that is worthy of consideration, and we continue to work with those other jurisdictions.

There is no doubt about the fact that the decision taken by PIRSA, in our view, to act decisively, in an environment where there is an obligation to all tomato producers throughout the state, is a prudent one. I can imagine a set of circumstances where PIRSA took a different course of action, let the virus run free and then there would be questions from those opposite scrutinising that decision, if not actively criticising it. I guess we acknowledge that there is difficulty here. I am satisfied that everybody in PIRSA is currently working as hard and as quickly as they can to deliver change.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:21): My question is to the Premier. What does the Premier say to Oriana and Peter Petsios who own SA Tomato? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: SA Tomato is a small family business that currently employs 25 staff and contributes in excess of \$6 million to the local economy. Due to inaction from PIRSA, they say they have now lost future orders for 2025 and their business is becoming unsustainable.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:21): I would say to those business owners—good South Australians doing their absolute best—that the government, at the government political architecture level, is seeking to apply as much scrutiny and, when appropriate, pressure to make sure that everybody is working as hard as they can to address the concerns possible.

No-one on that side of the chamber is a scientist in this area, nor is anybody on this side of the chamber, so we put our confidence in those regulators and then we scrutinise it. We ask questions, we put pressure where we can. I am not yet aware of—and I am happy to stand corrected on this—an alternative policy proposition. I accept that there are questions around compensation, but I am not yet aware of an alternative policy proposition that is emanating from those opposite. There are questions, to which you are entitled to an answer—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, including the leader, will come to order. You have been asked to listen to the Premier's response in silence.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We will continue to ensure, from the government's perspective, at a cabinet level, that PIRSA is working as hard as they can to address the various concerns.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:23): My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier's government abandoned the largest tomato producer in the Southern Hemisphere? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: Perfection Fresh have written to the Minister for Primary Industries three times—three times—since 17 October and have received no response.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Colton, I have asked for silence. This is a really important issue and we are trying to listen to the answer. It doesn't help when you are yelling out.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:24): I am not aware of those details, but I am more than happy to make active inquiries.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:24): Supplementary, sir.

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

Ms PRATT: In relation to Perfection Fresh, when did the Premier last speak to the CEO, Michael Simonetta?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:24): I personally spoke to Michael last on I think it would be about 25 September or thereabouts.

HAMMILL HOUSE

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:24): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister update my community as to the progress of restoring Hammill House at Port Pirie to provide aged-care facilities, as it did prior to the review that has just been carried out? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: I refer to the minister's press release on 27 August stating that the facility would remain as an aged-care facility. I have had several people with their loved ones trying to get into the facility but have been advised that they are not accepting any new patients even though there are existing beds, according to those people out there, and there has been no communication from the regional health board.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:25): I thank the member for Stuart for his question and his advocacy on behalf of health services in his local electorate and particularly Hammill House. For people who are not aware, Hammill House is an aged-care facility which is adjacent to the Port Pirie regional hospital.

I think it is fair to say that certainly for many years the future of Hammill House was under a bit of a cloud. I think it was within the first year or so after the election there was certainly a recommendation to me from the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network that we should close down Hammill House as an aged-care facility. It is a recommendation I rejected. I asked the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network board to go to the community, to consult with the community, to undertake further work on aged-care resourcing and needs in the local area, which—surprise, surprise—did come back and say, 'We do need Hammill House in the future. We do need that aged-care facility and the capacity that it provides.'

I was really delighted that we were able to announce that we will be keeping Hammill House and thank the member for his advocacy in relation to that. Hammill House got down to, I think, nine residents as of current, but we have committed to increasing that up to 18 residents. To do that, we will need to recruit additional staff. I understand that there is a recruitment process underway, and it is open at the moment. We are obviously hopeful that we will be able to recruit additional staff to open those additional beds and see more residents from the member's community being able to utilise the services at Hammill House.

But it is also fair to say that we know, particularly in the Port Pirie area, that there is a need for more nurses, which is also why another area in which the member has been a strident advocate is about establishing a new training facility that we will be building at Port Pirie as well, working with providers such as Uni Hub to be able to train more nurses locally, undertake their practical training locally and create that pipeline for further nurses to work not just at places like Hammill House but at the hospital and private providers into the future.

The essential answer to the member's question is we are recruiting additional staff to open those additional beds. Obviously, we want to do that as quickly as possible. I apologise to anyone who has been put on the waitlist while we are opening those additional beds. We are looking to do that as soon as possible to provide for that additional capacity for residents for aged care to receive that locally at Hammill House.

MALINAUSKAS LABOR GOVERNMENT

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (14:28): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on action taken by the Malinauskas government during 2024?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:28): I thank the member for Dunstan for her question. The member for Dunstan, being a new addition to the parliament in the calendar year 2024, I know has been particularly vociferous in following the events that have occurred and the work that the government is seeking to undertake. Let me just say this from the outset in a way that I have articulated on a couple of occasions in the media but not in this place: we are naturally, as a government, very grateful for the support that the constituents of both Dunstan

and Black have shown towards this government, but not for a moment do we interpret the results of those by-elections as being—

Mrs Hurn interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Not for a moment does the government look at the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Infrastructure and members on my left, the Premier will be heard in silence.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Not for a moment does the government look at those results and believe that it translates to the fact that everything is rosy for everybody in South Australia. There are, of course, challenges within the community but there are also extraordinary opportunities. This government is focused on tackling those challenges and embracing those opportunities everywhere we can, while at the same time dealing with the issues that arise from time to time that are worthy of government intervention.

It's an opportunity to reflect on a couple of the major policy efforts that this government has committed itself to throughout the course of this year. To my mind, one there are few more important than is the government's delivery of the Housing Roadmap, a comprehensive housing policy document, a comprehensive policy to actually unlock the growth of houses that this state so desperately needs and hasn't been given the—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, I can't hear the Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —policy emphasis that it has deserved in the past. One of the essential elements of the Housing Roadmap was to invest \$1.5 billion into new water infrastructure, which was all about unlocking growth for housing opportunities in suburban Adelaide. We took that number from the \$150 million that was allocated by the former government, who were more interested in the cheap politics of water prices, and we made the tough decisions to invest more money to unlock growth. That was on top of planning reform and on top of massive tax reform, to abolish a whole tax in perpetuity for absolutely every first-home buyer building a new home in this state, something that is just such a contrast to the retrospective tax impositions that we saw from a prior government.

On top of tax reform and the water and the planning reform, we have also seen big reform in regard to the Housing Trust, the re-established South Australian Housing Trust—investments rather than selling off stock, actually building stock, and building more stock we are. Then, of course, we see HomeStart continue to deliver in ways that are now being attempted to be replicated in other parts of the state so that lower income, sometimes on occasions potentially more insecure income households, can get access to a low-deposit home loan, and that has been taken up in spades.

There is so much more work to be done in this area. This government will not stop because we are seeing growth in our population, we are seeing optimism in the economy and we need to make sure that housing infrastructure goes a long way to meeting the demand that is coming our state's way.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:32): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Transport, you are getting close to your final warning. I would hate to chuck you out on the last day.

An honourable member: Send him out for the rest of the year.

The SPEAKER: He might enjoy that. The member for Frome.

Ms PRATT: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier commit to an independent review of his government's response to the tomato brown rugose fruit virus?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:32): What we will commit to is making sure that all effort, all urgency, will be applied to actually addressing the issue that is in front of us. The time for reviews is at the end of an issue, not during it. I'm trying to think of the best analogy of a most recent example of a virus coming from another part of the world into our state, and what happened then was the opposition at the time, occupied by members from this side of the house, were not running around trying to impose retrospective reviews on a crisis that was unfolding and an issue: what we sought to do was provide bipartisan support and—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, including the member for Morialta, will come to order.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —constructive ideas to actually address—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Morialta, I just asked you to remain quiet.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: What we are going to do, in answer to the member for Frome's question, is continue to do the effort as best we can. There may be a time for reviews later down the track but doing a review in the middle of the event doesn't seem to be a particularly productive exercise.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:34): Supplementary, sir.

The SPEAKER: We will see.

Ms PRATT: The Premier's final words were 'we will consider that later on down the track'. When would that be?

The SPEAKER: Later on down the track, maybe.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:34): You took the words right out of my mouth, sir.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services. Will the minister intervene in the matter of Detective Brevet Sergeant Jennifer Favorito and, with leave, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BATTY: *The Advertiser* has reported today that the 'veteran South Australian detective has blamed SA Police' "horrendous" mental health support system for almost driving her to suicide'. SAPOL rejected claims—

The SPEAKER: Sorry, member for Bragg—a point of order from the Leader of Government Business.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Standing order 1, sir: House of Commons practice does not allow you to refer to media reports.

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

The SPEAKER: I am going to allow the explanation. I think the explanation and the quoting of a newspaper article is to give some background but it's not necessarily that the minister is being asked to give an opinion on what is being discussed in that newspaper article.

Mr BATTY: Thank you, sir. I will repeat the explanation. *The Advertiser* has reported today that the 'veteran South Australian detective has blamed South Australia Police "horrendous" mental health support system for almost driving her to suicide', and further:

...SAPOL rejected claims her mental health was hit by the death of a close colleague at Port Adelaide Police Station in January.

The detective, who has worked for the state's force for 20 years, is now obliged to pay back all psychiatric and medical costs, including all wages, to SAPOL.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:36): I thank the member for Bragg for the question. News of any suicide or suicidal ideation is, of course, deeply distressing and we are all aware, as a parliament, that those who have been exposed to suicide are a great deal more likely to engage in suicidal ideation. Police and other first responders deal with confronting and, indeed, highly traumatic incidents every single day, and we have an obligation to ensure that this service is appropriately recognised and supported, including to ensure that there is adequate mental health support for all of our officers.

I am advised that South Australia Police does recognise the importance of the health and wellbeing of officers, including their mental health. Of course, it's a crucial part of having a high-functioning and resilient workforce—particularly one, as I have earlier observed, that is exposed to trauma on a regular basis—that those supports are in place and are practical and adequate. As we are all aware, the parliament is currently inquiring into the support and mental health services for police, and the government has supported the establishment of that committee and will very closely consider any resulting recommendations from its deliberations.

South Australia Police provides support in a number of ways to its employees in recognition of the uniquely complex and challenging work environment. South Australia Police members have access to psychosocial supports 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with out-of-business-hours support available via an on-call service that is accessed through the SAPOL communications centre.

South Australia Police has also established a health and wellbeing officer network, consistent with the South Australian government's Mentally Healthy Workplaces framework. Currently, I am advised that South Australia Police has a total of 112, approximately, trained health and wellbeing officers in that network located at various points across our state.

South Australia Police's employee assistance section, referred to internally as the EAS, provides a statewide professional psychological, medical and social work support service to the workforce. So far, for the 2024-25 financial year, EAS social workers and psychologists—this is up to, I am advised, October—committed 635 hours of response work, which includes individual consultations, unplanned attendances to clinic, and on-call responses out of hours. It is also important for me to observe that EAS provides support to all employees and there is a focus on delivering training and support to police officers who are in the early stages of their careers. It is important for me to observe too that each academy class has support provided to it directly.

Members present will appreciate that this matter is very distressing. All of us here, our heart goes out to any officer—including the officer that has been named in this place—who is suffering in any way because of the trauma that they have experienced, but it is equally the case that if there are internal processes underway then those internal processes must not be prejudiced by the comments that you invited me otherwise to make.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:40): My question is again to the Minister for Police. Can the minister guarantee that all SAPOL employees who are required to receive an annual psychological review have received their review this year?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:40): Thank you, and I appreciate this important question. There can be occasions on which officers, I am advised, have not completed their psychological assessment. I am advised that often that does not arise necessarily from the oversight of operational managers, who are encouraging people to engage in the psychological assessment processes that may be necessary, but instead, in the course of employment and taskings, sometimes these matters cannot be completed. I am advised, however, that South Australia Police places a significant emphasis on completing psychological assessments and I will seek additional advice and return to the house with precise up-to-date information—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders! Have you got a ticket on the earlier plane back to Lincoln? If not, be quiet and you can stay in here.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: However, I will undertake to the house to ensure that I bring back to the house the exact information as to the number of officers who as at the relevant date have not completed the psychological assessment. Allow me, however, to reflect further on the additional psychological support that is available. On an earlier occasion I was invited to reflect on a specific case and I think I was able to inform the house that each academy recruit course has support, through a central point of contact, for those recruits during academy training and then as probationary constables, in terms of their mental health support.

Can I also inform the house that South Australia Police members have access to a wellbeing program which has been developed in collaboration with Flinders University, as well assisting the Metropolitan Fire Service and the Country Fire Service. The program protecting emergency responders, with evidence-based interventions, is an evidence-based approach to building sustainable resilience and wellbeing. Of course, with a focus on prevention and early intervention the program is specifically designed for South Australia Police members in their first five years of service, covering key areas critical to maintaining good mental health.

I think that members can rightly infer from the information that I have shared with the house that the agency is taking early intervention right from the academy training process to ensure that South Australia Police officers—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Flinders can leave until the end of question time. You have been calling out nonstop during this entire answer, an answer that is very important to all members of the house.

The honourable member for Flinders having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: As I say, there is a focus from the agency appropriately on ensuring that every South Australia Police cadet, and subsequently constable, has access at a very early stage in their career—in the first five years—to comprehensive support. It is necessary not only to provide that support but also to ensure that a workforce is aware of the support available, and to ensure that from a cultural perspective accessing that support is something that people are aware of and prepared to do from the first days of their career. I must say, in terms of that operational focus and emphasis, it is appropriate that that support be put in place immediately.

MESONET WEATHER STATIONS

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:45): My question is to the minister representing the Minister for Primary Industries. What progress has been made on saving the ability of farmers in the Mid North to utilise existing weather monitoring infrastructure? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr ELLIS: COtL recently announced that stakeholders and clients of Mesonet would have been advised that the network will be shut at the end of the year and they will have to find alternative means of monitoring the weather.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:45): I thank the member for raising this important issue on behalf of many of his constituents who rely on this important sensing system to assist farmers with the information they need, particularly if they are engaging in chemical spraying activities, to make sure that they understand the prevailing weather conditions of the day.

By way of context, in South Australia the Conditions Over the Landscape (COtL) Mesonet provides a network of over 110 automatic weather stations across the Mid North, Mallee, Riverland, Limestone Coast, Langhorne Creek and McLaren Vale. These weather stations and the network that they comprise are designed to give chemical spray operators accurate local weather information to inform their decisions about how they can best engage in those spraying practices.

As of 2021, that has been centrally managed. It has been advised recently, in only the last 10 or so days, that the director of Conditions Over the Landscape has said that in the current operating environment they are struggling to maintain the network of these important 'weather stations', you could call them, and without sufficient revenues to maintain the service they may not be able to continue.

My advice is that they have already engaged with the government. In the past, they had received a grant—firstly under the previous Weatherill Labor government and again under the former Marshall Liberal government—to provide funding for specific parts of the project. This has been an endeavour that has required support from taxpayers in the past, and in the current circumstances it has become clear that there may be an opportunity to either assist the operators of the service directly or try to provide some assistance for them to secure funding from alternative sources, in an effort to address the important issue that the member raises today—that farmers and the operators of these spraying practices can have certainty about the local weather conditions by getting access to this important information.

I am advised those discussions are ongoing; they have not yet concluded. But I hope it is of some comfort to the member that they are being taken seriously and progressed and that the government is in direct communications with the operators of the service to try to arrive at a sustainable outcome for this important service.

ARID RECOVERY

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:48): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier update the house about the Arid Recovery program?

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) (14:48): I am delighted to update the house about the Arid Recovery program, which many but perhaps not all members are aware is a reserve area above Roxby, funded in part by BHP and also by the Department for Environment, Bush Heritage and the University of Adelaide. It started off at about 14 square kilometres of fencing when it was first conceived of as being something that could be helpful for restoring habitat and, most importantly, bringing back species that have been absolutely hammered by foxes and cats. Now, it covers some 123 square kilometres and has 80 kilometres of specially designed predator-proof fencing, within which the kinds of marsupials that used to be abundant in South Australia's outback are able to breed up.

Last week, I was very fortunate to attend Government House where the Governor, having been and visited the Arid Recovery program, had offered to host the people involved—the board, the volunteers and also the staff and the fundraisers—to come and have a celebration at Government House about the experience and the successes of Arid Recovery. It was a very worthwhile event. It was, in part, sadly, a farewell for Dr Katherine Tuft who, as the chief executive, I understand, has now got another position down in Tasmania and is very excited about that, but she will be an enormous loss.

Just to let people know, often when I stand up in this chamber and also in my joyful interventions in cabinet discussions where I tell people how bad climate change is and what is happening with nature across the world and in South Australia, in contrast to those experiences, there are some very good stories to tell about what is happening with the environment as well, due to the direct intervention of people who want to see the regeneration of nature—not just stopping doing bad things but actually starting to bring nature back, and Arid Recovery is one of the shining examples of that.

There are six species that have become functionally extinct in South Australia that now have been reintroduced thanks to Arid Recovery. Their capacity to not only bring those species back but also then start to see the transformation of the local environment is as significant and important as, for those people who have seen it sweep through YouTube, the putting back of the wolves in Yellowstone National Park in the US, which not only was wonderful for the wolves but started to transform that area back into more natural environment. It is exactly what is able to happen in South Australia as well and, I must say, I congratulate BHP on their role in helping to fund this.

The six species that have been reintroduced that had been locally extinct are the greater stick-nest rat, the burrowing bettong, the greater bilby, the western barred bandicoot, the western quoll and, most recently, the kowari. Interestingly, the plains mice, which had also gone missing, reintroduced themselves. We hadn't actually managed to find any and then they suddenly managed to find their way into the protected area and breed up enough to be rediscovered as a local population. In fact, there are so many of those inside that reserve that it is being used as a place to be able to take extra animals and put them into other conservation reserves.

I won't go through in detail each of the recoveries for those animals, because I do want to also note a nice little sideline to Arid Recovery, which is the success of having women involved in science. As I understand it, of all the papers published associated with Arid Recovery, women were the lead authors in 65 per cent of the papers and there were a total of 104 female authors in the sciences in scientific papers produced through Arid Recovery—nothing but an absolute shining light, both for science and for nature, and I congratulate them.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:53): My question is to the Minister for Police. Will the minister commit to increasing the number of counselling sessions provided to serving officers under SAPOL's employee assistance program or allowing former officers to access the program? With leave, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BATTY: Only six sessions are offered every two years under the program, which is not available to former officers.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:53): I appreciate the question from the member for Bragg. I have earlier described for the house the substantial support available within South Australia Police which, of course, is funded by the state government. I am prepared to take the question on notice, give it further consideration and come back to the house.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE NUMBERS

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:53): My question is to the Minister for Police. Does South Australia have a shortfall of police officers, and if so, is that shortfall causing crime to rise in Adelaide's suburbs? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BATTY: *The Advertiser's* front page this week referred to 'streets of fear' in our suburbs. It reported that crimes to the person were up by more than a quarter in Gawler, Elizabeth South, Dry Creek and Regency Park in 2023-24 compared with the year before.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order. Standing orders are clear from the House of Commons: you cannot ask a minister to verify media reports.

The SPEAKER: I will answer the minister, if you can just take your seat. The minister is not being asked to verify the media reports: the media report quotes are being provided as background to the question. In fact, there were two questions, I think, within the question. So I will not uphold that point of order. Member for Bragg, continue with your question.

Mr BATTY: I have concluded.

The SPEAKER: You have finished it? Minister, did you hear all of that?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I would be so grateful if the member for Bragg might put the question to me again.

Mr BATTY: Does South Australia have a shortfall of police officers and, if so, is that shortfall causing crime to rise in Adelaide's suburbs? With leave, I will once again refer to *The Advertiser's* 'streets of fear' front page.

The SPEAKER: Leave has already been granted, member for Bragg.

Mr BATTY: *The Advertiser's* front page this week referred to 'streets of fear' in our suburbs. It reported that crimes to the person were up by more than a quarter in Gawler, Elizabeth South, Dry Creek and Regency Park in 2023-24 compared with the year before.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (14:55): I appreciate the question from the member for Bragg. I make a number of observations first in relation to certain offences, including certain offences that have occurred in relation to some of the suburbs that have been mentioned. It is important to emphasise that in relation to robbery offences, for example, there has been a 21 per cent decrease on the previous 12 months in relation to that crime. In terms of theft from motor vehicles, there has been a 17 per cent decrease. In terms of illegal use, an 8 per cent decrease, and in terms of sexual assault as well.

There was also a reduction in serious criminal trespass relating to house break-ins and home invasions, highlighting how police operations—for example, Operation Mandrake—are cracking down on crime. I think it is important to observe that, from a circular statistical perspective, there is a reversion to the mean after COVID. There has been a return to normal activity across our community. Of course, nobody in the government accepts for a moment any crime committed in our state. We are prepared to focus very closely on these issues, but the opposition invites me—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Bragg!

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: The opposition invites me to give a perspective in relation to certain offences. I am advised that local police are working closely with community leaders, schools and various government and non-government agencies to prevent and reduce crime in some of the localities that have been mentioned, ensuring community safety. It is also right to say that South Australia Police provide a proactive and visible presence in these areas, focusing on crime prevention as well as responding to incidents. Their role includes monitoring repeat offenders and working closely with families and young people to divert them from criminal activity.

In terms of the shortfall in officers that South Australia Police is experiencing, this is a government that has been absolutely up-front about the need to invest further moneys into ensuring that we have a recruitment pipeline that is supporting South Australia Police. As I have said previously in this place, it would have been—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Bragg, no-one is going to hear your next question if you are asking it from the refreshment room. Listen to the answer in silence.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: It would have been obvious to any member of the previous government's cabinet that there needed to be substantial additional investment to support South Australia Police and to support South Australia Police recruitment. Let me provide this advice to the house: nothing was done, absolutely nothing. Now, of course, this government is ensuring that there is additional focus on these issues.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Florey, you can head to the refreshment room until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Florey having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: It is important for me to emphasise that more than \$80 million is being invested to recruit, of course, additional police security officers, more than \$12 million for recruitment overall. The second stream of recruitment is now online. We have additional officers supporting us, arriving from overseas—15 officers. We have full employment in our state, the first time in my lifetime, and that does make employment—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Well, it can make it challenging.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE NUMBERS

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (14:59): My question is again to the Minister for Police. Does the minister have a target for the net number of police to be recruited over the next three months and, if so, what is that target?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (15:00): I thank the member for his question. As I have remarked to the member previously in relation to a slightly different formulation of this question, we would like South Australia Police to return to establishment as soon as possible. The difference between the opposition, the former government, and this government is clear. We have taken actual steps to achieve that outcome, when the previous cabinet took none, in the face of the data that we have examined to form that view, and it is absolutely outrageous. It is outrageous for those opposite to suggest in any way that there hasn't been a sufficient focus on this issue because the contrast could not be sharper in this sense.

As I have emphasised, there are substantial resources, substantial public resources, taxpayers' funds, being devoted to this important task, to this essential task. It is the necessary role of government to supply funds to South Australia Police for them to support their recruitment pipeline. I earlier reflected on the more than \$12 million that is being devoted to recruitment overall. As I also earlier indicated in response to a previous question, we now have a dual recruitment stream. We are recruiting diligently within South Australia and we are approaching other jurisdictions to support us.

South Australia Police has a good record of approaching jurisdictions, including the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and, of course, now Canada, to ensure that there is a pathway for experienced officers to be joining us in South Australia. Previous cohorts have made a very substantial contribution to the South Australian community and to South Australia Police, the third oldest organised police force in the world. As well, we have thought very carefully about how in other ways we might be able to support South Australia Police. One of those ways is by recruiting a substantial number of police security officers, with more than \$80 million being invested there.

Nobody is distracted for a moment from the important task at hand, and that is to ensure that South Australia Police returns to establishment. It is also necessary for me to observe by way of context that South Australia Police has the highest number of officers by head of population anywhere in Australia—anywhere in Australia. If we had the same numbers by head of population compared to Queensland, we would have more than 300 officers fewer. As well, it must be emphasised that we have one of the lowest attrition rates in the country despite having one of the most buoyant employment markets.

It is often the case we have, I observe, an attrition rate of around about 5 per cent, which falls just behind the attrition rate experienced by most often the Australian Federal Police. As members would appreciate, the Australian Federal Police operates in a different policing environment and of course there is a different scope of policing activities that AFP officers are engaged in. Often, aside from the Australian Federal Police, we have amongst the lowest attrition rates in the country. But none of these matters are distracting us from the task to ensure that there is a dual pipeline of cadets available to South Australia Police, those being recruited locally and those being recruited from overseas, to join us in the same way as in previous years, and we have focused on that task.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:04): My question is to the Special Minister of State. Can the minister confirm that the recently passed ban on political donations will not affect the charitable efforts of MPs—for example, those seeking donations for Movember?

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN (Kavel—Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Special Minister of State) (15:04): I appreciate the question from the member for Narungga. It is a vital question. I am sure that all members are focused on this matter, but no more focused than the member for Narungga. I hope that you will indulge me, Mr Speaker. You, of course, will be familiar with standing order 127, which prevents digression or personal reflection on a member. I just observe that the member for Narungga has engaged closely with the Movember Foundation. He has been inspired to make a contribution to men's mental health. He

should be commended for his focus. I must say he has been making considerable progress—considerable progress.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Various suggestions are being made by members as to the likeness that the member for Narungga might invite, the comparisons that might be invited. Of course, I myself had in mind, perhaps, Mervyn Hughes or David Boon, or even Dennis Lillee. Those are obviously very flattering comparisons. I think there have been others around the chamber who have suggested—I am not sure what their TV viewing habits have been—that the member for Narungga's present appearance might be that of a Soviet tank driver or a World War II fighter pilot in the midst of the Battle of Britain, with no time to perform or to care for his moustache but all the time to commit to the necessary and desperate task of the defence of the realm. Can I commend the—

The Hon. N.D. Champion: Lord Flashheart.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I am not sure that that's a comparison I would make. In any case, we commend the member for Narungga. I am ashamed to say that I could in no way replicate his efforts. That is a complication I can't resolve, unfortunately. Nonetheless, I appreciate the question. To return to the question, Mr Speaker, having enjoyed the benefit of your indulgence and generosity and forgiveness, having extensively engaged in personal reflection under standing order 127, which of course directs me not to, can I reassure the member for Narungga that the world-leading donations ban, which has been the subject of focus in this house and in the other place—and once again I, of course, stray too close to the standing orders in making those remarks—has been the subject of considerable focus in the contribution of all, and there has been a consensus reached in this place to pass the bill.

I think Mike Smithson, now that we are reflecting on the contribution of others and the contribution of the media, described it as 'peace in our times' in his nightly reporting, which I always take seriously. It is a remarkable thing that we have built on the long history, the pedigree and legacy of people in this place who were determined to ensure that we would, no matter the complications and the novel complexities, address not only this issue but many other democratic reforms. I can advise the member for Narungga that there is no impediment to donating to the Movember Foundation—no impediment at all to doing that.

The SPEAKER: I remind the minister that the four minutes on the clock is a maximum, not a minimum. Henry Lawson has a supplementary—sorry, the member for Narungga has a supplementary.

MOVEMBER FOUNDATION

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:08): Considering that answer, will the minister finally make a donation to my Movember page?

The SPEAKER: The minister, a yes or no answer will suffice. I take that as a yes. The member for Elizabeth.

HEAVY VEHICLE LICENSING SYSTEM

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (15:09): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister inform the house of changes to South Australia's heavy vehicle licensing system?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:09): Everyone has the right to go to work and return home safely. We are, as a government and I think as a parliament, committed to building a safer, stronger road transport industry that prioritises the lives of everyone on our roads. In light of this, earlier today I held a press conference with Ms Delphine Mugridge and Mr Steve Shearer, who is the executive officer of SARTA (South Australian Road Transport Association), to announce that the government of South Australia will be making two changes to improve heavy vehicle driver competency. One change is the establishment of a multi-combination licence program. The other is requiring heavy vehicle drivers from overseas to hold a HR or HC licence for 12 months or

successfully complete the newly established MC licence program before progressing to an MC licence.

Drivers will be required to complete competency-based training through an approved RTO (registered training organisation). Following this training, a driver will then need to complete 50 hours of logged training with a qualified supervising driver if they hold a HC licence, or 60 hours if they hold a HR licence. Finally, a practical driving assessment in an MC vehicle with an authorised examiner will be required to complete this program. The program will provide drivers a clear and efficient pathway for achieving the required qualifications without compromising on road safety or driver training requirements.

In this state, a person who holds an overseas driver's licence and has the equivalent heavy vehicle driving experience can progress to an MC licence without having held an Australian qualification of HR or HC licence for at least 12 months.

As of early next year, we would no longer recognise overseas heavy vehicle driving experience for a person wanting to have an MC licence. Instead, overseas drivers will need to progress through a new MC licence program if they are employed by the eligible host business. Otherwise, a driver will be required to hold an Australian HR or HC licence for 12 months before being progressed.

By requiring these drivers who hold overseas licences to drive lower-level trucks for at least 12 months to gain local experience, we believe there will be a positive net impact on road safety, because these drivers will be more confident and more familiar with the roads and vehicles they are driving. Both measures mark a significant step forward in fostering a culture of safety, accountability and thorough training in South Australia for the heavy vehicle sector.

These changes were prompted by the advocacy of Delphine Mugridge after the death of her husband in April this year. Nev was one of three people killed in a crash between two trucks on the Eyre Highway at Yalata. Her petition, which I tabled earlier, called for stricter licensing requirements for heavy vehicle drivers, including for them to require more experience, and has the backing of more than 19,000 Australians who have signed her online petition. I am confident these changes will lead to safer roads.

What Delphine has made clear is that Australia has unique multicomination vehicles. We are unique in the heavy vehicle industry globally. Just because you have your heavy vehicle licence in Asia, Europe or North America, it does not mean you are competent to drive on Australian roads, and I urge other Australian states to follow our government's lead.

Grievance Debate

STATE LABOR GOVERNMENT

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:13): School is out for summer for some Year 12s and so is the 2024 parliamentary sitting year soon. At the end of every school year, students eagerly await the results of their annual report card. While I am sure students across South Australia will be opening their report cards with glee, I am sure there is one report card this year that I think is going to be a very big disappointment, and that is the report card for this Labor government.

Let's start with the most epic failure of them all: they were going to fix the ramping crisis. This year they delivered two of the worst months of ramping in our state's history. In July and in August, ambulances and patients spent almost 11,000 hours on the ramp. When it comes to fixing ramping, this government gets an F. Not only have they not fixed ramping but they have made it worse in some respects.

Other highlights from Labor's mismanagement of our health system this year include an unprecedented 11-week Code Yellow emergency, which saw elective surgery cancelled for patients right across South Australia. Let's not forget Labor's GP payroll tax grab, making it harder for South Australians to see their GP in the middle of that ramping crisis.

We move on to another crisis and, of course, that is the cost-of-living crisis, which is impacting households right across South Australia and no number of concerts or car races is going

to make up for Labor's failure to provide cost-of-living relief to struggling South Australians. When we called on the government to put a freeze on fees, to cut water bills and to scrap their GP payroll tax grab, what did they do? Absolutely nothing. When it comes to cost of living, we give this Labor government an F.

Then there are small businesses, small businesses that we know are the pillars of the economy here in South Australia and our community. We know that they are doing it tough, we know that the cost of doing business in South Australia is skyrocketing, and do you know what one of the biggest barriers for small business in this state is? It is this Labor government. The SA Business Chamber's quarterly Survey of Business Expectations, in fact, found that government regulation had become one of the biggest challenges for South Australian small business. When it comes to supporting small business, this government again gets an F.

Let's move on to the government's performance on crime, as we heard today. *The Advertiser* said it best this week: 'Streets of Fear'. There are streets of fear right across the city, another fail for this government that is failing to recruit but also retain police officers while the community has lives in fear. Only this week, the Liberal opposition brought a bill to vote to ban young people from purchasing knives. What did the government do? It did not support our legislation. Another F on safety from this government and this Minister for Police.

As we know, housing is one of the biggest issues facing our community and the lack of housing. When we asked the government if they had targets in place for the number of houses needed and the workforce to build them, we found out that they had none and they are not meeting those targets consequently.

Today, we saw tomato growers on the steps of parliament and in this chamber. They have been failed by this government in its management of the tomato brown rugose fruit virus. These people have lost millions of dollars, they have had to let go hundreds of workers, they are angry and we are fighting for them. What a total failure by this government and its Minister for Primary Industries and a complete lack of empathy by this government. It should come as no surprise that this city centric government has failed to support the regions and has especially failed our growers.

Once again, this quarter the Australian Energy Regulator revealed that South Australia has the highest power prices in the nation, up 35 per cent in recent times. Instead of bringing down power bills, this government is spending around \$600 million—who knows where it will end up—on an experimental hydrogen plant and they have no modelling to suggest that this plant will bring down power prices.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: No, you do not need any help, mate. He is doing it himself, mate. When it comes to ensuring that South Australians have reliable and affordable power, this government gets an F quite frankly. This year, the state's top auditor rang the alarm bells about the risks and delivery of this government's major projects. We now learn that the new Women's and Children's Hospital is not going to be on time or on budget, Northern Water is another one that looks in doubt and then you have the hydrogen plant for which the government is currently using diesel power B-double trucks, it says, to truck in gas, which is also likely to blow out. For its delivery of major projects, we also give this government an F.

The opposition will continue to hold this government to account. We will continue to call on them to do more to help struggling families and small business owners, just like the tomato growers who gathered in the chamber and outside on the steps of parliament today. It is quite clear that South Australians deserve much better from their government.

MARATHONS FOR CHARITY

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:18): Today, I rise to tell an extraordinary story of a truly legendary local from Flagstaff Hill: Asa Cowell. Asa's story is not just about running, it's about resilience, determination and a passion for helping others. While many might celebrate their 50th birthday with a party, a holiday or perhaps a shiny new toy, Asa has chosen to mark his milestone in a way few would dare to imagine: running 50 marathons in 50 consecutive days to raise at least \$50,000 for charity. Let that sink in: 50 marathons in 50 days!

Starting last weekend, Asa laced up his running shoes and embarked on what can only be described as a Herculean challenge. He is planning to run over 2,100 kilometres while juggling a full-time job and life as a father to two teenagers. Each day, he will begin his journey at 4am, ensuring he finishes in time to be at work by 9am. It is a routine of eat, run, eat, work, eat, sleep, and repeat for seven relentless weeks.

This is not Asa's first feat of endurance. A veteran of more than 40 marathons and ultramarathons, Asa knows how to push himself to the absolute limit. But this challenge is different. This time, Asa is not just running for the thrill; he is running to raise money and awareness for Catherine House—a South Australian organisation that provides crisis accommodation and support for women experiencing homelessness, many of whom are survivors of domestic violence.

The inspiration for Asa's cause came from a fellow runner: a mother, grandmother and survivor of domestic violence. Her story of resilience touched Asa deeply and motivated him to take action. He also participated in the Run Against Violence challenge in 2023 and 2024, where he learned about the devastating ripple effects of domestic and family violence—the way it increases the risks of poverty, homelessness, addiction and mental health challenges.

Asa, who himself grew up in a boarding school system where institutional violence was prevalent, knows the lasting scars that it can leave behind, and he is determined to use this challenge to raise awareness and funds for Catherine House so that they can continue their vital work. Every \$152 raised during Asa's challenge will fund a night of accommodation and support services for a woman experiencing homelessness. These funds will help women escape dangerous situations and it will help them rebuild their lives and find hope for the future. Asa's goal is to raise \$50,000, enough to provide hundreds of nights of safety and support for those in need.

Asa is not doing this alone. On Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays he is inviting fellow runners to join him for parts of his marathons. It is a reminder that we are all stronger when we come together. The wonderful Minister Katrine Hildyard and I will be joining Asa for a run at the Happy Valley Reservoir on 8 December with that invitation open to everyone. So I encourage you all. Support Asa's remarkable journey. Visit his 50in50 Facebook page to follow his progress, donate to Catherine House and, if you are a runner or even a walker, join him on a leg of this incredible challenge.

Asa Cowell's story is a testament to the power of the human spirit, the importance of community, and the difference that one person can make when they put their heart and soul into a cause. So let's get behind this extraordinary man and help him make his 50th birthday one that changes lives.

With the brief time I have left I would just like to congratulate the 2024 year 12 graduates right across our state, but particularly those in my community at Aberfoyle Park High School, Seaview High School, the Australian Maths and Science School, One School Global and IQRA College. They have all done an incredible job. Completing year 12 is a remarkable achievement and I hope that, now that exams and study are behind them, they can look forward to a well-deserved summer of relaxation and fun while they consider their exciting adventures ahead.

TOMATO BROWN RUGOSE FRUIT VIRUS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:22): Minister Scriven is scrambling. Just look at the mad panic in the last two days to cover her tracks. We have had rushed briefings, reluctant media and begrudgingly offering information months too late. Tomato growers, incensed by how they have been treated, made it clear they were coming to parliament today. If the minister would not come to them, then they would come to her.

That declaration of a rally on the steps of parliament put PIRSA into a frenzy. Last week, they cancelled an important briefing for growers it would seem just because they had no real answers. It was rescheduled for this afternoon but, in a curious twist, the meeting is now online only. No growers are allowed to attend in person, giving PIRSA the right to veto those questions and contributions with the power of a mute button. Growers are being treated like they have the virus themselves.

The rugose virus that was detected in August this year has caused less harm to human health than the Department of Primary Industries. This is not a natural disaster so much as a

man-made one. It is not Mother Nature causing the damage but bureaucracy. For many months, it has been clear that something is missing and I think that that is common sense. How hard is it to just rock up and listen?

The introduction of the virus was not caused by the minister, so why is she so defensive? Why did she not just go out to meet with the growers and visit them? Why did she not sit in the public briefings with growers like the opposition did? Why was she not prepared to meet with them, hear their stories of hardship? Why has she failed to write back to growers who were begging for information? These are the simple things that establish the character of an elected official and she has been found wanting. The growers who have come to this chamber today—and I thank them for it—would much prefer to be picking. They have been crushed to a pulp by the uncertainty and devastation of PIRSA's management of this biosecurity issue and feel powerless as the government makes decisions about their livelihoods.

Today we witnessed a rally on the steps by Tony Sacca representing Da'Salvatore Farms; Andrew Braham; the Cafcakis family; the Kapis family; Perfection Fresh, who remain in the chamber with me; and the Petsisos family from SA Tomato. I thank them sincerely for their determination to fight for better outcomes than they are getting now. Many are running mum-and-dad businesses and they cannot survive on an indefinite period of growing unviable plants.

We know an entire supply chain has been impacted: nurseries, couriers, pick-and-pack teams and packaging companies. As I mentioned earlier, representing SA Tomato, Oriana and Peter Petsios have been closed down for 103 days. They are the only nursery in SA that provides grafted tomato plants, which are essential in a commercial-growing environment. Last year they sold over two million plants and they were on track to sell over one million when they were shut down.

We need leadership to support a national agreement, first for the movement of fruit in the first instance and then the movement of plants. A few months ago the Premier promised to this house that he would call the CEO of Perfection Fresh, Mr Michael Simonetta. It took him a few more days but he did do it. When I asked Michael Simonetta when he had last heard from the Premier, Michael replied:

The day before Katy Perry. Had a great conversation. He asked me what he could do. I said I just want to be able to replant and get the protocol approved so we can get back to business. He said—

the Premier, quoting—

'That gives me something to work on.' Haven't heard from him since.

In his busy schedule of preparing for the AFL grand final, the Premier made one quick, brief phone call to our state's biggest tomato producer. One day before he waded through the crowd to find Katy Perry. I would ask the Premier now to reflect on that sparkling day—that one day in September, as the classic goes—listening to Katy Perry 'Roar' as he watched the stadium fill up ahead of the kick-off—that hallowed ground of the MCG. I ask the Premier now to imagine it filling up, seven times over, with the forced destruction of the ripe juicy tomatoes and strapping plants as Michael Simonetta described it for *The Australian*. Michael said:

We are currently in the process of pulling out and destroying seven MCGs' worth of perfectly good [tomatoes]...

These businesses have no cash flow, the banks are circling and the fruit is just rotting on the vine. Once they factor in freight costs, packaging and labour there is no margin left so they say what is the point in picking? This Labor government has failed our tomato growers. Shame.

WHYALLA STEELWORKS

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:27): I rise today to talk about what is, in my electorate, the most important issue—in fact, it is an issue of state significance and national significance—and that is the mining industry and the steelworks in Whyalla, part of our sovereign manufacturing capacity. There can be no doubt in anybody's mind as to the level of commitment on the part of the state government to seeing a prosperous future for iron and steelmaking in Whyalla. The commitment is well above 100 per cent; in fact, I am engaged daily in conversation about the future.

I know that my community of Whyalla want certainty. There have been job losses, there has been disruption to contractors who have had to lay people off, and some of the smaller companies have been going to the wall. But the commitment is there: 'We will work through these current difficulties.' We have made it very clear that the situation at the moment does have a degree of uncertainty surrounding it. When a community wants certainty and you cannot deliver it at this stage, for a number of reasons, that is concerning. But the reason why we do not have certainty at the moment is because it is an evolving situation in Whyalla at the mines and at the steelworks.

Most of the major contractors have essentially downed tools at the moment, pending negotiations with GFG about securing financial arrangements. The major contractors have downed tools. For some of the smaller contractors, most are being paid. Some are not, and we go in to bat for those companies that are not being paid. The issue with the smaller contractors, that domestic contractor base in Whyalla, has been the drying-up of work from the steelworks and the impact that is having.

The state government, and indeed the federal government, stand ready to act, but we need to know what the ultimate set of circumstances is going to be. As I said, this is an evolving situation. As a measure of the importance, the whole of the cabinet visited Whyalla a few weeks ago. We met with workers, with union delegates, with officials, with contractors, with GFG, and with Sanjeev Gupta and his senior team. We met with the council, we met with the Chamber of Commerce, and we met with other people to just hear directly from people.

We were there to express our support and to once again reiterate that message that we are there to back Whyalla all the way. Indeed, the largest investment in Whyalla in decades is going to occur with the hydrogen power plant, with some preliminary works starting early this year and with the contracts being signed off with General Electric when it comes to turbines. We have the green iron and steel expression of interest process that we commenced back in June. Fifty-two companies have put in an expression of interest, and when you look at the calibre of those companies—major international steel producers and major resource companies—it gives you some hope for the future.

In 2015 I initiated the change to steel procurement policy in South Australia. As part of that policy, we currently have an order for 120,000 tonnes of steel from Whyalla for road projects in Adelaide. We just need to get the blast furnace up and operating. I am currently lobbying for Northern Water, if that was to go ahead, to be built just to the south of Whyalla because that would make far more sense.

What we do need to see in Whyalla is that technology transition—that transition down the track to a direct iron reduction unit and an electric arc furnace and other peripheral developments. That is the direction that we need to go in. Natural gas will be a transitional reductive agent when it comes to that process, and ultimately we will be looking at hydrogen some years down the track. But the underlying fundamentals exist in Whyalla: the magnetite, the workforce, the port, the industrial infrastructure, rail, the connection to the grid, and the massive energy resources in our region. It is all there to secure a long-term future for steelmaking in our country. As I say, Whyalla is an incredibly important part of our sovereign manufacturing capacity, being the only integrated steelworks in the nation to produce structural steel and rail.

SCHUBERT ELECTORATE

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:33): I would like to talk to the chamber today about a few local issues that are going on in my community. I will start first of all with hoon driving, which is running rampant throughout the northern part of the Adelaide Hills. Last year I held a very well attended community forum on road safety in my electorate. One of the number one issues that was raised with me was the sheer prevalence of hoon driving and the fact that nothing was being done to stamp it out. I am disappointed to report to the chamber that really, since that time there has been no action to stamp out hoon driving in my community.

There are a couple of really notorious spots in my electorate, namely the Chain of Ponds junction that is frequented by many people who visit the Adelaide Hills—I am sure many people do because it is such a perfect spot. Particularly on Monday mornings after the weekend, there are tyre marks, there is debris and there are so many burnout marks that it actually does emulate what you

would expect to see at the Adelaide 500. Despite having raised this with the government and directly with Minister Cregan on several occasions, there has been no action.

There have been a couple of really reasonable solutions that have been put forward to me by my local constituents. Some of them relate to having a safety camera put at the Chain of Ponds juncture. There is actually a pot of money that is sitting within the state budget at the moment for this exact thing. Again, I have raised this with the minister and the response that I received, even six months after it was announced in the state budget, was that they are still considering where these cameras would go.

I think it is about time that the government provides clarity to communities like mine as to whether a safety camera can be installed as a deterrent. It also relates to the idea of having a concrete median strip throughout Chain of Ponds. This is a relatively low-cost and practical solution that has been raised by a constituent because it really would mitigate the opportunity for hoon drivers to do their burnouts at this particular spot.

There is also new technology, which is essentially anti-hoon bars: different texture that is put throughout the junction which might prohibit and stop hoon drivers from apparently getting—and I do not understand it—an adrenaline rush from doing their burnouts. Of course, we have the ongoing issue that the member for Bragg has been prosecuting in this place which comes down to police presence in the area. Like it or lump it, there is a general community consensus that there are not enough police to actually have the presence to deter this type of behaviour in our community.

Part of it, I think, comes down to the practical reality of the Chain of Ponds area. We are, of course, talking about Tippet Road, South Para Road and North East Road. It is very difficult for police to be policing there and sitting stationary, but not around the Chain of Ponds area. I would like to see action on that topic and it is something that I will keep working on with the local community to bring it to the public realm.

We have also had a recent win in the community that I also represent, which is the Barossa Valley, and that relates to rideshare being able to operate in the Barossa. It might surprise many members in this place, but despite rideshare being able to operate in places like McLaren Vale, the Adelaide Hills, Mount Barker, Gawler and the city, it has not been able to operate in the state's premier tourist region of the Barossa Valley. I think that is a massive oversight and so too did my local community.

This was evidenced by a survey that I did on this very issue asking people a very simple question about whether they would like rideshare companies like Uber to operate in the Barossa. I got nearly 3,000 people responding to that in a short period of time, and 95 per cent of respondents said, 'Absolutely, we want choice in how we travel.' So I am really pleased that after some initial resistance, rideshare companies like Uber will be able to operate in the Barossa. It is a big tick for business and it is a big tick for people who want to enjoy what we have to offer, so I encourage people to utilise that when it comes into effect. I hope it is here before Christmas, but I am not holding my breath.

Then, of course, this week we had public confirmation that the final business case for the Barossa hospital is sitting with state cabinet. This is a really critical step. We now know that the money that the former Liberal government put in the budget to purchase that hospital land is also available. Time is of the essence to secure it and I would encourage the government to make that a priority in the weeks ahead.

WAITE ELECTORATE

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (15:38): What a huge year we have had in our community of Waite. I am so very proud to have not only the opportunity to represent the good people of Waite here in parliament and in the Malinauskas government but the absolute privilege of supporting our community and building resilience.

Christmas is just around the corner, and soon we will see community groups, sports clubs, school groups, churches, local businesses and even our Belair National Park parkrun come together for the Blackwood Christmas Pageant. With over 60 floats, it is gearing up to be a fabulous event as we await next year's big celebration of 60 years.

This year, we will be introducing a third MC to the route so everyone can understand and hear about what they are seeing. Last year, I asked a young year 11 student from St John's Grammar, Dhruv, to be our MC, and he is back again this year with his wingman Nicholas. They will be down the end. In the middle, our new added MC will be Twinkle from Blackwood High School, who just graduated this year.

Both of these students from the schools, with the help of Nick, are fabulous artists. They are great at performing arts, and I cannot wait to hear them on the microphone. This week, we all met up with Brenton Ragless, a very good friend of our community and a very experienced pageant caller, to talk to him about tips and tricks that these students will be able to use. It was such a fabulous time at Joan's Pantry. I know they are working on their repertoire.

We are pulling the pageant together with the Blackwood Lions Club and the ever-hardworking Daniel Clutterbuck in my office. They are getting all of the floats, all of the traffic and all of the people ready to have such a wonderful event next Friday night. With the help of SAPOL, SES and the City of Mitcham, it is going to be brilliant. The pageant will be followed by the Christmas fair at the Waite reserve, which is hosted by the Coromandel Rotary club. With entertainment, rides and food, it should be an absolute hoot.

As we head towards Christmas now, though, we are also heading towards bushfire season. I would like to encourage everybody in our community to dust off their bushfire survival plan and make sure they are ready to go. Over the past few weeks, I have hosted five bushfire forums, four of which were co-hosted with our primary schools. They have been a great opportunity for parents who cannot normally get to these events to come along and bring the kids. We fed them with a barbecue. The kids got to play on the trucks and squirt the hoses.

We went inside to listen to our excellent Natasha Huber from region 1, our community education officer. The kids had things to do like colouring in, getting badges and doing crosswords. I want to thank Caprice in my office, who is the queen of the kids and kept them entertained. We also heard from relevant SAPOL officers as they talked about Operation Nomad and why you see extra police on the streets during high and extreme days but more on catastrophic days. It was lovely of them to come along, join us and share in the festivities before we started, with the kids checking out their police cars and the sirens.

The really important message was about being safe and reporting if you see something suspicious on a bad day. Thanks to Rob and his team from Coromandel Valley Primary School, Andrew and his group from Eden Hills Primary School, Rob and the team from Belair Primary School and Adam and his helpers from Upper Sturt Primary School. It was an absolute privilege to be able to work with the schools to get our community to come along to these events. I also thank the Belair, Eden Hills, Coromandel Valley and Upper Sturt CFS captains and their volunteers, who gave up their time to be there to talk with the community, and also Dale Thompson, our Sturt group officer, who does a fabulous job of keeping all the brigades and all the volunteers ready for the fire season.

To our SAPOL officers; Jacob and Jane from the Sturt SES; Paula and Anne from ARTC; the Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Kavel; the Blackwood Action Group; the Rotary Club of Coromandel Valley; and the Upper Sturt CFS—thank you for being there, for cooking our barbecue and for sharing your thoughts. It is important that we all work together as a collective responsibility to be ready for the fire season. I would like to thank all our CFS volunteers in advance for the upcoming season. You all do so much to keep our community safe. I also want to thank your families, who see you walk out the door and worry for every minute that you are on the fireground. Please take care this season.

As the parliamentary year draws to a close, I would like to thank all the members here for their lively contributions. We all work very hard. I especially want to thank the staff who work here at Parliament House who keep everything going and support us so well. We would not be here without you. To my own EO staff, thank you for your tireless dedication to our community. It has been a very busy year. I know you have done a lot, and I just want you to know that I really appreciate you. Finally, to our community, have a fabulous Christmas. Stay safe. Make sure you do all you can to keep your family close, and I will see you in 2025.

*Parliamentary Committees***JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LEGALISATION OF MEDICINAL CANNABIS**

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:44): I move:

That Ms E.L. Thompson be appointed to the committee in place of Mr F.J. Ellis.

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF VETERINARIANS

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:44): I move:

That Ms N.P. Clancy and Mr P.N. McBride be appointed to the committee in place of Ms O.M. Savvas and Ms E.L. Thompson.

Motion carried.

*Parliamentary Procedure***SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:44): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 4 February 2025 at 11am.

Motion carried.

*Bills***EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (BARRING NOTICES AND OTHER PROTECTIONS) AMENDMENT BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:45): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (15:46): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure to speak on this really important piece of legislation that I have just introduced today, which I hope will be something that many if not all members of this place and the other place are supportive and aware of, and that is the treatment of our teachers, school staff, principals, and I mean in preschools, primary schools and high schools, not just in the public system but across all sectors of our education system in South Australia—Catholic, independent and public—and that is the treatment of those staff primarily by parents.

Today I joined the Premier and Jayne Heath, who is the Chief Executive of the South Australian Secondary Principals' Association, better known as SASPA, and Penny Sweeney, who is the principal of Swallowcliffe primary school, which is out in the northern suburbs in Davoren Park. We spoke about the quite substantial bit of work that had been done over a number of months now to get us to the point where we find ourselves today where we can introduce this bill, which will make some very, very significant changes to the act, which grants powers to our school leaders and to me, as the Minister for Education, in terms of how we respond to abusive behaviour from parents, or perhaps it might be grandparents or carers, towards our school staff.

I am afraid that I must start my contribution today by talking about what has brought us to this point, and that is an enormous increase in the number of cases of bad behaviour exhibited by parents towards school staff in South Australia over the past five years. In fact, we have seen a

200 per cent increase in the number of barring notices issued by public schools alone and a more than 250 per cent increase in other operational responses, which might be formal warning letters and reminders about expectations of respectful behaviour. These are alarming figures. I know everyone in this place would agree.

It is not something that is happening in isolation in South Australia. In all the meetings and conversations I have had with my interstate and territory colleagues and the federal Minister for Education, Mr Jason Clare, we have had the same message from those jurisdictions about the same kinds of increases in the same bad behaviour from adults towards preschool, primary school and high school staff.

My message to those people who have been responsible for that abusive behaviour is: enough is enough. We are not going to sit idly on our hands in this government and do nothing, especially at a time when it is harder to retain education staff and attract new people to the profession of teaching than it has perhaps ever been before.

I say that against a backdrop of unprecedented teacher vacancies interstate. I mean that. That is not hyperbole. We are talking about teacher vacancies in the order of thousands in single states, particularly in the Eastern States: 3,000, I think, in New South Wales alone at one point in time, and more than 2,000 in Victoria at one point in time. This means there are classes that do not have a qualified teacher in front of them. It is the worst case scenario.

We are not immune from those kinds of pressures here in South Australia, and we are doing absolutely everything we can to avoid being in the same kind of situation that those states have found themselves in. Currently, in South Australia we have 44 vacancies. I think we are the only jurisdiction in this country where in the last three years the number of vacancies has got better and not worse, which is a credit to the work of our department.

I must say I think it shows that some of the commitments that this government made from opposition, a number of which were crafted by the now Deputy Premier and former Minister for Education, were almost prescient in the sense that as time has gone on we have seen how important they are. That is, for instance, a commitment to increase permanency in the system by at least 10 per cent.

We are moving heaven and earth to meet that target. We are converting at a rate we have never converted before. At the start of this week, I was at St Helen's Park Kindergarten, where we announced that we have just converted 100 preschool staff to permanency, which I understand is as much as the sum total of conversions to permanency in the early years in the last 10 years all in one year.

When I say that we are doing steps and have taken active measures to avoid being in the same situation as other states with those vacancies, I mean it. There is hope of tangible things, including throughout what was a very torturous enterprise bargaining negotiation last year, which people will certainly remember. It is not something that I will forget in a hurry. There were things that came out of that process which are going to protect our workforce into the future.

One of the things I might refer to is our decision to bring back the regional zone incentive, which is some extra money paid to staff who choose to move to regional, rural or remote parts of the state, and that amount grows depending on which zone or which rural area you work in. We also, throughout that enterprise bargaining process, in the end committed to not just making it ongoing for those staff who are currently getting the allowance, which generally finishes at the end of five years, but also brought it back for those staff who used to receive it and had then, essentially, maxed out at the end of their five-year period.

These are really important things, because I can tell you as someone who went to public school in the country and whose father taught at the public school that I went to. This was in the 1990s and getting staff then was nigh on impossible. I remember the feeling of loss, not just at the school but in the general community, when you would get a young gun teacher, in this case who came down from Melbourne to Portland. Students would think they were fantastic. They would inject some fresh talent into the school, join the netball club and join the football club. They were absolutely welcomed as only regional communities can do, and when they then decided to go back, for whatever

reason, it was a huge loss, not just to the school community but to the whole country community as well.

I know that whenever we are feeling pressures around how we fill vacancies in metropolitan areas, you can guarantee that they are feeling it more acutely in the country. That is why a Labor government bringing back those regional allowances is something I am going to bang on about in this place for as long as I get to be a member of this place.

I might just circle back to why we are doing that and why this bill on which I am speaking today is so important. Aside from those things that I just mentioned, of course the other thing we need to do is to protect our workforce. We need to grow our workforce and to convince young people that teaching is not just a noble profession but a profession that they will enjoy and thrive in, in which their employer will protect them. We need to be taking action against the really unsavoury kind of behaviour that we are seeing increasingly directed towards our staff.

When I say 'unsavoury', that is understating things. We are talking about physical violence from some parents. We are talking about staff, regularly female staff, because we have a highly feminised workforce, being physically hit by parents. I have heard stories of them being spat on, stalked, harassed, pursued, moving to encroach upon a person's physical space, standing outside the school grounds and yelling and swearing. I remember speaking to one regional principal, who said for a period of time, because of unrest in their school, she had decided she needed to take action to address that. She did not feel safe going to the shops without two of her sons or her partner, because she felt that someone in community might actually physically assault her. That is the kind of stuff we are talking about here.

When I talk about a 200 per cent increase and I talk about abusive behaviour, it is as serious as you can possibly imagine. I have spoken to so many of those staff—principals, senior long-serving teachers, new staff, SSOs, business managers, the front desk task, who often cop the brunt of it, I must say. The one sitting there at the front, our admin staff, often has to cop that. The toll that this kind of behaviour takes on them is really profound. It directly results in them quitting. It directly results in these people deciding that they are not going to do the job anymore. They just do not see the point in subjecting themselves to it anymore, especially in an economy at the moment where there are other job opportunities for people and they can choose to go elsewhere.

Of course, it is not just our existing staff. I will touch soon on how we have broadened the scope of where we can take action as a department in terms of the online forum, but that is where we have seen a lot of the growth. The other people who see that behaviour, who may not have been witness to it if it occurred on a school premises, are those who are studying teaching and those young people who are thinking that they might want to be a teacher when they are older.

If you were to see some of these Facebook or Instagram community forums, where, for instance, someone might put up what appears on the face of it to be quite an innocuous post asking for people's feedback on a local school that that they are considering for their child, you would read what is often then a 400 or 500-comment pile on on the school, which names staff, names principals, and which makes in lots of cases totally unfounded and highly defamatory claims against them. I would challenge you to think that a young person who was sitting there reading that, who had before that moment fancied themselves as a preschool teacher, primary school teacher or high school teacher, would still think that that was the profession for them after seeing the kind of abuse that the existing workforce is subjected to. It is absolutely abhorrent kind of stuff.

This bill here today goes directly to the things that we can do to tackle it. I want South Australia to have the most modern, fit-for-purpose legislation in this case. That means it is not just about the penalties, although they are important and we are increasing the penalties here, but also making sure that our legislation is actually fit for purpose for the year 2024, not 1964, not 1994 when I was in school high school, because back then there was no online forum through which people could subject staff to abuse.

Now, I would say it is almost the primary method of abusing staff in the education system, sometimes, and increasingly so, in an anonymous way too. Of course, if you are a teacher at the local school, knowing your community, knowing your students and knowing your families like you do, you would know who is saying those things about you, even if it was made under an anonymous

comment. Of course, the hurt that that causes is really profound and something we need to take action about.

As I said at the start of my speech, we are not orphans here; we are not the only place in Australia or internationally dealing with this. It is a global trend, sadly. The latest Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey, published in March of this year, found that the behaviour of some parents and caregivers is a major contributor to the stresses faced by school leaders, with principal responses suggesting parents were the top source of issues—this is parents, not students—that involved bullying, cyber bullying, gossip, slander and sexual harassment. Of those principals who reported being threatened with violence, two thirds experienced this from parents and caregivers. We are talking about an issue that is emerging not just here in South Australia but nationally.

The bill that I have introduced today seeks to address these problems by building on and improving what we already have by way of protections in part 8 of the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. Part 8 sets out relevant offences for misbehaviour and trespass on the premises of schools, preschools and education and care services and for abuse and offensive behaviour directed towards teachers and other staff acting in the course of their duties, wherever that occurs. I will come to that in a second. That is an important point around the context and the environment in which that abuse occurs.

Part 8 provides for designated persons in respect of premises, such as principals of schools and directors of preschools, to direct a person away from the premises in response to such behaviour and/or issue a notice barring a person from the premises or from other premises used or to be used by the school, by the preschool or by the service. However, the specific terms of part 8 have meant those powers have not been able to be leveraged in relation to some types of harmful behaviour. This includes, for example, vexatious communications with or about a member of staff, offensive behaviour targeted at students when involved in an education activity away from the premises of the relevant school, preschool or service.

By this we mean including but not limited to school camps, excursions and sports days. I have to say that so many of the specific examples that have been passed on to me as the minister by our staff have referenced things like sports day, where some of the worst behaviour is actually exhibited, or occurring just outside the boundary of the school where parents think they might be able to behave like this and get away with it: yelling abuse from outside the school gate, for instance.

The bill aims to address these issues and to improve the overall ability of leaders at schools, preschools and education and care services to ensure safe learning and working environments. We say this in this place a lot: everyone has the right to be treated well in their workplace but for some reason, which sadly is not clear to me, many people forget that schools are the workplaces, classrooms are the workplaces for teachers and they deserve the same kind of respect in that place that any of us here or elsewhere would expect in our workplace.

The bill will amend part 8 of the act to make it an offence to behave in a disorderly or intimidating manner on premises and increase the penalties for all offences under part 8 from \$2,500 to \$7,500. The bill will also broaden the grounds on which a designated person can issue a barring notice in respect of the premises of a school, preschool or education and care service to include where the designated person reasonably believes the following:

- that the person while on those premises poses, or would pose, a risk to the safety or wellbeing of any other person on the premises;
- that the person, while on any related premises being used by, or for an activity or in connection with, the school, preschool or education and care service, poses, or would pose, a risk to the safety or wellbeing of any other person on the related premises;
- that the person poses, or would pose a risk to the safety or wellbeing of any person related to a relevant school, preschool or education and care service while the related person is in transit between relevant premises;
- the person, while on premises, poses or would pose a risk of causing significant disruption to the learning or working environment;

- that the person has engaged in vexatious communication with, or regarding, a member of staff or other person employed at the premises.

The bill will also provide for the minister to publish guidelines in relation to barring notices and require a designated person in issuing a barring notice to comply with those guidelines set out that a notice may:

- bar a person from premises to which part 8 applies, or a part of the premises specified in the notice;
- bar a person from any related premises for any period specified in the notice during which the related premises are being used by, or for an activity conducted by, or in connection with, the school, preschool, or education and care service;
- prohibit a person from communicating with or otherwise contacting (whether that is electronically or by other means) a member of staff or other person specified in the notice employed at the premises;
- prohibit the person from communicating on any online platforms of the school, preschool, education and care service or department specified in the notice;
- subject to any guidelines published by the minister, provide that a barring notice may, in specifying premises or related premises in relation to which a person is barred, include any area within 25 metres of a boundary of the premises. That is what I referred to earlier, where we were seeing some of this behaviour exhibited which was outside the school grounds.

I would also like to make mention, especially given our joint sitting yesterday, that the state First Nations Voice to Parliament provided detailed and considered feedback on the bill. I thank them for their engagement. While they were generally supportive of the bill, the Voice provided suggestions to ensure that the provisions operate in a culturally sensitive way and do not disproportionately impact on First Nations people.

To this end, the bill provides for guidelines to be published by the minister in relation to the consideration of the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and children and their families in the issuing of any barring notices. The government looks forward to discussing these matters with the Voice as the bill progresses through this place.

In closing, the measures in this bill, as with the current provisions in part 8, will not prevent parents, caregivers and other community members from raising reasonable complaints or advocating for their child's particular needs and nor would we wish that to happen. They seek to promote positive interactions with the staff of schools, preschools and other services by improving safeguards against the worst kinds of misbehaviour.

There is no place in our schools, preschools or our education and care services—regardless of whether they are public, Independent or Catholic services—for violent, abusive or threatening behaviour. Our teachers deserve a workplace in which they can feel safe and free from harassment and harm. For our children and students to thrive, we need to ensure our schools, preschools and education and care services can focus on providing the best education and care possible. I commend the bill to the house, and I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Education and Children's Services Act 2019*

3—Amendment of section 90—Application of Part

This clause amends section 90 to extend the application of the Part to premises which are the premises of an approved learning program that has been prescribed by the regulations.

4—Insertion of section 90A

Section 90A is inserted.

90A—Interpretation

Proposed section 90A inserts several definitions for the purposes of the measure.

5—Amendment of section 91—Offensive or threatening behaviour

This clause extends the application of the offences in section 91(1) and (2)(b) to include disorderly and intimidating behaviour, which is consistent with other amendments made by the measure. The heading of the section is amended to reflect this change, and the maximum penalty for the offences is increased from \$2,500 to \$7,500.

6—Amendment of section 92—Trespassing on premises

This clause increases the maximum penalty for an offence against the section from \$2,500 to \$7,500.

7—Amendment of heading to Part 8 Division 3

This clause amends the heading of Part 8 Division 3 to reflect that the Division deals with the making of barring notices.

8—Substitution of section 93

Section 93 is proposed to be substituted as follows:

93—Power to bar person from premises, etc

Proposed section 93 gives a designated person in respect of premises to which Part 8 applies the power to issue a barring notice to a person if the designated person reasonably believes that person poses a risk to any other person on the premises, or on related premises, or to the learning and working environment or activities carried on at the premises or related premises. Subsection (3) provides a list of certain circumstances in which a person will be taken to pose a threat. A barring notice may also be issued to a person if the designated person reasonably believes that the person has engaged in vexatious communication with a member of staff or other person employed at the premises. A barring notice may prevent a person from entering premises, or engaging in conduct, specified in the notice. Provision is made in relation to the preconditions for the making of a barring notice, the form a barring notice must take, the premises and activities to which a barring notice can apply, and the consequences for the breach of a barring notice. The Minister may make guidelines in relation to barring notices, which must be followed when a designated person issues such a notice.

9—Amendment of section 94—Review of barring notice by Minister

This clause amends section 94 such that a person who is issued with a barring notice under section 93 that applies for at least 2 weeks may apply to the Minister for review of the barring notice, except to the extent that the notice applies to a non-Government school, preschool, approved education and care service or approved learning program.

10—Amendment of heading to Part 8 Division 4

The heading of Part 8 Division 4 is amended to reflect that barring notices may now also apply in respect of a related premises.

11—Amendment of section 95—Certain persons may restrain, remove from or refuse entry to premises

Amendments are made to section 95 to reflect the changes made to section 93, such that an authorised person in respect of premises to which Part 8 of the Act applies may, in circumstances where the authorised person reasonably believes that a person poses an imminent risk, either to the safety and wellbeing of any other person on, or to the learning and working environment or activities carried on at, the premises or related premises, the authorised person may direct that person to leave the premises or related premises. The authorised person may also direct a person to leave the premises if the person has engaged in vexatious communication with a member of staff or other person employed at the premises. Provision is made for certain circumstances in which a person will be taken to pose a risk.

12—Amendment of section 135—Proceedings for offences

Section 135 is amended to require that proceedings for an offence against the Act may only be commenced by the Chief Executive, or a person authorised by the Chief Executive, with the written consent of the Minister.

Schedule 1—Transitional and savings provisions

1—Barring notices

Provision is made such that a barring notice made under the Act prior to these amendments that is in effect as at the commencement of the amendments will continue in force as if it had been issued under section 93, as substituted by this measure.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Basham.

NATIVE VEGETATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (16:07): Continuing with my remarks, this means a majority of applications to clear native vegetation will follow one application process, require consistent information to be provided and have the same application fees. This bill will provide for administrative efficiencies but not alter the likelihood of gaining approval.

The Native Vegetation Council will continue to be responsible for considering applications to clear native vegetation, determining offsets and enforcing compliance with the act. Alignment of assessment provisions for Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 referrals is the next objective. This will be achieved through the bill streamlining the referral processes to allow the Native Vegetation Council to meet its statutory timeframe of 20 business days.

The final objective of the bill is to increase fines and penalty provisions. A number of penalties and expiations will be increased to support greater compliance with the act, including a maximum penalty of \$500,000 (increased from \$100,000) for individuals who clear native vegetation not in accordance with the act, and the same penalty increase for those individuals who contravene or fail to comply with a condition attached to a consent granted under part 5. The expiation fee has been doubled.

We need to have the right balance in South Australia to ensure that future generations can enjoy the native vegetation that we have, whether it be in our national or conservation parks, on the roadside, by our rivers and creeks and along our coast. We want everyone to be able to walk, hike, camp amongst nature, enhance their wellbeing and enjoy the natural beauty our state has to offer, while also protecting our biodiversity. Our state's native vegetation is integral to our First Nations peoples' relationship with country and is why this bill supports greater First Nations representation with the inclusion of a provision to enable the council to establish a committee that will provide opportunity for greater First Nations voices and representation. This is important as our First Nations people have been caring for our native vegetation for up to 100,000 years. I commend this bill to the house.

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (16:10): I rise in support of the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water for bringing this bill before the house. There is no stronger advocate for our natural environment and the wellbeing of South Australian fauna than the minister, and while the changes we debate today are largely administrative there can be no doubting their importance. So thank you to the minister, and I am so pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this matter, and particularly right as we finish our parliamentary year.

This bill amends the Native Vegetation Act to streamline its compliance processes, provide fit for purpose clearance requirements, expand the use of the native vegetation fund, and a great deal more. We know that native vegetation is critical to our state's biodiversity, providing habitat and food sources for common and threatened species, absorbing significant carbon dioxide and controlling degradation. But what is lesser considered is that it is also a significant economic benefit, both to our tourism sector and those in farming and agricultural industries. The Native Vegetation Act, alongside the native vegetation regulations, forms the legislative basis for protection and management of native vegetation throughout South Australia, with the exceptions in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

While the act in its original guise presented significant reform upon its introduction, a move which has helped prevent the mass clearing of valuable native vegetation, some elements have grown old, confusing and administratively burdensome. So with a fine toothcomb—and again led by

the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water—the Malinauskas government trawled the existing legislation for potential improvements, culminating in the bill before the house today. We can ill afford confusion where laws that protect our natural environment are concerned, in particular given that our state is growing, our economy is booming and development is progressing at a rate we have never seen before. Make no mistake, South Australia is growing up, but that growth cannot come at the expense of what, in part at least, makes us such a desirable city and state in the first place, and that is our flora and fauna.

This bill will deliver on another of the government's election commitments. In this instance, increasing legislative protection, monitoring and compliance of the act, while also ruling a firm line through any reduction in the legislative protections we afford native vegetation. As the minister referenced in her second reading speech, the state budget is further bolstering South Australia's green economic credentials through \$6.5 million in funding this year, growing to \$7.9 million per annum by the 2027-28 financial year, and what I welcome in that budget measure—and what I hope all members would welcome, for that matter—is funding that is included in that figure for the protection of native vegetation through strengthened compliance.

While we are talking funding, that broadening of the native vegetation fund's parameters that I referenced earlier will allow it to be used for a broader range of conservation-related activities, with changes including a stipulation that money paid into the fund from expiation fees be used to address adverse impacts from the loss of vegetation. These changes are not sexy and it is no surprise that there is nobody sitting up in the media gallery today, but that does not mean that these changes are not important. What we are doing here is increasing legislative protections, while ensuring that we steer clear of amendments that constrain development, and that is a fine line to walk. Ultimately, though, what it is going to deliver is a more consistent application of the assessment criteria, and that can only be a positive for anyone seeking clarity of process and the state more broadly.

It is a privilege to represent a community that sits at the feet of the Adelaide Hills, a region where native vegetation is in abundance. There are few places in the world that I would rather live and there is certainly no other community I want to spend each and every day working alongside. I am so pleased that we have the opportunity to progress these vital protections for native vegetation before the year is out, and I commend this bill to the house.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (16:14): I rise today in support of the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024. This bill represents a crucial step forward in our ongoing commitment to preserve and enhance South Australia's native vegetation. Our state's native vegetation encompasses a diverse range of flora, including trees, shrubs, sedges, herbs, grasses and simpler life forms such as mosses, lichens and fungi. These form the foundation of our state's biodiversity, contributing immense ecosystem use and non-use values.

According to the 2023 EPA's State of the Environment report, the level of vegetation cover in this state was at 87.8 per cent and declining. This underscores the urgent need to further protect and grow our native vegetation to achieve sustainable development and ensure its benefit for future generations.

From an environmental perspective, native vegetation provides habitat, protection and food for our native fauna on land. In aquatic ecosystems it enhances water quality through filtration and nutrition provision while stabilising riverbanks. Moreover, it plays a crucial role in mitigating the climate crisis by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. These carbon sinks are not only environmentally beneficial but also hold substantial financial value for our farming communities, as reflected in the expansion of the Native Vegetation Fund.

In my community, the current act significantly contributes to our native biodiversity through Native Vegetation Heritage Agreements. This program benefits both the environment by ensuring the protection and enhancement of localised ecosystem services, and landholders through support from the Department for Environment and Water in maintaining their properties. An exemplary initiative in our community is the Bandicoot Superhighway Project, a collaboration of landholders with heritage agreements, local reserves and the Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare site working to increase the endangered southern brown bandicoot's available habitat.

The benefits of native vegetation extend far beyond environmental protection. It is instrumental in controlling land degradation issues such as erosion and salinity that can severely impact agricultural productivity. Additionally, it provides natural capital to crops by hosting pollinators and pest controllers, offering a multifunctional and sustainable method of agriculture when incorporated.

Native vegetation also underpins South Australia's tourism economy. Our natural landscapes offer unique opportunities for individuals and communities to engage with nature, attracting visitors from all around the world. This not only enhances community wellbeing but also supports local economies and boosts the productivity of regional communities. In the Mitcham Hills, our community is surrounded by numerous parks including the popular Belair National Park; the Sturt Gorge, Brownhill Creek and Shepherds Hill recreation parks; and Watiparinga Reserve, among others.

The importance of this act and its amendments in increasing native vegetation protection and compliance cannot be overstated. It is crucial to acknowledge the history of vegetation in our region, especially to stress the necessity of increasing First Nations representation on the Native Vegetation Council. Prior to colonisation, the Mitcham Hills and Adelaide Hills hosted a wide abundance of iconic native species such as blue gum, red gum and my favourite, grey box.

For the Kurna and Peramangk people, this was their home. They moved between different locations, living off the natural environment's resources. Evidence of their historical presence in the area includes campsites and scarred trees. The environment was well managed, with ecosystems balanced through cultural burning practices that encouraged land regeneration and sustainable resource use.

After many tens of thousands of years of Aboriginal occupancy and environmental harmony—or until less than 200 years ago in our terms—colonisation brought rapid changes to the landscape. Woodlands were felled, native flora and fauna were replaced with agriculture, and livestock grazing became the new human ecology. Fortunately, the 20th century saw some reversal of this trend, with the government designating conservation areas and local groups undertaking revegetation efforts. However, our landscapes still bear scars, as evidenced by introduced weeds that our environmental volunteers work tirelessly to manage. This new and threatening ecology is exemplified by ironies such as the need to preserve blackberries in some areas to protect our native bandicoots from introduced predators.

Building upon this historical context, the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024 addresses the need to modernise our approach to native vegetation management. The current Native Vegetation Act 1991 and the Native Vegetation Regulations 2017 have been instrumental in preventing mass clearance, but parts have become outdated and administratively cumbersome. This bill aims to refine these processes while enhancing protection and stakeholder support. Key provisions of the bill include:

- clarification and streamlining of assessment and compliance processes;
- consistent and fit-for-purpose clearance requirements;
- alignment of assessment provisions with the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016;
- expanded use of the Native Vegetation Fund for a broader range of conservation activities;
- enhanced compliance actions against unauthorised clearance; and
- revised fees and penalty provisions.

These changes fulfil our government's commitment to increasing legislative protection without reducing existing safeguards.

To support these initiatives, the 2024-25 budget allocates \$6.5 million initially, increasing to \$7.9 million annually by 2027-28. This funding will strengthen our state's green economic credentials through improved compliance efforts. Importantly, this bill aligns with our broader environmental objectives, including the development of South Australia's first biodiversity act.

The process of creating this bill has involved extensive stakeholder engagement, including consultations with government agencies, environmental groups, industry bodies and the public. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with valuable feedback incorporated into the final version.

In conclusion, I support this bill as a vital step towards improving our native vegetation management framework. It not only protects our environment but also supports our agricultural sector, enhances biodiversity, enables economic growth through sustainable practices, and respects cultural heritage. We need to work together to ensure that future generations inherit a thriving natural landscape that continues to sustain both life and livelihoods here in South Australia. I commend the bill.

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (16:21): It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. I wish the minister and her department all the best, and I will try my best to understand that there are some really good intentions here. There are points about streamlining. There are points about re-utilising funds in a way that, perhaps, they are not allowed to be at the moment for the betterment of the environment and the use of the funds that have been collected in the department—the department of vegetation, I think—to be used for all the right reasons that I think were intended.

I am giving a little bit of a heads-up that I do have some amendments I would like to add. They are not to take away from the intent of what the minister is trying to achieve, but to perhaps address some of the really strong concerns or difficult concerns that my constituents are dealing with in the Limestone Coast. We could use these types of little amendments to help fix some of the issues that have been ongoing probably since I have been in politics and perhaps ongoing for many years before that.

The proposed amendments to the Native Vegetation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024 align with the government's desire to further streamline and improve the native vegetation assessment process. The first two proposed amendments deal with clearance for road safety purposes. They allow a regional council, which has been defined as part of the amendment, or an accredited third-party provider to authorise clearance for road safety purposes without restriction. We have defined a regional council as a council that is not within the Greater Adelaide planning area, which has been shown on a map which can be provided.

The other amendments modify the process to gain approval to clear where the clearance is to facilitate residential subdivisions in regional council areas. The key changes we have made are that a council or an accredited third party must, when deciding whether to give consent to such clearance, take into account the need for housing in the area. If the clearance is approved, we have also provided that the required environmental benefit is also to be reduced from the environmental benefit the person or developer would otherwise be required to provide. We hope the government includes these amendments—and I say hope, fingers crossed—which will assist with regional housing developments proceeding and enhance road safety in many regional areas.

It gives me great pleasure to elaborate on where we are coming from and why. We have examples in Naracoorte where a development is proposed for a subdivision that would be subdivided into many houses and there are five trees that are in the way of this subdivision. They are oldish, sort of broken down. They are living. They are manna gum, stringybark-type eucalyptus. These five trees are now worth to the developer \$30,000 each to remove, adding a \$150,000 cost before he even starts if he wants to remove these five trees.

Under the proposed changes that we are looking to do here, those five trees must be replanted by twofold. That would mean that there would be 10 new trees of the same species, managed and under the authority of either the council or a third party, planting them and making sure that they survive for a period like 10 years and beyond. We are all better off for this example. We have allowed the housing development to take place without the \$30,000 per tree cost, which is \$150,000. We have allowed the doubling of that species of tree, from five to 10, to be replanted in the vicinity. The government might say within 1 kilometre, they might say within 10 kilometres, I do not care; they have to be planted within the vicinity.

That means we actually have 10 new trees, managed and planted for the betterment of the environment, and we also get the win around these houses. Why is this important? Naracoorte finds itself as one of those examples, and no doubt it can happen elsewhere, where it is very restricted in its expansion. Naracoorte cannot, or it struggles to, expand towards the west or Lucindale because it is an old flood plain. It is on clay soils, they get wet and there is not a lot of drainage. You would have to build up a lot to make sure that you do not build in basically a swamp out to the west of Naracoorte. Out towards the east, it also has those same sorts of issues, whether it be flood plains, vineyards or big old red gums, so it is also very hard for it to expand in an easterly direction.

It can expand, and it has expanded, in a north-south direction. But north to south, which means following the range, is also where we find a lot of native veg, and it actually restricts the whole town and its expansion. If the government recognises, or perhaps remembers, or maybe has been advised, we know the reason this has happened—regional housing and its expansion—is economic failure. We know that the finance sector of Australia already makes it harder for houses to be built in regional areas because the finance is more expensive and the equity levels are greater. We know that is factual. When we then start putting in native vegetation costs, like \$150,000 for five trees, we know that we are just killing off the opportunity to build houses in a regional town like Naracoorte.

We do not want to see the area denuded of trees. We do not want to see widespread clearing of trees. We are actually saying we will happily double the number of trees, and we will have a new generation of trees being planted with good management and objectivity, perhaps even governance around this to make sure it is not spiked, misused and abused, that people can cheat the system; I do not see why you would want to, compared to what we are proposing here.

We have defined the regional areas outside the Greater Adelaide area. What is the greater Adelaide area? Sorry to the member for Finnis; I am not able to bat for him. I am not able to bat for the member for Hammond because Murray Bridge is included in Greater Adelaide. Going out to the northern areas, it goes up towards the Barossa, which I cannot include either. Beyond that, we know that all the towns in regional South Australia could do with more housing.

I do not see why the government would want to say, 'Yes, there could be these isolated tree pockets on the edges of towns, and they could be the impost, they could be the stopper, they could be the pothole, they could be the wall.' We just want to allow a gate there to be opened that is easier than the one that the Native Vegetation Council is putting there now. That is what we are proposing.

One of the things that I really hope the government is on board with in its endeavours of looking after the state and prosperity is that we do need regional communities. We do need the towns to grow. We already know that those economic failings and failures have occurred, and they will continue to occur if we keep turning blind eyes to these sorts of hiccups, problems and blockages. They are real expenses when we start talking \$30,000 a tree for five trees. That is \$150,000. We know that this process is already risky, building houses in the regions, without that sort of impost.

The other thing is about regional roads, again on the same premise and removing ourselves from the Greater Adelaide region where this rule will not apply. Anyone can go to a council—and they have it down here as a third party, but obviously I have just described a third party. The point is that we are saying to councils, 'We've got trees that are blocking visuals, they're blocking road safety, and these trees need to be removed from the roadside.' They have to be, obviously, from the roadside.

I can give you many examples of T-junctions and intersections where the trees are stopping the visual for cars coming and going. It is putting motorists at risk when entering that intersection because they cannot see what they used to because management around these trees and regrowth has been lost because the impost of only clearing about two metres back from the edge of the roadside kerb or one metre behind a white post is not far enough in some cases. We are putting lives at risk.

In that regard, we are saying, 'Council, we've got a problem here.' If the council says, 'No, we don't believe you. Those trees are aesthetically pleasing, they are valuable, no problem here,' that will belong with the council, if they say no to that. What we are then saying is if the council says yes, it will then be left to either the council to engage in that clearance or a private landowner to engage in that clearance, or even a sporting body. This is the bit I will say: we know that there are

sporting bodies in my region that would love the firewood from the trees growing over major roads in my electorate to sell at the local football club during the winter. We know that we have stock crates driving on our roads with cattle, particularly cattle that stick their heads up higher than the top of the stock crate, and they are being wiped out by branches. We have animals being wiped out, literally—animal cruelty—because branches are so close to the top deck of the stock crates.

This could be during wet conditions or it could be four years after the last pruning, where the regrowth becomes heavy, subsides and sinks and we cannot do anything about it because there is no authority to fix this. All we want is to give authority to the council to say, 'That tree is outside the specifications of the council clearance heights, but when it's wet and windy and after two or three years it will not be within the design of what the stock crate desires to get underneath it and, all of a sudden, we are damaging animals for no apparent reason'—and this is happening.

I know we can get volunteers to fix this, and they would happily fix this. I like the fact that the minister for the department of infrastructure talked about roadside vegetation, and that is obviously the grass on the side of roads, which we also know has not been managed as well as it could have been because of a contract that is really not meeting maintenance needs. I am suggesting that, in this area, if landowners want to slash the side of their roads they should be allowed to slash the side of their roads, just like we might have to prune the trees on the side of our roads. They tell me that over in Victoria they are allowed to do this. They are not handcuffed; they are encouraged to manage their own roadsides, with the councils missing in action, not being able to do it, did not get to it, or could not afford it.

Do you know what the best thing about this is? People are not turning a blind eye to it. We are allowing people with some authority, with a permission process, to fix it. We want a simple solution. We want to go to a local council, not a state government, not a big bureaucratic authority, and knock on the council door, and say, 'Look, council, this is all going to rubbish. You haven't pruned the trees on the roadside lately. They are wiping out our vehicles. Our vehicles are being damaged by these trees overhanging, and you're not there fixing it. So let's get the footy club in, let's get the netballers in. They will come and do it, I can tell you, and fix this for nothing.' Why are they not doing it? Because they are not allowed to. Why? Because they do not have the authority.

It beggars belief that in these times of austerity we do not have labour, it is hard to get workers, people are underemployed or they cannot get the employees out there. We know we still have these organisations like footy clubs, like a Lions Club, that collect firewood to raise money for the elderly or those who cannot get firewood themselves to keep warm during the winter. These are the sorts of projects that they would take up to fix the problem. They could do it without any cost to government, using some sort of common sense so that we do not just get vandals going down the road, chopping all the trees down and saying that it was all for road safety. No, we have to do it properly. We will have an authority and it has to be about road safety.

We are getting local intel on this, which is being lost because Adelaide does not see the trees coming down onto the top deck of the stock crates and wiping out the heads of the cattle when they get excited and jump up. No-one talks about this, but I can tell you stock crate drivers know about it, because when they unload them there are damaged animals on the top deck. This is happening.

All I can say is I hope that we get a good process. The minister is trying to streamline the process for the betterment of vegetation and native veg. This system is obviously going to help, and with my amendments—I think we are talking about three—around housing and road safety I hope that we can actually get a good commonsense outcome. With that, I await the bill to come to the house and I wish the minister all the best in her pursuits. I hope that I have some luck. I might be stretching my luck, but we can only try. I wish her well in her aspirations.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (16:34): I rise to speak on this amendment bill and to give a bit of context. It is interesting hearing some of the contributions from my metropolitan colleagues in this place, talking about certain aspects of the Native Vegetation Act as a whole, but I want to give some context, as my colleague the member for MacKillop has given some context from his perspective and from his region. I really want to speak about the impact that this existing piece of legislation has. I am sure, as the amendments are considered through this place, that some of the changes that will be brought in will continue to be an impact on regional South Australia in particular.

If you look at this legislation, it really is a piece of legislation for the area outside the metropolitan Adelaide boundaries. Those of us who live outside the boundaries of metropolitan Adelaide fully realise that we have a responsibility for our natural environment and native vegetation as a whole. Let me just say, members of our regional communities really are the best stewards of our natural environment and the native vegetation that we have in the state.

I, for one, have planted hundreds of trees—thousands of trees—thousands more than I have ever taken out, because we recognise that we need to appropriately manage vegetation. However, the legislation and the regulation that is wrapped up within the Native Vegetation Act is unfortunately putting regional communities at a disadvantage. It is putting projects and infrastructure at risk. It is putting potential investment at risk and adding extra cost and bureaucratic burden at a time when we should be enabling our regional communities to thrive, not putting hurdles in place.

I have already spoken this week about some of the frustrations that I have with that bureaucratic malaise when it comes to decision-making. I will give you an example. Just this last week, there was a proposal from Telstra to install a new mobile phone tower at Ceduna South in my electorate. Now, Ceduna is a long way away from Adelaide. We get frustrated that decisions that are made in Adelaide impact us in regional communities, but especially those that are isolated like Ceduna.

The application from Telstra to put a phone tower up went through local government. It went through the processes to get funding from Telstra and, let me tell you, that is not an easy thing to do either. It went through all these processes. It reached the final hurdle, which unfortunately was the Native Vegetation Act and the Native Vegetation Council, and they said no. They said, 'No, you can't put a tower there, because there's some native vegetation and we won't allow it.'

I know the area around where the proposal was for this tower, and it probably reflects the frustration that is heard across regional South Australia, because decisions are made in isolation, without the context of the vast swathes of native vegetation that already exist and will continue to exist within those areas.

I implore decision-makers and especially the Minister for Environment, who is in charge of the Native Vegetation Act, to be fully aware of the impact of decisions made by the bureaucracy, by the Native Vegetation Council, in regional South Australia, because now that funding for that tower is absolutely at risk. Telstra are reconsidering what to do with that project, and that is going to lead to lesser outcomes for my community in Ceduna.

To go through all the hurdles and then hit one, which I believe is a negative impact on a regional community and unnecessary within the context of what is already in place, I think is unacceptable. I hear countless stories from people looking to develop their business further, people who are looking at investing into regional South Australia, who go through all the different approval processes but hit that hurdle of the Native Vegetation Council decision, and unfortunately either they say, 'No,' or they say, 'You have to pay these tens of thousands of dollars.' In my history in local government, I saw this firsthand. We had a project, when I was on council, to put in place a community wastewater management system within one of the towns in my jurisdiction. The process that we went through as a council, the amount of money that was invested, the design, the structure, the advantage for community—we went through all of that.

The piece of land was identified for construction of the key part of that asset, the ponds. It was in amongst an area that I, as someone who lives and breathes it, would not say is high-quality native vegetation. It was an area which had been previously denuded, and obviously there had been a little bit of regrowth. Decisions that were made under the existing legislation by the council ended up costing tens of thousands of dollars more to the ratepayers of the District Council of Tumby Bay, but for what end? In and around this project and infrastructure that was put in place was, once again, vast swathes, acres and acres, of comparative or even higher quality native vegetation. What are these laws trying to achieve?

We have housing challenges at the moment within regional South Australia that are hitting this hurdle. Developers are saying, 'Why are we bothering to look at regional South Australia when we can end up having more opportunity within metropolitan area to have this sort of investment?' We have these restrictions that are in place that are adding extra cost, adding extra impost, adding

strange stipulations to developments—here is a piece of native vegetation, and we will put this value on it, whether it is monetary or whether it is an equivalent 10 times the amount to invest, in order to plant into another part of land somewhere nearby.

Some of these decisions are really questionable, and they are actually having negative impacts and outcomes for regional South Australia. This is why we see all the time developers looking at investing in housing here in regional South Australia, but this bureaucratic burden is actually being a negative towards those sorts of outcomes. At a time when we should be looking at what opportunities we can open the door for in regional South Australia, that door has been shut because of restrictions, regulation and legislation that are in place.

I have been a strong proponent for having a bigger picture perspective when it comes to native vegetation and trying to mirror some of the arrangements that are in place here in metropolitan Adelaide in the designated township areas within regional South Australia. Within our planning act, each town, each city has a designated township area within that planning system. Those boundaries are clear. Why is there not the same level of the legislation, regulation, obligation on the areas within that township boundary as there is within metropolitan Adelaide?

This is where I think there is an opportunity with a government that is looking to be proactive at investing into the future of regional South Australia. If those designated township areas did not have these native vegetation restrictions, you would be removing a hurdle out of the way of people who were looking to invest into the likes of housing, the likes of potential industrial growth, the likes of potential commercial growth within those townships and cities in regional South Australia. This is something that I hear right across the whole area. That is something that I hope will be investigated by the government, if they are truly honest about wanting to be encouraging regional South Australia to better themselves and continue to be a strong contributor to our state's economy.

The other aspect I have always been a strong proponent of is around the roadside vegetation management and the inconsistencies I see at the moment within the system we are facing and for us to try to have a structure that actually reflects the national guidelines for roads, so the road reserves reflect that national perspective. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

OFFICE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

Adjournment Debate

VALEDICTORIES

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (16:45): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 4 February 2025.

The parliament is set to conclude its work of calendar year 2024 and I think that presents an opportunity for members to reflect not just on the year that we have had, or indeed even what is potentially before us in 2025, but just to take a moment of pause to express our gratitude and thanks for a great number of things. One of the great blessings of the Christmas period is that for those of us who lead busy lives, and that is pretty much 1.7 million people in this state, we have a moment of pause just to take a deep breath and think about those things that matter most.

In terms of the parliament, the members of this house often fall into the trap of thinking everything just happens and the world revolves around us when in actual fact the opposite is true. Nothing happens without an extraordinary amount of hard work behind the scenes. A lot of people make us individually look better than what we are and make what is a rather complex organism in terms of the parliament somehow function smoothly and coherently, despite members' best efforts. I think it would be appropriate to express our gratitude for everybody who contributes to that effort.

I start, of course, in that regard by thanking you, sir, for your stewardship and leadership as Speaker of the house. You have not had an easy task in that regard because you were thrust into this role in a way that was not necessarily anticipated. I think you have stood up to the plate and

done a sterling job. The Presiding Officer has a thankless task. You will never please everyone—but thus far I actually think that question time and the conduct of the parliament has operated pretty smoothly and I am very grateful for your efforts. More than that, I think it is recognition of your substantial contribution in this place over 18½ years, which is not a small number. I do thank you for your ongoing effort. It is always a privilege to be in your electorate, as I was with you a few weeks ago, to see the fellowship you enjoy with so many residents on Fleurieu Peninsula.

Can I also acknowledge the Deputy Speaker, who is here with us. The Chair of Committees' role is a slightly less thankless task than the Speakership. Again, there has been a substantial legislative agenda, and I do not intend to use this opportunity to espouse all the achievements of the government over the last 12 months, but there has been a substantial legislative agenda and that requires your leadership, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank you for it.

To the Clerk, Rick Crump, and Deputy Clerk, David Pegram, how you stay sane is beyond me. You must take tips from the Hansard staff, whose mind is not allowed to wander probably as much as yours is—not that I ever suspect you do that. But to the Clerk and to the Hansard staff—bravo. We cannot thank you enough for your patience, we cannot thank you enough for your resilience. One day I will look up and you will be eating popcorn, but that has not yet happened.

Can I also thank all of the house staff: the Serjeant-at-Arms, the house services officers, the research officers and the corporate staff who make it all run so smoothly. John Weste—who, of course, is more than just the head of the parliamentary library here—is an icon, not just of the parliament but of this state, and we thank John for everything that he does. Every time you are in here with a group of schoolkids—I do not get to do it as much these days—and John takes the time to tell a story or two, he does it with equal parts enthusiasm and knowledge, which is something we are eternally grateful for.

The team in the Blue Room, particularly Nicky, Karen and Belinda—we love the work that they do. They not only keep us fed, but more than that: we love their personalities and their forthright wit, humour and engagement. I have only been down there once this week; for some reason I have not been down there much lately—anyway, we love them all, and they are rippers, and they give this place a bit of character.

The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner: They are watching.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Are they? They are watching. In that case, I should use all five minutes to speak about Nicky, Karen and Belinda. They would expect nothing less. They give the place colour and character. You get to know them a bit better in opposition because you are around a bit more and they would be the life of any party.

To all the parliamentary dining room staff, again we thank them so much. I had an important dinner last night with the global leadership of BAE Systems. Kylie was looking after us. You just know every time you bring guests into parliament that they will be utterly impressed with the quality of the service, including the meals. Can I thank Creon who makes all that work. Creon has a great degree of attention to detail. As we speak, he is probably making sure that everything is humming along in the dining room for an event that we are about to host, so can I thank Creon for his leadership and his diligence and steadfastness.

I thank the security team who make sure everything happens and works—the PSOs and SAPOL staff—and everyone on the switchboards, the People and Culture team and the building maintenance team. It is an old building, but she holds up alright because of their care and custodianship.

Can I take the opportunity to thank a few of my staff. I am running out of time here. I thank my EO staff: Pete Gonis, Gayle, Suzie and Sophia. They make it all work on Port Road, Welland, and I really appreciate their efforts. We had streetcorner meetings recently and it all sort of ticked along without me breathing down their neck in the lead-up to it. Everything just worked, and they follow up on all those queries assiduously. Premiers are not able to spend as much time in their electorate as they would like, and you rely on your EO staff even more. They are great people.

Can I thank the team at DPC led by Damien Walker. Damien, of course, is leaving and this is probably my only opportunity—and I wanted to do this on another occasion—to express in this

forum why Damien is still the CEO of DPC and how eternally grateful I am for the work that he has done for the government and the people of South Australia. He is a great South Australian: a boy who grew up in Tea Tree Gully, started out in the Public Service and rose all the way to the highest Public Service officer in the land, and he has been magnificent. In fact, Mr Speaker, he was introduced to me by you. I wish him all the very best as he takes up a new opportunity in the sunshine state, but I retain hope that one day he will return home and continue to serve the people of this state.

He has got a whole executive team around him that I am very, very grateful for. I do want to give a shout-out to Nari Chandler, the deputy CEO. Nari has really stood up to the role of deputy CE within DPC and has got a number of things on the boil at the moment that I am very grateful for. There is a whole team around Damien and Nari. Can I just acknowledge, at the expense of leaving people out: Wayne, Elspeth, Ben, Amy, Andrea, and everybody else in leadership positions in DPC. They do a great job.

With regard to my office—and with your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I might go beyond the 10 minutes—I want to start out by thanking the most important person in any leader's office, the most important by a country mile, and that is the executive assistant, the person who manages the diary. As I am sure the Leader of the Opposition is well aware, they are mission critical in the functioning of the office, and I want to give a shout-out to Nicole Chapman who took over from Ann in my office. Ann has done an incredible job as well. She makes it all sort of tick in every respect.

Then there is a whole other team in my office: the office manager and her team, so Jess, Paul, Angela, George, Leigh, Andrew, Monica, Anne-Marie and Maddy—that whole office team and the extraordinary amount of correspondence they make work. To my political staff, Cat, Vic, Lawrence, Caitlin, Adam, Pam, Nick, Minh, David, Harry and Wendy—I think there is also a speech guy, he has written here, 'And the speech guy, Andrew something.' Yes, I thank you, Andrew! He is quite the character and a great fellow; he is quite crafty and thoughtful.

I also want to thank the other person who sits above all of this and that, of course, is JB. JB is a formidable human being. There are two people I am scared of in this world, he is one of them. I will not tell you who the other is! Honestly, they work so incredibly hard and I would not be able to do the work that I do without them.

Beyond that, there is the broader Labor family that I am very grateful for, including everybody who makes up the parliamentary Labor Party. We finished the year with two additional members, but we do well to not look at ourselves individually, but rather as a united outfit. It is a privilege to be the leader of this institution, this extraordinary group of people. I am so exceptionally lucky and I am very, very grateful to each and every one of you, in all of your various capacities.

I do want to particularly thank the Deputy Premier. I could not ask for a stronger woman than Susan to be the second in charge of the government. Her contribution is formidable and consistent and I am very, very grateful for it. She provides a beating heart to the government in a range of policy areas in a way that is invaluable and I cannot thank her enough.

I cannot name every member of the cabinet, but I do want to name two positions that are particularly important in the context of the parliamentary year: the Leader of Government Business and Father of the house. He says, 'If you run out of time, continue on indulgence.' We all know what that means. The Father of the House is also increasingly an icon of this place. I know he does not necessarily enjoy affection from absolutely everybody in the chamber, but he certainly enjoys our affection. He is a formidable parliamentarian, a high-quality minister and is also the Leader of Government Business, which is an important role, as I know the deputy leader of the Liberal Party and also the member for Bragg are well aware.

I want to thank the whip. It is a thankless task, being the whip. The whip has done an outstanding job in ensuring that it all ticks and everyone is where they are supposed to be. Whipping is very much a full-time exercise, particularly when parliament is sitting. I want to thank the whip, along with his counterpart.

I would also like to acknowledge other members in this place who are not on the government side of the house. Politics is a tough business; we have seen evidence of that consistently around

the world. Notwithstanding the toughness of politics in this place, I think there is a civility to politics comparatively, relatively speaking, in South Australia versus what we see in other parts of the world. I hope that is able to continue. It should be robust, it should be highly competitive—and that it is. I am the first to acknowledge that the opposition has the task of holding the government to account or taking our heads off, whichever way you want to look at it. I want to thank the opposition. We have been able to work together constructively on a range of things, which is to your great credit and I want to thank you for that. I should acknowledge the crossbench in that regard as well, and members in the other place.

We are very lucky to collectively call this state home. The one thing we will have in this state that many others around the world will not is a peaceful Christmas. We will have a peaceful Christmas in the state of South Australia. We had the Sudanese community here yesterday, and you can only imagine how much they would give up everything they have to have what we have. I think that invites us to also think about those people in South Australia who might not be as fortunate as members in this chamber are. At this time of the year, we would do well to resolve to continue all of our efforts—individually and collectively, everybody in this place—to make sure that as many people in this state enjoy the opportunities that we are so fortunate to have.

Mr Speaker, on that note I would like to wish you and every member of the South Australian community a safe and Merry Christmas. I wish all the peace and prosperity in the world to everybody. God bless.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition, I extend the same indulgence that was extended to the Premier if you happen to go over time.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (17:02): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also rise on indulgence. I echo much of the sentiment that the Premier pointed out. As the Premier alluded to, whilst we are adversaries we are not necessarily enemies. I have appreciated the opportunity to conduct the business of opposition with some civility, and in some ways actually work in a very constructive fashion, so I do echo those sentiments as well.

There is obviously lots to be grateful for. It is that time of year when we are able to reflect on the year that has passed. I, too, would like to acknowledge and put on the record my thanks and gratitude for the many people who support us here in the roles that we undertake. First and foremost, I would of course like to thank my family: my wife, Charissa, and son, Leonardo. We have had some changes on this side of the house in the last few months and that has involved a few more hours, so I think it is very important to put that on the record.

I am sure I speak for all of my colleagues. We all owe a great level of gratitude to all of our family and friends for supporting us in these roles. It is obviously quite a privilege and honour to serve in this place. We are all, yourself included, humble servants of this place. We are very fortunate to be in these roles and represent our various communities in the way that we are able to.

We are obviously very fortunate to call South Australia home at a point in time when there are so many conflicts around the world, as the Premier alluded to. We are so fortunate to be here in South Australia, in a peaceful democracy, enjoying the rights and freedoms that we do. I want to pay tribute to the people who help to allow this parliament to function in the way that it does.

I want to start by thanking the clerks and their teams. To Rick Crump, I have to put my thoughts on the record: thank you for all that you do. Speakers especially know how well served they are by having someone with the experience of Mr Crump and also Mr Schwarz in the other place, having literally hundreds of years of precedents at their disposal. They are so pivotal to the good governance, order and maintenance of the house and the staff in it as well.

Thank you to Mr Crump and also to your EA, Travis Freckleton; to David Pegram, the Deputy Clerk; to Lauren, the Clerk Assistant and Serjeant-at-Arms; and to your teams as well. Thank you for your outstanding work and the way that you conduct your business so professionally. Of course, in the other place, thank you to Chris Schwarz, Guy Dickson and their various teams as well.

Thank you to the fantastic team at Hansard and the Leader of Hansard, Mr Andrew Cole. Along with a few others in this place, I was fortunate enough to hire Mr Cole. We knew he was the best person for the job and he is still there, which pleases me greatly. He is doing a great job. Thank you to the Deputy Leader, John Clarke, and the team as well. Everything they do is so precise and prompt. Sometimes they are tested, as we saw overnight, but they have to listen to us and hear everything that we say. I do not know how they resolve that one, but they work it out. Thank you for putting up with all 47 of us. It is such an important task to be able to go over that footage and read those records, so thank you so much, sincerely.

Thank you to the building services staff. It seems like there is always something that David Woolman and his hardworking, dedicated team are doing in this place. I think if they could design this place again, maybe they could have an extra lift here or there; that might be a job for a future Treasurer. Whatever it is—a nail for a painting, sorting something out in the car park, fixing a light bulb—nothing is not manageable, and even with all the craziness of maintenance, construction and cleaning, they always seem to keep the building afloat and keep it topnotch and ticking along. We really do sincerely appreciate what they do.

Thank you to the team at PNSG. There is nothing worse than when a bit of IT equipment does not work, so thank you to the team at PNSG for making sure, firstly, that we are cybersafe. We have seen attacks on other sectors and other parliaments around the world but we have not had that here, thank God, and there is always help there if we ever need it.

Much has been said about the Blue Room. We have seen many changes, certainly in the 10 years of my time here. We finally have protein bars, which I am sure the Premier would be very happy with. They do an amazing job. Nicky, Karen and Belinda: thank you for being so friendly and knowing everyone's name in the building. They are so important to the culture and the gel of this building. We sincerely appreciate that they are always there.

I should say something about the most powerful man in the building, and that, of course, is Creon Grantham. For the newer members who have not worked that out yet, he is the most powerful person in the building. Thank you to the catering manager and his team in the catering division: all the chefs, the kitchen staff, the dining room staff and the cellar staff.

I also thank the cleaners, if they are listening. We sincerely thank you for all that you do. We know especially that COVID really changed the way things were done in this place. We sincerely appreciate that it is always impeccable in here and we are always looked after. On both sides of the chamber, we do a lot of entertaining here and we take people through throughout the year, and we sincerely appreciate all that you do.

Thank you to Dr John Weste, who just marked a significant milestone, and his team. In the parliament, and especially in opposition when we find sometimes that resources are a little bit leaner than for the government benches, we certainly depend upon the resources of the library, and we very much appreciate that.

Thank you to Natalie Badcock, the Community Education and Engagement Manager, and her team. We would bring probably tens of thousands of students and members of the public through here, and we appreciate being able to do that. We also appreciate the opportunity to provide them with the relevant resources so that we can tell the story of a very proud institution that goes back to 1857. We have lots to be proud of in this place, and it is important that we tell that story to South Australians when they visit. Thank you to the protective security and parliamentary administration staff as well for helping to keep us safe.

I would also like to put my gratitude to my parliamentary colleagues on the record. Firstly, our leadership team: the member for Morialta; the Hon. Nicola Centofanti in the other place, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council; and the Hon. Jing Lee, Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I am grateful, especially in what has certainly been a challenging three or four months, for their steadfast support, and also to the rest of the parliamentary team as well. To the shadow cabinet, whether they are new or stalwarts, I am very grateful for the balance of youth and experience that we have in those positions. Thank you for the ideas and the efforts that you bring to the table.

To my office, obviously we have built a new team, but I am very grateful for the dedication and the commitment of the staff in the leader's office. With your indulgence, sir, I might put some of those names on the record: my Chief of Staff, Aric; in the media team, Lesley and Gretel; Nigel, Ned and the digital creative team; Anna, Max and Firas, who work in policy; Anna, who has recently joined our office; of course, our office manager, Dawid; and staff who assist in the broader team, such as Caitlin, Zane and Andrew, who also contribute significantly to our team in their various capacities.

Also, to enjoy the fruit you have to water the roots: we all have an electorate office. We all have an electorate office that works very hard. I need to put on the record that I have been very fortunate with electorate staff. They have served me for a long period of time. There is my office manager, Simone Bakopanos. Many of our team remember her as Simone Mazzeo. Unfortunately, we lost her from the eastern suburbs; she married a good Greek boy from the western suburbs. Congratulations to her on getting recently married to Stavros. She has just come back from her honeymoon. She has been with us in the office for about eight years. Thank you to Federica Lupis, who has been with me for over 10 years, and Sharon, Spencer and George Belperio, who have helped out as well.

The team behind us as parliamentarians does not go unnoticed and unthanked. I do want to thank the outstanding team that we have right across the board. Much has been said about the whips, the Davids. I have to be very grateful to the Davids. Often, we might be paired out with other arrangements. I will flick on and see what is happening in the house, and I have to say, both Davids do a sterling job of managing the opposition business, ably led—sometimes coerced, but ably led most of the time—by the Manager of Government Business. We appreciate his experience and his wisdom. We are always learning, so thank you for that. Thank you to the member for Bragg for stepping in as well in his new position as Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Speaker, I have to thank you as well. I trust that the speech notes have been well received. It is something I learnt from law school: get it all down on one page. Like all Speakers, you have kept us to work civilly, well behaved in the chamber. As you have worked out, it is quite a privilege to be in what is a very highly decorated position. I thank you for your service that you provide in this role and also wish you and your family a safe and merry Christmas.

My thanks also goes to the public sector employees. We have over 100,000 in this state who work in the public sector. They go about their business. In the past, as a minister, one of the privileges was getting to know many of these good hardworking people who loyally serve the minister of the day. They go about their business, and the state would not function as well as it does without their hard work. I do appreciate all that they do.

To those who are working over Christmas, while many of us will get some sort of break, we have to remember the hardworking and dedicated South Australians who do not necessarily get a break. The SAPOL officers, the firefighters, the paramedics, the doctors, the nurses and many others—many of those will be out there working and keeping us safe while some enjoy time off. I thank them for their dedication and their willingness to put their state first during this festive period.

To bring things to a close, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all we have mentioned. Whilst we get very busy and sometimes tied up in our day-to-day tasks and demanding roles, I do sincerely hope that everyone has a bit of an opportunity to catch up with loved ones, with their friends and family, over the Christmas period. I take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2025.

The SPEAKER (17:14): Thank you, leader, and thank you to the Premier as well. I would like to add a few thankyou's as well, firstly to all members of this place for your cooperation as I have had the trainer wheels on for the first few months in this role. It is, as the Leader of the Opposition says, a great privilege to be here. I have tried to conduct myself in the role with some humour, just trying to make sure that it is not war here. We all should probably get along pretty well and, I think, for the main that is what happens. Thank you for taking the debates in good spirits.

We farewelled some people this year, some of them through condolence motions, like former Premier Steele Hall and former minister and trailblazer Jennifer Cashmore. As a parliament, we had two mums in this place who welcomed sons this year, which I think we should acknowledge: the member for Badcoe and young Quinn, and the member for Schubert and Rupert. I thought it was a

bit of a sign of the times, with people coming in here younger, with their families, and continuing to build their families while they are in this place. I think we should celebrate that because we are, in a way, a family, and to have new additions to our parliamentary family is a good thing.

We welcomed two new members into the place, the member for Dunstan and the member for Black, which meant we also farewelled two members from this place. I want to wish Steven Marshall and David Speirs all the very best for the next part of their careers and lives. On that matter, I want to foreshadow something that I have discussed with most people in here, that is, what we are going to do next year to begin improving this place in terms of the transition from politics to life after politics. For any people interested in how politics works, Deakin University in Victoria did a quite telling study about two or three years ago into the Victorian parliament that showed the brutal nature of the transition from politics to life after politics. Some of the findings were quite brutal.

I have spent a fair bit of this year getting around talking to former South Australian members of parliament and listening to their stories. It is pretty hard. We are a group of people who look after our constituents. We are a group of people who look after people in our portfolio areas, and we all work really hard on that, but sometimes we do not necessarily look after ourselves and our cohort. There are some simple things we can do to help improve that.

One of the things that came back from the people I spoke to, and in the Deakin report, is that your political career just ends. If you went out to fight an election with every intention of winning, you did not get the opportunity to stand up here and give a valedictory speech and put on the record your thanks to your family, to the community groups, to the organisations. So one of the changes we are going to make next year is I will write to every former member who is still alive to give them the opportunity to write a valedictory speech, which we will then put in a virtual book in the library.

I want to thank Dr John Weste, the head of the library. As soon as I mentioned it to him he said, 'We're on board,' which is great, because without these resources it is pretty hard. So there will be a virtual book, which we might call 'The House of Assembly: the last word' or 'the final word', where you get to tell your story from your perspective. Most people know that when you are no longer a minister, for all your wins, someone else is cutting the ribbons on them, someone else is taking all the credit for the money. You are very quickly forgotten in those positions, and the work that you did is very quickly forgotten. For the sake of people's families and their legacy, I hope that will be one way of improving things for people who leave this place voluntarily or by being voted out.

The other thing that we are going to introduce is professional development for members of parliament, which I think is really important. We look at the public sector, we look at the private sector, and ongoing professional development is a big part of having a healthy workforce and having a workforce that gets better, that learns. We sent out an invitation yesterday and the responses have been fantastic. We have had a lot of people just saying yes, and that is for the first course which is going to be in February next year. It will be delivered by the McKinnon Institute, which has done a really good job in some other parliaments and government departments around Australia in terms of bringing about knowledge of political leadership and showing us the way on how we can all be better.

I want to thank the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk, Rick and David, and everyone else who helps so much in this chamber. To Lauren, our Serjeant-at-Arms, we have not had to arrest anyone or lock anyone up yet, but we are getting some advice on how we go about that.

To the house service officers, Will, Damien, Matthew and James, thank you very much for everything that you do. Rhys, I did not forget you, I just wanted to say all the very best to you and your partner. I know you are expecting your first child sometime between now and Christmas, so we hope that you have an extra special Christmas as your family grows.

To our procedure office staff—Josh, Alison, Tonia—thank you very much for all your hard work, keeping me on the straight and narrow, telling me what I am meant to say at the right time. To everyone across every division: I know the Premier and the leader have mentioned so many of the wonderful people in this place who do so many things across all the different divisions. Every one of you is very much appreciated and all the work that you do is very much appreciated by all of us. We are in here sometimes late at night, early in the morning and we have to all get on and work together, and it is made so much easier by the friendly people across every part of this parliament. Again, we thank you for all the hard work that you do.

I would like to thank Kerry and Bridget who run the Speaker's Office. They do an amazing job because as well as doing the day-to-day stuff we are actually doing some of this work on the professional development, we are doing some work on tracking down former MPs and things like that, so they are probably going a bit over and beyond. In the Mawson electorate office, thanks to Jenni and Jo, terrific people who are members of our local community who serve our local community so well. I want to thank all those people.

I want to wish everyone in this place and all the people who work in the building a very merry Christmas. I think we have a lot to look forward to in 2025. I am looking forward to getting back here and getting on with the job.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION AND RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL LEASES) BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

GREYHOUND INDUSTRY REFORM INSPECTOR BILL

Final Stages

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

At 17:23 the house adjourned until Tuesday 4 February 2025 at 11:00.

*Answers to Questions***GFG ALLIANCE**

In reply to **Mr PATTERSON (Morphett)** (24 September 2024).

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries): I have been advised:

1. GFG Alliance became in arrears on its royalty obligations on 1 August 2024. I was briefed on the royalty arrears promptly during August 2024.

GFG alliance has subsequently engaged with the Department for Energy and Mining to explore strategies for ensuring compliance with its royalty obligations. The government will continue to work with GFG Alliance to ensure the repayment of outstanding royalty obligations.

2. The government has not made any loans to GFG Alliance.

GFG ALLIANCE

In reply to **Mr TELFER (Flinders)** (25 September 2024).

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries): I have been advised:

1. The information in relation to GFG Alliance (or any other taxpayer) taxation arrangements cannot be disclosed pursuant to section 78 of the Tax Administration Act 1996 without the consent of the person to whom the information relates.

2. In relation to the funding guidelines, the terms have not changed in this term of government.

GFG ALLIANCE

In reply to **Mr TELFER (Flinders)** (16 October 2024).

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries): I have been advised:

The South Australian government regularly receives creditor reports from GFG for South Australian suppliers.

The number of creditors and the value of debt are commercial-in-confidence.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

In reply to **Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop)** (16 October 2024).

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries): I have been advised:

In the 1990's exceptional circumstance declarations were made which triggered support such as exceptional circumstances payments. In 2012 the Australian government ceased making drought declarations. We now have the National Drought Agreement; through this agreement the Australian, state and territory governments have agreed that support provided should be based on need, rather than be activated by drought declarations.

The Australian and South Australian governments have a range of support always available for primary producers who are experiencing hardship of any sort, including the impacts of drought. This includes financial support through the Farm Household Allowance.

To inform the South Australian government's response to these drought conditions, PIRSA has convened a Drought Advisory Group and has set up roundtables across the state to hear in person from stakeholders and producers about their concerns and avenues of support.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **the Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** (30 October 2024).

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills): I have been advised:

TAFE SA implemented a new recruitment and onboarding system (PageUp) in September 2023 which impacted the compliance rate as mentioned above.

TAFE SA has implemented a new process in October of 2024 whereby contracts are monitored 7, 5 and 3 days out from the contracted start date. This process combined with collaboration with education leadership, has seen a significant improvement in the compliance of contracts signed prior to employment commencement.

The two business units that had higher noncompliance rates in 2023-24 were Future Industry and Trade and Health Community and Foundation Skills.

DEPARTMENT FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT

In reply to **Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey)** (31 October 2024).

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs): I have been advised:

In 2023-24 the Department for Trade and Investment had expenditure in relation to 25 contracts above \$55,000 resulting from a 'procurement' as defined in Treasurer's Instruction 18—Procurement with non-SA businesses. These are listed in the following table.

Supplier Entity Name
Appian Software International LLC
Area9 Pty Ltd
Digital Transformation Agency
Forest Grove Technology Pty Ltd
GlobalData UK Limited
Kasada Australia Pty Ltd
Hyatt Hotel – Busan & Seoul
OmniStar Pty Ltd – trading as F1
Our Community Pty Ltd
Procensol Australia Pty Ltd
PSA Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd
Viceversa Limited
Social Power Pty Ltd
Ibisworld Pty Ltd
Fujiya Co. Ltd
Objective Corporation Ltd
QBT Pty Ltd
Harry the Hirer Pty Ltd
ESRI Australia Pty Ltd
Amazon Web Services Inc.
Paxus Australia Pty Ltd
ServiceNow Aust Pty Ltd
Akkodis Australia Talent
Technical Elements Ltd
MTPIIGC Ltd

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Mr COWDREY (Colton)** (12 November 2024).

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well): I have been advised:

The total value of invoices linked to self-managed or plan-managed services from 1 October 2023 (date of transition to plan-based payments) to 30 June 2024 was \$6.5 million. Of this, \$1.3 million remained unpaid as at 5 November 2024. This is made up of 380 invoices owed by 26 debtors.

The follow-up process for invoices outstanding is managed by the Shared Services SA Accounts Receivable team for invoices issued that are up to the 90 days old. The Department of Human Services (DHS) manages debts that are older than 90 days.

This work is undertaken in the context of NDIS-related disability services delivered by DHS worth more than \$100 million per annum.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Mr COWDREY (Colton)** (12 November 2024).

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well): I have been advised:

Around 49,800 small businesses received the energy bill relief payment in 2023-24.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Mr COWDREY (Colton)** (12 November 2024).

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well): I have been advised:

The capital program has delivered:

- a 12-bed accommodation unit with counselling and sensory rooms to better support children and young people with complex and/or disability-related needs
- a new eight-bed pre-court custody accommodation unit to ensure children and young people who are not granted bail are accommodated separately to those on remand and sentenced mandates while awaiting their initial court appearance
- new classroom space to better meet the learning needs of a diverse and dynamic population
- extended visiting space for family and professional visits.

Capital works were delayed due to supply constraints on both labour and materials along with weather issues. Practical completion of all new buildings has been achieved and work continues on remediating final issues prior to becoming fully operational.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Mr COWDREY (Colton)** (12 November 2024).

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well): I have been advised:

All of the service agreements that were outstanding from last financial year have been completed. The renewal of service agreements is an ongoing process and is no longer impacted by any backlog.