

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Wednesday, 30 April 2025

The SPEAKER (Hon. L.W.K. Bignell) took the chair at 10:30.

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.

Bills

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES (ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 10 April 2024.)

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:34): I move:

That this order of the day be postponed.

The house divided on the motion.

Ayes19
 Noes.....14
 Majority5

AYES

Andrews, S.E.
 Clancy, N.P.
 Fulbrook, J.P.
 Hughes, E.J.
 Mullighan, S.C.
 Piccolo, A.
 Wortley, D.J.

Bettison, Z.L.
 Cook, N.F.
 Hildyard, K.A.
 Hutchesson, C.L.
 Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)
 Picton, C.J.

Champion, N.D.
 Dighton, A.E.
 Hood, L.P.
 Koutsantonis, A.
 Pearce, R.K.
 Savvas, O.M.

NOES

Basham, D.K.B.
 Cowdrey, M.J.
 McBride, P.N.
 Pisoni, D.G.
 Telfer, S.J.

Batty, J.A.
 Ellis, F.J.
 Patterson, S.J.R.
 Pratt, P.K.
 Whetstone, T.J.

Brock, G.G.
 Hurn, A.M.
 Pederick, A.S.
 Teague, J.B. (teller)

PAIRS

Stinson, J.M.
 Gardner, J.A.W.

Tarzia, V.A.

Szakacs, J.K.

Motion thus carried; order of the day postponed.

*Motions***INTERNATIONAL MESH AWARENESS DAY**

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (10:46): I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes that 1 May 2025 is International Mesh Awareness Day, Mesh Awareness month;
- (b) acknowledges that thousands of women and men around the world have suffered adverse effects from medical mesh, including in South Australia;
- (c) calls on the state government to make a public apology to the South Australians who have been adversely affected by medical mesh; and
- (d) proceed with implementing the remaining recommendations of the Social Development Committee inquiry: Surgical Implantation of Medical Mesh in South Australia.

I know that has been previously moved, but I just want to highlight the wording of that motion, because we have a number of people in the gallery today, and I think that is important.

This motion provides an opportunity to focus on the recommendations and where we are at with the implementation of those recommendations. Following the Senate inquiry, it was evident that there was a need to hear from South Australians about their experiences and how the process of identifying mesh injury and the pathway to removal could be achieved. The 44th report of the Social Development Committee, 'The surgical implantation of medical mesh in South Australia', was handed down in June 2021 with a number of recommendations.

Today, I want to thank all who contributed to the inquiry and extend a warm welcome to some of those who join us in the chamber today. In doing so, I recognise the many women and some men across South Australia whose voices were unheard for so long, and acknowledge the suffering, ridicule, frustration, pain and life-changing impact that failed mesh devices have had on their lives and the lives of their families. While we cannot turn back the clock and change these events, we can learn from them and we can take steps to ensure that they are never repeated.

The first time I heard about mesh was from a constituent, Tracey. Tracey left a message with my trainee. She wanted me to return her call. A couple of days later, I knocked on Tracey's door. She opened the door, grabbed my hand and said, 'You need to hear what I have to say.' Tracey told me: 'I'm not a number. I'm not a statistic. I'm a woman who was just 29 years old when mesh ruined my life.'

She told me that mesh stole her life, it stole her children's happiness and it almost stole her marriage. She said, 'It stole my mind and my body and my ability to trust another human being.' She told me that the damage—physical, emotional, financial and psychological—was far more damaging than the very reason why she had the surgery in the first place.

We also have in the gallery today, Kim, an active advocate who has worked tirelessly to have the voice of mesh-injured women heard. A mother of four, a career paramedic and a registered nurse, Kim shared with the committee her experience about the life-altering impact on her and her family physically, emotionally and financially, along with the impact on her professional life. Kim had the mesh implanted in a South Australian hospital a number of years ago and had to travel to the US at her own expense to have it removed.

Also in the gallery today is Yvonne, who was not fully informed prior to mesh being implanted. The procedure has negatively impacted and altered every aspect of her life. She told me that going into surgery she was fit and active, a much-needed wife, mother and grandmother, and she was full of hope. Yvonne developed a foreign body reaction to mesh, which she says stole her dignity, self-esteem, confidence and independence.

For years we have had women in South Australia and around the world telling these stories. In evidence, we heard similar stories that after months and months, for some even years, of going to doctors and specialists with all sorts of symptoms there was no available record of the mesh implantation. Some had numerous tests searching for the cause of their symptoms, and some were

told symptoms were in their head, given medication and diagnosed as hypochondriacs or suffering from anxiety.

As a result, there were relationship breakdowns with partners and other family members who found it difficult to live with a person who apparently had no reason for their pain—pain that left them unable to participate in family activities, have a physical relationship with their partner, contribute to the running of the household or participate in the workforce. They had been told their debilitating symptoms were all in their head.

We heard evidence from witnesses that it was not until their partner's penis was grated during intercourse, as if by a cheese grater—when there were actual physical signs—that the medical profession actually saw the impact that the mesh, which in some cases was coming through the vaginal wall, was having. If it could do this, what other internal damage was it creating? We know that the consequences for some women have been severe. We also know that there are men impacted by the implantation of medical mesh. Not everyone will experience negative outcomes, but the risk, particularly with some medical mesh devices, is significant.

Today, I thank all who persevered and were brave enough to tell their own personal story, although I know at times it was difficult and that you paid the emotional price. To each of you, please know it is your valuable contribution that has paved the way for a less harrowing journey for those appearing in more recent times with adverse symptoms and for ensuring confirmed consent is sought prior to a procedure. You have made a difference. I will leave it to the Minister for Health, who has been supportive from day one, to update the house on the implementation of the recommendations.

Ms PRATT (Frome) (10:52): On behalf of the opposition, I rise to speak to this motion in full support, noting that 1 May is recognised as International Mesh Awareness Day and the start of Mesh Awareness Month. I want to begin by acknowledging our guests in the gallery today. I thank all of you for coming along in support of this motion and I am sure that you all have your own story to share that brings you here.

This day, International Mesh Awareness Day, highlights the complications suffered by some men, but mostly women, who have had mesh implants to treat urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse. We know that approximately 150,000 Australian women have had pelvic mesh used in surgery in the last 20 years.

Medical mesh is made of plastic polypropylene to treat hernia and pelvic organ prolapse and urinary incontinence, which is common among women. These pelvic mesh devices have been linked to serious complications like bleeding and infection, chronic pain, chronic fatigue and irreparable incontinence. Internationally, consumers and clinicians continue to raise serious concerns regarding the safety and effectiveness of these devices to treat pelvic prolapse and incontinence.

Going back in time, just a few years, the former Liberal government during our term also recognised the impact this was having on your health, on the health and wellbeing of South Australian women, and at the time initiated a comprehensive strategy to address the recommendations of the inquiry to which the member for Torrens refers. It included the formation of various advisory and clinical groups, the establishment of a consumer support service, the creation of informational resources and the implementation of a clinical audit and referral pathway for women affected by pelvic mesh complications. In addition, a communication plan was developed to engage with stakeholders.

I referenced that by way of demonstrating that governments of both persuasions, Liberal and Labor, have continued in their recognition of the ongoing concerns, lack of research evidence and the personal impact that this has had on South Australians and what responsibility governments of the day have to pay attention to that and address those issues.

The former Liberal government also acknowledged the evidence collected and recommendations that were made at the time by the commonwealth Senate inquiry in 2018 into transvaginal mesh and the work done by SA Health since that time to mobilise a strategy to address those important recommendations.

To go back four years, during the term of that former Liberal government, on 25 May 2021, as you would be fully aware, the Social Development Committee tabled its 44th inquiry into the

surgical implantation of medical mesh and at the time the committee members, who have developed or delivered recommendations that we now speak to today, sat across both chambers. In the other place contributors to those recommendations that impact our guests today were the Hon. Connie Bonaros MLC, the Hon. Emily Bourke MLC, the Hon. Dennis Hood MLC, the Hon. Robert Simms MLC and from the lower house, Dr Richard Harvey, Ms Paula Luethen and, of course, the member for Torrens, Ms Dana Wortley.

Currently, the member for Torrens and I sit on the same committee looking at other social issues, but I want to commend the work that the member for Torrens has not shied away from that has culminated in today that brings you here as our guests. The member for Torrens, as a member of that committee at that time, really did contribute to the inquiry in a significant way and she has been determined—dogged—in her pursuit of recognition for you, for mesh sufferers, and I wish to put on the record in this chamber that consistency, that determination that she has taken to lobby her own health minister, which has led to today's public apology by the state government.

At the time, the committee made 17 recommendations which to this day remain current and reasonable. Recommendation No.13 suggested that:

On behalf of the Government of South Australia, consider issuing a public apology to the women and their families affected by medical mesh in South Australia, for the systemic failures of the Healthcare system in detecting and acting promptly on issues around medical mesh, and for continuing to implant mesh in the public hospitals, despite a lack of robust clinical and longitudinal research data on the efficacy and safety of medical mesh.

The report of that committee looked at several issues in the evidence which suggested the physical, material and psychological damage that can be caused by failed mesh devices is at least as severe as it has been reported to be by mesh-injured people and is likely to be more widespread than it was thought to be by the health system and medical profession. That was four years ago. Here we are today.

The enduring physical, financial and emotional toll has been well documented but we would all be familiar with reports of deaths due to mesh injuries in addition to years of pain and suffering that as our guests you have experienced, I am sure. Mesh survivors' accounts were described as calamitous, shocking, disastrous and preventable. The role of mesh in their injuries was not identified or it was ignored.

Today, in recognition of International Mesh Awareness Day, we welcome the state government's decision to offer a public apology as requested and determined by the Social Development Committee four years ago. This apology, I hope, will go a long way to acknowledging the profound pain and distress caused by these medical failures. This public apology follows years of advocacy from impacted individuals and a parliamentary inquiry that highlighted the catastrophic injuries resulting from these implants.

Not only are we joined today by so many fantastic advocates, guests and, I am sure, sufferers, but in the media today we have also heard from a sufferer and advocate, Kim Blieschke, who has endured significant personal suffering and crippling medical costs due to mesh implants that required her to travel to the United States for surgical removal. In Kim's own words, 'It doesn't fix the pain or change the lifelong consequences we all live with.' Kim, we thank you for your brave advocacy. On behalf of the opposition, I support the motion.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (11:00): Today, on behalf of the South Australian government, I apologise to those South Australians adversely impacted by medical mesh implants. On the eve of International Mesh Awareness Day, I acknowledge the life-altering complications for many women and some men across South Australia because of mesh procedures.

For the pain, embarrassment and gaslighting that you have endured, we are sorry. For the times when you have questioned your own experiences, were dismissed by those who were meant to care for you and had to fight to receive the appropriate, compassionate and quality care you deserved, we are sorry. To those who have had to wait years for corrective surgery through the public health system, we are sorry, and to those who still today are physically and emotionally affected by this systemic failure, we are sorry.

I know that this apology does little to right the wrongs which you have endured. It is now our government's responsibility to ensure that our response remains on target, to continue to improve services for those seeking care, to improve education for primary care so no woman is left dealing with these injuries by herself and, importantly, to do what we can to ensure that this does not happen again.

This has been a story centred on the resilience of those impacted by the unintended and downplayed consequences of purported innovation. Between 2003 and 2018, approximately 11,000 mesh procedures had been performed in South Australia, yet it became increasingly clear that the rate of complications was significantly higher than the success rates. Women reported chronic pain, mesh erosion, infections and permanent nerve damage. Some required multiple surgeries to attempt removal of the mesh, often with limited success. By 2018, more than 4,000 women had already re-presented with complications. Every year since, it is estimated that around 150 women will require ongoing care through a multidisciplinary specialist clinic.

I would like to acknowledge the many women we have here today who are survivors of mesh implants and thank them for their bravery and resilience in battling what has been an awful experience. One of those people here today who has been a fierce advocate for mesh-injured South Australians over many years is Kim from Port Pirie. Kim has her own extraordinary story of pain and resilience that I am sure many sufferers here today can relate to.

Following the births of her three children, she developed a severe pelvic organ prolapse which significantly impacted her ability to work as a paramedic and manage daily family life. In March 2006, she underwent pelvic mesh surgery. Kim said she was not adequately informed about the risks, the size of the mesh or the complexity of the procedure. Postoperatively, she suffered immediate and ongoing complications, including extreme pain, mesh erosion, infections, nerve damage and a loss of bladder and bowel function. Over several years, she required multiple surgical interventions, none of which fully resolved her injuries. After her initial surgeon retired, she struggled to find ongoing medical care and support.

In January 2016, after her own extensive personal research and financial sacrifice, she travelled to St Louis, Missouri, in the United States, where she underwent a complex 5½ hour surgery to remove the mesh. The mesh had embedded into her bladder, bowel and pelvic floor muscles. Although the surgery was successful in removing the mesh, she continues to suffer permanent injuries, including chronic pain, nerve damage, joint dysfunction and significant physical and emotional trauma. Her injuries have severely limited both her personal and professional life.

Despite these ongoing challenges, Kim has dedicated herself to advocating for others affected by medical mesh. She contributed to the Social Development Committee's inquiry and served as a consumer adviser on the executive committee responsible for the establishment of the Pelvic Mesh Clinic at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Kim continues to live with permanent disabilities that affect her career, her family and daily life.

Sadly, Kim's story is not unique. The class action instigated against one of the world's most prominent medical device manufacturers found companies had misled both patients and doctors about the safety and efficacy of nine transvaginal mesh products. Thanks to the courage of three Australian women who had undergone transvaginal mesh procedures, the class action gave a voice to thousands whose suffering had been dismissed or downplayed. For years they felt isolated, shamed and disempowered. Their stories were often met with disbelief, despite a growing number of similar reports and a glaring absence of long-term safety studies. This court gave those impacted the justice they deserved with a clear acknowledgement of the wrongdoing of these trusted medical device manufacturers.

Here in South Australia, our parliament undertook an inquiry—as well as the federal parliament in the Senate—into this issue, and we have practical recommendations to work towards safeguarding South Australians like Kim now and into the future. In 2018, following the recommendations of the federal inquiry, SA Health commissioned the establishment of the South Australian Pelvic Mesh Clinic. The clinic has now achieved, or is in the process of achieving, the recommendations from the South Australian inquiry, which were accepted at the time by the then Minister for Health and Wellbeing, the Hon. Stephen Wade.

In June 2023, we reached a milestone: South Australia employed its first local and publicly credentialed urogynaecologist in over a decade. This appointment has increased surgical capacity and reduced dependence on external services. The multidisciplinary team includes that urogynaecologist but also two gynaecologists, one urologist, one colorectal surgeon, one clinical psychologist, a pelvic floor physiotherapist, two clinical nurse consultants and an administration officer.

Since December 2021, the clinic has performed 24 full mesh removals in the public system, and in total 192 surgical procedures have been completed. But we know that there is more work to do in providing timely mesh removal surgery to patients. We know that when women have waited so long to be believed and diagnosed, waiting for a date for surgery is not an additional stress that they need.

In 2024, the Pelvic Mesh Specialist Group welcomed three new consumer representatives. These representatives are helping to shape the future of the clinic, advocating for improvements and ensuring that lived experience remains central to the treatment and care provided. We are committed to partnering with all South Australian mesh-injured women experiencing major complications related to pelvic mesh implants.

I hope that this apology goes some way to alleviating the pain that these women have experienced. Your strength in coming forward, in asking questions, in demanding better is the reason why that mesh clinic exists. Your courage has driven systemic change and your voice continues to guide our response. As we look to the future I want to thank you for being here and for your continued strength and advocacy. I would also like to acknowledge in particular everybody who was involved in that Social Development Committee report: all the members of parliament and also the staff and everyone who contributed to it.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the member for Torrens for her very significant advocacy on this subject for many years. She has been absolutely tireless in fighting for the cause for women affected by pelvic mesh, and it is, I think, in large part because of her advocacy as well that we have now improved services but we are also undertaking this action in the parliament today. With those words, I endorse the motion and offer the South Australian government's apology—our sincere apologies to all South Australian women affected.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence) (11:09): Today, I also rise to support this motion and to acknowledge that tomorrow is International Mesh Awareness Day and the commencement of Mesh Awareness Month. In doing so, I honour the extraordinarily courageous women with us today, whose journey has been so long and so very hard. I hope that our words today, and the Minister for Health and Wellbeing's heartfelt apology on behalf of our government, help in some way as you continue to traverse that journey.

This is a time to recognise and to wholeheartedly applaud the strength, the resilience and the voices of these women with us today and the tens of thousands of women, and some men, around the world who have been terribly affected by the adverse effects of medical mesh implants. We pay special tribute to those who have endured pain, disability and loss, often without adequate support, acknowledgement or justice.

As has been said, medical mesh, commonly used for procedures like pelvic organ prolapse, stress urinary incontinence and hernia repair, was once hailed as a modern medical advancement, but for thousands worldwide it has led to life-altering complications, chronic pain, nerve damage, organ perforation, autoimmune responses and severe limitations in daily life.

For too many years, it has been another example of how women can sometimes be dismissed, not believed, disrespected and gaslit throughout the process of seeking medical treatment, which sadly can sometimes lead to a distrust about the very systems we want to be there to support them.

Through the tireless advocacy and courage of many, we have seen a Senate inquiry, our own South Australian parliamentary committee inquiry and a landmark class action, which have rightly progressed regulatory reforms. The powerful statements from those who provided

submissions to the parliamentary inquiry brought to life the ongoing and devastating impacts on their lives that these complications have had.

They also spoke to the trust they had in the medical profession and system, only for them to feel let down through not being given the crucially important information about the risks. Despite progress made over time, many are still living with the consequences of mesh, often still facing difficulties gaining adequate access to treatment, compensation or support. As we mark International Mesh Awareness Day, it is not only a time for reflection, it is a call to action on what we still need to and must do to support those impacted.

There is one member here whom I wholeheartedly thank for her tireless work over years to progress awareness and action. I thank the member for Torrens for her work to date and her continued passionate advocacy on this topic. The member for Torrens has been utterly tireless, relentlessly standing with women, empowering and amplifying their voices. I also thank the Minister for Health and Wellbeing for his actions, his work and the apology today, acknowledging this important day and to help ensure South Australian women have access to support for this and the many other health issues they may encounter over their lifetime.

To the survivors, advocates and families, we see you and we hear you. Know that your fight has brought international awareness, legal reform and so much hope for so many women, for safer medical practices and respect and dignity as women access them. I commend the motion to the house.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (11:14): I will be brief on this, but thank you to the member for Torrens for bringing it up and also to everybody in this house for previously agreeing to the committee actually investigating it.

I want to just go back and compliment not only Kim Blieschke from Port Pirie for bringing it to my attention a few years ago, but also other members from Port Pirie who came into my electorate office. I think I have mentioned it in this chamber before, but I had no idea of the pain, the suffering, the trauma that these women have been through because of an issue that, in my view, went wrong at that particular time.

It is alright for us men: we might complain about something, but I must give credit to women because they are better and do not complain about pain, or whatever it is. In this instance here, when Kim brought it to my attention, with her partner, Jarrad, I listened but I still did not fully understand the impact of what Kim was enduring at that particular time.

We had further discussions regarding her personal issues, and this is where I get not only very emotional but also very appreciative that people come in and talk about their personal issues with me, and specifically women. I find that very rewarding, in a way—and I do not mean that in any other way—because it gives me an opportunity, as a member of the opposite sex, to understand a bit more about some of the issues the female sector deals with.

When Kim and then a few others came into my office in Port Pirie—I was the member for Frome at the time—as well as some people from around the southern part of the electorate, that brought me more of an awareness not only of this issue but also of endo and other issues that have been brought to this chamber. It gave me a far better understanding—and even some of my staff. I have all females in my staff at Pirie and also Port Augusta, and some of them were not fully aware of the consequences, of the pain and also the personal disadvantage these people went through—not only the women but also their husbands or partners, and their children. That was a big issue.

I know that Kim has been an advocate for this for a long, long time. There are a lot of people in our communities who might bring an issue forward, but then they will step back and maybe not highlight their issues, so that in a way they can be behind the scenes. However, Kim has been a great advocate, personally going to the front and making quite sure that everybody basically understands the issues she had—and it was in the paper today, the issues she had. I remember very clearly when Kim and her partner, Jarrad, went over to America to have the procedure. As has been mentioned before, not only was that at a financial cost but also it was a very dangerous course of action, because no-one knew how to remove this mesh.

To all the women, to all the sufferers, who have been persevering with this for many years and who have now brought it to attention in the public domain, I say a very sincere thankyou. To the people who have come and talked to me, you have enlightened me and increased my knowledge of some of the issues on the female side that I was not aware of. That was an eye-opener for me, an awareness, and I can now far better appreciate some of the issues that our communities suffer but that they do not bring to the attention of the public. It is International Mesh Awareness Day tomorrow, and let us be aware.

I want to thank the minister and the government for publicly making an apology. The apology is fantastic, and it is absolutely well and truly overdue, but we must remember that these particular people still have that pain going forward. An apology is a move forward, but there is still the pain, the trauma and the memories. We also must remember that some of these people are not here today because of the overwhelming pain they endured. Again, I commend the motion to the house.

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (11:19): I would like to thank the Minister for Health and Wellbeing for his apology on behalf of the government today and also for his ongoing support on this issue. Member for Frome, thank you for your heartfelt words. I know that you have had an interest in this particular issue since it has been in the parliament, and you have always been very supportive.

The former member for Frome, now the member for Stuart, has been supportive from day one, when we first held a forum in the Balcony Room, inviting the women who had contacted me in relation to the issues they were experiencing regarding medical mesh. The Minister for Women, thank you. I know that women are held in such high regard in your heart and in your mind and a day does not go by without you advocating on behalf of women in South Australia.

To the women here today, I know this does not make it better for you. I know that your pain will continue. Tracey, I think you missed the beginning. I know that we started early here. I spoke about the fact that you were the one who brought my attention to this issue. I had never heard of it. In fact, you contacted my office, and it was a young male trainee who took the call and he was not sure what he should say to me. Then a couple of days later I knocked on your door, and you grabbed hold of me and said that I needed to listen to what you were saying.

I know that today some people will think, 'Well, that's an apology.' It is good to hear some of the progress that has been made as a result of the implementation of the recommendations and that we have had a number of mesh removals, full mesh removals and partial mesh removals, here in South Australia. For the people you still have contact with or the new people who are coming forward, we would like to make that journey shorter.

I want to assure you that I am onto it. It is not going to sit and gather dust. A number of the recommendations have been implemented, and we need to continue that going forward. Thank you for your advocacy because you really have made a difference.

Motion carried.

INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS' DAY

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (11:22): I move:

That this house—

- (a) recognises that 4 May is International Firefighters' Day;
- (b) acknowledges that firefighters dedicate their lives to protecting South Australians across our metropolitan areas and in our regions;
- (c) honours and remembers past firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their communities and protecting others;
- (d) expresses its gratitude to all CFS and MFS personnel and volunteers for their courage, commitment and tireless effort in times of emergency; and
- (e) recognises the serious health risks firefighters face from exposure to hazardous contaminants and the importance of ensuring their protection.

This coming Sunday is International Firefighters' Day and an opportunity to acknowledge and reflect on the dedication of our firefighters to our community every day, defending our property, our environment and, most of all, our lives.

On Sunday at noon, firefighters around the world are invited to sound off their sirens for 30 seconds, followed by a minute of silence in memory and respect for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The sound-off, which is a small price to pay, has had incredible support all around the world since 2002. It is a small but powerful way to honour those who protect our community.

International Firefighters' Day sparked following an incident in Linton, Victoria, in December 1998. Volunteers from Geelong West Fire Brigade responded to calls for assistance to help fight a large wildfire in Linton, approximately 150 kilometres west of Melbourne. Among them were Garry Vredeveltdt, Chris Evans, Stuart Davidson, Jason Thomas and Matthew Armstrong, who were all tragically killed due to a sudden violent wind change. Their bravery and courage to answer the call will be remembered, along with many other firefighters right across South Australia, our country and the world who have lost their lives while fighting fires and serving.

In South Australia, the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires were some of the worst we have seen in recent history. Who could forget? They threatened Yorketown, the Adelaide Hills, Kangaroo Island and more communities. They destroyed or damaged 1,180 homes, buildings and facilities and burned 278,603 hectares of land. Three people sadly lost their lives. The hard work of the firefighting and recovery efforts in that period cannot be overstated.

The recent Katarapko Island fires in March burned a large area of the island and threatened locals. Thankfully, the fire was kept under control by the incredibly dedicated work of our emergency services personnel in Chaffey. We also had the recent Wilmington fires in February. While thankfully no lives were lost, we acknowledge the bravery and commitment of volunteer CFS, local farm fire units and the DEW personnel, who all worked tirelessly. It was an outstanding effort from all involved, who put their lives on the line, and from Michael Wigg, who suffered major burns but is well on the road to recovery.

In Chaffey, emergency services personnel work tirelessly for our local communities but also at several MFS, CFS and SES stations across the region, making up a significant number of South Australia's volunteer base. There are stations in Blanchetown, Baramera, Loxton, Berri, Renmark, Paringa, Swan Reach, Waikerie and Morgan. I want to acknowledge all of the CFS units in other communities that are unmanned and also the Riverland operations coordination units in Renmark, Berri and Loxton. They are all underpinned by volunteers.

The involvement of volunteers in South Australia's emergency response cannot be overstated. They are the backbone in protecting our state and protecting our communities, but sadly under the current government their numbers are falling. Since 2022, South Australia has lost 418 CFS and SES volunteers. This is incredibly disappointing, and I call on the government and the minister to do more to recruit and maintain our volunteer base and give them the support that they deserve.

Hazards and health risks are also part of the journey of being a first responder. South Australia was seriously behind in recognising various cancers and diseases under the Return to Work Act for presumptive firefighter injuries. Thankfully, with the support of the opposition this was amended to support 23 cancers, in line with other states. This was passed in the Legislative Council but has not been through the House of Assembly as yet. Why the delay? Why is the Labor government delaying this progress? This is one win for South Australian firefighters, but there is still more that the government has failed to act on to protect their health and safety.

The Auditor-General's Report found various compliance issues relating to workplace health and emergency services personnel. Cleaning services are critical to firefighter safety and involve decontaminating carcinogens and other contaminations. There is low compliance for cleaning personal protective equipment. The government were warned in 2023, but they still had not made any great progress by 2024. The government's inaction is disappointing, and every firefighter, every first responder, is waiting in anticipation that the government will enact a measure that will make it fairer and more equitable for them to be a volunteer with the protections behind them. Hopefully, that move will be made to protect our frontline emergency personnel sooner rather than later.

All frontline emergency service personnel are on standby 24/7 with a pager on person, ready to act. I say thank you to all of those who serve for their dedication and for protecting our state. We are appreciative that you put your lives in front of ours. Mr Speaker, the dedication that firefighters provide was not only seen firsthand by yourself with the Kangaroo Island bushfires but every community has witnessed one occasion where those firefighter personnel and those first responders have kept our community safe, they have saved lives and, as I said, they have put their lives in front of ours. I wish to thank all of them, each and every one of them. My heartfelt dedication and thanks cannot be overstated.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:29): I want to make a brief contribution to the motion brought by the member for Chaffey. Of course, as the member for Chaffey said, this Sunday is International Firefighters' Day or, as it is also known, St Florian's Day. St Florian was the patron saint of firefighters. He was the first known commander of a firefighting squad in the Roman army who died for his Christian faith, making him a martyr and elevating him to the patron of all things in the prevention of danger from fire.

This Sunday is an important day to recognise and reflect on the dedication, bravery and contribution firefighters from our state's MFS and CFS have made and continue to make to all of our communities across South Australia. Importantly, we can also use this day to highlight the work of other frontline emergency services in general, including the SA Ambulance Service, the SES and also SAPOL. No matter which uniform they wear, our emergency services work together for the protection and the safety of our community, and I acknowledge them as part of this day.

I want to put on the record some of the investments that the Malinauskas Labor government has made in our state's emergency services. These include an additional 12 MFS trucks to significantly reduce the pressure on fleet reserve and ageing appliances, an associated asset management plan focused on truck replacement, and \$2 million over four years for bushfire farm firefighting unit grants, which I am sure you are familiar with, Mr Speaker, so that farm firefighter units can continue to play a role in fire emergency responses in South Australia.

Over the last three years, the government has awarded funding for 1,297 pieces of equipment for farm firefighting units, including 334 units, 295 UHF/CB radios, 279 pieces of fire-rated personal protective clothing, 47 water tanks, 37 water pumps and numerous hose reels, first-aid kits, fire blankets and beacons.

We have also invested in a new SES unit in Gawler and replaced fire towers with new technologies to provide landscape-level fire detection. We have also invested in additional mental health and wellbeing support for emergency services volunteers, staff and their families through the South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM). I was lucky enough to be invited to represent the Minister for Police at the ANZAC Day footy game between the combined emergency services and the ADF. Unfortunately, the ADF won a pretty significant victory that day. It was the curtain-raiser before the Port Adelaide game. Nevertheless, it was an important contribution to raising the awareness of mental health issues amongst both emergency services responders and our defence forces.

The CFS has strong representation through South Australia: 13,500 volunteers, including cadets and operational support members who are committed to supporting their communities; a fleet of over 800 fire trucks; and over one million average annual volunteer hours.

The MFS, of course, have very strong representation throughout South Australia: 1,200 personnel, including full-time and retained (regional part-time) firefighters and non-operational personnel, who are committed to supporting their communities. There are 37 stations in all—20 in the metro area and 17 located in larger regional centres.

While I am on my feet, I would also like to highlight the tireless efforts of personnel and volunteers who not only make sacrifices to serve their own community but are willing to pause it all to travel interstate to help someone else's community. I want to particularly acknowledge our recent deployments to Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania to assist with fires, floods and cyclone areas.

I also want to recognise the incredible efforts of the relevant volunteer organisations: the CFS Volunteers Association and the CFS Foundation, as well as the United Firefighters Union. Once again, in the lead-up to St Florian's Day I want to thank our state's firefighters and emergency services as a whole for dedicating their time to keeping our community safe.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:33): I rise to support this motion by the member for Chaffey:

That this house—

- (a) recognises that 4 May is International Firefighters' Day;
- (b) acknowledges that firefighters dedicate their lives to protecting South Australians across our metropolitan areas and in our regions;
- (c) honours and remembers past firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their communities and protecting others;
- (d) expresses its gratitude to all CFS and MFS personnel and volunteers for their courage, commitment and tireless effort in times of emergency; and
- (e) recognises the serious health risks firefighters face from exposure to hazardous contaminants and the importance of ensuring their protection.

I certainly support the many thousands of firefighters, whether they be the 13,000 CFS volunteers or the Metropolitan Fire Service personnel, full-time or retained, and the many thousands of farmers and other local people in the regions and in the suburban areas—outer suburban areas, most likely—who command farm firefighting units. The whole system works well together and they are all needed when it literally hits the fan. It was interesting that not that many years ago farm firefighting units were discouraged, but now they are totally embraced as a vital part of the firefighting effort out on the fireground.

As a local CFS volunteer myself I am so proud to see many people, whether it is in an intense moment or in the mopping-up stages of a situation, doing their bit to assist their community. There have been a few fires recently down our way out in the Mallee and in the South-East over the years. The Carcuma fire was an interesting one, out near Ngarkat Conservation Park. We were out there just prior to Christmas. We had the farm firefighting unit out there, actually, and my two brothers were out there as well along with many others trying to put this fire out. There was a bit of hesitancy on doing a back-burn on some country that was going to burn anyway. Thankfully, a decision was made to put the back-burn in place. The dozer breaks had been put in and the back-burn was instigated, and it saved many days, I think, of people waiting for it to get into that scrub line and get that fire contained and under control.

I have seen over the decades hesitancy to do the appropriate back-burns when the reality is that the fire is coming at you. The big one was just over 20 years ago when there was one in Ngarkat Conservation Park that was burning towards the Mallee Highway. Before it could get to the Mallee Highway it had to go through many thousands of acres of farmland. Notwithstanding the fact that the fire was predicted to come out of that park at 90 km/h with the winds behind it, there was no decision made to light a back-burn, which would have been the most sensible decision that day.

We need to be far more proactive on a fireground when the stark reality is that you do have to sacrifice some country to get the best outcome. You end up with lawsuits and many hundreds of acres of farmland burnt. It is interesting that with a fire coming at that ferocity, the CFS and the powers that be deemed that the place to hold it was the Mallee Highway. That was barely big enough to hold that fire, so I think some learnings came out of that.

When I was down on Kangaroo Island helping with the mop-up I witnessed that there was some serious work done, even on one road near Vivonne Bay where they actually got the scrub chain, the anchor chain, out between a couple of dozers and chained down massive trees—probably 20 metres high—all up one side of the road as a firebreak. I saw a contractor and an Army bulldozer clearing a big break, probably at least 150 metres wide, of similar-sized trees on the way to Kingscote as a last-ditch firebreak, so it was good to see some reality there.

Having recently been over to Kangaroo Island, it is good to see that on the North Coast Road coming back from Stokes Bay down towards Cape Borda, I think it is, a decent-sized break has been made. I think it is about 80 metres wide; it possibly could be wider, but at least there is a break in the

parkland there to help contain those lightning strikes that will probably happen again—noting that the last big fire before 2019-20 on Kangaroo Island was in 2007.

They do keep going and they do keep coming. I certainly acknowledge, in talking about the big effort in that huge fire where about 50 per cent of the island was burnt, that it was MFS, CFS and local units in attendance. It was a massive job done by all.

Certainly the biggest one locally was the Yumali-Netherton fire, five years ago this year. Many local people went out with their farm firefighter unit, and the CFS were there, the strike teams came up from the South-East and from close into Adelaide, which was very welcome after we had been out all day. They attended to it at night and then a lot of us were back on the scene the next morning, either helping mop up or having to put down sheep, shooting sheep and assisting distraught landowners who could not do that themselves.

Sadly, there were a few burns out of that—we were lucky that people did not get killed. Two women were in a ute that was about to be overwhelmed; thankfully they just parked, shut the windows and the fire went over the top and they came out completely unscathed. I saw that ute later, completely burnt to the ground. We can never underestimate the work done by the people who go to put out fires—our Country Fire Service, Metropolitan Fire Service and those farmers and others on the ground with their farm firefighter units. Anything can happen on the day, especially when you have a 30-kilometre breeze coming behind you and you can feel the heat—you know it is on.

People go out—because that is what they do in country areas—to assist their communities and put out these fires. It is great to see more infrastructure over time going in. I know that Coomandook will get a new station not that far down the track, a three-bay station, to house the 34 truck, the 44 truck and the bulk water tanker. The other thing that CFS do in country areas is a lot of roadworks. I was there one night when a truck burnt to the ground. It is pretty ferocious when turbos get hot in motors and other things; electrical faults light up semitrailers and B-doubles and it is quite a sight. You do what you can to get the truck out, but usually it is pretty fierce by the time you get there, then you try to save the surrounding areas.

Another thing that firefighters do, in an interesting way I suppose, is bring joy to people's lives. One of my constituents in a rest home in Murray Bridge—Resthaven—was turning 100. I turned up and saw her and I talked to her daughter. I said, 'What does your mum really want for her birthday?' The birthday was two days later, but I could not be there that day so I was there a couple of days earlier. She said 'She'd like to see some firemen turn up'. I thought, 'I have to pull some magic as the local member here'. I went through the process, and the local Metropolitan Fire Service are retained fireys, so they have to come off their normal work. They brought in a truck and there were two or three of them there. She got a real kick out of it—they pulled up out the front of Resthaven and entertained her just outside the rest home. That is something that brings a little bit of light to people's lives, especially toward the end of their life.

I truly support the commitment of all our firefighters, whoever they are—they do lay their lives on the line. Things are getting better, obviously, with burnover drills. We heard about the terrible incident at Lynton, where they got burnt in their truck, and we have to do a burnover drill every year to make sure we know all the survival techniques, but sometimes you are not in that situation. You have to be very aware on the fireground. May our firefighters be safe in the coming seasons.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (11:44): It is a great privilege and pleasure to speak to this motion brought forward by the member for Chaffey. This motion states that 4 May each year is recognised as International Firefighters' Day and, as we celebrate on this day, we also need to celebrate and remember the great services, at times dangerous and very emotional tasks, that these people undertake to protect not only other people's lives, human lives, but also infrastructure and animals.

In Port Pirie, we have a full-time fire station, which is the MFS, and this is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. At times, they are not required, but we have the smelters down the road, which are a very important part of the community and at any time they could be called down there for any incidents and things like that, but that is very rare and if it does happen down there, quite often it is a false alarm.

There is also an MFS fire station at Port Augusta, staffed by some full-time but mainly part-time employees. These people, particularly the volunteers, not only give up their personal valuable time but also risk their lives on many occasions. There are also many Country Fire Service (CFS) locations scattered across all of regional South Australia. In my electorate, I have approximately 33 locations which are assisted, organised and staffed by numerous people, both male and female.

One of the big things that people residing outside of regional locations may not be totally aware of is that these dedicated people are on call for not only fires but also for road accidents, which can happen at any time. Whilst these people risk their lives to assist when the occasion arises, when they are attending a particular road accident or similar the victims involved with that incident may well be known to the volunteer or in many cases the victim could be a family member or a very close associate.

I vividly remember 10 days prior to Christmas in 1992, an accident occurred on the Port Broughton Road at 7.45am. In this head-on collision, the first person who noticed it was a farmer, who actually lived around 200 metres from the incident. But this also required the services of the MFS, the SES, the CFS and also the South Australian Ambulance Service. The police were also called to the accident and there were several people who attended the accident who at the time refused to actually acknowledge and recognise the deceased victim of the accident.

Even to this day, the emergency service people involved, but also the medical and hospital staff, can vividly remember the exact time of the event even after 34 years. This victim was my late wife, Arlene. What I am recognising here is not only the risk to their lives but also the emotional impact that can continue for many years to come for these people, dealing with victims who they know and love. It is an issue that we may talk about regarding what these volunteers do, but it has a long-lasting impact on the mental health of those particular people.

With regard to fighting fire, these occasions do not pause after a few hours; they require continuous attention at the coalface, and there are no breaks at any time whatsoever. Mr Speaker, you would be well aware of that with the Port Lincoln fires many years ago, and I know that there are volunteers in this house here who know that if they have attended a fire there is no sitting there and all of a sudden saying, 'I want a cup of coffee,' or whatever it may be. You have to continue at the coalface, at the fire front and keep going.

Other than risk to life, there is also the risk at times that these people may not know exactly what substance is in that fire. We have discussed this in this house on previous occasions: what are the materials in a particular fire? We need to have the best protection we can get for these people who volunteer and risk their lives, whether they are firefighters, full-time MFS, police, SES or Country Fire Service personnel.

I know that International Firefighters' Day can be acknowledged, but we also need to encourage more people to volunteer out there. Governments of the day cannot afford to pay full-time people across all the regions in South Australia. I know we have the emergency services levy and suchlike, but we have to acknowledge those volunteers out there specifically in regional locations.

I thank the member for Chaffey for bringing this motion to the chamber. There are also other members here who bring up these sorts of motions, but we must also remember to say thank you very sincerely to business people in regional South Australia in particular, who allow their staff to vacate their jobs at a minute's notice when there is a fire or an accident. It is not only the volunteers who serve there and risk their lives but it also affects businesspeople who risk a financial impact on their businesses, especially these days when the cost of living is very high, and it is very expensive for them to let somebody go. Certainly, I commend the motion to the house.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:50): I rise to commend the motion moved by the member for Chaffey and shadow minister, for importantly recognising, of course as we do every year, International Firefighters' Day, and that is coming up in just a few days' time. I want to focus my remarks on paragraph (b) of the motion. I acknowledge that there have been important contributions to the debate already that have highlighted what is well understood throughout our community in South Australia, that it is really a truly extraordinary contribution that is

made, not only by professional firefighters—the MFS in our state—but by dedicated volunteers in our state's regional areas, and Heysen is among the key beneficiaries of that volunteer commitment.

I want to acknowledge, as paragraph (d) of the motion does, that firefighters dedicate their lives to protecting South Australians across the metro area and particularly in our regions. Each year the circumstances in which the house comes to reflect on International Firefighters' Day will be different. Sometimes, as we have seen even in recent years, we come to 4 May reflecting on the summer just past and the really terrible disasters that have afflicted us.

As you know well from experience, Mr Speaker, it was only a few short years ago that Kangaroo Island was devastated, and the consequences of that will be with us for decades to come. Just a few days before those terrible fires ripped through Kangaroo Island, of course the Cudlee Creek fire devastated much of the Hills. That was truly a terrible summer of fires in that year.

Again, it was a terrible set of circumstances in the following year: the so-called Cherry Gardens fire that really started in a small way in Cherry Gardens but emanated from Bradbury in a potentially more devastating way. It started late in the afternoon on that day in late January and was a fire that rapidly took on in the vicinity of the Mount Bold Reservoir. We saw what can occur when you have a combination of volunteer firefighters on the ground, together with the extraordinary effects of aerial firefighting. In a couple of short hours, before darkness descended that evening, the aerial drops in very hard to access parts of the Hills I am sure prevented that fire from being very much worse.

Even so, were it not for relatively benign circumstances overnight and then, eventually, drenching rains in the late afternoon of the following day, the Hills might have seen a terrible disaster. It is well that the arsonist who started it has been dealt with by the courts. We all know that we are at great risk through the summer. Whatever the cause of a fire, we need to know that we are in a position to address and to end the fires when they start, and that was a particularly courageous and effective demonstration of how our community volunteers on the ground can work to achieve really community-saving things.

I will just reflect briefly, as I have previously, on the most recent seriously devastating fire incident, and it perhaps goes to the wide range of incidents that our CFS volunteers respond to. When the Woolworths supermarket was burnt to the ground in Stirling, it was the CFS who were first on the ground. The brilliant and effective communication between the CFS and the MFS just down the hill meant that the initial response of the CFS could be appropriately aided in partnership with the MFS and about the best possible response to that fire was able to be achieved.

It was a combination of defensive firefighting and then—what I am still very moved by—offensive firefighting within that burning location. I say I am moved because I was standing there on the footpath and seeing those who I am used to seeing walk into the supermarket of a morning, but now dressed in breathing apparatus, going in to attack that fire offensively, with the result that the fire did not spread beyond that particular location. Although the building was devastated and businesses were devastated, there was no loss of life and the village of Stirling was not otherwise more dramatically affected.

To emphasise the seriousness of that, at the Stirling CFS briefing—and it was not only the Stirling brigade that responded; very many of the surrounding brigades were actively involved in responding to that devastating incident—at an about three-hour briefing on the Monday night afterwards, in a very sensible, low-key, stepwise way, the brigade highlighted at the outset that this was actually, bar none, the worst, most significant event in the brigade's history, including Ash Wednesdays past and so on. So I would highlight to the house just how devastating that was.

I want to pay tribute in particular to the CFS Chief Officer. I was speaking with him just the other day and reflecting on what was a relatively minor fire around Mylor several weeks ago. I was marvelling at the fact that there is this extraordinary capacity for the CFS to respond in such a way that—although we see the smoke very close by and we see the flames and what could be a very terrible event emerging—as soon as it starts there is a very effective response, and the Mylor fire was no exception.

If I may, in the same breath of paying tribute to the chief officer, I also highlight that these are circumstances in which there is nothing but complete bipartisanship. Minister Bourke was in contact with me and providing up-to-date information, and that was appreciated.

I will just say a brief word about strike teams working together with farm firefighter units. The member for Hammond has reflected on the fact that that has been an issue that has evolved over time. I am very glad to see now that farm firefighter units take their proper place, fully appreciated. I often reflect on my Uncle Butch over in WA, who has led the group of farmers in the south-west there for decades.

When I was over there as a kid, there would be this sort of check-in from the ute. It would be, 'Fires, fires.' That would be it, just to check that everyone was actually on board and listening and engaged. Farmers, those who understand the local area, are the same people who volunteer to look after their community. They should be celebrated. There is a lot more that can and will be said. We do well to celebrate this occasion each year as we do, and I commend the motion.

The SPEAKER (12:00): Before calling the next member, I would like to also add my support for this motion and thank all of those firefighters across South Australia, all professional firefighters, those paid and those volunteers, who put in so many hours of training. Thank you for the sacrifices you make.

I would also like to thank the family members of those who put their hand up to fight fires. I know from those Black Summer bushfires that burnt half of Kangaroo Island back in the summer of 2019-20 that, as I was putting photos up on Facebook of tired firefighters coming back in for changeover and images of fire trucks that had been damaged by burnovers, I was being constantly contacted by family members who had not heard from their loved ones, loved ones who had been out overnight fighting the fires, who would come back totally exhausted.

I will never forget seeing them getting a bacon and egg roll and just lying exhausted on the oval, where other people had gathered as well in the refuge centre, because they had had to evacuate their homes. They were so exhausted that they had gone back into the Humanihuts that had been set up and were just getting some sleep, so their family members had not had a call and of course they had been out of range for all of the night while they were fighting the fire.

It is harder and harder to get volunteers and for people to put their hand up right across the board in South Australia, so those people who do, particularly the CFS volunteers, the Farm Fire Unit firefighters, we thank you very much. We also thank your families for the sacrifices that you all make, particularly at times like Christmas and New Year. We know that the fires on Kangaroo Island burnt for four weeks, and we had so many firefighters coming from the mainland to lend a hand and to put their support in. Christmas plans, holidays and new year's plans were all put on hold so that people could come to the aid of their fellow South Australians.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (12:02): I rise to speak in support of this motion that has been put by the shadow minister, especially as a regional MP, in recognition that International Firefighters' Day holds a special place for regional South Australia. Although major centres have paid MFS staff who do amazing work within those regional centres, the vast majority of the firefighting that happens in regional South Australia is done by those volunteers who spend so much of their own personal time preparing for incidents and occasions where their expertise needs to be called upon, and also, obviously, responding during those most challenging times for our community.

As a regional MP, I have so many different CFS sheds right across Eyre Peninsula and the West Coast, and each one of them is sustained by strong volunteers. As I am on my feet, can I encourage anyone who is not involved with the CFS in regional areas to consider the opportunity to do so. These are really most challenging times for our regional communities, when we have fire, when we have incidents.

Honestly, the work that a CFS volunteer has to do within a regional centre is a lot broader than a lot of people consider. It is not just the actual fighting of a fire—and obviously that is having to respond during some of the hottest, driest, most challenging times—but all throughout the year the first port of call, the first responders to things like fatal car accidents are our firefighters, and our volunteer firefighters in particular.

It is always a pleasure to be able to recognise and thank members of the CFS who have given so much time volunteering throughout their lives, and it is always a special occasion for me. Recently, at the Australia Day Awards at Tumby Bay, we had the opportunity to add on to those Australia Day Awards some recognition of people who have given decades of service to the CFS. Every 10 years there is an opportunity to recognise them. When we can see volunteers who have spent 10, 20, 30 or 40-plus years volunteering with the CFS, it really highlights that those people are community first. They are driven by trying to make sure that they do what they can at a time where they can take responsibility to keep our community safe and, as regional communities always are, to pitch in and to make sure that each and every one of us take on that responsibility to keep our community safe.

We really do express our gratitude to all CFS and MFS personnel and volunteers for their courage, their commitment, and their tireless effort in times of emergency. It really is incumbent on us as decision-makers—and those on the Treasury benches—to make sure that they are putting the necessary resources into our CFS, in particular in regional areas, because it is volunteers who do all the heavy lifting when it comes to the work of keeping our communities safe. It really should be reflected in proper resourcing and proper funding for the equipment and the infrastructure that is necessary. Often as a local member, I am advocating to the minister to consider investment in some of our further flung CFS sheds and equipment, and it has been encouraging to see successive governments roll out upgrades of fire trucks, for instance.

There are also incredibly ageing pieces of infrastructure, not just in my electorate, but right across regional South Australia. When you rock up to a CFS shed, which is often the central point to a community—a lot of communities these days have constricted down to a point where they might not have a shop, they are lucky if they have a pub or post office, but there is always a CFS shed there, and often that is the central part of a community. To have that infrastructure up to a standard where people actually want to be involved in their local CFS and do not see that infrastructure as a deterrent is really important.

For those of us who have had the privilege, but also unfortunate opportunity to be involved in battling some of these vicious fires which have torn across our countryside and regularly do so, that first-hand experience really does give us an insight into what our volunteer firefighters do every single time they are called out. Every time that beeper goes off or the notification on their app comes out, they make that conscious decision to put themselves in harm's way for the sake of their community, and they do so without a second thought.

I am not a member of the CFS. My brothers and cousins are. It is often me, as has been spoken about before, on the farm fire unit that is coming in to do the mop-up. The big truck goes through, and to see the fleet of farm fire units—once again, it is everyday people putting themselves in harm's way for the sake of keeping their community safe. To experience that first-hand, and as a regional MP to also take the opportunity in parliament to recognise that, I think is really important.

It was only a few years ago when my house was only 500 metres away from a fire. To feel the force of an out-of-control bushfire, but to know that there are firefighters who are willing to do the heavy lifting in the community, I think is a real reassurance. We managed to dodge it that way, and long may that be so, but some people are not that fortunate. The Wangary fires, which are now over 20 years ago, caused incredible devastation, and we know that there was a loss of life, loss of buildings, and people's homes and livelihoods. That is the devastation that fires can cause, and that is the devastation that our firefighters put themselves in the pathway of every single time, so that is the service they provide.

Can I especially recognise from that fire 20 years ago Trent Murnane and 'PeeWee' Richardson, two firefighters who, as this motion says, made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their communities and protecting others. Their families are still hurt by it now. They were volunteering to put themselves in harm's way.

As a regional MP, I think it is really an obligation and a responsibility for us to recognise the sacrifice that has been made but also the continual decision that people make every single day to volunteer and put themselves on the frontline of a fire. In recent weeks—only a couple of weeks ago—black smoke went up from Tumby Bay and a well-loved Mitre 10 hardware store went up in

smoke. As is mentioned in paragraph (e) of this motion, we recognise the serious health risks firefighters face from exposure to hazardous contaminants and the importance of ensuring their protection.

This hardware store was riddled with not just the things they were selling—and you can imagine the contaminants that come in a hardware store like that, with paint and timber and that sort of thing—but also the building itself was covered with asbestos. We had volunteer firefighters who, without a second thought, were going in and putting themselves at risk. This is a really important motion, especially for regional MPs. Can I thank the member for bringing it to us and can I urge the house to wholeheartedly support it.

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (12:11): I likewise rise to support this motion from the member for Chaffey. Firefighters are an important part of keeping our community safe, and they do a fabulous job. My grandfather was very heavily involved in the CFS in the Port Elliot area for many, many years, and he actually was one of the founders of getting, as it was known then, the Emergency Fire Service set up in Port Elliot. In 1959, there was a fire that started at the top of Cut Hill near the corner of Crows Nest Road and Victor Harbor Road. That was known as a significant fire in the region at the time, and it burnt all the way down from the top of the hill right to the beaches at Middleton. The seaweed was apparently burning for days right down on the beach.

The Basham family farm—my family's farm at the time—was very much in the firing line of that fire, but my grandfather was up fighting the fires elsewhere. He was out there supervising, trying to get people to where they were needed. It was extremely challenging in that era because no-one had radios or mobile phones. He was driving around in his Holden, and apparently at one stage he ran into a ditch and got stuck and someone else had to pull him out in the middle of all the smoke on Crows Nest Road itself. So these were really challenging environments, but it certainly evolved.

That fire led to, as I said, the EFS being formed in Port Elliot. They started with old Army Blitz trucks that were converted into fire trucks. In subsequent fires that we have been involved with on our farm, we actually had a CFS Blitz truck left on our place to help mop up. It is a great truck to mop up with because it has no cab, so you can sit and do the whole lot yourself; you can wander backwards and forwards and let the truck keep driving itself. There are all sorts of fun things you can do. It is not overly safe, though. Safety certainly was its weakest point by a long way. There was zero protection between you and the fire, but it was what was available at the time. The fires that have affected our family farms continued over the era. That was the original one in 1959.

My parents decided to move from Port Elliot, taking the dairy farm out to Mount Compass in 1976. Apparently, something that nearly every new farmer to the district decides to do is burn one of the paddocks in the autumn to clear up the weeds, the stubble and the things that are there. You only ever do it once, apparently, because you learn that the Mount Compass soil keeps burning for days and days.

It was about this time of the year in 1977 that mum and dad lit this paddock, and it kept burning and it kept burning. We got a few hot days and that flared it up. It is probably not the greatest way to get to know all the local firefighters when you move into a district. It was the night of their season wind-up and they were all in having a black-tie show at Mount Compass when the fire got away again that evening, so they all rocked up in their dinner suits on the backs of the CFS trucks. Mum struggled to talk to some of the other families for the next week or two as they were complaining about their dinner suits being ruined, fighting the fire in dinner suits. That was our introduction to burn-offs; certainly, we did not do any more after that.

We continued to have issues with fires across the property at Mount Compass from time to time. There was another one during the 1980s that very much comes to mind. We had just been down to VACSWIM at Victor Harbor—I was a teenager at the time—and were coming back from that. We had literally just driven down past the hill, pulled up into the driveway, turned around and there was a fire coming exactly from where we had just driven. We had passed a Highways Department roller going up the hill, and we suspected that fire started with a spark and came straight over the hill. We had no time to get ready for anything.

Dad and I got a rubbish bin, filled it with water, put some hessian bags in it and drove across to try to save the hay shed, while mum called the CFS to come. Dad and I were out there with wet

bags, beating down the fire front as it was coming directly at the hay shed. Thankfully, the CFS truck arrived just in time. It was about from here to the Speaker's chair away from the shed by the time it turned up, so I was very pleased to see them at that stage.

We had another fire in the nineties that started just south of Mount Compass. Someone was getting some hay bales out of a hay shed. They were round bales, and the top bale fell off the top of the stack and landed on the exhaust pipe of the tractor and subsequently it went up. It was sad that at that stage we were seeing the move away from farmers being the backbone of the CFS to some city people being involved. This was on a workday, in work hours, and there was only enough crew for one truck. Sadly, that truck ran out of water before they got the fire out, and it got away and burnt through our place. It was certainly a pretty nasty day, and we were really thankful that they were able to get there and stop it going any further.

There happened to be two council graders in the district at the time. They tried to grade a firebreak and nearly got right across the front of it with the break. It probably had about 20 metres to go before it reached there and it got through the gap, but at least that channelled it and made it a much smaller front than it was going to be and probably stopped the fire going all the way to Goolwa. So it is amazing—it is not just the people who are actually CFS members who are out there fighting these fires but it can be council workers who just happen to be in the right place at the right time.

We then moved into the 2000s. During the 2000s, I very much remember a really hot New Year's Eve, sitting inside mid-afternoon waiting to go in to milk. It was when the CFS app was very much in operation. I remember getting a text message saying there was a fire at Mosquito Hill, which was the district that we were in, on the Mount Compass–Goolwa road. Mosquito Hill probably has about eight kilometres of road frontage on that road. We own six of it. So I was a little bit nervous. Thankfully, the fire was on the other two kilometres of the road, so it was not directly involved in our place, but it was certainly another significant fire that we saw in our farming area.

We move to this year. Even though we do not have the farm at Mount Compass anymore, mum and dad still have land at Port Elliot. On New Year's Day I think it was, maybe the 2nd, there was a small fire that was started as the steam train went past. The fire front missed mum and dad's house by about 50 metres. Mum and dad rang me saying, 'We're a bit nervous. The fire seems to be coming directly at us. Would you mind coming over and helping?' so I jumped in the car and went over. The CFS had a very busy day that day. They got that fire out, and another one started just behind Middleton, and all the crews had to leave and left me there with a rake as my only method of actual fire control at that point. Luckily that fire did not go any further.

It is so important that we have these people out there helping us protect our property and our lives. Sadly, so many lives have been lost over the years, but I reflect back on the Ford Blitz through to what we have now to protect our volunteers. The emergency services levy has been a wonderful thing to protect our volunteers, making sure there is enough investment. So thank you to all those firefighters out there.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:21): I will be brief. I would like to thank all of the members who have made a contribution to a very important motion. In some way, shape or form, fire has touched all of our lives. Whether it is living in a metro city or whether it is living out in the regions, many of the stories that have been told here today reflect that. Some of the stories can be quite lighthearted, but lot of the stories are very, very serious. As has been reflected in the motion, the volunteers, those firefighters putting their lives in front of others to protect them, protect their community and protect families should never, ever be understated. So it is very, very pertinent to this motion.

What I must say is that I pay tribute to the paid firefighters as well as the volunteers, but as a note on volunteering here in South Australia I must urge anyone with a listening ear at the moment and for all of the MPs in this chamber: we should be better at promoting volunteering. We should be better at promoting the importance of community service, whether you are young or whether you are middle-aged—or nowadays we accept seniors to go out there and keep our community safe.

It also gives a sense of belonging to a community via a CFS branch or a shed. It does provide great reward, it does give great camaraderie, but it also gives an ability to bring people together, whether it is after a fire, whether it is training, whether you are getting your breathing apparatus

certificate or whether you are just gaining skills in learning how to fight a fire and keeping yourself safe while protecting others. Gaining training and skills I think is also a very, very understated side issue when it comes to volunteering and being part of a team. It is team building and it is a great attribute to give your service to community.

As the shadow minister for emergency services and on behalf of the opposition, on behalf of the Liberal Party here in South Australia, I say to every firefighting volunteer, every paid firefighter, thank you on behalf of this side of the chamber. You are exceptional community people. You provide a service that is second to none, so thank you.

Motion carried.

INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS' DAY

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (12:24): I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes that 4 May is International Firefighters' Day;
- (b) remembers the firefighters who have lost their lives whilst protecting the community;
- (c) shows its support and appreciation for firefighters who put themselves at risk and work hard every day to protect our community as well as to the families of our first responders who have to worry about their family member; and
- (d) acknowledges that firefighters can experience traumatic events through the course of their duties.

This Sunday 4 May is International Firefighters' Day. It is a day to pause and recognise the extraordinary courage, commitment and compassion of our firefighters, not only here in South Australia but across the nation and across the world. This day is a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by those who protect our lives, our homes and our communities from the ever present danger of fire and natural disaster.

International Firefighters' Day sets aside a moment to honour firefighters for their service across the world, to remember firefighters who lost their lives during service and to commemorate firefighters killed in the September 11 attacks. It was established after a proposal by a female Australian firefighter, JJ Edmondson, and it was made on 4 January 1999 following the deaths of five firefighters fighting a bushfire in Australia on 2 December in 1998.

JJ Edmondson, a volunteer firefighter and lieutenant in Victoria, deeply understood both the camaraderie and risks of being a firefighter. This awareness became painfully real when five firefighters, Matt, Stuart, Jason, Garry and Chris from Geelong West, tragically lost their lives. Though they were from different brigades, their death resonated deeply with JJ, highlighting the universal bond shared among firefighters.

The loss underscored the danger inherent in the job firefighters do with pride, dedicated to protecting lives and property. Motivated by this tragedy and the outpouring of global support, JJ set a 1999 New Year's resolution to create an internationally recognised symbol and a day of remembrance for all firefighters.

She coordinated global discussions via email and decided on a meaningful date and symbol, receiving enthusiastic support from the international firefighting community. This collective effort led to the establishment of International Firefighters' Day, a tribute made possible through the shared input and endorsement of people worldwide, turning JJ's vision into a globally recognised event. We thank her for bringing it all together as we recognise International Firefighters' Day here today.

However, the roots of this profession's honour actually stretch back centuries to St Florian, the patron saint of firefighters. Florian was a Roman officer who organised and led fire brigades. He is remembered not only for his leadership and skill but for his refusal to renounce his values and for sacrificing his life in the name of service and integrity. Today, his name stands as a symbol of protection, valour and selflessness, qualities embodied by every firefighter who dons the uniform.

Internationally, we do not need to look back very far to see how far individuals will go to protect homes and their communities. The 2025 California wildfires were among the most

devastating in US history, igniting over 250,000 acres across the state. The Palisades and Franklin fires in Los Angeles County ravaged the Santa Monica Mountains.

The fires caused an estimated \$250 billion in economic losses, making them the costliest natural disasters in the nation's history. Firefighters and emergency responders faced extreme conditions, battling intense flames and hazardous terrain. Despite the challenges, their efforts were instrumental in protecting communities and wildlife, highlighting their resilience and dedication.

Back here in South Australia, our firefighting services represent some of the finest examples of that legacy. We are proud to support and stand beside the brave men and women of the Metropolitan Fire Service, the Country Fire Service and our National Parks and Wildlife Service crews. As a member of the CFS and of a community for whom the risk of major bushfires is very real, I see today, and indeed every day, as an opportunity to champion the unwavering commitment of our firefighting community.

This has been the first fire season since the devastating 2019-20 summer in which South Australia has experienced a level 3 fire incident, this time in the rugged terrain of Mount Remarkable National Park. It served as a stark reminder that our climate remains volatile and that the need for preparedness and responsiveness remains urgent. I thank all of the first responders for their courage across that fire, including members of brigades in my own community.

In fact, this season the fire risk has extended well beyond summer months, with the Mount Lofty Ranges fire season officially extended now until 14 May, a clear sign of the ongoing danger posed by dry fuels even in cooler months. Fire does not wait for summer anymore, it is ever present and we must always be vigilant.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the critical work of our national park firefighters. These are specialists who manage fuel loads, coordinate controlled burns, and protect South Australia's natural treasures under often difficult and dangerous conditions. Their work, largely unseen by the public, is vital to preventing and reducing the severity of larger fires, and we thank them sincerely.

The MFS, with its 1,200 personnel and 37 fire stations—20 in metropolitan Adelaide and 17 in our regional centres—are equally critical. Brigades like the St Marys and Glenside MFS, who are often called into action in our Mitcham community, serve with exceptional commitment, working around the clock and protecting lives and property.

The CFS continues to be the beating heart of regional and rural firefighting in this state, including in the Hills areas of the community that I serve. With over 13,500 volunteers, including cadets and operational support members across the state, and a fleet of over 800 trucks, they have responded to 5,155 incidents this fire danger season. They contribute an astounding one million volunteer hours annually; that is a million hours of selfless service to our communities, large and small.

This year strike teams from my community were deployed to combat fires in Wilmington, Langhorne Creek, Happy Valley, the South-East, and many more. Their response was professional, rapid and deeply courageous. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the almost 200 emergency services volunteers who put their lives, work and families on hold to assist interstate during national disasters. This is Australia at its best, states supporting one another, communities uniting through adversity.

In our own backyard the Sturt and Mount Lofty CFS groups are a shining example of local strength and unity. The Belair, Blackwood, Eden Hills, Coromandel Valley and Cherry Gardens brigades, which all belong to the Sturt group, along with our Mount Lofty crews, including my own brigade of Upper Sturt, and also the Ironbank and sometimes Stirling crews, all come to assist our community when in need. They, as well as our air ops crews and those who work the radios and logistics in our support and operations roles, as well as paid staff in HQ, are all integral to our Hills community's safety.

It should be noted, though, that these volunteers are not abstract heroes. They are our friends, our neighbours, and they are our family members. They are everyday people doing extraordinary things, and their presence is deeply felt and deeply valued.

I was very happy and relieved to join our federal member just recently—last week, in fact—as she revealed the two new QRVs, the quick response vehicles, that are heading up to the Sturt group in the not too distant future. QRVs are incredibly important, a piece of equipment that allows our brigades to be able to get down really narrow driveways, but also, if a truck driver has not arrived at the station yet for a call-out, then they are able to leave the station and get onto a fire very quickly. I am very happy that these will be coming our way, and I know how grateful our brigades are to be receiving these. I am sure they will put them to good use, and I thank Louise for her advocacy for these.

It should be remembered, though, that our firefighters do more than just hold a hose. They are often first on the scene at terrible car accidents, having to support drivers and passengers, working to extract them and sending them on their way to paramedics, never knowing the outcome. This can and does weigh heavily on our firefighters, no matter their ability to deal with it, and it stays with them.

Firefighters are also called on to assist other emergency services, be it the SES with trees that have fallen, rescues when people get into trouble, and also in support of our paramedics, often again being first on scene and having to administer life-saving treatment such as CPR. They share in the pain of property loss with those who face having lost everything they own and comfort families who arrive on the scenes of accidents.

They get called out for all sorts of things, even strange things, even recently in our own community assisting a young student who got his finger stuck in a drink can at school. Our Coromandel brigade, who also went to that one and saved the child's finger, assisted a resident with a possum that was stuck in their roof space. Our Belair brigade often has to head down to our trails and pull out our mountain bike kids. They come to grief—whether they fall over or whether their bike has a stack—and the fire brigades have to come in, extract them and send them on their way, and I thank them for being there to support our kids. Such is their sense of community that they attend these kinds of events with professionalism and commitment, and I thank all our brigades and their members.

While we celebrate the bravery and commitment of our firefighters we must also remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, those who never make it home from the fireground, those whose families miss them every day. The tragic death of Louise Hincks, a cherished member of our emergency services and a good friend to many in my community, still weighs heavily on our hearts. We honour her memory and the memory of all fallen firefighters on International Firefighters' Day and every day we get on a truck. Their courage lives on in every siren, every act of service, and in the example they set for us all. Behind every firefighter is a family though, a support system that stands strong through nights of worry and days of sacrifice. These are quiet heroes: the partners who wait by the phone and the children who wave goodbye with pride and a touch of fear. On International Firefighters' Day we recognise you too.

As a parent of a firefighter, one who holds no fear, I understand what our families go through when their loved ones answer the call, and the instant worry that sets in. I understand you and I thank all of our families who worry waiting for their treasured firefighter to come home. They rely on your support.

To those children of firefighters, many of whom grow up watching their mums and dads rushing out the door to protect others, you are part of this story. You carry the legacy of Florian. For those who go on to become CFS cadets, training hard and preparing for a future of service, we salute your early commitment. You are the future of firefighting in this state.

I would like to pay a special mention to the cadets who stood out in the cold holding ground at our Blackwood War Memorial and, more broadly, at youth vigils across the state on ANZAC Eve. Your commitment to service has started young and I hope continues, and also that you are good role models for your friends and siblings. I look forward to being out on a fireground with you, side by side, protecting our community into the future, as I am sure all of our volunteers across the state do.

As we look ahead following what has been an incredibly dry summer, we know the risks are still real. The threat of bushfire is growing in intensity and duration, but so too is our resolve. Our firefighters continue to train, our agencies continue to plan and our government remains committed

to ensuring that every firefighter, urban and rural, full-time and volunteer, has the tools, training and support that they need to keep us safe.

So today, in honour of International Firefighters' Day, let us honour those who serve, those we have lost and those still preparing to answer the call, and let us all commit to standing shoulder to shoulder with the men and women who protect us so bravely.

This Saturday, at election booths across the state in regional areas and areas where CFS protect life and property, you will find trucks and volunteers because election day is collection day. I encourage everyone to take along what they can, what they can afford to give, and support our fireys. Finally, to all our firefighters, we see you, we honour you and we thank you. May the fourth be with you.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (12:37): I will make a few comments in support of this motion by the member for Waite. I will make only a few comments because I will also acknowledge the contributions made by the other members in the member for Chaffey's earlier motion. This Sunday is International Firefighters' Day, which is also known amongst Catholic people as St Florian's Day. St Florian was the patron saint of firefighters and all emergency service workers—and by workers I mean both paid and volunteers.

In speaking to this motion, I would like to acknowledge not only the firefighters but also all those other services that support our firefighters, for example, our SES, our ambulance, our police, people often involved in animal welfare during a fire and other volunteers and people who actually make a contribution when fire strikes our land.

I would also like to acknowledge that when we have a major event, there are a number of other volunteers who actually come and support our firefighters. There are the CWA ladies who make food, the local Lions clubs, the Rotary clubs and all those service clubs who come out and prepare and support the firefighters to enable them to take on the task of fighting the fires.

One issue I would like to touch on, particularly in our regional areas at the moment, is the impact of the drought not only on our farmers but on all our community organisations, and that would also be true of our CFS volunteers. The distress and pressures caused by the drought would also be reflected in the volunteers who, despite those stresses, are still out there protecting our communities. I would like to pay particular gratitude to those firefighters in our regional areas who are not only battling everyday pressures of life but are there working hard to protect our community as a whole.

I think it is really important to note that as a government we are, through the South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission, also providing additional support for mental health and wellbeing to support our emergency services volunteers and staff and their families. I think it is really important, because while the volunteers are doing it tough in our regional areas we need to make sure that we are providing as much support as we can to them.

We are very fortunate to have a strong force of volunteers throughout our state. The CFS has around thirteen and a half thousand volunteers, including cadets and operational support members, and a fleet of over 800 appliances across the state. When you look at the average annual volunteer hours, it is quite staggering. It is estimated that on average there are over a million volunteer hours provided by CFS volunteers each year. The MFS also makes an important contribution in terms of our safety, including in regional areas. Of the 37 stations operated by MFS, 17 are located in our larger regional centres and are covered across the state by 1,200 personnel, both full-time and retained—those regional part-time firefighters in some of our smaller communities.

Even though St Florian's Day is a day of celebration and it is important to celebrate the dedication of our firefighters to their communities, it is also a day of commemoration in that we commemorate the sacrifice that some have made to their communities as well. Once again, I would like to put on record my thanks to the state's firefighters and emergency services as a whole for dedicating their time to keeping our community safe.

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (12:41): I rise again to support this motion recognising International Firefighters' Day on 4 May. I thank the member for Waite and previously the member for Chaffey for bringing these motions to the house, which give us the time to pause, reflect and honour the courage, commitment and sacrifice of our firefighters across South Australia.

We do owe an immense debt of gratitude to these men and women: those serving in the MFS, and especially our CFS volunteers, who day after day and often night after night place themselves in harm's way to protect lives, homes, businesses and the environment. They do not seek recognition; they do it because they care deeply for their neighbours and communities. As this motion rightly acknowledges, some have paid the ultimate price in the service of others. We remember them and we honour them.

But while we stand here today to express our thanks, we also have a responsibility to listen to our firefighters. In my electorate alone, there are over 10 Country Fire Service brigades, all operated entirely by volunteers. These are local residents who give up their time and often take leave from their jobs and their families to answer the call when emergencies strike. This was powerfully illustrated last year during the Grampians National Park bushfire, which is just across our border, when more than 250 CFS volunteers gave up Christmas Day with their families to go and fight those fires in Victoria.

Yet, despite their extraordinary commitment, many of our local brigades are being asked to do their work with ageing and inadequate equipment or facilities. They are being stretched further under increasing pressure without the modern resources they need. One local station is still operating with an appliance that is more than 20 years old.

Just last month, during severe lightning storms, the station attended 25 per cent of their average annual callouts in just five days, while members continued working their regular jobs and balancing the two. It is a remarkable effort by any measure. Yet the promised additional appliance—a smaller four-wheel-drive 14 unit, vital for reaching rugged terrain—has now been put on hold. Another brigade that was also promised one of these vehicles has faced the same delay and has been informed that there is no money for capital works or vehicles. This is not about a luxury; this is about basic, essential infrastructure. It is about making good so people can do their job safely and effectively.

The solution is simple: we must provide our volunteers with modern equipment and fit-for-purpose facilities. The commitment is already there. The skills and dedication are there. What is missing is the support from us. We must also consider the broader health risk firefighters face, particularly exposure to hazardous contaminants, as mentioned earlier. These risks are magnified when crews are forced to work with outdated appliances and in stations that do not meet modern standards for decontamination or equipment storage.

We often say thank you, we often speak proudly of the Aussie spirit of our volunteers, but words without actions are hollow. If we truly value our firefighters, we must back up our gratitude with real support, in funding, in equipment and in long-term planning. Let International Firefighters' Day be more than just a day of recognition. Let it serve as a reminder of our ongoing responsibility to act, to invest and to ensure our firefighters have the tools they need to continue protecting us all.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (12:45): I rise to support International Firefighters' Day. It is a very important motion that the member for Waite has brought before us. On 4 May, many of us will hear the sirens at noon. It is a very small recognition to honour those who have lost their life protecting others.

What I must say is that I have made quite a contribution in the previous motion, but there is always one station I miss when naming many stations in the electorate, and I think I have done that. I just want to put on the record my thanks and gratitude to the volunteers at the CFS stations in Chaffey, and there are many: Renmark, Paringa, Berri, Barmera, Loxton, Waikerie, Swan Reach, Morgan, Monash, Blanchetown, Glossop, Taylorville and Cadell. I seriously apologise if I have missed anyone but do not think I have at this point in time.

I also want to thank the volunteer firefighters, but the unsung heroes in many instances are the landowners—those farmers and community members who go out there at their own will with their makeshift farm firefighting units and do whatever they can do, whether they are using communication in their own vehicles or whether they are helping. A lot of community people are always supplying food, drinks, sustenance for those people fighting fires, so they cannot go unnoticed.

I also want to mention the aerial firefighting teams. It is an incredibly dangerous circumstance flying a rotary-wing aircraft into fires. It comes with great uncertainty. We know that fires present their own weather patterns, their own wind. You just have to further understand the uncertainty of flying an aircraft into a plume of smoke, into gusts of wind that are unknown. Over a period of time around the world we have seen many aircraft whose pilots have succumbed when putting their life on the line fighting a firestorm, so I want to make sure that they are recognised.

Also, I want to thank the interstate teams that come from far and wide. Some come from overseas, some come from interstate, but they all come to help keep our community safe, to reduce the risk the fire presents into the lands it is burning, and so I really do want to express my gratitude.

The member for Finniss touched on some family history with some fires. I want to put on the record that the state is currently a tinderbox. We know that fire needs fuel. In many instances when the country is as dry as it is, we see vegetation burn, but we also see the soils burn. Some soils with high content of fibre always present a risk of fire.

For the majority of my life, I have lived on farms. I have witnessed fires. I have fought fires. I have supported firefighting personnel. As a young fellow, we were shearing in the middle of summer down in the South-East. We were going out to bring in sheep and we had a lame sheep, so I got out of the vehicle to put that sheep in the back of the vehicle, and then noticed a fire underneath the vehicle. That was a tell-tale of vehicles in dry situations. That was a fire that continued to burn. We lost a lot of country, about 1,000 hectares in total, and that is a lot of a farm. It really did give me a wake-up call as a young fellow.

There was another incident on my family farm down in the South-East, just outside of Keith at Mount Charles. We had a large feedlot down there and my father had a large hay shed of about 10,000 small bales, as I remember. Next to that hay shed was a furnace or an incinerator—a 44-gallon drum, if you like—which was where the strings went from the hay when loading up the equipment to make feed. All of a sudden, the hay shed caught on fire. Just about every local in the district came to help fight that fire because it was a big fire. It was a big shed with a lot of hay. My father came back with a ute-load full of beer and a lot of meat to feed the troops and thank them for their efforts, but in the same footsteps came the fire sergeant with a fine. He gave him the fine and said, 'Don't light fires next to a hay shed.' That was something that was a little bit lighter; there was no injury and no life lost.

I will touch on the Kangaroo Island summer fires. That was devastating, as it was for all of the other regional areas to have those summer fires. For me to go over to Kangaroo Island and witness the devastation and witness the trauma that fire presented to the Kangaroo Island community was profound. My partner's family have a farm on the island. A lot of the surrounds, the pine and blue gum forests, were all burnt and a lot of the paddocks were all blackened, but both houses and some shedding were saved.

I went over there to visit some family friends and to better understand. I knew that they were not in a good way. I went over there and took it upon myself to call in to the local pub and fill up the back of the car with beer, and I went out there and visited a few people just to see how they were. Before I knew it, I could see that the mental strain was so immense from what they had experienced. They had been traumatised. What they needed most was a little bit of help to distract from what they knew was inevitably the next task at hand, so I spent the next few days out in the paddocks on a front-end loader with a rifle shooting sheep.

It is something that still really does clog up the works when I think about it today, but it was something that I felt I could do to contribute and help those landowners just to take a little bit of pressure off them because they had lost almost everything. They had lost their homes. They had lost their vehicles. They had lost the majority of their livestock. They had lost just about anything that was worthy left on the farm. That was a contribution that a volunteer like myself could make in that particular period.

I visited a number of family farm owners and it really did scar me for life, as it would have for the people who had seriously experienced that fire. Seeing the livestock that could barely breathe—their airways were burnt, their feet were burnt—they had to be put out of their misery and that was just something that we had to do.

Their mental health is also something that needs to be recognised in firefighters. People who are experiencing that trauma, doing what they know they need to do in protecting and mitigating the fire and the impact, but there are mental health pressures on our firefighters, as well as the people who have been traumatised by the effect of that fire. I commend the motion. As the shadow minister for emergency services, on behalf of the Liberal Party of South Australia, I say to all our volunteers, all our frontline firefighters: thank you, thank you, thank you.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:55): I rise to support the motion. Much has been addressed in support of the shadow minister's motion previously. By reference to paragraph (c) of this motion, on 24 May, just a few weeks hence, Bradbury brigade will celebrate its 70th anniversary, and I look forward very much to joining with the brigade on that very special day. I would single out the dedicated service and leadership of Lisa Knight, serving the Bradbury CFS brigade. It will be an occasion to celebrate all those who have been at the centre of Bradbury CFS. Lois Allen I am sure will be there among so many who have dedicated decades of service, but I am especially thoughtful of Bradbury CFS brigade celebrating 70 years—they are amongst so many in the Hills who continue to provide dedicated service, including on that terrible day in January 2021, making the difference between a community being saved from disaster and a disaster devastating a community.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (12:56): As a member of the CFS family and a representative of a community that knows the risks of bushfire very well, it was really important for me to give my thanks by moving this motion today. I thank everyone who spoke in support of the motion and those who have given their contributions to the previous motion.

Member for Heysen, I will join you at the Bradbury Country Fire Service celebrations, and I look forward to celebrating with them and Upper Sturt, which also will be celebrating next year a significant number as well. It goes to show that some of our firefighters in these brigades have been there almost since the start of the brigades, giving so many decades of service. They still continue to give, even when they are unable to get on a truck anymore. Not only do we thank all our frontline firefighters who continue to serve, but it is those support crews and those who still continue to come along to training and support the crews—thank you.

Thank you to all our firefighters who have been honoured here today. It is great that our parliament has been able to come together and show our appreciation for our firefighters. They drop whatever they are doing and head towards the danger, they head towards fire, they head towards sometimes very confronting scenes, and we thank them. We thank their families and communities—they miss your events to go along to fires, and we know how much sometimes that can cause a problem, so thank you to you as well. So thank you everybody, thank you to our firefighters, thank you for all you do and thank you for being you.

Motion carried.

SENOR SANTO NINO DE CEBU

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (12:58): By leave, I move my motion in an amended form:

That this house—

- (a) acknowledges the history of the origin of the Senor Santo Nino de Cebu image;
- (b) acknowledges the significant beliefs that the people of the Filipino Catholic faith have in the religious image of the statue of Santo Nino;
- (c) acknowledges the challenges and sacrifices the people of the Philippines made during World War II;
- (d) appreciates the Festival of the Senor Santo Nino and the great celebrations and the traditional foods that are enjoyed on this day of celebration; and
- (e) gives thanks to the Filipino population of Port Pirie and surrounds for this year's festival which was held on 25 January.

Today I am proud to discuss the region of the Santo Nino, the image of the Santo Nino, which arrived in Cebu in 1521. I will also talk about the religious belief of the people of the Philippines and their struggles over many years, particularly in the Second World War. The Senor Santo Nino de Cebu is

a Catholic title for the child Jesus, associated with a religious image of the Christ child. It is the oldest Christian artefact in the Philippines, originally a gift from Ferdinand Magellan in 1521. The Santo Nino de Cebu was originally produced by Flemish artisans, according to legend, based on a version of Teresa of Avila of the 16th century Discalced Carmelite mystic.

The image is replicated in various parts of the country with different titles, and the Christ child has become one of the most beloved and recognisable Filipino cultural items. The annual dancing feast of the Sinulog is held on the third Sunday of January every year in his honour. Today, the original image is permanently encased behind bulletproof glass inside the chapel within the Basilica del Santo Nino.

Debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to welcome to parliament today students from Seymour College, who are the guests of the member for Bragg. Welcome to parliament. I hope you enjoy your afternoon here.

Question Time

BENCHMARKING ADELAIDE REPORT

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:10): My question is to the Premier. Is Adelaide less liveable under Labor? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The Benchmarking Adelaide 2025 report found that Adelaide had moved down four spots for liveability, affordability and wellbeing, with the third highest share of income spent on rent. Residential vacancies in Adelaide are below 1 per cent, and Adelaide is now amongst the bottom 8 per cent for home ownership affordability in the English speaking world.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:10): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. It goes to housing policy, which is a priority of this government, which stands in stark contrast to governments that have gone before it, particularly the last one. I am not too sure the Leader of the Opposition fully appreciates the way to address the housing crisis is to increase supply. To that end, what this government has undertaken is the most comprehensive housing policy agenda that we have seen in the state for some time. The way—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Planning is on his final warning.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Minister for Planning has been, in conjunction with other key portfolios within the government, focusing on a comprehensive policy agenda to pull every lever that is at this government's disposal, in fact the state government's disposal writ large, to actually address the housing supply. So let's look at some of the measures that have already been enacted that are making a material difference. We have got one of the biggest releases of land that has ever occurred in the state's history. The state government is using this balance sheet through Renewal SA to procure and develop strategic infill in locations such as Keswick and Prospect Corner. We see it occurring, of course, at Thebarton at Southwark as one example.

We are investing in infrastructure, and none more important than water infrastructure. The former government allocated a whole \$150 million to water infrastructure expenditure. We are spending \$1.5 billion in the regulatory period on water infrastructure and pipes. Pipes are being laid in the ground of a size that haven't been laid in the ground for many, many decades in South Australia. The Leader of the Opposition, I am more than happy to afford him with a brief by SA Water on just how quickly that is being rolled out. You can go and visit some of those sites as we speak.

More than that, we have also undertaken important reforms for the rental sector, as the Leader of the Opposition referred to, that the Minister for Consumer Affairs brought through this parliament, which I think ultimately enjoyed bipartisan support, although there was a campaign from your predecessor against it in a way that raises genuine conflict of interest questions. But we have delivered reforms to improve renters' rights in South Australia in a complex market because we see that being important. Then, of course, on top of all of that, there are the efforts and investments that we are making in public housing. We are a government that stands alone in this regard. For 15 of the last 16 years in South Australia, we have seen governments reduce public housing stock. We have stopped the sell-off. We have stopped that sell-off—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: But under my government, we are—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order. The member for Hammond, the member for Chaffey, you are on your final warnings.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The outgoing member for Morialta had his turn. He sat around the cabinet table. He decided to sell off housing stock, and in this government we have stopped selling off public housing stock and we are increasing public housing stock because we believe in the role that it plays within the community. On top of all of that, of course, there is the tax reform that we have made by abolishing stamp duty for new builds of first-home buyers in the state of South Australia. That is a serious policy. You observe the problem; we do something about it.

HOUSING SUPPLY

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): My question is to the Premier. Will South Australia meet its housing targets this quarter and, if not, why not? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The Urban Development Institute of Australia, otherwise known as the UDIA, has reported that South Australia's housing supply will fall short of the National Housing Accord target by 34 per cent.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:15): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. He is right to refer to the UDIA as being a contributor to thoughtful policy in housing reform in our state, and I thank Liam Golding and the UDIA for the representations they made, amongst others: the Property Council of Australia, the Housing Industry Association of Australia and, of course, Master Builders Australia.

In South Australia, each of those organisations, we believe, are well led. As a government, we have sat down and worked with each and every one of them to calibrate our policy agenda to address their concerns where we can, and they have offered pragmatic solutions. Of course we haven't agreed 100 per cent of the time—the size of garages might be an example of that—but by and large they have helped formulate the agenda that we have rolled out.

When you look at these organisations, which are national organisations, what are they saying about the South Australian policy agenda on the housing crisis? The Business Council of Australia says if you are going to build anywhere, you are going to do it in South Australia, number one in the country. The Housing Industry Association gives every jurisdiction a score out of 10. What did South Australia get? We got nine out of 10, the best in the country.

When you add that up, what does that mean? What does that mean for young South Australians trying to buy a home? Again, if you look at the State of the States report, which the Leader of the Opposition referred to yesterday, it rates South Australia as one of the best performing jurisdictions in the country in terms of new dwelling starts—new dwelling starts.

Whether it be tax reform, whether it be land reform around where it is released, whether it be infrastructure investments, whether it be public housing reform and investments around that, you

name it, this is a government that is working with industry to develop an agenda to roll activity out in the housing sector, and we are outperforming the rest of the country.

Not for a moment do we rest on our laurels. We believe that this is mission critical, because it is not just important in terms of a growing economy; it is actually important to a social pact that has existed from one generation to the next in this country to actually make sure that young people have the opportunity of home ownership, which means this government is not going to be caught sitting on its hands.

This government is not going to be caught short on not doing code amendments, on not doing water infrastructure, not doing serious planning reform, not cutting public housing stock. Now, if I think about a government that might be guilty of all those sins, we don't have to look too far back—we don't have to look too far back. We will take—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order: it's standing order 98a. The Premier has fallen into that same old familiar trap of debating, contrary to the standing orders. He needs to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: I disagree with you, deputy leader. The question was about the views of an industry group, and the Premier is giving an historic context which transposes both the present government and governments that have gone before this government. That's what the Premier is doing.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are witnessing a housing shortage, a housing supply crisis that hasn't developed overnight. It has developed over a sustained period of time. I acknowledge that former Labor governments could have done more, but do you acknowledge that you could have done more? You haven't shown any contrition, any contrition whatsoever, which is why you are incapable of developing a policy agenda of your own. We have acknowledged the mistakes of the past. That's why we are getting on and doing something about it, and we are mightily proud of it, because we will not, this government will not—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order. The member for Flinders, the member for Unley and the member for Morphett are on your final warnings.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The member for Bragg sits there with a smirk on his face. He opposes every single medium-density development in his electorate that he can come across. Every time someone wants to build a new development at Glenside, you are out there trying to arrange a protest—right?—you are out there worrying about your primary vote. Well, we are worried about building homes while you are worrying about politics.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Okay everyone, we will have silence on both sides. The Leader of the Opposition.

HOUSEHOLD WATER BILLS

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier rule out any further government increases to household water bills?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:19): Another question from the Leader of the Opposition that invites a bit of compare and contrast on housing water policy. So what did you do in government? What did the Leader of the Opposition do when he sat around the cabinet table? He cut water prices and ran around to South Australians telling them, 'You're going to vote for us because we're the people who cut water prices.' Well, look young South Australians in the eye and explain to them why they are experiencing a housing supply crisis—because you made a virtue, you thought it was clever politics, you thought it was clever policy—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Schubert and the member for Morialta are on your final warnings.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: You thought it was clever politics and policy to cut off water infrastructure policy, to be damned to any future young South Australian who wants to have a home, to be damned with housing supply in the future. 'We're going to make a virtue of telling everybody who already owns a home the benefits of cutting investment in water infrastructure in this state,' and you thought it was a vote-winning strategy. It turned out that didn't turn out to really work in your favour, but now you stand up and criticise this government that is honest—honest about the difficult decisions that we are making to invest in water infrastructure to unlock housing supply.

Now what has been the response to that policy? The Leader of the Opposition has made it clear that South Australians have a choice at the next election. They have a choice at the next election: we can go back to cutting off water infrastructure investment and driving down housing supply, but if South Australians care about the housing crisis, if South Australians want their kids not to be living at home until they are 40, then they only have one option at the next election and that is to vote Labor, because you are going to wind back water infrastructure investment and we are going to keep on delivering it.

We don't see this as a political virtue, we see this as a moral imperative because there is a lot at stake if this country doesn't turn on water infrastructure and, in turn, housing supply for young generations. We are not going to look our kids in the eye on this side of the aisle and say, 'We are going to cut water prices to impress baby boomers at the expense of young people being able to own a home.'

It is absolutely critical that we do not generate more intergenerational inequity economically through depriving young families and young people of an opportunity for home ownership or affordable rents if they are not in a position to harness the capital for home ownership. So housing supply is the answer and water infrastructure is absolutely essential to be able to deliver that. Without the water, you don't get the home, and you don't get the water unless you invest in the infrastructure. You want to cut it, we are going to invest in it—at least we are honest about how we are going to pay for it.

PUBLIC HOUSING, ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:23): My question is to the Minister for Housing. Does the government evict Housing Trust tenants for antisocial behaviour and, if so, what is the criteria for doing so? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr TELFER: On Sunday, the media reported that Mr Dennis Brown of Mile End had endured a range of antisocial behaviour allegedly at the hands of fellow public housing tenants, including faeces being left in his letterbox, an assault requiring 17 stitches, and the house he lives in being set on fire.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:23): I am going to take this question because I want to speak to Mr Brown's circumstances and the challenge around the unsociable behaviour, to put it mildly, that we see in public housing stock in this state. The first thing I would say is that this is an issue that the minister is well versed on; in fact, he gave a rather lengthy presentation at cabinet just this week on this very challenge.

This is a tough one, because we are investing in public housing because we believe it has a role to play but, with statistics that the minister will provide if there's a subsequent opportunity for him in this session of question time, what we have seen is public housing stock and the people who call it their home—the nature of that client makeup has changed dramatically over the course of the last few decades where now effectively people who are getting access to public housing are often having acute needs of their own: mental health issues being chief amongst them.

Where I live in Bowden Brompton, I live next door to Housing Trust. I am surrounded by a mix of private ownership and Housing Trust. Only recently I have borne witness to a property changing over through the death of someone who had lived in their Housing Trust home, as I understand it, going back to the eighties, and now they have been replaced by a young couple. I think it's fair to say that they fit that criteria of being at the most acute end, and it causes enormous disruption in the street. Good hardworking people who have just bought in the area are having their

lives turned upside down because they live next door to a really disruptive public Housing Trust tenant, and what do you do?

I think we have got to be alive to evicting people when it is appropriate because sometimes there is literally no option but to evict. But the truth is that we understand and appreciate that evicting people to homelessness isn't particularly a thoughtful strategy. Evicting people, either to homelessness or just moving the problem to somewhere else, isn't particularly useful to the next place that they move.

In my electorate, where we have got a high density of public housing outside of where I live, as many members, frankly, on this side of house know—and on yours too—where we see higher density of public housing this is becoming an increasingly challenging problem. This is why you've also got to have a program to actually invest in other critical services through the Department of Human Services, which the member for Hurtle Vale does, and of course critically around mental health as well, and the Minister for Health will speak in great detail about the investments we are making in this area.

But this is a wicked problem. Anytime you see an instance like the one that the constituent of the member for West Torrens had in Mile End suffering this type of infliction to the innocent, it is gut-wrenching, because no-one should have to experience that in their own neighbourhoods or their own homes, no matter where they live.

The minister, the department and Housing SA are turning their minds to reforms we can make in this area. For one, we do believe that eviction should be a tool that in some instances might more readily need to be applied, but it is also true that you can't just go around evicting everybody all the time, because evicting people to homelessness only makes the problem worse, and as a society we have an aspiration to be better than that. So it is a difficult policy area. It is a challenge we take seriously, and I am sure the minister will be glad to go into detail about some of the measures we are taking to address it.

DROUGHT HUB

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:27): My question is to the minister representing the Minister for Primary Industries. Can the minister advise my constituents how many drought hubs are working in the drought-impacted regions, how many councils are involved and will they continue to be maintained in their current form and current locations?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:28): I thank the member for Stuart for his question. It is a really important one, given the context of the current drought and not only the substantial package of support that the Malinauskas government has committed to support drought-affected communities across our state but also given some of the supports that have been triggered from the commonwealth government.

I am advised that the South Australian Drought Hub is one of eight established across the nation through the Australian government's Future Drought Fund. Led by the University of Adelaide, in partnership with the state government's Department of Primary Industries and Regions, the Drought Hub comprises the hub headquarters at Roseworthy and five regional nodes. They are at Minnipa on Eyre Peninsula, Port Augusta, Orroroo, Loxton and Struan in the South-East.

The locations of these nodes ensures that we have pretty close to statewide coverage of pastoral low, medium and high-rainfall agricultural production zones. The Drought Hub focuses on the adoption of a number of tools to assist farmers become more drought and climate resilient, as well as to deal with a lot of the pressures that they are currently under given the historically low levels of rainfall that our state has been experiencing.

As part of the \$73 million that the Malinauskas government has committed for supporting drought-affected communities—and farmers, in particular—\$17.4 million of that is committed for Future Drought Fund programs. PIRSA will continue to work with those partners that I mentioned before, the commonwealth government and the University of Adelaide. As to the people working in the Drought Hub, I have not been made aware of any forecasted changes to staffing levels or locations but, should that be something that is considered, not only will we update the house but we

will obviously let the member for Stuart as well as other members of parliament who represent our regions across South Australia know, so that they understand any changes and what the reasons are for those changes.

To reassure the house, the advice I have received is that they try to ensure that these hubs and the nodes are located in those communities that are feeling the sharpest effects of the drought conditions. Should that change, hopefully it changes as a result of the different needs of communities across South Australia. Given how much funding the state government has provided to it and the fact that it's co-funded with the commonwealth, those changes will not be informed by any sort of reduction of resources: it will be an allocation in order to better meet community need.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (14:31): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier provide an update to the house on the state government's support to drought-affected communities?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:31): I thank the member for Light for his question; it follows the question from the member for Stuart to the Treasurer.

Indeed, since parliament last met in the preceding sitting week, the state government on 8 April did announce a comprehensive drought assistance package that comes on the back of the package that was also announced in November last year and I think it is important to update the house on that package and it being rolled out. I thank the member for Light for his question. The member for Light has been a really powerful advocate for the interests of people from our regional communities for some time, having represented significant proportions of them, particularly in parts of the Mid North of the state, and I thank him for his advocacy.

When we developed this second package, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Treasurer and I were keen to make sure that we learned from the things that were working well from the first package and maybe dial back some of the things that weren't as productive. We were very grateful for the input that we received from the primary production sector, from a range of different organisations, and their feedback definitely informed how the package has been structured. They deserve a lot of credit for the way that they have gone about advocating for their communities and their constituencies' interests, along with members of the opposition who have also raised various ideas at points in time as well.

The government certainly has been deliberate in wanting to invest in on-farm drought infrastructure, with the further \$13 million investment in that regard, because that is not just a handout, it is a hand up, which is language that we consistently heard from primary producers themselves. They are not just looking for cash; what they are looking for is the capacity to be able to deal with drought resilience, because this won't be the last one that occurs, of course.

There was also \$4 million to assist charities in freight costs and, to that end, I am very pleased to report that a very substantial volume of hay is being delivered already throughout the state, which is very virtuous indeed. On top of that we have also provided financial relief by providing rebates for the ESL and also commercial vehicle registration fees for primary producers and \$2.5 million for an immediate and comprehensive strategy to boost mental health resilience in drought-affected areas.

We are very deliberately providing direct financial support to rural financial counselling and rural small business organisations with \$3.5 million to them. One of the challenges of the drought is the broader movement of other fauna into agricultural areas. There are a lot of kangaroos moving south as a result of the drought. That necessitates the culling of pests and managing kangaroo populations and \$3.1 million has been allocated to that specifically, which is a big investment in that exercise. Also, \$4.5 million has been allocated to support and produce the implementation of EID for sheep and farm goats. This is a national strategy that is being rolled out for very good reason for biosecurity purposes.

We contemplated turning that off altogether, but the far better strategy, of course, is to acknowledge the biosecurity risks that we have as a country that are coming our way and instead to just provide financial support for rolling out EID. Of course, on top of that, there were other provisions that have been made to a range of communities throughout the state.

The package is comprehensive. We would encourage farming communities to get access to it and we have also expedited the payments that have been rolled out to the community as well.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:35): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Is the government committed to delivering a proton therapy cancer treatment centre in South Australia?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:35): I thank the member for Schubert for her question. It's an important one because it's not just the South Australian community, it's the national community that has been left in the lurch by the failure of the supplier of the proton therapy unit, ProTom International, not being able to deliver against their contractual obligations in the contract that they entered into with SAHMRI.

As I previously informed the house, I became increasingly concerned during the course of 2023 that we were getting repeated requests, or SAHMRI was getting repeated requests, and then, of course, referring that to Treasury to release funds in advance of the contractual milestones. We were concerned that this was becoming a level of behaviour which was indicating a lack of capacity for ProTom to deliver.

With that in mind, as I have previously advised the house, a delegation from SAHMRI, from SA Health and also Treasury travelled to the United States, where the company is based, to try to see firsthand and get some sense as to how far progressed they were and whether we could have any confidence as a state that they could deliver. Unfortunately, the advice that came back from those officials was that we should not be making further payments and we should expect ProTom International to indicate to us very clearly how they were going to get the project back on track and deliver.

Since that time, I am advised, we have had key technical personnel leave that company, further diminishing their capability to deliver on the contract, and as a result SAHMRI has now cancelled the contract and is in the process of winding up those contractual arrangements between itself and ProTom International.

What we have been doing in the meantime is providing support from the state government to help SAHMRI understand whether another more credible international supplier for proton therapy equipment could be procured to fit their equipment, their model of proton therapy unit, into the space that has been constructed in the basement or what has been referred to as the bunker of the Australian Bragg Centre building.

That building has reached practical completion. There are some tenants who have moved into that building as a result of some of the financial commitments entered into by the previous Liberal government to support the project. There are some five floors, I think, of now Department for Health and Wellbeing staff who have moved in and we are continuing to progress the investigations as to whether another supplier's unit can fit into that bunker, to what extent there would need to be building modifications, whether that is practical or reasonable, and also whether the building owner, Dexus, is prepared to support that endeavour. That has been the work, basically, that has been undertaken to date.

SAHMRI, the state government and certainly the clinicians who have led this project are all doing their absolute best to try to ensure that we have the best opportunity of securing this. It is my view, and I think the view of the government, that South Australia still enjoys a bit of a competitive advantage opposed to the other states and territories around the nation in that we already have a facility that can be made suitable for a proton therapy unit whereas all other states and territories do not. So I would like to think that, of anyone in the country, we have the best chance of securing it here, but we do have to resolve these technical issues about whether a unit can be installed in the bunker of the Australian Bragg Centre first.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:39): My question is to the Treasurer. What impact, if any, will the decision by the federal government to fund the Queensland Cancer Centre have on the future of a proton therapy centre in South Australia?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:39): It is a good question because from the outset, when SAHMRI first considered this project I think back in 2016, when the funding commitment was made by the former federal health minister Greg Hunt in 2017 and when all of the contracts and the other obligations were entered into I think in May 2018, the concept behind this was that this would be the sole facility in Australia that would treat not only Australian patients but patients potentially from other nations in the Southern Hemisphere.

Of course, that concept or that business case has changed substantially, which would mean that if the service is to be provided in the basement of the Australian Bragg Centre, it is likely to require a new—and I will try to get the terminology right—Medical Benefits Schedule item number for the treatment so that there is commonwealth funding for this particular health service, like there is for so many other thousands of health treatments available in our nation, as well as making sure that there is funding available for a new proton therapy unit.

As I said briefly in my earlier answer, the benefit we have is that we are the only state or territory that has a building already constructed, and these are buildings that are bespoke in nature. They need to be not just built for the equipment that is destined to be housed in them but built in a way so that the equipment can be safely held and the clinicians, patients and other support staff who are participating in the treatment services are safe as well. I think one of the specifications in the Australian Bragg Centre building is that the walls of the bunker, for example, are five metres thick, built of concrete, such is the—and here I am, really exhausting my technical expertise.

Mr Telfer: That's thick.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: That's right; it is better summarised by the member for Flinders than me—for safety reasons. Hence, I think the task of trying to locate another supplier's equipment in there, if there are modifications to the built form of the bunker, potentially creates a logistical and engineering challenge. We have engaged expert advisers to assist SAHMRI navigate that challenge.

The advice to date is it seems that it would be technically feasible, but there needs to be a further stage, more technical interrogation of the building specifications and plans that were designed by Commercial & General, now in the ownership of Dexus, to see if that is possible and what those costs are. I think it is not until we resolve that that it is reasonable for SAHMRI, on behalf of the state or anybody else, to put a plan to the commonwealth to say, 'This is the way forward.'

In the short time I have remaining, while we do understand that there are other states, like Queensland, that the member for Schubert rightly mentioned, and potentially New South Wales and perhaps even Victoria, there is the challenge of delivering these pieces of infrastructure, of procuring the equipment, getting them installed and commissioned, and then the cost of service delivery. My advice is we understand some of those other states are cooling in their ambitions, and obviously there has been a change of government in Queensland, which may also be leading them to reassess whether this is a priority for them. Nonetheless, we still think we are best placed as a state to prosecute this, and we will continue doing our best to make sure we make a success of it if we can.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:44): My question is again to the Treasurer. Has the Treasurer sought assistance from the federal government to find a solution to ensure proton therapy cancer treatment can be delivered in South Australia? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mrs HURN: It was reported in *The Advertiser* today that Ms Tuckerman was frustrated that calls by the Bragg proton centre consumer group, including to the federal health minister Mark Butler, had fallen on deaf ears, quoting, 'We've literally got crickets.'

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:44): I thank the member for Schubert for her question. In fact, Ms Tuckerman has corresponded with me directly and I have responded to her to try to indicate the efforts that are being pursued in order to continue this as a potentially successful initiative for South Australia.

I don't think it is reasonable at this point in time to say that the commonwealth hasn't delivered funding when it should have or that it was in a position to. As I have articulated in my previous answers, we still haven't comfortably resolved these technical and engineering challenges about getting the building fit for purpose to be able to accommodate another supplier's proton therapy equipment. We think that that is feasible but we have to do this detailed engineering work to prove that up. Then, of course, on the basis that that is possible—that is the expert engineering advice that we get—then we would need to go to market with, I guess, international proton therapy unit suppliers who we feel more comfortable can deliver against a future contractual obligation to deliver, commission and then maintain this unit in South Australia for the benefit of the community.

We have certainly been briefing federal health officials. The minister and I have met with federal Minister Butler, bearing in mind that this is federal money, granted—albeit in 2017—by the commonwealth health department. They have, of course, a right to know what has been happening with the money that they made available, via the South Australian government, for SAHMRI for the proton therapy initiative. We have been keeping them up to speed with what is required.

We have also tried to provide an understanding of what would be required in the event that it is feasible to get a proton therapy unit in the basement of this building, what is likely to be required in terms of time, indicative cost, as well as the need to create that MBS item number, and for them—this is not something that we can necessarily do at a state level—to identify the cost or fee for that item number, and be committed to paying it.

What we have done as a state, though, is to ask the commonwealth for their endorsement for us to use some of those unspent project funds to keep the project team together. That is not just the project team within SAHMRI, but there is a clinical team led by Adelaide's leading paediatric oncologists who have been working to assist the project and also managing the MTOP—I hope I get this right, the Medical Treatment Overseas Program—which coordinates the overseas cancer treatment for patients who are deemed by the clinicians to be suitable candidates for a proton therapy treatment.

The article that was in the paper today about Ms Tuckerman and her child's journey overseas, in having to go to the United States for this treatment, is exactly what MTOP provides. We have sought the approval of the commonwealth to continue using some of the unspent project balances to keep that program going. That means other children, who are suitable candidates for this proton therapy treatment, will still get access to the treatment albeit having to fly overseas for it.

MACKILLOP ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:48): My question is to the Minister for Education. Can the Minister give an update to the house on the recent visit to the MacKillop electorate? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: Earlier this year the Minister for Education visited the school communities of Millicent, Beachport, Kingston, Tintinara, Meningie and Raukkan.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills) (14:48): I did greatly enjoy my visit to the South-East. As the member said, I visited a number of our sites there. I started off at Kingston Area School to formally open the capital works redevelopment there. It was a project first announced by the member for Port Adelaide, I think back in 2017. While we were there we visited the Kingston childcare centre. Many people in this chamber will be aware that it is a pretty innovative announcement made in conjunction with the council and with the federal government around finding a childcare solution for the Kingston South-East region, given there is a very long waiting list there. It was good to meet with the local community who had championed that cause and will actually see that that will now be delivered.

I also visited Millicent High School, Tintinara Area School and Meningie Area School as well, and I did visit Beachport Primary School at the request of the school. They wanted to speak to me very frankly about some infrastructure challenges that they have, and I agreed to do that. We went on a tour of the school. I saw the infrastructure, and I think I was pretty frank and honest to the school and governing council leadership in my assessment of that infrastructure—that it wasn't up to scratch, and I acknowledged that it needs attention.

In the spirit of being frank with them and not misleading them, I said that they are not alone there and that the government is doing what it can to improve the stock of our public education sites but that there is a lot more work to do. I didn't make any commitments to Beachport Primary about what can be done, but I did make a commitment to go away and speak again to the education department around what capacity we might have to look at Beachport Primary School specifically, in acknowledgement of having seen it for myself and confirming that it is not as we would like it to be.

I would like to put on the record that—despite that it doesn't make any minister for education's job easier when you meet with schools like that and they show you infrastructure that needs a bit of TLC—it is good to have our governing councils and our school leadership advocating for their sites and requesting to have the minister come out and make a case for why they deserve some further investment. I will meet the commitment I made to the school and go away and look at that and come back to the school as quickly as I can.

CLELAND WILDLIFE PARK

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (14:51): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier update the house about Cleland Wildlife Park's recent development?

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (14:51): I am delighted to answer this question from the member for Waite, who is dedicated to supporting her community and also the environment, which Waite is more than blessed with. The Cleland Wildlife Park—I am not sure how many people are aware of the age of Cleland Wildlife Park. It was created in a very, very fine year, an exceptional year: 1967.

Mr Telfer: That's a long time ago.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE: It's a long time ago. Thank you for reminding me. It has long been a place where people will go for birthday parties, or maybe if they have people from overseas they might go and show them a bit of South Australian wildlife there. I would suggest that it repays another visit, if you haven't been for a while.

Cleland Wildlife Park is not only continuing to be a wonderful place to take people—it has a fabulous cafe, you can see kangaroos, you can see wallabies and you can see a number of reptiles, which are always fun—but it has just had a magnificent new koala loft opened up. \$2.6 million of South Australian government money has gone into creating this new koala loft. More than 20 koalas are in there. It is fantastic for them because it gives them room to be out more with the public or inside, more private and quiet. We all know that koalas like to sleep for many, many hours of the day, and sometimes they like to do that where it's a bit more peaceful.

It is also a place where people can come along and really understand koalas and what they mean for the environment. There is a room where you can have a koala experience, with a beautiful backdrop and a koala placed to do its very important eating, which is the other thing it spends most of its time doing: it's either eating or sleeping. You can go along and have your photographs taken with it, but, more importantly in some ways, you can talk to the keeper and understand more about the character of that particular animal.

What that koala loft enables Cleland to do is continue to contribute to our nature-based tourism—which is a remarkable part of our tourism; about \$2.1 billion was estimated last year to have been spent on nature-based tourism—and also enable people to know that they are part of helping to protect, preserve and bring back our natural environment. It helps to have young people understand the importance of native species like the koala and also the way in which habitat is so important, and protection and restoration is so important—and to know that the money that is spent

in going to see Cleland is going to be repaid to nature in protecting both the individual species you are seeing and also nature more generally.

One of the most magnificent exhibitions that we have had recently in South Australia is, of course, Chihuly, which just finished in the Botanic Gardens. Again, it pleases me so much to see that there is a place that people could go to enjoy an individual thing, in that case, art, magnificent art, and, in the case of Cleland, going along and seeing koalas up close, but at the same time getting into nature, appreciating our environment and therefore recognising how important it is that we continue to protect it and, importantly, that we continue to invest in restoring nature, in bringing nature back, because we are all so dependent on the health of our environment, particularly in the context of climate change.

I would emphasise to people, if you haven't been to Cleland for while, this is the time to go back and have a look. It is a wonderful visit. The koala loft, with the koalas and the keepers, is a brilliant experience, and I encourage you to share it with people who come from overseas, with your own family, or just go up by yourself and have a quiet coffee and a nature-based experience.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:55): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Has the minister met with Ms Billie Tuckerman and her daughter Evelyn? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mrs HURN: Ms Tuckerman's daughter received life-saving proton therapy in the US after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer at seven months old. Ms Tuckerman was quoted in *The Advertiser* today saying the following:

We didn't know at the time, because of the way Evelyn's cancer was, whether or not she would be coming home with me alive or in a box...

To uproot yourself for two months while not knowing what the outcome is going to be and being away from your support network, it's just horrible...

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurana—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:56): Certainly, I would be happy to if there was a request, and I will check if there had been a request. Obviously, the Treasurer has already explained that he has responsibility in relation to the proton matter, as was under the previous government, under the Hon. Rob Lucas as well, that he has corresponded with the family in terms of their concerns. Obviously, the government is working to try to develop a solution and working with the federal government to try to do so as well.

I understand that this family is part of our consumer network through SAHMRI and the ABCPTR as well. We are very keen to be in contact with as many consumers as we can, obviously understanding the difficult journey that they have gone through in terms of getting their daughter treatment in the United States. That is obviously why there has been a national ambition to have a service available in Australia, so that families do not have to go through that very difficult journey.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (14:57): My question is to the Treasurer. Will there be any new money allocated to the proton therapy cancer treatment centre in this year's state budget?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:57): Well, you wait and see, I guess. We hand down the budget on the 5 June and not in advance of that. I think I have tried to be as detailed as I possibly can be to the house in response to the questions from the member for Schubert about where the project is up to and what the work program currently is and what challenges and complexities need to be navigated in order to ensure that we still have the capacity to have a proton therapy unit here in South Australia.

I would like to think that that's a possibility, but there are some things which are beyond anyone's control. If the building modifications, for example, are required to the extent that it impedes with or is too impactful on or deleterious to the structural integrity of the bunker facility that has been

created, or it reduces the structural integrity of those very thick walls, which the member for Flinders helped me explain so well before, then that may make it unviable. That's not our indication to date, but we still have to resolve that first. Then, we would need to go through a process of reaching an agreement with the building owner for modifications to occur to their building and then going out to market, contracting with someone who is more capable of delivering than Proton International has been, getting it built, installed, commissioned and turned on with the funding support of the commonwealth.

So there is a pathway forward. We are not in the position of being confident enough to be able to progress with the procurement, let alone the installation, of a proton therapy unit, but I do think we are making some progress. As I said, I have met with those clinicians who are responsible not only for providing the clinical advice to the program but also for managing the MTOP program that the constituent the member for Schubert was referring to, Ms Tuckerman, has taken advantage of.

We don't have access to this important treatment in the country and we never have done since. The idea of this initiative was to, for the first time, introduce this service into Australia, but, for the benefit of our state, be the home of it. I still think that we have a better chance than other states and territories of being able to prosecute that opportunity here in South Australia, but we have to successfully navigate those challenges.

I have been in regular contact, as I said, with those clinicians to let them know how far progressed we are, what the work program is. We have extended their funding to keep their clinical efforts together and to keep the MTOP program going for, I think, another 18 months while we try to resolve this. Hopefully, at the end of that process we will have a positive resolution and we can move forward, but that is the work that is underway.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:01): My question is again to the Treasurer. Does the Treasurer have a secondary preferred supplier for the SAHMRI proton therapy cancer unit?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:01): It's a good question. I don't have a preferred supplier. Part of the advice that we have sought has been around who the credible suppliers of proton therapy units globally are. There are some that are really well known and established and have delivered many of these. For example, I am advised that Hitachi is one of those. I think they are probably the company that has delivered the most of them.

Their current technology solution, I am advised, is not practical or suitable to fit into the space that has been constructed at the Australian Bragg Centre, but there are other suppliers that have delivered multiple units of these, are long established, well-credentialed and have a demonstrated capacity to deliver these units, as well as commission and support them through life, that we are advised are potentially able to fit within this space.

Our advice is that there is more than one of those suppliers and I think that is important, because if and when we get to the point of proceeding with the initiative, having had the commonwealth approval and funding to do so, that means that we should be able to have some sort of competitive tendering process to give further confidence that not only are we getting the right technological outcome that can be delivered but we will be doing it on a value basis for Australian taxpayers.

PROTON THERAPY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:02): What other suppliers would be able to retrospectively fit their equipment into that existing bunker space that you spoke of?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:02): I don't have that detail in front of me. I would also need to get some advice, given that we would need to go through a competitive tender process, about whether we would want to be signalling that information from our perspective so openly, but I am happy to take that question on notice and see how much detail I can provide to the member.

RIVERLEA GRADE SEPARATION

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:03): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. How close is the developer of the Riverlea project to being compelled to construct a grade separation at the entrance to their suburb? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr ELLIS: A letter from a previous minister dated 5 March 2021 suggested an upgraded signalised intersection would be required when 3,400 allotments were developed and a grade separation would be required at 9,000 allotments. Both would be fully funded by the developer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:03): It is true: Liverpool have won 20 league titles. I said this to you yesterday. I am not sure why you are asking me again. They are now the most dominant team in England. In terms of Riverlea, it is important to note that the agreement signed by Mr Knoll—the letter I am assuming you are referring to is from Minister Knoll—does put a requirement on the developer and the state to make that intersection grade separated.

The question is whether or not we can accelerate that in any way, because I share your concerns. The freight industry shares your concerns. We have an excellent nonstop corridor other than for that Riverlea intersection. We are having to signalise that intersection in a way to give advance warning to trucks and motor vehicles that they actually need to stop. So the department is working very, very hard to try to do as much as we possibly can quickly to try to get that intersection removed, rather than have a grade separation or some other solution there in its place.

I don't have the exact details here at hand. I will get them for you. When I do have that answer, I will give you a personal briefing—and thank you for asking about Liverpool again; it was a great success on the weekend.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (15:05): My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the South Australian economy?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:05): I thank the member for Black for his question. I will do my best because we have some pleasing economic news and I know how much that frustrates and enrages the Leader of the Opposition. Good news is an anathema to the member for Hartley, the current Leader of the Opposition.

It is worth putting today's inflation data in some context because when this government was elected and when the federal government was elected inflation was already running rampant. It was already well above the target band of the Reserve Bank. In fact, at the beginning of May not only did we have inflation nationally running at more than 5 per cent per annum but we already had the Reserve Bank increasing interest rates in response to the inflationary pressures on Australians. So that was the record of the previous Coalition federal government: high inflation and increasing interest rates. That's what we started the last three-year period with.

What we have had today is a confirmation in the latest inflation data that our nation is winning the war against high inflation. Not only is it back within the Reserve Bank's target band of between 2 per cent and 3 per cent, it's back within that band both on the headline inflation figure and in the trimmed mean inflation figure—really good news for Australians. Remarkably, if you think in a period of three years we have had a federal government which not only has inflation under control but now has it under control to the extent that the Reserve Bank has already started cutting interest rates for the benefit of Australians, it shows—

Mr Teague interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: Well, that comes as some news to the member for Heysen, that interest rates are coming down and that some of the cost-of-living pressures are not quite as acute as what they have been thanks to the previous Coalition government. Maybe he lives in a different world from the other 99.5 per cent of the South Australian community; maybe, Mrs

Slocombe-like, he can give us another anecdote about his cat—we will wait and see what his next contribution is. For the rest of the country, having today's inflation data coming out showing that we are back within the target band of the Reserve Bank is really good news for Australians and continues to lead national economic commentators to forecast good news for the Reserve Bank's next meeting starting in May. Let's hope we see some further improvement.

Here in South Australia we had inflation, particularly in Adelaide, higher than some of the other capital cities for that period, led principally because of pressures in housing costs. And what have we seen today in the latest data? Well, we are seeing that South Australia has recorded the lowest annual inflation figure of all mainland state capitals at 2.2 per cent, I am advised, which is terrific, rising by just 0.5 per cent on the last quarter compared to the national rate of 0.9 per cent. That also means good news for South Australia, good news for the CPI figures for Adelaide, and I think shows just how good a job the federal government—supported by this government—has done over the last three years getting inflation under control.

GIANT PINE SCALE

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:09): My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. Will the government commit to funding replanting and environmental restoration of areas affected by giant pine scale outbreaks?

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (15:09): That is not an easy question for one minister to answer, given the different tenure of land that has been affected by giant pine scale. For members—I am sure people have been paying attention—this is a very nasty disease that runs through pine trees.

There have been outbreaks of this discovered through the north-east, and the north-eastern members of course are well aware, and much of that has been on land owned by SA Water, some on land that I think is owned by the minister for renewal but managed by the Department for Environment and Water, and some on land that's Crown land but given over to the care and control of the local council.

There are a number of different tenures of land and therefore different questions about how restoration of vegetation might take place, and replaced with what? So a question of whether it would be replaced by some sort of pine tree or a non-native species, but more of interest to myself and the environment department would be opportunities for replacement with native vegetation.

There is an active discussion going on at present with the council on how that reserve, given that it has been cleared, might have native vegetation put in and under what scheme, whether there are some grant fundings that are available. That is being actively looked at at present. I also note that, if anyone finds that they have giant pine scale, should they have pine trees on their own private property, which is not common but does happen in a scattered way, they ought to get straight on to PIRSA because there is an absolute desire to eliminate the pest where it is found, and the faster it is seen and the tree is taken down the better.

Grievance Debate

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (15:11): The ongoing drought conditions being faced across South Australia are having significant and long-term impacts on our regional communities around the state but especially in my region. Many have not had any rainfall of substance for six or even nine months, rainwater tanks are running out and stock feed levels have been exhausted. Many parts of my electorate have faced their second or third season with less than average rainfall.

Six weeks ago I spoke in parliament here about the dire situation being faced by livestock owners in particular who are really doing it tough and how our communities are crying out for attention. In the weeks since, things have not got any better. I have heard from so many farmers that they are having to either sell off their stock or some are having to put down their stock because otherwise they will be starving in their paddocks, and it is utterly heartbreaking.

If breeding stock is sold off, they cannot be readily replaced. It will mean a substantial and long-term issue. This is breeding stock that has seen generations of investment, time, money and effort put in to maximise the productivity of our flock across the state, which are now being sold off because they cannot be sustained in the current conditions. Last time I spoke in this place on this important subject, I spoke about how we cannot wait and we cannot delay.

I watched with interest the announcement from the government a couple of weeks ago and, sure, on face value it might seem okay, but what is the reality on the ground? Farmers are in desperate need of some hay to sustain their flock in the short term. Weeks ago, we had heard that there was hay interstate that had been paid for and donated but had not been trucked over because the government had been tardy in their considerations.

What I am hearing from providers now is that hay that has been sitting there waiting for the South Australian government to act has now been mobilised and sent up to Queensland to farmers who are affected by the Queensland floods. Farmers in South Australia seem to be left in the dust, literally. What I am hearing from providers now is that some of them are not even returning to South Australia again, and there will not be hay from the rest of them able to be delivered to my region for up to a month unless something dramatically changes—up to a month. We cannot wait that long. Farmers need that hay desperately, and they need it now.

I am sick of the spin. I am sick of the political games, the government speak, the show of it all, the big Peter party, the distraction, when the rest of us are living in the real world where farmers have done the best they can in maximising the resources they have, where they just need action. There are going to be serious long-term effects because of this sustained dry period on our regional businesses and communities, and that impact could have been lessened with a Premier and a government that actually knew what was going on.

I want to speak about the concerns of regional communities on the crime levels that we are seeing across South Australia, especially in regional South Australia. As a passionate regional member of parliament, I regularly speak to individuals, businesses and organisations from across our state and these concerns about increasing crime have been getting louder. We have heard about the challenges that the police in this state are facing at the moment; the shortage of officers, the challenges of recruiting and the shockingly worrying attrition rate that is police officers just leaving the force.

From my electorate every week I get numerous phone calls, messages, emails and stories from individuals and businesses in my electorate from towns like Port Lincoln, Ceduna and beyond about their concerns of what they see as a lack of awareness of the crime problem and violent and antisocial behaviour which they are facing. These are businesses that are facing daily thefts from their shops, individuals who are living in fear of their homes being broken into, businesses that are experiencing levels of constant vandalism, which is unacceptable. The number of broken windows that we are seeing keeps rising. I worry that they are starting to get desperate and might take things into their own hands, whether they are businesses or individuals.

I recently met with our regional superintendent Luke Richards, whose jurisdiction covers the Eyre Peninsula and far west, including Port Lincoln, Ceduna and Whyalla. As well as this, I am speaking to police right across my electorate and the state about their frustration with the lack of strategy—particularly around youth crime—where we are seeing repeat offenders being apprehended by police, let out on bail and the police feel uncertain about where to next. This needs to be a whole-of-government response, absolutely, but someone needs to take responsibility and whether it is the Premier, the Minister for Police, the Attorney-General, the Minister for Human Services or the Minister for Child Protection, I do not mind. My community do not want to hear blame-shifting or obfuscation; they just want to feel safe in their own homes, businesses and communities and I reckon that is fair enough.

NARUNGGGA POWER OUTAGE

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:16): Here we are six weeks on and my community is still awaiting answers when it comes to the power outage that they experienced on Friday 14 March. In the lead-up to that date they had a series of flickerings on and off and the power was unreliable and caused great distress to the community. But on that day, Friday 14 March, we had an outage that extended to

almost 20 hours long, causing enormous disruption for households and businesses in my region. Businesses lost stock. One business had a machine that was damaged and they were themselves unable to trade on that day because there was no way to turn the lights on and get the EFTPOS machine working. Similarly, there were residents of my community who had lost the ability to refrigerate their valuable medication, which put them literally in a life or death situation.

Somehow we have found ourselves falling between the cracks. There is no compensation that seems to be available for those businesses or households that have lost stock—through no fault of their own—and it is not something that I am going to let rest and let pass away with the passage of time. It is something that I am going to continue to pursue.

I have talked in this place previously about different examples of loss that has occurred in the community, but I would like to raise two more for the reasons which will become apparent later. Mr Tony Simpson of Port Clinton lost his garage door on that day. The garage door was halfway open when the power went out and when it re-turned on it fried the motor on the garage door and he was unable to then open and close it until he got it replaced. That comes at a significant expense to Mr Simpson. It is something that he will have to replace, likely being in the thousands of dollars to get the whole thing ordered, installed and replaced. That is no small expense for a retired person living in a coastal fishing town.

Similarly, Kerry Dunn, from Tarnasey Farm and Copper Coast Produce, lost a whole refrigerator room full of produce they were hoping to sell the businesses around their service area. That is a significant expense for a small business providing fresh fruit and vegetables to local pubs and different shops and restaurants and that sort of thing. They will have to bear the costs for that.

The reason I raise these two issues is because in question time on 18 March when I asked whether there was any compensation available for an incident like this, one of the recommendations that was made by the minister was to seek out insurance from their personal insurance provider. I can tell you that both of these entities, the household and the business, have sought insurance from their provider and have been rebuffed. In both instances they have been told that it is not something that their insurance will cover and that they need to go to SAPN or ElectraNet to find compensation for the loss that they have incurred. Well, they have tried that and they have been rebuffed there as well. So here we have my community falling through the cracks, not having compensation being made available to them from their insurance company, from their government or from the providers of their electricity. So who does provide compensation?

We know that the guaranteed service level payment is only \$100 a year for 20 hours or more outage. That is a really minuscule amount for a significant loss and would go nowhere near covering the amount that people have found themselves out of pocket. So that is not appropriate. Add to that that it is only made available when it is a supply issue, not a transmission issue. This issue on Friday, 14 March was attributed to transmission in ElectraNet and as such the guaranteed service payment, as small as it is, was not made available to people in my electorate.

Yesterday in question time we heard that there is a small claim scheme available, but that is limited to voltage variation. If you are a constituent in my electorate who has lost his garage door because of a power outage, you are not eligible to get it replaced, but if you are a constituent in a different electorate who has lost their garage door because of a voltage variation, you are eligible to get it replaced. I would ask this house in this parliament what the difference is for those people on the ground and why one is eligible and the other is not? It seems an extraordinary thing to me.

I will be writing to the minister and requesting that we consider expanding that small claims compensation scheme to include power outages, because the fact of the matter is if you are on the ground, if you are a small business or a household who has lost money on account of an electrical fault through no fault of your own, then you are just as entitled to compensation as someone who has had a voltage variation. I think that is only fair and I will be pushing this parliament to adopt that same thing.

I would like to reassure my constituents that although six weeks has passed this is an issue that I will continue to progress. Should the government not be willing to come on board, it is something I will investigate putting forward a private member's bill for and attempting to convince the parliament of its merits on my own. It is something that I think we need to revisit and it is a gap in our

scheme that I think we need to close so that we all have access to the same compensation schemes for the same problems, no matter how they arise.

COLTON ELECTORATE

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (15:21): I rise today to provide an update of recent events in the electorate of Colton, in particular to reflect on what was a very significant and emotional ANZAC Day service that was held at the Henley & Grange RSL on ANZAC Day.

I have obviously attended a number of services at the Henley & Grange RSL on Seaview Road both as the local member and prior to that, but I must say that I thought this was one of the best services that we have had. It was very well attended. A replacement sound system was one of the things that had been mentioned over the years because it was not easy to hear the proceedings and what was happening during the service. It is a very difficult location on the corner of Seaview Road and North Street and the crowd swells in different directions at times.

I wanted to highlight the performance by Ben Ford-Davies on acoustic guitar for the second year running, which I thought was one of the highlights of the service. His performance last year, and this year as well, was touching and very well received by the crowd. We also had Tim Ginever come down and provide the keynote during the proceedings this year, with his reflection on his good mate Bob Quinn and his history both through part of his football career and also his service through the armed forces. You could tell through the delivery and the way that Timmy G. recounted the stories just how heartfelt and real the connection was that he had with Bob Quinn's story. I just wanted to highlight the great work of Tim Ginever that day.

It was also made especially significant by the fact that we were commemorating the 110th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. The unique circumstance of having the service so close to the coast meant that for the first time we had representatives from the local surf life saving clubs rowing down and landing just at the end of North Street and then walking up with some of the veterans to the start of the service, which I thought was an excellent addition to the service this year.

Again, I just want to thank everybody involved, from the volunteers from the RSL and more broadly across our community as well. A number of small businesses are involved each and every year in donating a range of products that help facilitate the after-events: the barbecue bacon, eggs, sausages and all sorts that go on down there and coffee with some additional extras depending on what floats your boat on the morning. It is a particularly good event that really brings our community together. For the first time as well, we also had the Henley Sharks Football Club play the following day wearing an ANZAC round jersey. It was very special for them to be able to compete with that insignia this year.

I also want to highlight the return of the Cowdrey Cup. The Lockleys and Henley football clubs will be taking part on 3 May, this Saturday, at 2.15pm down at Lockleys Oval, the fourth edition of the cup after we ended up with both teams being promoted from div 3 to div 2. Last year, Henley got the better of Lockleys across the three games, two to one. The cup is just about to come back with the engraved scores from last year, so we are looking forward to another cracking game of football down at Lockleys Oval on Saturday.

I also want to quickly highlight the great work of the Charles Sturt Museum Trust, which each and every year commemorates the birthday of Captain Charles Sturt. This year was the 230th edition, which saw a group come together at the Grange. There is a museum off Jetty Street at Grange that houses some memorabilia of Sturt's adventures and his many escapades around our great state. He really had a significant impact.

The trust do that work to ensure that the legacy of Charles Sturt is retained. Some of our young schoolchildren get the opportunity to go through that museum to learn a little bit more and to understand the genesis of our state and many other things along the way of what life was like, given the fact that, as best as possible, the original house has been retained in that condition. There is much to do, much to see and a good game of footy on the weekend out in the west.

BORDERLINE SPEEDWAY

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:27): For 67 years, the Borderline Speedway has been an iconic centrepiece of our community, offering exhilarating motor racing against a stunning backdrop of gum trees and grass banks. It is not just a racetrack, it is a vital engine for social connection and economic vitality. Today, however, it needs our support. Borderline Speedway is urgently seeking assistance to fund critical safety upgrades, including improvements to the fencing, track and lighting infrastructure.

This is not a luxury: it is a necessity. The current infrastructure was constructed over 40 years ago, and new national regulations from Speedway Australia require upgraded height and strength standards for track and spectator safety fences. Without these improvements, Borderline risks losing its rank as one of Australia's top six speedway venues in the whole of Australia. Losing this status would have devastating consequences for local tourism, business and race enthusiasts.

The estimated cost of these essential upgrades is \$1.6 million, a modest investment compared with the immense value Borderline Speedway delivers to our economy, hosting premier events such as the Australian Sprintcar Championship, which it successfully did in 2018. It injected over \$3 million into the local economy across just three nights of racing. That is real money supporting local hotels, restaurants, retailers and tourism operators. Looking ahead, Borderline has been awarded the 2026 Australian Sprintcar Championship, a golden opportunity to once again showcase our region to a national audience that brings millions of dollars into local businesses, but we must provide a facility that has the necessary safety requirements going forward.

Economic modelling by the RDA Limestone Coast clearly demonstrates the broader benefits of this project. The construction phase alone is estimated to generate \$2.7 million in economic output, add nearly \$925,000 in value across local industries and create jobs in sectors like construction, retail and services. These are not just numbers on a page, these are real opportunities for local families, apprentices and small businesses.

Importantly, 100 per cent of new jobs generated during the construction phase will be filled by Limestone Coast residents. This project, which strengthens our community from within, ensures that every dollar spent circulates locally and lifts our region. This is not simply a plea for funding, it is a call to recognise and invest in what makes regional South Australia thrive—community-driven initiatives that deliver long-term returns.

Investing in the Borderline Speedway is investing in regional developments, economic resilience and community wellbeing. The club is currently run by a dedicated group of volunteers, some of whom you will see at the track five or six days a week in race season, doing all they can to save vital club funds. This dedication has seen the club invest several hundred thousand dollars on upgrades and infrastructure over the past few years, demonstrating their commitment to provide a safe, modern and up-to-date facility.

Borderline Speedway is a unique asset. Few other facilities can claim to offer such high quality spectator experiences, attract national and international competitors, and deliver significant economic return to the local economy. It promotes recreation, sports, tourism, drives retail and trade, and provides young people with a pathway into motorsport. Most importantly, it unites our community by bringing people together.

Without support we risk not only losing national championship events but also diminishing a proud piece of regional identity. With a relatively small investment we can secure the Speedway's future, ensure the safety of competitors and spectators alike, and continue to deliver tangible economic and social benefits for decades to come. I urge the government to seize this opportunity, support the Borderline Speedway and, in doing so, stand up for regional South Australia's future.

WINE EXPORTS

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:31): Yesterday, Wine Australia released its export report and it was very concerning. The report shows that our established markets are declining and it is of real concern, hugely concerning for bulk wine producers, especially in the Riverland. Exports in the rest of the world, excluding China, are seeing their lowest value in the last decade. They are seeing

their lowest volume in the last 20 years, and seeing volumes drop in key markets such as the UK, the US and Canada.

The global wine market is facing considerable headwinds as global consumption has fallen by 13 per cent and the report says the impacts on other markets are unlikely to resolve in the near term. Mainland China now represents 39 per cent of Australia's total export value, but just 15 per cent of volume—more evidence that pushing South Australia back into the Chinese market is not solving the issues, no matter what our state government is telling us.

It will not help oversupply. Currently, the wine tanks in the Riverland are full and the future is uncertain. The government has spent \$1.85 million on re-engaging with China, but only \$260,000 on helping the Riverland wine industry to develop a blueprint. The Riverland is the engine room of our state's wine industry, but \$260,000 is inadequate for an industry worth \$2.5 billion to South Australia's economy.

This report tells us what we already know, but the government is just not listening. We need to diversify, whether it is in markets or in structural adjustment. Entry-level products are being ignored in favour of the premium end of the market. More effort and resources are needed on products that draw in new customers, and premium products are important and worth focusing on but, ultimately, the weight of the premium market hinges on success and the growth of entry-level products, products that primarily come from the Riverland. While it is important to concentrate on the premium end of the market, we must put some concentration on efforts and resources for entry-level products that recruit new consumers who will ultimately become the premium wine consumers of tomorrow.

While the state government shells out billions into steelmaking, millions into drought-affected farmers, and millions into dairy, the wine industry in the Riverland is on its knees. It has received \$260,000. The concern that I have today is that the Riverland has been left hanging on a hook for far too long. We are entering the fifth vintage where wine grape growers are now receiving less than the cost of production, and it just cannot go on. We have seen a paltry effort by this state government. I am not actually advocating for putting huge amounts of money into wine grape growers' pockets, but I am advocating for structural adjustment. I am advocating for an industry that has a very unclear future.

Sixty per cent of the Riverland's economy is based around the wine industry. Whether it is growing wine grapes, whether it is making wine, whether it is manufacturing, whether it is packaging, whether it is transport or whether it is putting it onto a ship to our global trading partners, the Riverland has missed out on the opportunity. The China tariffs have hurt the sector badly, and what we are now seeing is that we have all levels of government, both federal and state government, hanging their hat: they are claiming victory from the rafters, and yet they are forgetting the very same sector of the industry that has been the engine room for a very long time, for decades.

Today we have a very uncertain future for our wine grape growers. Only late last week, I attended a Riverland wine industry coming together which was about understanding the state of people's mental health and the state of people's financial concerns. It was really there to better understand what the future has in store for those wine grape growers. What they are looking for is decisive action, and it is up to me as a local representative to feed them the information. The Wine Australia report is just part of the information that I will be disseminating and putting in front of all of those wine grape growers to help them make decisions.

While we have governments telling us that everything is rosy and everything is fine, we look at the wine grape growing sector, who are hanging their heads in uncertainty. They are uncertain about their future, they are uncertain about whether they continue, and at the very same time we have a federal government preying on their water allocations. The bulk wine industry, the Riverland wine sector, is on its knees. It is at a crossroads and it is looking for some certainty in the future.

ANZAC DAY

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:36): I rise with a deep sense of gratitude and responsibility to reflect on the enduring legacy of the ANZACs, a legacy that continues to shape our national identity and inspire generations of Australians. This year marks the 110th anniversary of the

Gallipoli landing, which is a moment etched into the heart of our nation. It is a privilege to share with you the efforts made across the Light and Frome electorates to honour this legacy.

On ANZAC Day we do more than commemorate. We pause to reflect on the resilience, courage and sacrifice the ANZACs embodied. These qualities are not just historical footnotes; they are the foundation of the values we hold dear as a nation. They remind us of the strength found in unity, the power of community and the importance of standing together in the face of adversity.

I had the honour of being represented at 21 ANZAC services across both the Light and Frome electorates. These services reflect the dedication of our local communities who work tirelessly to preserve the memories and values of our fallen heroes. I was able to personally attend services in Manoora, Robertstown, Two Wells and Watervale, while my dedicated staff and volunteers represented our community at services in Auburn, Clare, Eudunda, Freeling, Gawler, Gawler & District College, Hillier Park, Kapunda, Mallala, Mintaro, Port Parham, Riverton, Saddleworth, Smithfield, Tarlee, Thompson Beach and Wasleys.

Each ceremony has its own unique character, whether it is the intimacy of small towns like Manoora and Robertstown or the larger commemorations like Gawler, Two Wells and Clare. Yet what remained constant was a deep respect on display on every face, young and old alike. To the organisers of these services, I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your commitment ensures that the stories of the ANZACs are not only remembered but also passed down to future generations. Your work is instrumental in keeping the courage and sacrifice of the ANZACs alive in our collective consciousness.

I am deeply indebted to my staff and volunteers who joined me in honouring those who served and sacrificed. Their presence at these services was a powerful reminder that the spirit of ANZAC is not confined to history books; it lives on in the actions and dedication of everyday Australians. On ANZAC Day, we also acknowledge the immense sacrifices made by the families of those who served. These families bore the weight of loss and the challenges of supporting loved ones who returned but were forever changed. Their resilience and strength are a testament to the enduring spirit of our nation. In a world that often feels uncertain and unstable, the legacy of the ANZACs offers us light in the darkness and a source of inspiration. It reminds us of the importance of community, their values of service and the power of unity. These are lessons that resonate deeply, not only on ANZAC Day but every day.

To all of the volunteers, staff and community members who made these services possible, I say thank you. Your time, effort and dedication are invaluable. You ensure that the stories of the ANZACs continue to inspire and that their sacrifices are never forgotten. As we move forward, let us carry the spirit of the ANZACs in our hearts. Let us strive to embody their resilience, courage and commitment to service in all that we do. Let us work together to build a future that honours their legacy, a future defined by unity, compassion and a shared commitment to the greater good.

Private Members' Statements

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:40): The school holidays have just concluded, and of course with school holidays, Gather Round, Easter and unseasonably warm weather rolled into one, it was the perfect cocktail for families to enjoy time together exploring my electorate, and many others I am sure. We saw an explosion of visitors, domestic and intrastate across regional South Australia.

I want to use my time today to pay very special recognition to two amazing humans that live in Mintaro and will be known to thousands and thousands of people across South Australia, Sharon and Mick Morris, who are perhaps better known as the couple, the family, who have been running Mintaro Maze for the last 25 years. On the Easter weekend, they held and hosted the final ever Easter bunny hunt through the fabulous Mintaro Maze. I know it was probably with some sadness that they saw so many people come through for the last time.

It has not been lost on South Australian media and tourism outlets that a couple like this and a business like this have had to close their doors, not for want of trying to find others. All through the Clare Valley, whether the Clare Valley Distillery, the caravan parks, Bukirk Glamping, the Easter

Races, the caravan and camping sites were booked out from one end to the other. I want to thank everyone for their contribution, including the Main Street traders.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:42): I would like to take this opportunity to pay my tribute to the life of Bill Adams who, sadly, passed away on 20 April. His funeral service was held yesterday at the Kapunda Harness Racing Club. Bill was a prominent and long-serving community advocate for Kapunda, where he lived for much of his life. Known for his tireless efforts to enhance the town, he initiated and led several community-driven projects. Making a Diff was one such organisation, aimed at fostering positive change in Kapunda.

Through this initiative, he published books such as *How to Put an Old Head on Young Shoulders*, *Mary MacKillop and the Kapunda Connection* and *Laughter is the World's Best Medicine*, with proceeds supporting local causes. In response to the closure of two local service clubs, Bill founded Friends of Kapunda Incorporated and its volunteer-run second-hand bookstore. As a result of Bill's stewardship, almost \$50,000 in profits have been reinvested in the community through small grants.

Bill also played a pivotal role in launching the Kapunda Farm Fair in 1999, an event that became a significant fixture in the regional agricultural calendar. After leading the fair for over two decades, he retired in 2020. Even in his late 80s, just months away from his 90th birthday, Bill continued to champion Kapunda's recognition, actively supporting the town's bid for South Australia's Agriculture Town of the Year Award. In recent months, he also formed a new organisation, the Kapunda Progress Association.

Many other organisations within the region have benefited from Bill's involvement and guidance: the Kapunda Business Alliance, the bowling club, the art gallery and the harness club, just to name a few. I would like to express my heartfelt sympathy to Bill's family, friends, colleagues and associates. I would also like to thank Mick Talbot and members of the Friends of Kapunda, who provided the information for this tribute. Vale Bill Adams, aka Mr Kapunda, and safe travels home.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): I am feeling generous today: the member for Schubert.

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:44): Thank you very much. I rise to talk about something really exciting that has been happening in my local community in the Barossa Valley, and that is the Barossa Vintage Festival, which has seen hundreds, if not thousands, of people come to the Barossa Valley to enjoy all we have to offer. The festival dates back to 1947 and it was originally a festival which was kickstarted to celebrate all the hard work and toils of the vignerons in our region, to put on a bit of a party to celebrate all of their hard work.

There was something for everyone in this year's festival. We had the traditional things like the Ziegenmarkt. We saw grape stomping. There was, of course, the parade, which had over 1,000 people involved. I was very pleased to be able to ring the bell to kickstart the parade, which started at Nuri High School and ended up in Tanunda.

In particular, I would like to thank the volunteers who dedicated so much of their time to put on this event. We had the festival chair, Carla, who works in my team. We had the co-directors, Maz and Bec, and also in my team Casey and Kaitlyn, who were involved in so many committees to pull the festival together. To all of the businesses, the locals and the tourists who flocked to the Barossa to enjoy the buzz, thank you so much. I am really looking forward to the next Vintage Festival parade in 2027.

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (15:45): I rise to say a few words of thanks and congratulations to the Medhane Alem Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Church. I know I am going to mispronounce things, so I ask in advance that you forgive my Anglo tongue. On 5 April, I had the honour of attending the Feast Day of Medhane Alem, the Saviour of the World. It was a lovely day, and I give thanks to Joseph Abraha and Reverend Father Mehari Delai for inviting me back to enjoy the service and celebrations in the company of interstate clergy, parishioners and many members of the Eritrean community.

This is an amazing young and close-knit group. According to the 2021 census, South Australia has around 433 people who were born in Eritrea. Judging by the large turnout, I would not

be surprised if it is bigger, noting also that around a third of our Eritrean-born community arrived in the past five years and how they have been instrumental in supporting their new arrivals.

Coming back after 12 months, this community has gone from strength to strength. Specifically, I congratulate them on the acquisition of their new church, with the feast day marking the inauguration service at the former Wesleyan church and hall in Woodville Park. In passing, I also acknowledge the support other church groups have given the Eritrean Orthodox community in the build-up to the very special day. Congratulations to you all. This has been long fought with a lot of hard work to make this happen, and I feel it is appropriate we use the record of *Hansard* to document this significant occasion.

Bills

MENTAL HEALTH (COMMUNITY VISITOR SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:48): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Mental Health Act 2009. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kurna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:48): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

The *Mental Health Act 2009* relates to the treatment, care and rehabilitation of persons with severe mental illness with the goal of bringing about their recovery as far as is possible.

The legislation aims to safeguard the rights of persons interacting with mental health services.

One of the ways the Act does this is through the Community Visitor Scheme. The Scheme plays an essential role in promoting the wellbeing, dignity, safety and rights of people living with a mental health condition receiving care from a mental health service.

A volunteer-led scheme, the Community Visitor Scheme visits, inspects and advocates for improvement to services.

The Principal Community Visitor and Community Visitors are independent statutory appointments established under the *Mental Health Act 2009*. Their independence is vital to the Scheme.

This Bill seeks to amend the *Mental Health Act 2009* to offer the Community Visitor Scheme a more practical and greater flexibility to conduct visitations by authorising the Minister to appoint, remove or suspend a community visitor, enable the Principal Community Visitor to delegate powers and functions and allow for visits and inspections of residential community mental health facilities to occur at least once in every 4-month period, unless specified by regulation, and at least once in every 6-month period for outpatient authorised community mental health facilities.

Currently the frequency of visitations is set out under the Act as 'at least once in every 2-month period' for treatment centres and for authorised community mental health facilities.

For some services, particularly community mental health services, and those in regional areas, bi-monthly visits are not fully effective as community mental health services often do not have consumers present.

A more targeted approach to visit a clinic or group meeting day is more effective to meet with consumers. The scheme has finite resources, and this requires visitation schedules to be prioritised on a risk-assessment basis.

In 2017 the *Mental Health Act 2009* was amended to allow the gazettal of community mental health services. In 2022, the Chief Psychiatrist took a staged approach to gazetting additional community sites that were not gazetted at the time of the amendment, in particular in rural areas. This has led to more sites being gazetted and therefore requiring visitations by the Community Visitor Scheme.

It is important to note that these proposed changes will not affect the current legislative requirement to visit and inspect treatment centres at least once every 2-month period.

Targeted consultation on the earlier version of the draft Bill took place between November 2023 and February 2024. Detailed information was provided to targeted consumer groups, including lived experience and professional bodies via the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist.

The Principal Community Visitor also discussed the changes at meetings with the Lived Experience Advisory Group and the Human Rights Coercion Reduction Committee, and at regular meetings with various local health network mental health directors.

In total, 13 written submissions were received and overall there was strong support for the proposed amendments.

I would like to thank the many people who provided feedback to the consultation on this Bill.

The Principal Community Visitor has also developed a supporting policy position outlining the implementation of announced visits and inspections, with focused strategies for increasing client participation and client engagement, working in conjunction with services.

I would like to acknowledge the Principal Community Visitor Anne Gale, as well as Chief Psychiatrist Dr John Brayley and his team for their work in preparing this Bill.

This Bill is a positive change which will allow for greater flexibility in undertaking visits within the capacity of community visitors, alongside visits to disability accommodation by the Community Visitor Scheme under the *Disability Services (Community Visitor Scheme) Regulations 2023*.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Mental Health Act 2009*

3—Substitution of section 50

Section 50 of the Act is substituted by sections 50 and 50A:

50—Principal Community Visitor

Proposed section 50 provides for the appointment of a Principal Community Visitor. The Principal Community Visitor is to be appointed on conditions determined by the Governor for a term not exceeding 5 years and will be eligible for reappointment. The Governor may suspend the Principal Community Visitor, but the Principal Community Visitor must be restored to their position if an address from both Houses of Parliament seeking their removal is not presented to the Governor within a specified timeframe. The Governor may, on the presentation of an address from both Houses of Parliament seeking the Principal Community Visitor's removal, remove the Principal Community Visitor.

50A—Community Visitors

Proposed section 50A provides for the appointment of Community Visitors. Community Visitors are to be appointed on conditions determined by the Minister for a term not exceeding 3 years and will be eligible for reappointment. The Minister may, on application by the Principal Community Visitor, or on the Minister's own initiative after consultation with the Principal Community Visitor, suspend or remove a Community Visitor.

4—Amendment of section 51A—Delegation by Principal Community Visitor

This clause amends section 51A to provide additional categories of persons to whom the Principal Community Visitor may delegate their powers and functions under the Act.

5—Amendment of section 52—Visits to and inspections of treatment centres

This clause amends section 52 to make changes to the requirements imposed on community visitors for the periodic visiting and inspection of treatment centres.

6—Amendment of section 52A—Visits to and inspection of authorised community mental health facilities

This clause amends section 52A to make changes to the requirements imposed on community visitors for the periodic visiting and inspection of authorised community mental health facilities.

Schedule 1—Transitional provision

1—Continuation of appointments of Community Visitors

This clause is a transitional provision which provides for the continuation of appointments of Community Visitors in force immediately before the commencement of this clause.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Batty.

SUPPLY BILL 2025*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 29 April 2025.)

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (15:49): I continue my remarks from yesterday. Importantly, we are not just addressing immediate needs, we are also reforming the system to make it fairer by expanding access to concessions for tenants and share houses and ensuring more people can access the support they need. We are modernising our social safety net to reflect how people actually live today. This is about dignity, it is about inclusion and it is about ensuring that no South Australian is left behind.

In November 2024, the South Australian government announced a \$9 million redevelopment of the Marion Ambulance Station located on Sturt Road. As the busiest ambulance station in Adelaide's southern suburbs, this project will replace the existing facility with a modern, fit-for-purpose station enhancing emergency response capabilities for the surrounding communities.

It is with great pride that I share the significant advancements and investments made by the South Australian government at the Flinders Medical Centre and its surrounding precinct since July 2024. These initiatives are pivotal in enhancing healthcare services for our community. This includes a major expansion and upgrade of the Flinders Medical Centre.

A cornerstone of our commitment is the unprecedented \$498 million redevelopment of the Flinders Medical Centre, jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments. This project includes the construction of a seven-storey acute services building set to deliver 98 additional clinical spaces. This expansion will encompass two 32-bed adult inpatient units, an 18-bed medical day unit, a 16-bed intensive care unit and a dedicated CT scanner suite. Construction commenced in April 2024, with completion anticipated by December 2028. To facilitate this development, the main entrance of the hospital was closed in October last year, redirecting access through the northern entrance.

In response to growing healthcare demands, we have undertaken several initiatives to increase bed capacity. A new 20-bed inpatient ward was established by repurposing former administrative offices, providing acute care services for older South Australians. An additional 10 acute mental health beds are scheduled to open at the Margaret Tobin Centre in 2025. Overall, these efforts contribute to a total of 160 new beds across Flinders Medical Centre and the Repat Health Precinct.

In partnership with Flinders University, we are investing in the Flinders Healthcare Centre—a state-of-the-art 10-storey facility within the Flinders Health Precinct at Bedford Park. This \$300 million project, with \$150 million contributed by the federal government, aims to provide 10,000 health appointments annually, accommodate up to 100 patients simultaneously and facilitate the graduation of approximately 1,300 health professionals each year. These strategic investments underscore our unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible healthcare services to the residents of southern Adelaide.

No great society is built without great infrastructure. This Supply Bill continues to fund the vital services and networks that underpin our daily lives—from transport to water, energy to health care. In particular, I want to highlight our investment in water and sewer infrastructure, which will unlock over 40,000 home allotments across the next four years. This is fundamental. For too long, systemic failures in connecting Adelaide's northern developments have stifled housing growth and frustrated residents. We are fixing that. We are laying the foundations—literally—for future homes, future communities and future opportunity.

The Majors Road interchange project is advancing steadily and remains on schedule for completion by the end of this year. Eighteen steel bridge girders have been installed, and the concrete deck poured for the widened section of the Majors Road Bridge has been completed. Night works occurred in March 2025, leading to temporary speed restrictions on the Southern Expressway

near Majors Road. These restrictions will lift soon as the road surface develops appropriate traction for safe driving.

The project includes shortening on-off ramps by approximately 100 metres and relocating the Patrick Jonker Veloway to improve sightlines. Additionally, powerlines along Majors Road have been moved underground to allow for increased landscaping and tree planting. The construction phase is supporting approximately 245 full-time equivalent jobs annually, contributing to the local economy.

The Morphett Road tram grade separation project is part of the broader \$870 million Tram Grade Separation Projects initiative, jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian governments. This project aims to replace the existing level crossing at Morphett Road with a tram overpass, to enhance safety and reduce congestion.

Major construction commenced in late 2024, with the level crossing removal expected to be completed by the end of 2025. To facilitate construction, the Glenelg tramline will be partially closed between Moseley Square and South Terrace from 4 August this year to late January next year. Substitute buses will operate during this period to maintain public transport connectivity for our community.

Works on the Morphett Road and Anzac Highway intersection are set to begin soon, aiming to improve traffic flow and safety in the area. The project is expected to significantly reduce delays for the approximately 25,600 motorists who traverse the level crossing daily when boom gates can be down for up to 16 minutes each hour during peak times. This is a project that has proved very popular across Gibson.

The Supply Bill 2025 is not just a ledger of incomes and expenditures, it is a story. It is the story of a government that listens, leads and delivers. It is a reflection of our values: that every person deserves a fair go; that the economy should serve people, not the other way around; and that we are strongest when we act with compassion, courage and clarity. From housing to industry, cost of living to clean energy, we are meeting the moment with bold ideas and practical action. So today I support the Supply Bill 2025 not just as a routine matter of finance but as a meaningful step toward a stronger, fairer and more resilient South Australia. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (15:56): I rise to speak on the Supply Bill, which of course the opposition will be supporting, but it is a good opportunity for me, about a month out from the state budget being delivered, to talk a little bit about what I would like to see in there from a local perspective, some of my local priorities that we have been fighting for over the past few years in the eastern suburbs.

In particular, there are three key priorities I would like to talk to this afternoon. The first is our ongoing campaign to get trucks off our local roads, including Portrush Road and Glen Osmond Road in my electorate. The second is the need to invest in schools in the eastern suburbs, both school capacity and ageing school infrastructure at some of the best schools in the state that need to be shown some love. The third is a key focus on investing in open space and spaces for sport and recreation for many of our local sporting groups that are simply searching for a home. I hope to be able to support them through this budget process as well.

Turning to the first of those issues, which is an ongoing campaign to get trucks off Portrush Road, I made a commitment three years ago when I was elected that I would fight every day to try to get heavy vehicles off Portrush Road and off Glen Osmond Road. I am strongly of the view that our local roads are just not appropriate freight routes, and I know that because the problem is very clear to see.

We have about 650,000 heavy vehicles coming down the South Eastern Freeway every year. We know the large majority of them at the moment choose to travel down Portrush Road when they reach the bottom of the South East Freeway. That is over 1,000 trucks thundering down Portrush Road each and every day, going past the things that people in my electorate see every day and the things that I see every day as I drive along Portrush Road.

These trucks are going past things like nursing homes and schools, whether it be Seymour College, Loreto College or Linden Park Primary School, where the pedestrian crossing near the Aldi

was recently named one of the most dangerous school crossings in the entire state. They are going past shops, homes and houses. These are all things that do not mix well with B-doubles.

It is not only a road congestion issue, but I also know, particularly in my capacity as the shadow minister for road safety, that it is a really significant road safety issue. It is an accident waiting to happen—indeed, it is an accident that has happened quite often. Only a few months ago there was another major truck rollover at the bottom of the freeway. I think there have been about six or seven major accidents at the bottom of the freeway since 2010, and some of those, sadly, we know have involved fatalities.

What I do not want to do is wait for the next tragedy, the next fatality, before we all wake up and finally take some action on this issue and finally realise—like every other state and capital city in Australia has realised—that our local roads are just not appropriate freight routes. We are the only capital city in all of Australia where we have our major freight route running through our local streets and suburbs, thundering past things like schools and nursing homes and houses.

The good news is that there is a solution. Something that I have been working towards for a very long time now is advocating for a Greater Adelaide Freight Bypass that would see a large majority of the freight coming down Portrush Road redirected before it even reaches the bottom of the freeway. This is something that I have been advocating for since I was first elected to this place. Indeed, it was the first question that I asked in question time to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport a few years ago, and it is probably one of my most recent questions as well.

The good news over the past few weeks is that we have seen some significant advancements in our campaign for a Greater Adelaide Freight Bypass that would see trucks off Portrush Road, with the Liberal Party—both state and federal—committing to a \$1 billion bypass that would see thousands of trucks removed from Portrush Road, Glen Osmond Road and Cross Road. We have seen a pledge from the federal Coalition of \$840 million towards a Greater Adelaide Freight Bypass and I was very proud to stand with the Leader of the Opposition and announce that the state Liberals, if elected, would also commit \$211 million to co-fund the \$1 billion bypass that would see thousands of trucks have a more efficient route through the Hills, getting them off our local roads in the eastern suburbs.

What the freight bypass would do is deliver major upgrades along the Monarto to Sturt Highway corridor, including the Truro township bypass. That is the project, of course, that state and federal Labor ripped money out of in recent times—the duplication of the Swanport Bridge, upgrades to the Monarto Interchange and level crossing and critical safety improvements along the freight route. It is a solution that we have been crying out for for a long time now. I feel that people in the eastern suburbs have been talking about this problem for the better part of my life.

It is only now for the first time that we actually have a serious proposal with one political party with some serious money on the table to actually fund it, and construction of the Greater Adelaide Freight Bypass could commence from this year if state and federal Liberal governments were elected.

Those opposite, I know, have attempted to confuse this issue a little bit. In recent times they have attempted to appear supportive of a freight bypass, but unfortunately the federal Labor government have only announced half of the funding that is required—some \$500-odd million—with the bulk of that funding not being delivered until about four years time. My community does not want to wait that four years to get 50 per cent of the funding and you cannot build half a road, of course, so really a commitment to half a road is no commitment at all.

What we have not seen here in this place is a commitment from the state Labor government to even fund any of this project and that is something that I urge them to consider before the next state budget, because we just cannot wait any longer and have this situation where we have thousands of trucks thundering down my local roads and putting my local community at risk.

We know where those opposite stand on this issue historically. I only need to quote the member for Dunstan last year who stated:

South Australia's a small state and having a bypass is a hugely expensive piece of infrastructure...trucks will always be to some degree on Portrush Road.

The now Treasurer, back in 2017 when he was the shadow treasurer, was interviewed about this issue on ABC Radio and it was put to him whether the trucks will go down Cross Road and the Treasurer said, and I quote, 'Yes, that's right. That's the long-term plan which has been agreed to by federal and state governments, which is currently being funded by the federal and state governments and that's why it's a project priority.' Not quite believing it I think, the journalist replied, 'So you're going to have B-doubles rumbling down Portrush Road and, just for a bit of novelty, rumbling down Cross Road.' The now Treasurer replied at that time, 'It's not a novelty. This is what's in the state's best economic interests.'

I could not disagree more with the member for Dunstan, who seemingly wants to accept a situation where there will always be heavy trucks thundering down Portrush Road, and I could not disagree more with the Treasurer that it is in the state's best economic interests to have heavy trucks thundering down Portrush Road. I urge them, a month out from the budget now, to join with the state and federal Liberal Party in funding a billion-dollar bypass, finally, a serious solution to what is a very serious problem in my local electorate.

The second issue that I want to talk about today is that of school capacity and infrastructure in my local electorate. We have some of the best schools in the state in my electorate and I am enormously proud of them, their leadership, their teachers and, indeed, their students who year after year are often found to be the top one, two, three, four, five schools in the state, but we do have a problem, which is that they are so popular, they are bursting at the seams. It is a good problem to have, but it is a problem nevertheless.

We only have to look at some school enrolment capacity data for particularly the high schools in my electorate to see the nature of the problem. Glenunga International High School, one of the larger schools in the state, and, of course, one of the best schools in the state, has a capacity this year of 2,200, but currently has 2,356 students enrolled. So right now that school is 156 students over capacity. Similarly, Marryatville High School has a student enrolment capacity of 1,600 and current enrolments are at 1,719. So that school is 119 students over capacity right now.

The problem is only projected to get worse, particularly at Glenunga International High School, for example, where we see the enrolment capacity again next year being at 2,200, but the enrolments projected for 2026 are expected to be 2,396—nearly 200 students over capacity next year at Glenunga International High School—and that is in a situation where we are already turning people away from Glenunga International High School. It is subject to a capacity management plan.

I am helping a number of constituents, some of whom live within a stone's throw of the school but are being turned away from Glenunga because it is full. I strongly believe that local kids deserve to be able to go to local schools. We have a capacity problem in the eastern suburbs that we need to invest in to fix. Again, the problem will only get worse under a Labor government that seems intent on building 20-storey and 30-storey towers all around my electorate.

We had this unprovoked and, frankly, unhinged attack on me from the Premier in question time today about me standing up for inappropriate high-rise, high-density development in my electorate. The Premier made some comments about development in Glenside. I note his planning minister has been very careful with what he said, given that the code amendment is currently under consideration by the planning minister. The planning minister is the decision-maker and he has been very careful to say not a lot on the topic, but we had this bizarre outburst from the Premier today about high-rise development in Glenside and, unfortunately, I think, giving my constituents a bit of an insight into what the Labor government is planning in Glenside—perhaps planning to approve this 20-storey tower that my constituents certainly do not want.

The Premier would know that if he came out and listened to people on the ground, if he came out and listened to the community like I have. He characterised me as trying to organise protests at every development in Glenside. There has only been one development in Glenside under this government and it is a 20-storey tower proposal, on top of 1,000 homes that have already gone in there.

The Glenside development could have been an example of a really successful medium-density development, but out of greed at the last minute it seems the Premier is going to try to ruin that best practice example and have a series of high-rise towers in residential Glenside. I ask

the Premier in the context of Glenunga International High School, which is the zoned school for Glenside, already being 200 students over capacity: where are all the students living in his towers going to go to school? Again, he would know that is a big concern of my constituents if he came to any of these gatherings that I have organised.

I have gone out and listened to the community, and they tell me that they are very concerned about unrestrained high-rise, high-density infill when it is happening in a context where there is no discussion at the same time about investment in public infrastructure. The schooling is one example, but there is also car parking, traffic and our public transport. The whole development is served by one bus stop and a bus that occasionally shows up. There is no discussion at all about investing in the associated public infrastructure to go with it. It is this unbelievable idea that you can start building high-rise towers and they will just be absorbed by the local community.

The whole area at Glenside was planned pretty carefully on an eight-storey height assumption. All of the planning has been done on that assumption. At the last minute, out of pure greed, the Premier today and the planning minister are trying to change it to 20 storeys, which could potentially go up to as close as 30 storeys under an affordable housing overlay as well. So I think there was very bad news for my constituents coming out of question time today, with the Premier giving some clues about what he might have planned for Glenside.

We will continue to let the Premier and his minister know what we think about it, even if he does not want to hear it. Perhaps it even gets a little bit under his skin; that is our job to do that. It is really those three categories of concerns: no discussion about public infrastructure; secondly, no consideration of character and heritage in our area; and thirdly, just simply being unfair for the 1,000 people who have bought into that development on the basis of a really different plan. It is bad planning because it was never the plan.

Returning to schools, though, it is not just school capacity that we need to look at. I think the infrastructure at many of the schools in my electorate has been neglected for some time now. Perhaps there is no better example than Burnside Primary School. I had the privilege of touring Burnside Primary School recently with the principal and also the parents and friends at that school to have a look at the state of the infrastructure there, and frankly, Burnside Primary School needs to be shown a bit of love.

There are currently five ill-equipped transportable buildings housing 11 classrooms that appear to have become permanent fixtures somehow. They are well past their use-by date. With the exception of a two-storey junior primary building constructed in 2011, the school's buildings were all constructed between 1907 and 1970. Upgrades are desperately needed and would be of great benefit to all of the students and the wider community at Burnside Primary School.

What I have recently been engaging with the minister about with respect to Burnside Primary School is the need for a new multilevel building to replace that series of transportable classrooms that have become well past their use-by date. There is an opportunity to get something in there that is pretty special, purpose built; perhaps a STEM facility, some breakout spaces and some more suitable classrooms as well.

I would also like to see a covered outdoor learning area (a COLA) at Burnside Primary School. It is desperately needed, particularly so that students can enjoy the outdoors all seasons round. There is a need for some new toilets to replace a very outdated toilet block near the top of the playground and also a need for an upgraded performing arts centre at that school. The school has done some initial costings of that project at just over \$9 million. I invited the minister to come and visit the school, and I am glad that he has agreed to do so. He can see with his own eyes the desperate need for some additional funding for infrastructure at Burnside Primary School.

The final thing I wanted to touch on very briefly was the need to invest in open space in the eastern suburbs, and spaces for various local sporting groups and recreational groups to be able to gather. We are really starved of green open space in my electorate which leaves sporting clubs like the Glenunga Football Club and, indeed, the Glenunga Cricket Club always looking for more to cater for their growing numbers. They have a space at the Glenunga Hub which has to be some of the most over-used green grass that I have ever seen in the state.

We have groups like the Burnside Hockey Club that is searching for a home, the East Adelaide Cricket Club is searching for clubrooms and a space to call home and, indeed, the East Adelaide Football Club—who I met with only last week—are currently utilising a space in the Parklands but are really looking for more and more certainty for them to be able to cater for the needs of their growing club.

Of course, there is the plight of the Saints Gym Club which currently operates at St Peter's Girls School, and with their redevelopment at that school we are looking for a new home by the end of the year. They are currently catering for hundreds of young girls and boys, and with hundreds more on the waiting list they are urgently needing a space.

I support the Supply Bill and have appreciated the opportunity to just draw the house's attention to those three issues in particular that are priorities for me and my electorate: getting trucks off Portrush Road, investing in our schools, and investing in our open space and sporting clubs.

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (16:16): To begin, I just want to reflect on some previous remarks made by my friends on the other side of the chamber. They mentioned matters such as debt reduction and increased spending and things that they are going to do if they are given the keys to the Treasury. I want to point out before I begin my speech that you cannot have both without tax increases and service cuts.

I am very happy to rise in support of the Supply Bill. I plan on speaking for a while so if anyone wants to grab a Milo and a blanket, now is a great time to start. Jokes aside, this is a serious bill for numerous reasons which my colleagues and I are in the process of outlining. To me, I consider the need to speak as a way to underline the brilliant work and to express gratitude to our Public Service.

I do not imagine many will remember the speech I gave a few years back on how amazing our police and ambulance officers were at the time when my dad passed away. I do not want to open up old wounds, but when I get up and speak on supply it is examples of dedication and brilliance that come front and centre, and why I feel passionately about why this bill must be passed with a high degree of enthusiasm.

Today, I want to use this time to highlight some of the exceptional work I have experienced both directly and indirectly within our Public Service as a means of highlighting just how lucky we are. I want to start with a little group within the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (or DIT for short) known as the Rail Care team. There are a lot of moving parts to this team and, as their website points out, Rail Care is a volunteer program led by Public Transport South Australia that looks to build healthy neighbourhoods and lead community engagement.

Scrolling through their web page, I can see that they go to great lengths to run volunteer programs, as well as beautifying our urban environment through public art. It is their public art that I really want to home in on and highlight the great work that this team did around Parafield Railway Station towards the latter end of 2024.

I know they do not seek personal recognition, but I would really like to put Scott Bailey, Courtney Robinson, Jamie Farr, Paul Speck, Peter Wenham, Trevor Harding, Scott Lawrence, Grant O'Daniel, Tom Young, Robert Lugg, George Hedges and Mark Kerko up in lights for their amazing work. Their efforts in engaging the community was second to none and, while I am so proud of what they have achieved, I know my words will never really express the true brilliance behind their efforts.

To tell a story, I will begin briefly by highlighting the work they achieved, alongside the member for Waite, and the exceptional artwork adjacent to the Glenalta Railway Station. That is my hardworking colleague's story and I will leave it to her to go into details, but, needless to say, my mum lives in Blackwood, and the striking artwork really caught my eye when passing and made me ask myself what I need to do to see something similar along the northern Adelaide railway corridor.

A call later to Minister Koutsantonis' office, and before I knew it I had the Rail Care team sitting in the lounge at Parliament House, looking at ways in which we can engage the community in their own unique project. This prompted me to meet with the principal of Thomas More College, Corey Tavella, to see if he was keen to be part of a prospective project. He seemed very keen, and

before I knew it he was assembling staff and students, and meetings with the Rail Care team happened soon after.

It was at this point that the project started to take shape, with two notable teams of students forming: one to green up the station with some extra plant life, while the other team focused on adding some street art to the area. I was really privileged, on 20 September last year, to join year 9 environmental studies students for a day of planting at the station. All sorts of native plants, shrubs and ground covers were planted with the intent of bringing birdlife and butterflies back to the area. In raising this, I want to give a shout-out to the Australian Association for Environmental Education, who not only provided the plants for the day but spent time with students, talking about what they were planting and the significance of each plant species to the local area.

It was also a perfect prelude to the mural work that was to follow, noting that, collectively, the students placed an emphasis on bringing back butterflies to the station. With this in mind, year 11 students and their amazing art teacher, Paul Kralj, set to work, developing designs to brighten up a space that without any controversy could be described as drab. Students agreed that there would be an emphasis on bright colours, nature and butterflies, and set about developing designs to complement the new plants, while being incorporated into the station and the surrounding signal boxes.

It was at this point that the incredible Rail Care staff brought in the ever-talented Ella Simpson from Ink and Ruby Studios, who not only worked closely with the students in developing their designs but was also on hand to adapt them as full-size art pieces for the public to enjoy. Chances are you are familiar with Ella's work, even if you do not know it. Her clients around Adelaide include the Rundle Mall Management Authority, YWCA and local councils, including Kangaroo Island, Salisbury, Port Adelaide Enfield, Prospect and Marion. She splashed a lot of colour across South Australia, making it such a thrill to lend her talents to work alongside this amazing bunch of students. Ella is not only very talented but is down-to-earth and gifted in working and engaging with young people.

Arguably, one of the best stories to come out of this project was just how closely she worked with Thomas More student Zoe Renshaw. It is not for me to put words into people's mouths, so I hope Ella will not mind when I say that she was so deeply impressed with her work that she took her under her wing, and the two spent part of the summer holidays working alongside each other on a number of projects. It has given Zoe a genuine taste of a future career, and it is a prime example of how Rail Care goes way beyond prettying things up, which in this case has sown seeds for what I hope will be a very bright career. Hopefully in years to come, when we celebrate the work of Zoe, we can look back fondly, knowing it all started at a suburban station in northern Adelaide.

This is one of the several stories I want to share today in demonstrating the worth of our Public Service. Before I move on to the next story, it is worth pointing out that a lot of the Rail Care staff are loyal members of the Public Service who refused to be transferred to the private sector when the Liberals privatised our railway network. So hats off to them for their commitment to our state. In my eyes they have all done a fantastic job, and I am grateful for all their help and the good they have achieved within the communities that I represent. Of course, there is more to do, and I know that Paul Kralj from Thomas More is hopeful we can get his team back into our neighbourhood as soon as possible.

In hailing the work of our Public Service, I do not want to move too far from recognising our next set of excellent employees within the Department for Infrastructure and Transport—this time within the public transport team itself. Ever since I was endorsed as a candidate, I have had members of the community approach me to improve bus services within The Boulevard section of Parafield Gardens. For those unfamiliar, Parafield Gardens is an exceptionally large suburb, which, if you were going to compare it to some inner city suburbs, you could squeeze about four or five Maylands or Leabrooks into the same area. Because it is such a vast space, it means that some parts of the suburb were not developed until recent times, with The Boulevard section being a prime example. Subsequently, some areas are served reasonably well by public transport, while there has been a bit of a gap in the southern, newer parts.

This matter has been compounded further through the development of the Gardens Lifestyle Village. With 210 homes, up until recently it has had a very limited offering when it comes to public

transport. The reality is that, as we get older, the odds of us keeping our driver's licences diminish, meaning there were many individuals without access to a car and therefore their transport options notably reduced. I played table tennis against a number of these residents, so I do not want to paint a story of mobility issues, but in keeping with a straight bat I will point out that until very recently there was a good walk to the nearest bus stop that regularly serviced the area. While many can hit a powerful backhand, the walk was not easy for everyone, especially at night or during inclement weather.

Enter the good people of the department, who met with me on several occasions to develop the best plan possible to help service this community. While I was very grateful to be given the opportunity to help shape a revised bus route, my ask to them was very simple: with the resources available develop the best strategy possible to get maximum bang for our buck. I love public transport, but am out of my depth when it comes to transport planning, so the best thing to do was to defer to the experts and let them come up with the solution. What they came up with was a commendable plan to slightly detour the 411 bus route, which acts as a feeder bus service between the Salisbury and Mawson interchanges.

As of this Monday, the service has been detoured from the western side of Shepherdson Road through The Boulevard, out through Rundle Drive, and then connecting back onto Shepherdson via Martins Road. In examining the timetable, I understand it will add an extra four minutes of travel time to the journey, but in the process helps several hundred families by providing a service much nearer to their homes.

I do acknowledge there have been some people unhappy with what is proposed, but I hope those slightly inconvenienced will understand that I could not sit by and accept more and more seniors living in The Gardens and surrounding streets being forced to give up their driver's licence and with it the freedom to get around town. While there is always room for possible adjustments, I want to express my thanks to the team from DIT who worked hard to make this happen. They have moved exceptionally quickly from the meetings we had just last year.

I was at the pre-polling booth for the federal election last week and met one couple from the Gardens Village who expressed their delight that this change was then imminent. They explained to me that, while they are still driving, the loss of a licence was no longer something they feared, knowing they had a regular bus service that would operate day and night, seven days a week. This translates into giving hundreds of people peace of mind, knowing that this change will hopefully ensure they do not have to move away from their friends in the years ahead.

The last story I want to home in on is not mine but one belonging to a local resident, a friend of mine, Chris Bellamy from Paralowie. This is a story he has been keen to share. I recently approached him and said that if we could use it to reinforce the value of the Public Service the Supply Bill would give us the freedom to go into detail without the word limitations we would normally expect when delivering a personal statement via a grievance debate. He jumped at the idea, explaining to me with pride that he would not be here today if it were not for the hardworking staff we have within our public health system, and, of course Dr Nick Tellis, his hardworking and extremely dedicated GP.

I remember the day quite clearly, when I first read about Chris. I was working in my office on the weekend when I realised I had missed an *Advertiser* story about a local constituent battling a brain tumour. The whole story stopped me in my tracks, and whatever I was doing, it played second fiddle to what I had just read. I recall then writing a careful letter to him explaining how I was his local MP, and in dealing with what must be a difficult time perhaps the last thing Chris wanted was a politician in his life but how I wanted to meet with him and see if there was anything I could do just to be useful.

Needless to say, we caught up. I hope he will not mind me saying that he is one of the nicest, most caring and decent people I have had the privilege to meet. But enough about me and what I think. This is Chris's story and he has asked that we begin by winding the clock back to 2 September 2022, which he describes as starting like any other day, with his kids dropped at child care and him suited up and ready for a day at work, beginning with the commute from Paralowie to Lonsdale.

Driving along South Road, he suddenly noted an insanely strong smell of smoke, and his vision flipped upside down. After a moment of severe panic, he focused on the car in front, trying to ensure there was no collision. The symptoms then suddenly disappeared, and Chris pulled over immediately. He then called his wife and continued his drive to work. With the commute complete, he told his boss what had happened and was then taken straight to hospital.

On arrival, he described the incident to the hospital staff, triggering the need for many tests. At that point, none of them showed any irregularities or issues until he underwent a CT scan confirming that he had a brain tumour. Chris was then transferred to Flinders hospital to get an MRI and assessment by the professional team, in which the initial assessment suggested he had a small tumour with a large amount of swelling.

By 20 September, he was at SAHMRI, undergoing a detailed 3D scan. Twenty days later, he was rehospitalised after a stroke-like incident, and by 14 October scans had shown that the tumour had grown rapidly. Three days later, he underwent a biopsy to assess the tumour, and on 19 October he was given the news nobody wants to learn. Chris was diagnosed with a large stage 3 astrocytoma, with an estimated remaining lifespan of around six weeks, and advised to celebrate Christmas early, as there were no guarantees that he was going to make it.

At this stage of the story, it is worth placing into context that at the time Chris was 30 years old, married to Chelsea with two amazing kids, a two-year-old son, Luke, and a four-year-old daughter, Kairi. As the notes he gave to me clearly expressed, he was not ready to say goodbye. Following diagnosis, the amazing staff at Lyell McEwin Hospital organised swift and intense treatment to try to slow down his tumour from growing, with the treatment beginning on 30 November with chemotherapy and radiotherapy every day for the next six weeks.

The date of 24 December was his final day of treatment—or so he thought. Chris then received word that due to the public holidays he would have to have his final day of treatment a full five days later. He decided he was having none of that and instead opted for double treatment of radiotherapy and took his final dose of chemotherapy. Noting that he made it through to 25 December, Chris celebrated Christmas with his family, but the following seven months were nothing short of tough, with continual chemotherapy in the first week of every month until August 2023.

While it was far from easy, with an attitude that needs to be chiselled into its rightful place in our *Hansard* Chris expressed that every day for him was an achievement and a reason to celebrate. During this period of treatment, Chris took advantage of every day and did some things he had always wanted to do. He and his father went swimming with sharks in Port Lincoln on 22 January 2023, even though his treatment made him incredibly nauseous and seasick on the trip. His response to the team asking if he would be okay to get in the cage was, 'If I vomit while I am in the water, it might bring more sharks. Nothing will stop me from going in the water.'

On 3 February 2023, shortly after his return from a trip, a large private fundraising event was held at Dom Polski for Chris, with over 200 people in attendance. They received many generous donations for an auction at the event, which raised over \$30,000 for Chris's family, to help with bills, outgoings and additional treatments, including naturopath therapies. Just before I stop, there is a bit more to this, but I will say Chris is still with us to this day and is doing well. With that in mind, I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call on the Premier to move a motion, I would like to acknowledge the following people in the gallery who are guests of the Premier today: the Hon. Hieu Van Le, the former Governor of South Australia—welcome, Governor; the Hon. Tung Ngo from the other place; the Vietnamese Community in Australia, the South Australian chapter; the Vietnamese Veterans Association of South Australia; members of the Vietnamese Catholic community in South Australia; the Phap Hoa Temple; the Viet Tan group; Vietnam veterans; and members of the Vietnamese community of South Australia. Welcome to our parliament today. I call on the Premier.

*Motions***FALL OF SAIGON ANNIVERSARY**

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (16:35): I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes that 30 April 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, leading to the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of communist rule in Vietnam;
- (b) notes that the fall of Saigon, also known as Black April, had disastrous ramifications for Vietnamese people, including hundreds of thousands of people sent to re-education camps, with many experiencing torture, disease and starvation, and creating a refugee crisis with millions of people displaced into neighbouring countries and across the world;
- (c) acknowledges the significant pain and distress still felt by South Australian Vietnamese community members, many of whom directly experienced these traumatic events, or are descendants of those who suffered through both the war and the long, dangerous journey to our shores;
- (d) thanks and acknowledges the sacrifices made by Australian and Vietnamese veterans, as well as their families, in the fight for freedom;
- (e) recognises the especially significant contribution that Vietnamese South Australians have made to our state in the decades since these events, overcoming the many challenges posed by the legacy of the war with the signature determination, grit and optimism we have come to recognise in our Vietnamese community; and
- (f) calls on all South Australians to stand with our South Australian Vietnamese community as they reflect on this pivotal and catastrophic event in our history.

I stand today to mark a sombre anniversary. Fifty years ago, the war in Vietnam ended after two decades of conflict, blood and pain, with the fall of Saigon marking the end of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's existence and the beginning of communist rule. Over 60,000 Australians served as part of the military coalition defending South Vietnam and its people. More than 500 were to never return, including 58 South Australians, and many of those who did come home did so bearing physical and psychological scars that time can never heal. It is an enduring national shame that the return of our troops was met with little fanfare and tragically, on occasions, even outright hostility.

At the same time, the price paid by the people of Vietnam truly defies comprehension. It is estimated that over four million people, a full 10 per cent of the Vietnamese population at the time, were killed or wounded during the conflict—four million people. Even now, the war continues to exact a toll in blood from the people of Vietnam: from chronic illness and birth defects attributed to chemical defoliants to the five and a half million hectares of land still contaminated by landmines and unexploded ordnance patiently laying in wait.

Following the fall of Saigon, no fewer than two million people attempted to flee Vietnam. Just think about those men, women and children. Think about how terrified they must have been about the fate of their democracy, their country and their own livelihoods that they would make the decision to leave everything behind for an unknown future. Think about the sort of fear that would have existed to take one's own children and place them on a rickety fishing boat to cross treacherous and deadly waters but to rise above that fear and execute incomprehensible courage and determination to indeed endure that journey.

Of the two million people who fled South Vietnam, a full 10 per cent are estimated to have perished en route to Australia, disappearing somewhere in the dark waters of the South China Sea. Today, we think of those families huddled together in leaking, overcrowded boats, riding low in the water, holding their terrified children close, whispering desperate words of comfort, all in the knowledge that the next wave to strike the hull might be the one that finally drags them down.

Today, we also think of the resilience and determination of those who did find safe harbour in Australia where an entirely new set of challenges awaited them. Australia has welcomed waves of immigrants since colonisation, including thousands of refugees following the Second World War, many of whom found at least some comfort in familiar cultural, political and religious institutions that Australia had inherited with European settlement.

By contrast, the majority of Vietnamese refugees were starting new lives from nothing and doing so while learning to navigate a foreign culture in an entirely unfamiliar language, in a place where everything from the food to the climate provided a daily reminder that home, if it still existed, was a long, long way away.

I was honoured to join veterans of the conflict to lay a wreath at the Vietnam War Memorial at the Adelaide Parade Ground this morning. Our veterans in South Australia, who served our nation with pride, distinguishment and extraordinary courage, do us all proud to this day. There still represents ongoing opportunity for the people of our state, particularly younger South Australians, to pay homage at the feet of those men and women who served our nation in the name of our democracy. We acknowledge many of those who are here today.

Aptly, the ceremony took place only metres from the Vietnamese Boat People Monument that stands on the Torrens Riverbank in a tribute to those who came across the seas to build a new life in our state, including the Hon. Hieu Van Le AC, who arrived as a refugee in 1977 and was to become the 35th Governor of the State of South Australia. His proud example represents the way in which our Vietnamese community are an integral and celebrated part of modern South Australia.

I might add that the Boat People Monument not only reminds us of the courage of all Vietnamese people who made that perilous journey but also serves as a reminder to every Australian. It is a reminder that, as a country, when we choose to open our hearts with compassion, warmth and welcome to other people from foreign lands enduring their own adversity, it is not just a good thing for them but an even better thing for ourselves as a people for who we are.

The Vietnamese Boat People Monument is one of the most beautiful in our state and it can serve as an ongoing legacy for the extraordinary courage of Vietnamese people and a reminder of what Australia looks like at its absolute best. But it would also be a grave injustice indeed to forget the horrors and the sacrifices that were endured by so many along the way on that journey to Australia. That makes anniversaries like this even more important. We honour the courage and resilience of the people of South Vietnam and all those who stand for democratic ideals. We remind ourselves not to take for granted the peace and freedom that we enjoy in this country at a time when the people in so many nations have neither—including Vietnam to this day. Today we pledge never to forget the price paid in blood and suffering by Australian and Vietnamese veterans alike.

As we approach a federal election of our own, one that inevitably is greeted with a healthy degree of cynicism amongst the population towards the political process, it is also true that this is a process that is a privilege that has been fought for and won. It is each and everyone's civic duty to honour the sacrifice that has been made by our men and women in uniform in the name of democracy; to acknowledge the courage and determination from those who have sailed from other parts of the world in the pursuit of the opportunity to be able to participate in a liberal democracy; that this weekend we do not just look at it with a healthy degree of cynicism but that we also look at it as a privilege to be celebrated that here in this state, in this nation, notwithstanding our challenges, that our democracy is free, participatory and welcomes people to participate, not just those who were born here but those who now call South Australia and Australia home.

There is no finer example in this state and in this country of a contribution that has been made to our rich social fabric from those who have come from across the seas, more so than the Vietnamese people post the Vietnam War. The fall of Saigon was a tragic moment indeed, but it also serves as a reminder that with resilience and courage and hope, we as people are capable of achieving anything. I commend this motion to the house.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (16:46): I, too, commend the motion:

That this house—

- (a) notes that 30 April 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, leading to the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of communist rule in Vietnam;
- (b) notes that the fall of Saigon, also known as Black April, had disastrous ramifications for Vietnamese people, including hundreds of thousands of people sent to re-education camps, with many experiencing torture, disease and starvation, and creating a refugee crisis with millions of people displaced into neighbouring countries and across the world;

- (c) acknowledges the significant pain and distress still felt by South Australian Vietnamese community members, many of whom directly experienced these traumatic events, or are descendants of those who suffered through both the war and the long, dangerous journey to our shores;
- (d) thanks and acknowledges the sacrifices made by Australian and Vietnamese veterans, as well as their families, in the fight for freedom;
- (e) recognises the especially significant contribution that Vietnamese South Australians have made to our state in the decades since these events, overcoming the many challenges posed by the legacy of the war with the signature determination, grit and optimism we have come to recognise in our Vietnamese community; and
- (f) calls on all South Australians to stand with our South Australian Vietnamese community as they reflect on this pivotal and catastrophic event in our history.

I stand here today not only as the Leader of the Opposition but also as the nephew of a Vietnam War veteran in Peter Varricchio service No. 4719431. He, like many South Australians and thousands of Australians, fought in this war many years ago. I have got to say one of the most touching commemorations I have ever seen today was, in fact, the one that I attended this morning. I do want to pay tribute and acknowledge the many distinguished guests, members of the Republic of Vietnam Veterans Association of SA and VCA/SA, members of the Vietnamese community, religious leaders and other leaders in the community, who today came together to honour the fallen.

Because we know, as we have heard today, that the fall of Saigon was not just for some the fall of that, but was also the fall of a country. We reflect on that day that holds a very heavy meaning, the day that was a day of profound loss, sorrow and remembrance, but also a day that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit, of courage in the face of adversity and resilience in the face of loss and of hope, even amongst tragedy.

As we have heard, what followed were certainly dark days, where hundreds of thousands were sent to what has been put as re-education camps, camps where many suffered very cruel fates: torture, disease, starvation and also forced labour. We know that families were torn apart and dreams were extinguished and yet, from this deep adversity, hope persisted. We have heard some truly amazing and courageous stories of survival.

Those community members who did make it to Australia, and to South Australia, the Vietnamese community is a very proud community here and from those stories of adversity and resilience, the community here can be very proud that the South Australian Vietnamese community has continued to excel on a whole range of fronts and enrich our society, whether it is the Hon. Tung Ngo in the other house, one of your own, who has been elevated to be a member of parliament, whether it is the former governor, the Hon. Hieu Van Le, whom I have an enormous amount of respect for, and whether it is in business, or whether it is in other feats, they have excelled in all walks of life and South Australia has been enriched. The Vietnamese community has become cherished and is a vital part of this state's fabric. The journey of some of these people from what was traumatic, the resilience that they have shown and their contribution is nothing short of inspirational.

Today, we acknowledge the pain and the trauma that so many in our Vietnamese community still carry either as survivors or descendants of those who fled. We understand that pain is still real. That was evident today. The history, however, cannot be forgotten. We also pause to honour many of those who served. I quoted one such example: my uncle, born in Italy but who fought alongside his new Vietnamese friends as an Aussie. To the Vietnamese veterans, to the Australian service men and women who fought alongside them, we thank you as well. Many of them are here today. We remember the courage that you showed and the freedom that you fought to preserve. We celebrate the legacy of the strength that has followed in the face of this immense hardship. Vietnamese South Australians have risen with determination, with optimism and grace and they have shaped our state across every field.

To the Vietnamese community, those present, those listening, and those who will observe these words, I say on behalf of the opposition and the Liberal Party, we certainly honour your sacrifices. We stand with you in reflection and remembrance. We celebrate your profound contribution to South Australia. May we never forget those who gave everything in the fight for freedom. May we continue to uphold the values that we hold dear and may we continue to be inspired by the extraordinary resilience of all those who found a new beginning on those distant shores.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (16:52): The fall of Saigon marked the end of a war and the victory of tyranny over freedom. The communist-led North Vietnamese army that marched into Saigon violently and viciously attacking the city had its genesis in the Paris Peace Accords in 1973. After the Paris Peace Accords, it became clear that the United States would pull out of Vietnam and, of course, the South Vietnamese military and morale collapsed culminating in a last stand in Saigon.

There were great feats of heroism in those last days in Saigon, including from US service men and women who were in the operation called Frequent Wind. There are some lasting images of that day of helicopters evacuating nearly 7,000 civilians in one day, lasting images that were imprinted on the minds and images across Australia and the United States and the free world, seeing communist troops overrun a free city.

The human consequences of the mass exodus out of South Vietnam were devastating for those who were left behind. Those who were left behind were subjected to some of the cruellest and most violent behaviour you could see from a repressive regime. The communist regime did all it could to cleanse, in its words, free people of Saigon. They even went to the lengths of renaming the city in celebration of their victory in a last cruel blow to the people of Vietnam.

That defeat sent shock waves around the world. It was a communist victory over the free world. It was something that shaped the last draw of breath of the Cold War between 1975 and 1991. Unfortunately for the people of Vietnam, they are still living under that system. But Australia is a beneficiary of the people who had the courage, as the Premier said, to come on their boats, risking their families and their lives, to come to a free nation, and we accepted them.

I want to pay tribute today to a politician who did so much for that reunification in South Australia, and that was former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser. Malcolm Fraser did something that I thought was magnificent. I got to know Malcolm Fraser in the last few years of his life. I know he had very high words indeed for our Governor and the Vietnamese community, and he was not as impressed with his old political party as he used to be, without wanting to make any aspersions today.

He showed the very best of what it means to be a liberal democracy. He welcomed those boat people to Australia because we had a responsibility to accept them. He worked hard to make sure that they were accepted. He worked hard to make sure that his government, and subsequent governments like the Hawke government, did all they could to protect and preserve their culture and, of course, afford them a new life in a new country, accepting them as we had past waves of migration.

That community has gone on to do amazing things. I went to high school with my very good friend Tung Ngo, who graces the gallery here. On our first day at Adelaide High School in class 8.1.22, we met for the first time, and here we are today again in the parliament. We got together again in the Labor Party in later years. His story is a remarkable one as are many other remarkable stories of refugees who came to this country fleeing a postwar world.

I am the son of migrants like that. I did not have to come to a new country not knowing the language. I did not have to make new friendships. I did not have to try to find a house for my family. I did not have to try to find a job when I could not speak English. I cannot imagine what those waves of migrants went through. They stuck together. The bonds that they have are unbreakable, and they are beautiful bonds.

The morals and the values of those communities are being passed on to their children and their grandchildren. They have enriched our country and made our country better. They are shining lights for us to see the value of family, perseverance and sticking together. They are great entrepreneurs as well. They are in academia, they are in business, they are in politics. They are in all fields of Australian and South Australian life, and they have made our country so much better.

I also want to mention, as people have, our veterans, who were sent to participate in a war to defend Australia's democratic values while we were in the midst of a Cold War. Whatever the thought processes were, they served in our name, and they deserve our gratitude, our thanks, for their valour, for their sacrifice, what that war did to them and how they were treated when they were returned.

We have a responsibility in this generation to make that right. We have a responsibility as political leaders to make sure that we honour our veterans, to make sure that they are given the gratitude that they deserve and that they were not given when they first returned home. I think the Premier, the government and the opposition stand here today united to say that we honour their service and honour their valour. We think of the fallen. We will never forget the sacrifices that they made, and they will always be in our hearts.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:58): I rise to make some comments regarding this motion on the fall of Saigon 50 years ago. I want to acknowledge the impact of the Vietnam War, noting that 30 April 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, leading to the end of the Vietnam War. I want to acknowledge the sacrifices made by both Australian and Vietnamese veterans, as well as their families, in the fight for freedom.

As has been indicated today, we certainly understand the long and dangerous journey taken by boat by many Vietnamese refugees to the safety of Australia's shore. We thank and acknowledge the sacrifices made by both Australian and Vietnamese veterans, as well as their families, in the fight for freedom. I also want to recognise the especially significant contribution that Vietnamese South Australians have made to our state in the decades since these events, overcoming the many challenges posed by the legacy of the war.

Sixty-thousand Australians, including ground troops, air force and navy personnel served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1973; 2,400 were injured during this time and, sadly, 523 lost their lives, with 58 of those lives lost being South Australian personnel. Sadly, the Vietnam veterans who returned home were ignored, met with hostility and even made aware that their presence was not welcome because some people believed they had not served in a proper war.

This was the reaction they received from not only the public but from some fellow veterans and RSL branches. It took more than 10 years after their return from Vietnam for the veterans to be given the welcoming they deserved. In 1987 a welcome home parade was held in honour of their service and sacrifices. Over 22,000 veterans marched through Sydney, with crowds amassing to more than 100,000.

I want to talk about some of the important Australian conflicts and battles that happened during the Vietnam War. We were well supported by the South Vietnamese while we were there. Obviously, one of these was the Battle of Long Tan. This was a battle that started on the morning of 18 August 1966. The Australians in the Long Tan plantation were outnumbered 20 to one. The majority of the battle was fought in a blinding monsoon and thunderstorm. The entire battle took place over an area no bigger than two football fields.

The rubber plantation at Long Tan was approximately five kilometres from the artillery at Nui Dat. The battle lasted 3½ hours with the last contacts occurring around 7.15pm on 18 August 1966. At the end of the battle, 15 Australians were missing. The ANZAC force had no idea of the significant Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army force they had faced, or the significant casualties they had inflicted upon them.

The Australians lost 18 men who were killed, 17 from Delta Company 6RAR; 11 of these were national servicemen Australian Army, six were regular soldiers in the Australian Army; one was from 3 Troop, 1 Armoured Personnel Carrier Squadron, who died nine days later from wounds sustained in the battle; and 24 members of D Company were wounded. There were 245 North Vietnamese army and Viet Cong soldiers killed.

In regard to the Coral and Balmoral battles for the fire support bases, during the mini tet offensive mounted by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces in May 1968, the 1st Australian Task Force deployed two battalions to an area 20 kilometres north of Bien Hoa City to intercept and disrupt enemy forces withdrawing from the capital, Saigon, and the Bien Hoa-Long Binh Base complex. Several fire support bases were established to provide defended firing points for artillery and mortars which would cover foot patrols to be sent out by the battalions, both 1RAR and 3RAR. One of these fire support bases was dubbed Coral.

The occupation of Coral was begun on 12 May, but the defences remained unfinished when, at about 3:30am on 13 May, it was attacked following a brief but intense rocket and mortar barrage.

The 3RAR mortar platoon position was overrun, along with one of 102 Field Battery's six 105 mm M2A2 howitzers in the base. With the aid of extensive air support, the attack was beaten off by 6.30am and the captured gun pit was retaken, still with the gun in it. This howitzer is now on display in the Vietnam War gallery at the Australian War Memorial. Eleven Australians were killed and 28 wounded, while the attackers lost more than 52. A further three Australians sadly died in patrol clashes on 14 May.

At 2.30am on 16 May, Coral again came under attack, this time from a North Vietnamese Army force estimated at three battalions strong. The base was now defended by armoured personnel carriers of A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment and 3RAR's rifle companies, all of which were heavily engaged. Part of the A Company position was occupied for a period, but the enemy was forced to withdraw. The attack was repelled after four hours of fighting, with the Australians having suffered five men killed and 19 wounded. Two members of the American Battery which had reinforced the base were also wounded.

On 22 May, Coral was subjected to yet another rocket and mortar barrage, but this time the NVA troops were dispersed by return fire from mortars as they formed up to attack. Although there were further bombardments on 26 and 28 May, and patrols sent out from the base came into contact with the enemy, Coral was not seriously threatened again. During fighting on 26 May, the base's defenders even turned the tables on the NVA by sending a troop of Centurion tanks from C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment (which had arrived as reinforcements three days earlier) outside the perimeter wire with infantry support. These engaged and destroyed most of an NVA bunker system that had been discovered.

Enemy efforts on 26 May were primarily focused on another base, named Balmoral, which was established about 4½ kilometres further north on 24 and 25 May by 3RAR, supported by tanks. The defenders threw back assaults launched against Balmoral on 26 and 28 May. On the latter occasion, the attacking NVA regiment lost at least 42, and seven prisoners were taken.

These were just some of the significant battles that were undertaken during the Vietnam War, and the Australian soldiers fought with valour alongside their South Vietnamese counterparts. The camaraderie and the assistance that the South Vietnamese soldiers gave to our men while they were fighting for democracy in Vietnam, and also the families of South Vietnamese who assisted our people while they were trying to defend democracy, can never be forgotten.

On 26 April 1976 the first boatload of refugees fleeing Vietnam sailed into Darwin Harbour, heralding a series of arrivals over the years to follow. The vast majority of refugees from Vietnam arrived by plane after selection by Australian officials in refugee camps established throughout South-East Asia. Since 1976, Australia has become home to a thriving Vietnamese community. In fact, the census from nine years ago shows that there were 219,357 people in Australia who were born in Vietnam.

Vietnamese Australians have made significant contributions to various aspects of Australian life, including culturally with their cuisine and certainly with business. I want to acknowledge former Governor Hieu Van Le, here today with his wife, Mrs Le, and their contribution, along with all the other Vietnamese who have made such a great contribution to this great state and this great nation.

The impact of war was terrible, especially for those left behind who were tortured and persecuted for their belief in democracy. Thankfully, we have made a safe haven for many refugees to come and enjoy the benefits of this great state and this great nation. Again, I want to acknowledge all the veterans, the South Vietnamese and the Australian veterans, who worked together in trying to enforce democracy all those years ago in such a terrible war. In closing, I again want to acknowledge the massive contribution that the Vietnamese community has played right across this state and this nation. We are far better for it. Thank you.

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (17:09): I rise to speak in support of this important motion moved by the Premier, acknowledging the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Today, we reflect on a pivotal moment in history, which took place 50 years ago on 30 April 1975. This day marked the end of the Vietnam War, a conflict that shaped the lives of millions and left a lasting impact on both the people of Vietnam and the global community.

There are moments in history that we can never forget, moments that change the course of history and impact millions of people along the way. The vast human toll of the Vietnam War and the fall of Saigon is one that was captured before the eyes of the world. The Vietnam War is often referred to as the first television war, because it was the first conflict shown with such devastating images in homes across the globe.

The images and stories from the fall of Saigon will never be forgotten. It is often said that in war armies collapse gradually and then very suddenly, and this was no exception. The chaos was such that with North Vietnamese forces closing in on Saigon there were only a few hours to evacuate. In addition to American South Vietnamese troops, there were hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese people who had supported the war effort in other ways, whether by working as suppliers, translators or transport workers and many other roles.

When you include their families, there were upwards of a million people who had a reasonable expectation that they should be evacuated by the Americans to safety. These people were at extreme risk of being killed or sent to camps by the North Vietnamese. On 29 April, a code was read out over radio, 'The temperature in Saigon is 105° and rising.' This was the signal to get to the embassy immediately and to board a helicopter to safety, but with only a few dozen helicopters on hand there was no chance of evacuating so many Vietnamese troops and supporters, let alone their families, so many were simply left behind.

The world watched as helicopters took off from the roofs of buildings, with people clinging on in desperation. For those who lived through that moment, it was a time of profound uncertainty, fear and loss. The images of refugees fleeing, of families separated and of a country torn apart are seared into our collective memory, but behind these powerful images are equally powerful stories of the individuals impacted by this war.

These stories are often devastating, with young children separated from their parents and siblings in a desperate scramble for survival. Our thoughts will always be with the families and friends of these brave individuals, especially on this day. Each year, the anniversary of the fall of Saigon remains a sad day for millions of Vietnamese people around the world and all those who fought to defend South Vietnam from communist aggression.

As we reflect on the 50th anniversary, we must also remember the resilience and strength that emerged from the ashes of war. From unimaginable horror, many Vietnamese refugees boarded boats, fleeing their country in search of safety on foreign shores, and South Australia is all the richer for their courage and determination.

The Vietnamese community faced tremendous challenges when they arrived in South Australia, having experienced unbearable trauma and separation from their loved ones. Despite this, through sheer determination and an impeccable work ethic, newly arrived Vietnamese refugees embraced life in South Australia to become an integral part of the community. They now represent our fourth largest multicultural community in the state. In addition, when they arrived in Australia, our Vietnamese community was able to reconnect with their religion, something which had been outlawed in their homeland.

Today, we also honour the brave men and women who served in the Vietnam War on both sides, and the countless lives that were forever altered as a result of the conflict. As mentioned, we lost 521 Australians who made the ultimate sacrifice, 58 of whom were South Australian.

In supporting this motion today, I pay tribute to our Vietnamese community here in South Australia, in particular Mr Dang-Thao Nguyen, President of the Republic of the Vietnam Veterans' Association, and Mrs Quin Tran, President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia, South Australian Chapter—the first female president of the community and also a member of the South Australian Multicultural Commission.

I would like to also recognise our former Governor Hieu Van Le whose comment of coming to Australia with a suitcase of dreams has been repeated back to me so many times from other refugees who have come here. I would like to recognise his impact when he was Governor of opening Government House to a large diversity of South Australians. He made sure the time that he was in that role made a difference, and that is something that has also continued under Frances Adamson:

to make it open to the public, to invite lots of our diverse communities in to make them understand that Government House is their house.

Can I also pay tribute to my friend and colleague the Hon. Tung Ngo whose story, like so many other Vietnamese refugees, is one of incredible resilience. Tung fled Vietnam at the age of nine with his sister. They were separated from their parents and they travelled on a small fishing boat to the Philippines before being accepted by Australia. After being elected as the first Vietnamese-born person to local government and then to the Legislative Council, Tung played an integral role in the establishment of the Vietnamese Boat People Monument on the banks of the Torrens. He is an inspiration to me and my colleagues, and I recognise Tung's work in making that monument happen and bringing the community with him to fill the sense of ownership of what that monument stands for.

Today is one of those days when we reflect on history, and we recognise that we continue to be in a world that experiences significant conflict and people are impacted as we speak and as we stand here. We recognise, however, most importantly the sacrifices today of our Vietnamese community and recognise those who fell in freedom's name who will be forever remaining in our hearts. We must not forget how many people are impacted when there is conflict, but what we today also recognise is what resilience, hard work and determination to live life to the fullest can mean to a community. I support the motion.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (17:17): I rise to support this important motion and particularly acknowledge all of those Vietnamese community leaders, those Vietnamese veterans and those Australian veterans from the RSL who have paid commemoration today on the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon—50 years to the day, a black day, on which Saigon fell: a liberal democracy taken over and defeated by a violent, corrupt, authoritarian, totalitarian, communist dictatorship. The motion we are debating acknowledges the trauma of this, and it is good that it does so unambiguously. It is an acknowledgement of the torture, disease and starvation visited upon millions of Vietnamese people: victims of the invasion, victims of so-called re-education camps—people forced to flee as refugees in small boats on deadly, treacherous waters.

Today, at the commemorative service, attended by a number of members of parliament including myself and the Leader of the Opposition, leaders in our community, dozens of veterans from both the Australian and South Vietnamese services and one American serviceman, also particularly along with their representatives, we paid tribute to all those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. We acknowledged the mateship and camaraderie felt by Australian and South Vietnamese forces.

Today, it was also important to acknowledge some difficult truths. The speeches acknowledged the regret that we now have for the way in which our returned service personnel were treated upon their return. The member for Hammond highlighted the gap of more than a decade before there was welcome home acknowledgements on a national scale, for example. They were fighting for our nation. They were fighting for our freedom and our values.

More than 500 Australians gave their lives, both conscripted and voluntary services. They deserve every honour that is given to them, and it was a positive thing today that the Vietnamese community in particular demonstrated their gratitude to these dozens of service personnel this morning with particular acknowledgement. As members reflected earlier in this debate, it is incumbent upon us all to ensure their sacrifices are not forgotten, their service is honoured and the way in which they were maltreated and insignificantly supported upon their return is never repeated.

Today in the service, Bill Denny, as a returned Vietnam veteran, also reflected upon the significant regret that was felt by many of the Australian personnel who were serving in Vietnam when the announcement and the order to return to Australia was given. The South Vietnamese forces were understood by many of those personnel, as Bill Denny reflected, to be abandoned in many ways to fight their fight alone, without sufficient support, without sufficient resources and without the air defence equipment necessary to enable their continued survival and successful defence of their country.

They were opposed by not just the North Vietnamese forces but also all of the communist bloc countries: the Soviet Union, China, Cuba and other Eastern Bloc countries, as was described,

who were supporting the North Vietnamese invading forces. For all of those people who continued to fight for the principles of freedom and democracy, we in this parliament should also give thanks. There is a sorrowful and a particular trauma as we think of the flame of democracy and democratic liberty being extinguished by a belligerent invading force.

Fifty years later, our reflection on this trauma should stiffen our sinews and firm our resolve to continue supporting our friends in Ukraine as they continue to fight for liberal democracy and its values against a belligerent invading force. As I laid my wreath this morning, along with the Leader of the Opposition, we did so knowing that our local florist, a Ukrainian migrant Natasha, had done a magnificent job, and it felt a particularly salient moment.

The second part of this motion is equally important and perhaps a more cheerful note on which to end because, as we commemorate 50 years since the fall of Saigon, we can at least celebrate the 50 years that the Vietnamese community in South Australia has had such a remarkable impact upon all our lives. It is unthinkable to imagine South Australia today without the extraordinary contribution made by so many Vietnamese migrants, so many of whom came as refugees in extraordinarily difficult circumstances in the late 1970s.

As a Liberal, I am so proud of the work done by former Liberal Prime Minister the late Malcolm Fraser, who made that active choice that we would welcome and support those refugees coming to Australia. It was virtuous, it was righteous and, ultimately, it was a decision that has been in our country's interests and in the interests of our state, because every time that I go to a Vietnamese community event I am overwhelmed first by the sense of gratitude that the community feels with the songs that have been written.

Quin Tran, as the President of the Vietnamese Community in South Australia, this morning read us a rewritten version of Dorothea Mackellar's *I Love a Sunburnt Country* with words about the gratitude of the Vietnamese community integrated into its text. Every time I hear one of these statements, and they are invariably at almost everyone of these events, I am overwhelmed by the sense that we are more fortunate as South Australians to have the Vietnamese community here.

It is a positive thing for the tens of thousands of South Australians of Vietnamese background or birth. They are able to live safe and free in this country and, indeed, make that extraordinary contribution to our state. It is important, therefore, for our state. May we always provide a safe home for them and their families, where they may prosper and achieve as they have done, and where the sacrifices and losses on their part and their forebears will not be forgotten. Lest we forget.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (17:24): It is a great pleasure and with great pride that I join many people in this chamber today in speaking to this important motion, on this particularly important day, and a day that is not without significant trauma for the Vietnamese community here in South Australia.

Can I begin by acknowledging the extraordinary service that I and many members of this house attended today at the Vietnam War Memorial. As always, with the Vietnamese community and the Vietnamese veterans' community, it was solemn, it was respectful, but, as I think the member for Morialta just reflected, full of a unique joy, a unique joy that is often shared and uniquely shared amongst the Vietnamese community.

Growing up in Royal Park and being the local member representing Athol Park, where many of the Vietnamese community in South Australia are based, and being the local member for the Phap Hoa Buddhist Temple, which is such an important spiritual place for members of the Vietnamese community and those of Buddhist faith, gives me great pride. I have spoken in this place before, too, around the important contributions that personally I have felt, received and continue to enjoy from my friends, my neighbours in the Vietnamese community.

The fall of Saigon and the Vietnam War has shaped our nation; it has shaped our nation and our state. It has shaped our nation in the first part because of the extraordinary and immediacy of the stepping up of a contribution from Australia in the pursuit and defence of freedom in Vietnam. It is important to note that the war in Vietnam was only mere years upon the conclusion of World War II,

the war that was meant to be the war to end all wars. It was just years after Australia's enormous contribution in the war in Korea.

Again, in that case it was an important moment in our nation's history around the emerging spectre of communism across the region. And then, mere years thereafter, Australia once again stepped up into conflict, into conflict in pursuit of defence of the freedoms and ideals which our nation was built on. That has shaped our nation because of the immediacy and the extent to which Australia's contribution to resolving conflict and defending freedoms are known across the world and, importantly, across our region.

As other members have reflected on today, it has shaped our nation because of the shame that our nation continues to bear because of the response, the reaction, the welcome that was received by those who fought in Vietnam. It is not just those who voluntarily signed up, not just those who voluntarily, with courage and conviction, stepped up to serve their nation, but it was those whose nation chose them that were also spat on in the streets. It was those that were called upon from their nation to serve that were ostracised and shunned. There is shame, our nation's shame that that occurred.

But that history and response from our nation has shaped us. I see and know and trust that the nature of our nation's response—the inadequacy and the shame of our nation's response in that moment—has made us a better nation, because our response to those who served, the response to the complexities of conflict and the complexities of war, is now better and it is more befitting of a nation which, continually to this day and into the future, calls upon our young men and women to serve, often for the purposes of pursuing and defending freedoms that were defended in Vietnam at that time.

Shaping our nation has also occurred upon the extraordinary response that has been touched upon today by other members to the humanitarian response that our nation provided. We are a nation that should define ourselves by the welcome that we give others. We are a nation and we are a state that should define ourselves by the care, the love, the support, and the hope that we can give and provide to those who seek it. We saw that with the tens of thousands of Vietnamese boat people who fled Vietnam and were welcomed into the safe embrace of this nation. That has shaped who we are.

We have been doing this for some time, of course. Many of us in this place have spoken of the impact that the conflict of World War II has played on the shaping of our multicultural communities. In my very first speech in this place I spoke about my own father's experiences as a refugee from Hungary. I reflect on that today because of the important understanding that I had of the Vietnamese conflict as a child. The war ended, Saigon fell well before I was born, but my dad fought the very same communist oppressors in Budapest, the very same communist oppressors that rolled through Saigon on this day 50 years ago.

In my home, with my mum and my dad at the kitchen table or in the lounge room, we spoke often and I understood innately the need, the desires and the obligations for us to continue to tell the stories of those who stood up against the extreme enormity of the Soviet, the communist oppression, through the fifties, the sixties and the seventies.

To fast forward now 50 years and find myself with the extraordinary privilege of serving as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, I think back to those days when I was six or seven around the kitchen table hearing my dad so eloquently speak about the communist oppression through Vietnam and the bravery of the men and women who withstood it.

In conclusion, I will reflect in the manner in which I did earlier on today at the memorial on the way that we as a community, that we as a parliament, can and should keep the memories alive of those who have sacrificed so much, the way that we can truly and adequately, some 50 years after the tragic fall of Saigon, pay our lasting respects to those who served, those who lost, and those who sacrificed.

The world is a difficult place, the world is seeing conflict, but we are a country and we are a state that has always stood on the side of what is right and what is just. Every time I drive down Hanson Road in my electorate, at Woodville North I look with great pride at the yellow flag that flies

so proudly. We are a state and a council in the City of Charles Sturt that stood proudly and resolutely to say that that flag, the flag of the Republic of Vietnam, has pride of place in our city. We are also a state that has stood, across all partisan, non-partisan politics and across all sides of politics, proudly on the side of what is right and what is just in Ukraine.

As the challenges, the struggles, and the oppression in Vietnam continues, I also pay my respects today to those in Vietnam who continue to be the advocates for freedom, for democracy, for those things which we take for granted in such a profoundly enormous way here in South Australia. I express my enormous gratitude to the Vietnamese community for their friendship, for their bravery, for their leadership, for their humility but, most importantly, for their resolute support of what is right and what is just. I hope that, in the years I have the privilege of continuing to serve in this place, I can do them proud by always standing on the side that they stand on. Lest we forget.

Sitting extended beyond 18:00 on motion of Hon. J.K. Szakacs.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (17:35): The capture of Saigon by invading North Vietnamese forces on 30 April 1975 led to the collapse of the South Vietnamese government and the evacuation of thousands of South Vietnamese people. This event and its aftermath, known as Black April, marked the end of the Vietnam War.

To say that the long and complex conflict in Vietnam had a profound impact on Australian society is undeniably true. For many Australians, the legacy of that impact still influences aspects of the way we think and what we believe. Our Defence Force personnel who served in the conflict, numbering in total around 60,000 and among whom over 15,000 were conscripts, had their lives forever changed by the experience. So too did their families, and none more so than the families of the over 520 Australian service members who lost their lives.

More than 200 of Australia's casualties in Vietnam were conscripted men. In fact, the first Australian conscript to be killed in action was Errol Noack, a 21-year-old South Australian, the only child of a single father, who died after only 10 days of service. In carrying out the missions they were given, our ADF personnel in Vietnam gave so much of themselves. It is also the case that our veterans returned to a nation that did not uniformly extend its understanding and gratitude. For a variety of reasons, many of our living Vietnam veterans still suffer.

But no group of people was more profoundly affected by this complicated conflict and its devastating impacts than the men, women and children of Vietnam. After more than a decade of turmoil and war, the fall of Saigon had devastating consequences for the people of South Vietnam. A long period of political and social upheaval followed. A great many South Vietnamese soldiers and civilians fled. Many of those who did not or could not flee were sent to re-education camps, where they endured torture and unthinkable conditions. Many urban residents, particularly in Saigon, were forced to relocate to rural areas, leading to significant social disruption and economic hardship.

Over the months and years that followed the fall of Saigon, hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese residents left to seek safety, freedom and opportunity. Many of them took the difficult decision to embark upon a perilous journey by sea. They crowded in number onto boats that were unseaworthy and unsafe. The strength of their hope for a better future was enough to drive them to risk their lives and the lives of their families in such a way.

Of course, it was a minority of the total number of Vietnamese refugees to Australia and ultimately to South Australia who arrived in this manner. But among the most memorable images for many South Australians when we reflect on the arrival of Vietnamese refugees seeking to make new lives in Australia is that of boats arriving in Darwin Harbour, full of exhausted but courageous and determined people who had succeeded in braving an angry sea's violent storms, who had endured the frightening threat of piracy and who had survived the ravages of extreme hunger and thirst in their quest to reach safety on our nation's shores.

When many South Australians think of such brave people, we think of people such as the Hon. Hieu Van Le, who was the first person of Asian heritage appointed as a state Governor in Australia and the first person of Vietnamese background appointed to a vice-regal position anywhere in the world. We think of the Hon. Tung Ngo, who was the first Vietnamese person elected to local government in South Australia and the first Vietnamese-born member of parliament in South

Australia. Both these distinguished and accomplished community leaders fled Vietnam and made their way as refugees to Australia by boat. They each speak regularly and openly of the terrifying and uncertain journeys that brought them here and the challenges they faced after they arrived.

On an occasion such as today, we should reflect upon the understanding that so many Vietnamese South Australians have stories much like theirs, having faced and overcome so many of the same hardships. Whilst it is true that every Vietnamese South Australian has their own unique story, the common story that they all share is that of becoming, in this place that is now their home, fundamentally interwoven into the fabric of our state and its communities. Once they had found the safety they had sought, significant barriers remained to realising the lives they imagined for themselves and their children.

The Whitlam government passed the Racial Discrimination Act in 1975, the same year in which Saigon fell, but some types of change cannot happen overnight. Many Vietnamese South Australians faced both racial discrimination and practical obstacles to opportunity. They faced difficulties in rebuilding their lives because of a lack of proficiency in English, because of the inability to have qualifications they gained in Vietnam recognised here, or because they were not able to refrain due to an immediate need to support their other family members.

With time, however, Vietnamese South Australians have not only persevered but flourished. They excel in work and in education. They are strongly represented in professional and creative endeavours throughout our community, as well as in positions of leadership. They have distinguished themselves across every area of endeavour.

When one reflects on the contribution that Vietnamese South Australians and Vietnamese Australians have made to this state and this nation, what stands out in particular is the way in which they helped Australia and its people grow. Their arrival and their integration into our community was a powerful catalyst for our country's development into the proud multicultural nation we are today. Their arrival can be regarded as the first practical test in Australia's willingness to grow after the Whitlam government's dismantling of the White Australia policy in 1973.

What a benefit to our state and our nation that this willingness to grow was realised. We are all much richer for the continued contributions of Vietnamese South Australians to the place we are all fortunate to call home. They and their culture are so much a part of the social, cultural and economic life of our state that it is hard to imagine the place without their influence. Especially in Adelaide's northern suburbs and western suburbs, and particularly in Pooraka in my own electorate, they have made their powerful and indelible mark, and they have built and continue to build the lives for themselves and their families that they imagined and that they deserve.

It is so fortunate that Australia as a nation recognised and upheld our responsibility to extend safety, freedom and opportunity to the hardworking, ambitious, industrious, creative, strong and vibrant Vietnamese people who wished for the sorts of lives and futures that we had ample ability to offer to them then, and still have today.

On this solemn milestone anniversary, I pay my respects to those Vietnamese South Australians and, indeed, to all South Australians for whom this is a day of mourning and sad reflection. To those who directly endured the distress and trauma of the hardships and horrors that occurred before, during and after the fall of Saigon, and to their families, I extend my thoughts and sympathy.

To our veterans and their families, I offer my gratitude, as well as my regret to those Vietnam veterans who suffered and still suffer from the impacts of their experiences in the defence of democracy and in the face of international communism aggression.

I am grateful to the Vietnamese South Australians within my community and all around our state and nation for their deep love of the home that we share, for their embracing of its culture, which they have helped to build, and for their respect for the values and the opportunities that make our state and our nation such a wonderful place to live. I commend the motion to the house.

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (17:42): I will keep this brief, but with at least 3,000 people from my electorate born in Vietnam, this motion has deep significance to the many people I am privileged to represent. On their behalf and in memory of those who suffered, I rise in its support.

In acknowledging the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon and subsequent settlement of Vietnamese refugees in Australia, I see both the good and the devastation within this milestone. It was good because it brought a community to us and enriched us as a nation, but it was devastating for the reasons that brought us together. When history makes a dark turn, there can be no argument that this a solemn occasion. Together we, as South Australians, stand shoulder to shoulder with our Vietnamese community in remembrance of events leading to the deaths of what I understood to be four million people, the lingering effects of defoliants and to one of the largest refugee crises of the 20th century.

While I know I only touch the sides, I raise these points in appreciation that the effects and memory of this conflict haunts both Vietnamese Australians and, indeed, veterans to this day. In a week when we pause to remember those who defended our country and our way of life, I extend my deepest thanks to the veterans of this conflict. Their sacrifice must not be forgotten. Of those who said goodbye to loved ones and made a new life within our shores, while we cannot erase the pain, may today's expression of gratitude to the contributions they have made to South Australia ease this slightly.

I also hope seeing the success of subsequent generations gives them good reason to be proud of their decision to settle here and the collective contributions that they have made. I echo the sentiments of previous speakers to honour the bravery, generosity and spirit of the Vietnamese community in South Australia. Just as 30 April marks a solemn occasion, there can be no argument that we are a better place because they have joined us.

Motion carried.

Bills

STATE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION AND FACILITATION BILL

Final Stages

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

No. 1. Clause 6, page 7, after line 31—Insert:

- (3a) In addition, in nominating members for appointment, the Minister must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the membership of CGO reflects an appropriate diversity of experience and perspectives (whether business, industry, government or other experience or perspectives) and should have regard to the knowledge, experience and background of each person to be nominated for appointment.

No. 2. Clause 12, page 10, after line 26 [clause 12(2)]—After paragraph (a) insert:

- (ab) must provide for a quorum of CGO to include at least the principal member; and

No. 3. Clause 33, page 23, after line 22—Insert:

- (5a) If CGO publishes a declaration under subsection (1), the Minister must, within 6 sitting days after publication of the declaration, cause a copy of the declaration to be laid before—
 - (a) if the Minister is a Member of Parliament—the House of Parliament of which the Minister is a Member; or
 - (b) in any other case—the House of Assembly.
- (5b) If either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing a declaration laid before it under subsection (5a), the declaration will cease to have effect.
- (5c) A resolution of a House of Parliament is not effective for the purposes of subsection (5b) unless the resolution is passed within 14 sitting days (which need not fall within the same session of Parliament) after the day on which the declaration was laid before the House under subsection (5a).
- (5d) Nothing in this section affects the validity of a declaration under subsection (1) disallowed under this section before the passing of the disallowance resolution.

No. 4. Clause 38, page 28, after line 29—Insert:

- (9a) For the purposes of this section (including in legal proceedings)—
- (a) a statement in a claim that an owner of land suffered loss or damage as a result of a person entering or temporarily occupying land under this section; and
 - (b) a statement in a claim specifying the amount of the loss or damage,
- will, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be accepted as proof of the matter so stated.

No. 5. Schedule 2, page 35, lines 29 to 31 [Schedule 2, clause 1(1), definition of *relevant interest*]—

Delete 'interest (including pecuniary and personal interests) of a kind specified by the Minister as being relevant to the office of member of CGO' and substitute:

interest of a kind prescribed by the regulations

At 17:46 the house adjourned until Thursday 1 May 2025 at 11:00.