

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 26 June 2025

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. L.W.K. Bignell) took the chair at 11:00.

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

The **SPEAKER** read prayers.

Bills

DROUGHT RESPONSE AND RECOVERY COORDINATOR BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council with a message drawing the attention of the House of Assembly to clause 17 printed in erased type, which clause being a money clause cannot originate in the Legislative Council but which is deemed necessary to the bill. Read a first time.

ROAD TRAFFIC (PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN OFFENCES WITH CHILD IN VEHICLE) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2025

Estimates Committees

The Legislative Council gave leave to the Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector and Special Minister of State (Hon. K.J. Maher), the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and Minister for Forest Industries (Hon. C.M. Scriven), and the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism and Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing (Hon. E.S. Bourke) to attend and give evidence before the estimates committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill, if they think fit.

Parliamentary Committees

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Legislative Council informed the House of Assembly that it had appointed the Hon. R.P. Wortley to the committee in place of the Hon. M. El Dannawi (resigned).

Motions

BURIAL AND CREMATION ACT REGULATIONS

Private Members Business, Notices of Motion, No. 2: Mr Odenwalder to move:

That regulations made under the Burial and Cremation Act 2013, entitled Surrender of Interment Rights, made on 18 November 2021 and laid on the table of this house on 30 November 2021, be disallowed.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:05): I move:

That this notice of motion be withdrawn.

Motion carried; notice of motion withdrawn.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT REGULATIONS

Private Members Business, Notices of Motion, No. 3: Mr Odenwalder to move:

That regulations made under the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021 entitled, General, made on 23 June 2022 and laid on the table of this house on 5 July 2022, be disallowed.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:05): I move:

That this notice of motion be withdrawn.

Motion carried; notice of motion withdrawn.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT REGULATIONS

Private Members Business, Notices of Motion, No. 4: Mr Odenwalder to move:

That regulations made under the Controlled Substances Act 1984 entitled, Youth Treatment Orders—General, made on 18 November 2021 and laid on the table of this house on 30 November 2021, be disallowed.

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (11:06): I move:

That this notice of motion be withdrawn.

Motion carried; notice of motion withdrawn.

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION ACT REGULATIONS

Private Members Business, Notices of Motion, No. 7: The Hon. J.A.W. Gardner to move:

That regulations made under the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1996 entitled Fees Notice—Fees (2025), made on 4 December 2024 and laid on the table of this house on 4 February 2025, be disallowed.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (11:06): I rise today to speak to this disallowance motion. Each year, fees and charges are reviewed and adjusted, usually in line with CPI; however, the increases under this regulation go well and truly above CPI. The additional revenue appears to be imposed to assist Births, Deaths and Marriages in meeting a \$1 million budget savings target.

This is an unfair and unnecessary burden on South Australians at some of the most challenging moments in their lives. We are talking about new parents who are already facing significant financial pressures. We are talking about grieving families who are dealing with the emotional and financial toll of losing a loved one. New parents and grieving families should not be asked to pay more simply to help balance the budget. The government should not be using grieving families as a cash grab to fix their budget problems.

A \$5 increase may seem small in isolation, but the reality is that these costs add up and, at a million dollars across the scale of what this budget is doing to South Australians, it is this cohort of South Australians being asked to add up these extra pennies for government, which is unfair. At a time when South Australians are already struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, the government should be looking for ways to ease financial pressures, especially on grieving families, especially on new parents, not add to them.

There is an increase from \$62.50 to \$67.50 (an 8 per cent jump) for registering changes of names or gender, processing applications for identity acknowledgement certificates, making corrections to entries or printing any standard form; a 5.3 per cent increase for printing death certificate extracts; and a 16 per cent increase for producing a digital historical record. The parliament should send a clear message to this government that we are not supportive of adding to the many costs during some of the most vulnerable times in people's lives, especially during a cost-of-living crisis.

A \$5 increase may seem like nothing to the government and it may, in isolation, be a low amount but it comes on top of the increases in food, it comes on top of the increases in electricity, the increases in water, the increases in every aspect of people's lives. I think that these percentage increases being above CPI is unnecessary, unfair, and should be opposed by this chamber.

The house divided on the motion:

Ayes16
Noes.....27
Majority11

AYES

Basham, D.K.B.
 Cowdrey, M.J.
 Gardner, J.A.W. (teller)
 Patterson, S.J.R.
 Tarzia, V.A.
 Whetstone, T.J.

Batty, J.A.
 Cregan, D.R.
 Hurn, A.M.
 Pederick, A.S.
 Teague, J.B.

Brock, G.G.
 Ellis, F.J.
 McBride, P.N.
 Pratt, P.K.
 Telfer, S.J.

NOES

Andrews, S.E.
 Champion, N.D.
 Cook, N.F.
 Hildyard, K.A.
 Hutchesson, C.L.
 Michaels, A.
 O'Hanlon, C.C.
 Picton, C.J.
 Szakacs, J.K.

Bettison, Z.L.
 Clancy, N.P.
 Dighton, A.E.
 Hood, L.P.
 Koutsantonis, A.
 Mullighan, S.C.
 Pearce, R.K.
 Savvas, O.M.
 Thompson, E.L.

Boyer, B.I.
 Close, S.E.
 Fulbrook, J.P.
 Hughes, E.J.
 Malinauskas, P.B.
 Odenwalder, L.K. (teller)
 Piccolo, A.
 Stinson, J.M.
 Wortley, D.J.

Motion thus negatived.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: MOUNT BARKER DISTRICT SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:16): I move:

That the 140th report of the committee, entitled New Mount Barker Hospital Multi-Deck Car Park and Early Structural Works for Clinical Services Building Project, be noted.

The Mount Barker District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital is operated by the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network. It is currently a 34-bed facility providing 24-hour accident and emergency services, inpatient and day patient surgical and medical services, obstetrics and gynaecology, chemotherapy, renal dialysis, palliative care, allied health and community-based services.

The hospital is seeing an increasing health service demand in its catchment area, driven by the rapidly growing population in Mount Barker and the Adelaide Hills. To meet this demand, the facility will require additional beds, and the South Australian government has committed \$320.8 million for the new Mount Barker hospital development on the existing site which plans to triple the hospital's inpatient capacity from 34 to 102 beds. The development will also expand specialist beds, providing new outpatient and community health facilities, establishing an onsite pharmacy and establishing a new mental health unit.

A previously approved enabling and early works package for the hospital development has already commenced, and SA Health—referred to as 'the department' herein—states that the proposed works for a new multideck car park and early structural works for a clinical services building will significantly progress milestone one of the hospital development. Works for the car park include:

- a three-level deck structure of approximately 11,500 square metres that will accommodate 370 car parks;
- a relocated access driveway from Wellington Road, providing shared public access with the adjoining at-grade parking areas being constructed within the previously approved early works package;
- modification to the access road and site entry at the west end of the site from Wellington Road; and
- substantial associated external civil and landscaping works.

Works for the clinical services building will include:

- early structural works for a new purpose-built facility which, when completed, would include five levels across approximately 16,500 square metres;
- structural works for level 1, which will comprise the main entrance and mental health inpatient unit; and
- structural works for level 2, which will accommodate the perioperative theatres and women's and children's inpatient unit.

The project is expected to cost \$60.6 million, drawn from the overall new Mount Barker hospital development project budget of \$320.8 million.

Construction of the car park is anticipated to commence this June, to be complete mid next year, and the early structural works are expected to commence this July, to be complete this September. The delivery of the project will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management, as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. This includes:

- development of formal communication channels;
- preparation and management of a project program;
- establishment of a cost plan and management of project costs;
- scheduling regular reviews of design, documentation and construction;
- appointment of professional service contractors;
- identifying risks and implementing mitigation strategies in compliance with the relevant planning, development and infrastructure legislation.

The professional services contractor team and managing contractor have been finalised and secondary professional service contractors may be engaged as required. In order to qualify for invitation to tender, both the professional services contractors and managing contractor are to maintain current Department for Infrastructure and Transport prequalification levels for the design and delivery of state government infrastructure projects.

To manage the project throughout planning and implementation, as well as to manage any risks and issues arising, a two-tier governance structure has been established, including an executive steering committee responsible for strategic oversight and an integrated management team responsible for day-to-day operational management.

Risks identified include:

- the proximity of construction works to an operational clinical environment, for which the project team is in ongoing communication with site management and patients attending the hospital;
- the requirement for serviced cutovers to ensure continued operation of the existing hospital, for which the project team is planning service to version where required;
- the need for temporary facilities to ensure continued operation of the hospital; and
- the required traffic management and contractor vehicle usage at Wellington Road.

The managing contractor will develop a series of critical works plans to accommodate the necessary engineering service cutovers.

The project team has established formal processes to ensure that sustainability considerations are incorporated into the project during all phases of the project life cycle and a dedicated work group is tasked with ensuring that environmental and sustainable initiatives are fully integrated into all work undertaken. This includes:

- optimisation of the building layout for natural ventilation;

- implementation of effective management and operational protocols that reduce the impact of the building on the environment;
- energy efficiency initiatives, including LED lighting and provision for future installation of solar panels; and
- a selection of ethically sourced, recycled and durable materials where possible.

The department is in ongoing consultation with various stakeholder groups and is working closely with key facilities management personnel from the local health network to ensure safe operations continue throughout the duration of the project. The local health network's governing board has also been engaged throughout each stage of the clinical aspects of the project and will manage required communications around site planning and logistics to ensure hospital end users receive appropriate information concerning the development.

Broader consultation on the hospital project is ongoing, including with clinicians, workforce, industrial bodies and the Mount Barker and Adelaide Hills communities. SA Health states a search of the central archive identified no Aboriginal heritage in the proposed work locations and there is no registration of state heritage in the vicinity of the site.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Mount Barker hospital multi-deck car park and early structural works for clinical services building project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Melissa Nozza, Director, Capital Project Infrastructure, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Bronwyn Masters, Chief Executive Officer, Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network; Layton Waters, Manager Major Projects, Building Projects, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; Matthew Raven, Director, Lead Professional Services Contractor, Swanbury Penglase Architects; and Dave Forster, Director General, Health Infrastructure, Government of South Australia. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to thank the member for Kavel for his written statement of support for this project in his electorate.

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

Motion carried.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: INQUIRY INTO THE POTENTIAL FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS ACT FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA—CORRIGENDUM

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (11:23): I move:

That the report of the committee entitled, Inquiry into the Potential for a Human Rights Act for South Australia—Corrigendum, be noted.

The Social Development Committee tabled its 49th report on the Inquiry into the Potential for a Human Rights Act for South Australia on 29 April 2025. It was noted at the time when the full report was tabled that the committee received many submissions to this inquiry.

Submission No. 112 discussed the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. The submission advised the committee that a private member's bill, namely the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Amendment (Protection from Torture and Slavery) Bill 2023, had amended the Victorian charter.

On page 70 the report of the committee refers to the information on the Victorian charter as provided in the submission. The committee subsequently became aware that the bill had not been passed and that the Victorian charter had not been amended. The committee was provided with the correct submission by the submitters. Accordingly, the committee substitutes the relevant passage on page 70 of the report with the corrigendum, as tabled on 3 June 2025.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HACKHAM WEST CHILDREN'S CENTRE NEW FACILITY

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:25): I move:

That the 142nd report of the committee, entitled Hackham West Children's Centre New Facility, be noted.

The Hackham West Children's Centre is presently situated near, but separate, to a hub of other services, including the Hackham West primary school and a community centre. The Department for Education uses a socio-economic guide, known as the Index of Educational Disadvantage, to allocate resources to schools in need of support. The index considers Hackham West Children's Centre, as well as the Hackham West primary school, to be category 1 institutions which serve the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities.

The children's centre community programs, currently located at the primary school site, provide a range of services to support children and families, including care, education, health, community development and family services. By relocating the children's centre also to the site, the project will deliver an integrated hub in an area of developmental vulnerability, which is a key component of the state's aims to improve outcomes for children and families.

The children's centre will offer a preschool program of up to 30 hours per week for three and four year olds to improve their learning and development, alongside tailored health, wellbeing programs and other offerings so that families can access multiple support services in one place. The project will provide a modern early childhood education and care facility that meets legislative compliance requirements and delivers the department's benchmark accommodation for children between birth and four years of age.

Key aims of the co-location of the educational services are to provide seamless transition between preschool and primary school, as well as the provision of flexible spaces suited for the delivery of early childhood education and care. As of June 2023, the children's centre had 40 long day care and 18 preschool enrolments, with a current licensed enrolment capacity of 30 preschool and 30 long daycare children. The new children's centre will deliver a total enrolment capacity of 77 places, comprised of 44 preschool and 33 long daycare enrolments.

The new facility will include a new preschool, indoor learning and play spaces, long daycare facilities, community and cultural spaces, health and wellbeing spaces, staff spaces, a kitchen, a sleep room, administrative and amenities, car parking, outdoor learning and play areas and associated landscaping. The department considered an alternative option to refurbish the existing children's centre but discounted the plan due to the significant expansion necessary and the site constraints and leasing arrangement with the City of Onkaparinga.

The new building will be comprised of health, teaching and learning spaces, community areas, staff areas and indoor and outdoor play areas. Transitional spaces are designed to be inclusive, maintaining clear boundaries and ensuring privacy and teachers' preparation spaces, while also creating designated breakaway spaces for children within play areas.

The building structure will take a skillion form that enhances natural light via high-level windows. The use of light brickwork will complement the existing school, and associated exterior works will include soft landscaping, revegetation, hardscaping, play elements and furniture. The space has been divided into under three-year-old and over three-year-old spaces, which both include storage sheds, a large turf area, garden beds, a sandpit, a paved bike path loop, space for loose play and fixed play elements, as well as nature play features.

The project will preserve significant and non-significant trees, which the design intends the new areas to weave around, creating natural and heavily shaded areas. Project design has also ensured provisions are made for persons with disabilities, in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. The project is expected to cost \$8 million, drawing on funds provided from the department's 2023-24 capital works program. Any changes in the recurrent cost of the school's operation will be funded from within the department's existing budget.

The site is registered under the name of the Minister for Education and no outstanding land purchase transactions or agreements are required. Works are anticipated to commence this August, with the expectation to be complete in October next year. The project will be managed and delivered by DIT, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, in accordance with the requirements of the project implementation process. DIT has appointed lead professional service and cost management contractors, and construction contractors will be appointed utilising an amended general conditions

contract. Tenders will be sought from contractors that are registered in the applicable DIT Prequalification System category.

Project delivery will follow the best practice principles for project procurement and management as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities. The project management process is responsible for identifying potential risks as well as implementing related minimisation and mitigation strategies. The department states that the project has a medium level of risk, noting the moderate scope of the project as well as the extensive expertise and experience of DIT and the project team. The primary school will continue to operate throughout construction, and the project team is establishing a strategy to ensure the school is able to operate safely during construction works.

Design and development has incorporated sustainability principles to reduce energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the project. Initiatives include: maximising energy efficiency through passive design features; preparing for the potential installation of a solar panel system and future integration of electrical vehicle infrastructure; installation of water tanks to minimise the use of non-potable water; landscaping that emphasises the selection of native and drought-tolerant species to reduce irrigation requirements; prioritising locally sourced products where possible; the selection of durable, renewable and recyclable materials; and tree planting to support local tree canopy.

The management team is in ongoing consultation with stakeholders and the community, and the school's leadership and staff have been closely involved throughout project development and endorse the redevelopment. The project has also been reviewed by relevant government personnel, departments and agencies, which have provided input in the production of documentation for this project. A search of the central archive has identified no record of Aboriginal heritage at the school's location, and the department states that native title has been extinguished at the site. The department also confirms that there are no state or local heritage places or items at the site.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Hackham West Children's Centre new facility. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Helen Doyle, Director, Capital Projects and Technical Services, Department for Education; Aislinn Morris, Portfolio Manager, Education, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; and Yvonne Klein, Associate, Hosking Willis Architecture. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to thank the member for Hurtle Vale for her written statement in support of this project in her electorate.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: COMMUNITY DRUG AND REHABILITATION BEDS

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:32): I move:

That the 143rd report of the committee, entitled Community Drug and Rehabilitation Beds Project, be noted.

As part of the 2022 state election, the state government committed funding to establish new community drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds across the state, including the delivery and operation of 12 drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds in metropolitan Adelaide. Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA) is a statewide health service that offers a range of prevention, treatment and information services for people with alcohol, tobacco and other drug issues. Rehabilitation is a highly structured program that includes treatments, group and peer therapy and structured activities that teach living and coping skills.

The proposed facility will provide treatment in a residential live-in setting that includes accommodation, meals and recreational spaces. These services will cater for stays that may range from three to six months, depending on the needs of the client. The project brief has been prepared by the Department for Health and Wellbeing (SA Health) and supplied to DIT, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, which will commence procurement processes. In the interim, DASSA has implemented temporary services at a metropolitan Adelaide location.

Following a detailed investigation process in consultation with DASSA and Renewal SA, SA Health has identified a suitable portion of land at John Rice Avenue, Elizabeth South. The site was selected due to its proximity to the Lyell McEwin Hospital and the associated health precinct, providing clients easy access to medical and emergency facilities. The location also benefits from easy access to public transport and is in proximity to local amenities. The site is part of a larger parcel of land which has been approved for subdivision and SA Health is currently undertaking a compulsory acquisition process.

The new facility will be located in a community setting and will provide 24-hour care for people who have experienced withdrawal or require stabilisation and need to continue their treatment via residential rehabilitation. This service also aims to help reduce reliance on emergency departments as admission pathways into mental health services.

Accommodation and support will cater to clients who arrive voluntarily who are already detoxed and who are seeking assistance reintegrating into the community. The facility will be staffed and all clients supervised 24 hours a day. The facility will be owned by DASSA who will undertake an invitation to supply to select a non-government organisation who will manage and provide the rehabilitation services.

The project will create a building that is structured, safe and flexible enough to cater for varying clientele. Due to the long lengths of client stays, the project will include outdoor spaces which are an essential component for better mental health outcomes. The outdoor spaces are also critical for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultural safety and suitability. Australasian Health Facility Guidelines have informed the schedule of accommodation, clinical adjacencies and equipment requirements for the facility, and a project reference group was consulted regarding the functional design and care requirements.

The project will build a single storey, U-shaped, that is structured into four pods, creating private living areas that connect to a larger shared space. Patient areas will include:

- four individual living pods, each consisting of three bedrooms, one shared accessible bathroom and one shared kitchen/lounge area;
- a large central shared kitchen/dining/lounge area;
- an activity room and gym space;
- a secluded quiet room;
- a domestic laundry and storeroom; and
- landscaped areas, a lawn area, a basketball hoop, raised productive garden beds and a wellness garden.

The clinical area will include two patient consult rooms as well as office space for staff. The facility will also include:

- a staff hub, including two bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom and a recreational space;
- a staff courtyard garden;
- separated storage and service areas to manage waste and maintenance; and
- onsite car parking.

The project will cost \$9 million, and construction is anticipated to commence this August, with the expectation to be complete in June next year.

The professional service contractors have been engaged by DIT, and specialty professional contractors will be engaged as required. DIT is engaging the construction contractor using established procurement, evaluation and contracting processes. The project will be monitored by an integrated management team, established with executive level membership across SA Health, DASSA, DIT and the rehabilitation beds project. The delivery of the project will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management as advocated by the state government and construction industry authorities.

The project team has established formal processes to ensure that sustainability initiatives are comprehensively and systematically incorporated within the project. Initiatives include:

- engagement of an independent sustainability consultant;
- futureproofing and adaptability, including provision for potential electric vehicle charging stations, as well as accessible and flexible engineering spaces;
- management of performance, including building tuning and an environmental management plan;
- selection of insulating building materials;
- energy efficiency, including LED lighting and a photovoltaic energy system;
- water efficiency, including rainwater collection; and
- selection of materials that are durable and ethically sourced.

The department states that a search of the central archive identified no record of Aboriginal sites at the proposed works location and that there are no state or local heritage sites within the construction footprint.

Throughout the project development, the department has taken care to consult with clinicians and non-clinical staff, consumer reference groups and industrial bodies. Consultation will continue throughout the final stages of the design, and key stakeholders will remain informed of the works as they progress through construction into service readiness. The project has also consulted various government agencies and units within SA Health and DASSA. The department's Media and Communications Unit will manage required external communication, media inquiries and press releases.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the Community Drug and Rehabilitation Beds Project. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Melissa Nozza, Director, Capital Projects, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Lochlan Pellew, Principal, Brown Falconer Architects; John Jenner, Portfolio Manager Health, Department for Infrastructure and Transport; and Victoria Cox, Statewide Clinical Director, Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: REBUILT MARION AMBULANCE STATION

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:39): I move:

That the 144th report of the committee, entitled Rebuilt Marion Ambulance Station, be noted.

The South Australian Ambulance Service (SAAS) operates 119 ambulance stations located across South Australia, including the MedSTAR emergency medical retrieval service at Adelaide Airport. SAAS has developed an Operational Growth Plan that sets out how state government investment in infrastructure, vehicles and staffing will be delivered.

The rebuilt Marion Ambulance Station project will deliver a new ambulance station on the existing site at Sturt Road in Mitchell Park, and is part of a broader \$102 million Department for Health and Wellbeing program to deliver five new and six rebuilt ambulance stations. The station will provide accommodation for SAAS crews to expand service capacity and capabilities, as well as improve service coverage for consumers in the southern metropolitan area.

SAAS has worked with Renewal SA to identify potential locations for the new and rebuilt ambulance stations, and has determined the rebuilt Marion Ambulance Station will be located on Sturt Road, Mitchell Park within a predominantly low-scale residential and municipal zone that includes the nearby Sturt Police Station and local council depot facilities. The project will provide

patient-centred emergency services designed around community needs, and forms part of the government's 2022 election commitment to improve ambulance service infrastructure.

During the concept design process, the project team identified that the existing site for the rebuilt ambulance station presented challenges due to its narrow, long, linear nature. The existing site also has a crossfall of approximately 2½ metres from east to west and is bounded by roads on three sides, with an elevated train line to the east. The design of the new station is heavily influenced by these site constraints, and to meet functional requirements SA Health is acquiring land between the existing station and the railway line from the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. This land parcel contains existing services that will be relocated outside the proposed site boundary as part of the building works.

The project will deliver a two-storey fit-for-purpose ambulance station that will provide accommodation for SAAS crews and garaging for seven ambulance vehicles and one light fleet vehicle, as well as two external parking bays for light fleet ambulance vehicles. The structure will be positioned at the western end of the site, with secure parking to the eastern end. General vehicular access will be provided through an existing crossover on Lynton Avenue, while returning ambulance vehicles will use a new entrance on Bradley Grove that provides direct access to the garage. The existing crossover at the front of the site will be used for exiting emergency vehicles only and will be supplemented by warning lights.

The construction works will provide a two-level structure comprising crew and training rooms, a study area and office, a shared working area and meeting room, six personal staff break rooms and a kitchen and dining space; nine standard ambulance bays, seven located within the garage and two within an outdoor covered space; one ambulance and light fleet vehicle bay within the proposed garage; and 25 outdoor car parking spaces. During construction, the station will be decanted and SAAS staff will be temporarily relocated.

The project is expected to cost \$9 million, drawn from the broader \$102 million state government commitment to deliver new and rebuilt ambulance stations. Construction is anticipated to commence this August, with the expectation to be practically complete in November next year. The delivery of the project will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management, which will include extensive consultation, evaluation and review of solutions against the brief, development of formal communications with stakeholders and the community, preparation of a program that reflects the scope of the project, establishing and managing a cost plan, appointment of professional service contractors, and scheduling reviews of design, documentation and construction.

The Department for Infrastructure and Transport has engaged the professional service contractors, and the general building contractor will be engaged utilising standard form of contract. Further specialist contractors may be engaged as required. An executive steering committee has been established with an executive-level membership across SA Health, SAAS, DIT and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The committee is supported by an integrated management team that operates at a program management level for all key matters.

The project team has established formal processes to ensure sustainability principles are incorporated into the design, construction and operation of the ambulance station. SA Health recognises that providing a facility with good environmental qualities will provide a positive environment and workplace for staff and users, as well as support improved wellbeing and assist in managing behaviours.

Design measures have been incorporated to support increased adaptability and changes of use with minimal impact, including highly accessible and flexible spaces to support and incorporate changing technology, as well as provisions for a solar electric system and future electric vehicle charging stations. A range of detailed initiatives are in place to maximise sustainability outcomes throughout the project's life span regarding indoor environmental quality, energy efficiency, monitoring, transport, water use, materials and emissions. An independent consultant will be engaged to assist in the successful delivery of sustainability initiatives.

The department states there are no local heritage places or items located on the site and confirms that any significant trees within the development zone will be protected in accordance with

legislative requirements. The department also states that a search of the central archive identified no record of Aboriginal sites in the proposed work location.

SA Health will remain in ongoing consultation with stakeholders in the community throughout the construction process and into service readiness. The community has been informed via targeted letterbox drops and was invited to a community information session held in June. Throughout development and construction, SAAS and the SA Health Media and Communications Unit will manage required external communications, media inquiries and press releases.

The project team has also undertaken specialised subject matter expert reviews with various units and agencies within SA Health and SAAS, including work health and safety, infection control, hygiene advisers and industrial bodies.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the rebuilt Marion Ambulance Station. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Melissa Nozza, Director, Capital Projects, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Paul Lemmer, Executive Director, South Australian Ambulance Service; Robert Tolson, Executive Director, Country Operations, South Australian Ambulance Service; Rob Elliott, Chief Executive Officer, South Australian Ambulance Service; and John Jenner, Portfolio Manager Health, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time.

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

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: NEW TWO WELLS AMBULANCE STATION

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (11:47): I move:

That the 145th report of the committee, entitled New Two Wells Ambulance Station, be noted.

The South Australian Ambulance Service (SAAS) operates 119 ambulance stations located across South Australia, including the MedSTAR Emergency Medical Retrieval Service at Adelaide Airport. SAAS has developed an Operational Growth Plan, which sets out how state government investment in infrastructure, vehicles and staffing will be delivered.

The new Two Wells Ambulance Station project will construct a new ambulance station in Two Wells and is part of the broader \$102 million Department for Health and Wellbeing program to deliver five new and six rebuilt ambulance stations. The new station will provide a purpose-built ambulance station with an increased capacity for associated crews and vehicles to address the growing demand from population growth in Two Wells and the nearby regions.

SAAS has worked with Renewal SA to identify potential locations for new and rebuilt ambulance stations and has determined the new station will be located at the intersection of Old Port Wakefield Road and Wells Road. The site spans approximately 2,000 square metres, situated in a precinct that currently comprises several facilities, including the Adelaide Plains Council office and Public Information Centre.

The project will provide patient-centred emergency services designed around community needs, and forms part of the state government's 2022 election commitment to improve ambulance infrastructure. The new station will include one office with four workstations, a multitasking area for 10 staff, a four-person study, a four-person meeting room, one kitchen and crew area for six staff, four private wellbeing break rooms with lockers, three ambulance bays, one light fleet vehicle bay, 15 external parking spaces and one carport for ambulance parking. The project will also construct a new car park in place of the council car park that will be displaced by the new ambulance station.

The project is expected to cost \$5 million drawn from the broader \$102 million state government commitment to deliver the new and rebuilt ambulance stations. The project site is currently under the care and control of the Minister for Environment and Water, and SA Health and SAAS have commenced negotiations to acquire the proposed portion of land. Construction is anticipated to commence this October, with the expectation for it to be complete late next year. The

delivery of the project will follow best practice principles for project procurement and management, which will include:

- extensive consultation;
- evaluation and review of solutions against the brief;
- development of formal communications with stakeholders in the community;
- preparation of a program that reflects the scope of the project;
- establishing and managing a cost plan;
- appointment of professional service contractors; and
- scheduling reviews of design documentation and construction.

The Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) has engaged the professional service contractors, and the general building contractor will be engaged, utilising standard form of contract. Further specialist contractors will be engaged as required.

A steering committee has been established, with executive-level membership across SA Health, SAAS, DIT and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The steering committee is supported by an integrated management team which operates at a program-management level for all key matters.

The project team has reviewed geotechnical information to establish existing conditions, with the intent to mitigate or remove potential risks. The project has established formal processes to ensure ecological and sustainability principles are incorporated into the design, construction and operation of the ambulance station. SA Health recognises that providing a facility with good environmental qualities will provide a positive environment and workplace for staff and users, support improved wellbeing, and assist in managing behaviours.

Design measures have been incorporated to support increased adaptability and changes of use with minimal impact, including highly accessible and flexible spaces to support and incorporate changing technology as well as provisions for a solar electric system and future electric vehicle charging stations. A range of detailed initiatives are in place to maximise sustainability outcomes throughout the project's lifespan regarding indoor environmental quality, energy efficiency, monitoring, transport, water use, materials and emissions. An independent consultant will be engaged to assist in the successful delivery of sustainability initiatives.

The project's footprint is on a portion of a larger site that also comprises three state heritage places: the Two Wells public library, the Two Wells Courthouse and a retail store. The department states that the work will not impact on these properties. The department also states that a search of the central archive has identified no record of Aboriginal sites in the proposed work locations.

SA Health will engage in ongoing consultation with stakeholders in the community throughout the construction process and into service readiness. The community has been informed via targeted letter drops and was invited to a community information session held in June. Throughout the implementation of the project, SAAS and the SA Health Media and Communications Unit will manage required external communications, media inquiries and press releases.

The project team has also undertaken specialised subject matter expert reviews with various units and agencies within SA Health and SAAS, including work health and safety, infection control, hygiene advisers, and industrial bodies.

The committee examined written and oral evidence in relation to the new Two Wells Ambulance Station. Witnesses who appeared before the committee were Melissa Nozza, Director, Capital Projects, Department for Health and Wellbeing; Paul Lemmer, Executive Director, South Australian Ambulance Service; Robert Tolson, Executive Director, Country Operations, South Australian Ambulance Service; Rob Elliott, Chief Executive Officer, South Australian Ambulance Service; and John Jenner, Portfolio Manager Health, Department for Infrastructure and Transport. I thank the witnesses for their time. I would also like to thank the member for Light, who presented to the committee concerning this project.

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

Ms PRATT (Frome) (11:52): I rise to speak today in response to the Public Works Committee update report on the new Two Wells Ambulance Station. I know that my community of Two Wells are really pleased by the progress that we are going to see by the end of the year with the commencement of construction for the new ambulance station. It is certainly a service that a community of this growing size needs, including in new estates like Liberty and Eden and with the new Xavier College school seeing enrolments increase. Safety and access to health services, in particular emergency services, is a fantastic step towards seeing the community of Two Wells really grow into itself.

Anyone who lives north of Two Wells, including communities like Mallala, Balaklava and my town of Blyth, who would use Traeger Road and the Nine Mile would duck through around Old Port Wakefield Road to curve around Two Wells and make their way through to their local communities. It is on the corner of Old Port Wakefield Road and Wells Road that we are going to see exciting construction taking place as we see, by the end of the year, the beginning of a new ambulance station.

For the community's benefit, we are going to see at this station the inclusion of one office with four workstations, a multi-training area for 10 staff, a four-person study, a meeting room for four staff, one kitchen and crew area for six staff, four privacy wellbeing break rooms with lockers, three ambulance bays, one light fleet vehicle bay, 15 external parking spaces and one carport for ambulance parking. This project will also construct a new car park to accommodate the council car park displaced as a result of the construction of the new ambulance station.

We can expect, as progress is made with this construction, to have some disruption around the main street. It is a busy hub. Across the road, on the other side of Wells Road, is the great work that the Adelaide Plains Council has been doing with developers to deliver to the Two Wells community. It is going to be an extraordinary, modern shopping precinct which we await with great anticipation. That is not to take away from the services that have been provided for decades now in the main street, and I think of the great work that Kate Dimasi, community pharmacist, has done in providing services to her community. I remember popping in to chat with her and, with her back to the door, it did not matter who walked in that morning, she knew by the sound of their voice who had come in and she was ready to have a chat.

The butcher and Paul at Bella Mia Espresso Bar coffee shop in the main street—that has been a real hub—have engaged in the opportunities that have been presented to the Two Wells community by the state government and the Adelaide Plains Council for not just a facelift but an injection of funds that will see government services and commercial retail opportunities expand. That is not to take away from the fantastic lamb-shank pies that you will find at the Two Wells Bakery.

But today my reflections are on the corner of Old Port Wakefield Road and Wells Road, where we are going to see the progress of a \$5 million project that sits on a larger portion of land that also hosts heritage places such as the courthouse, the library and what is described as a retail shop but is, in fact, a craft shop well supported by the Red Cross volunteers in Two Wells.

The government came to visit Two Wells earlier in the year, in February, as part of country cabinet. They made an announcement at the time of an investment in the police station that is in the main street. Again, residents of Two Wells have raised with me concerns about what they see is a sign of increasing crime, of young people who perhaps have less to do and find themselves making poor choices. As a community, the residents of Two Wells are certainly going to benefit from an investment in the police station, seeing more cops on the beat as the population grows, and we know that that is set to swell.

I mentioned the courthouse and the library. While Two Wells is perhaps under-resourced at the moment in terms of meeting places, private function rooms or areas that people can book for meetings, what I absolutely love to do is to make myself available in the front room of the library. As I said, it is a heritage place: the original stonework has been lovingly restored. At the front of a well-patronised library is a kitchenette and a function room or public meeting space that allows for anyone

to come in and sit there. It is a place where people often find me, and it is a fantastic accessible location for those who are keen to catch up, to come and have a chat.

This space sits adjacent to the public green, the square in Two Wells, and the Adelaide Council has seen opportunities to keep investing in the main street in a way that maintains pride and becomes an attraction. It is not every day that a local town wants to be known for its public bathrooms and toilets, but there is a sense of pride about those rest stops as people are travelling through the green square. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Bills

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (DEFENCES—INTOXICATION) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 5 June 2025)

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence) (12:00): I had reached the point where I was explaining what amendments part 2 of the bill makes to the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, and one of the amendments that it makes is that a drug, for the purposes of the new sections, includes alcohol or any other substance capable of influencing mental functioning.

The consumption of a drug is taken to be non-therapeutic if it was not prescribed and/or consumed in accordance with the medical practitioner's and/or manufacturer's instructions. This definition allows the partial defence of excessive self-defence to remain available to a person whose genuine belief is affected by intoxication caused by an unexpected reaction to prescribed, or over-the-counter medication that has been taken in accordance with relevant instructions.

In order to address stakeholders' concerns that the bill could risk criminalising survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence by removing the partial defence of excessive self-defence for people who kill their abusive partner to protect themselves, the bill inserts a note in clauses 3 and 4. The note provides some guidance on the application of the new provisions; namely, that it does not prevent the operation of section 15B of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935, which addresses offences committed in circumstances of domestic, family and sexual violence.

In particular, the note clarifies that it may be that the genuine belief of a defendant is not substantially affected by the consumption of a drug where there is evidence of other matters substantially informing or affecting the belief; for example, if the offence occurred in circumstances of ongoing perpetration of domestic, family and sexual violence.

To put it in other terms, the purpose of the note is to ensure that in determining the availability of the partial defence of excessive self-defence where a person kills a family member, the court can take into account any evidence of domestic, family or sexual violence in the determination of whether the defendant's genuine belief was substantially affected by the consumption of a drug, or whether the background of domestic, family and sexual violence has substantially informed or affected that belief.

It is intended that these changes will go some way to address the community's concerns about a defendant's ability to reduce their murder charge to manslaughter through excessive self-defence in circumstances where their actions were a direct result of their voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug and deter people from using substances that may affect their mental function and result in violent acts.

As I have said many times in this place, domestic, family and sexual violence is a terrible scourge that requires continued action from government to address, in partnership with the sector and our whole community. Our government is staunchly committed to making a real difference, and we will continue to relentlessly speak up and act and do what we can to help prevent and eradicate domestic, family and sexual violence.

This bill helps us to take another step forward. As I said in my opening remarks, I introduced this bill and speak again today with the offering of love and wholehearted condolences to all who loved and knew Ms Bell. I am absolutely sure that her family and friends must be deeply grieving, and my heart continues to ache for them. I again acknowledge their incredible courage, in amongst that grief, in calling for this legislative change. I am sure that I and everybody in this place carries them in our hearts and our minds as we continue our debate on this bill today.

As I also said in those opening remarks, this case really tragically highlighted that the law in our state, as it currently stands, enables a person who has been charged with murder to rely on the partial defence of excessive self-defence. A reliance on this partial defence can reduce a person's criminal liability from murder to manslaughter based on that genuinely held belief that their conduct was necessary and reasonable to defend themselves, even if that belief was formed on the basis of delusions or hallucinations and even if those delusions or hallucinations were caused by their self-induced intoxication.

I say again that that is frankly not good enough, and it is really clear from our community's justifiable outrage about the outcome of this horrific case that this reduction in liability is in no way consistent with community expectations. Today, in debating this bill, we say that we want that to change. As I spoke about earlier, our government is determined to drive policy, legislative practice, investment and change, and we have been doing so, changes that tackle that horrific scourge of domestic, family and sexual violence. We have taken a number of steps forward and this is another step forward.

In about six or seven weeks, the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence will provide us with a profound generational opportunity to drive change in how South Australia tackles this horrific scourge of violence against women and girls, as well as gender inequality that drives that horrific scourge. Our government very much looks forward to receiving the royal commissioner's report and to acting on recommendations that address any gaps in prevention, intervention, response and recovery and healing, and also to looking at how we much better coordinate our efforts across community, government and the sector.

I deeply hope that this important change that we take forward today honours Ms Bell and her family and that it also helps other families should such terrible tragedy ever be repeated. Domestic, family and sexual violence has absolutely no place in our community. I commend the bill to the house, and I seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

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

3—Amendment of section 15—Self defence

The proposed amendments to section 15 provide that a defendant is not entitled to rely on a defence under section 15(2) in relation to a charge of murder if the prosecution proves beyond reasonable doubt that the genuine belief of the defendant, that the conduct to which the charge relates was necessary and reasonable for a defensive purpose, was substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug.

4—Amendment of section 15A—Defence of property etc

The proposed amendments to section 15A provide that a defendant is not entitled to rely on a defence under section 15A(2) in relation to a charge of murder if the prosecution proves beyond reasonable doubt that the genuine belief of the defendant, that the conduct to which the charge relates was necessary and reasonable for a purpose referred to in section 15A(2)(a), was substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12:09): I indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition. I indicate the opposition's support for the bill, and I adopt much of what the minister has said in bringing the government's speech to the chamber. The restriction on the

partial defence is now in terms that are more practically able to be applied than what it was as originally circulated. It has benefited from the advice, including of the relevant committee of the Law Society, in two respects. The use of the word 'intoxication' in the draft has been, as I read it, substituted for 'reflection' to provision for the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug and the operative condition that that has induced remains being substantially affected by that voluntary consumption of a non-therapeutic drug.

The second way that the draft has been affected by that advice is, as I understand it, by the addition of the note to which the minister has just now referred. The effect of that will be that the partial defence might remain available in circumstances where, as the minister has described, there might be one or more substantial effects. I am not exactly sure how that is going to pan out in terms of the way that the court will have to deal with it, but the way I understood the minister to describe the note, which will have to stand on its own terms, is that, where there are competing substantial effects, including the example given in the note but not limited to that example, then it may be that it is open to the court for there to be a finding that the genuine belief of the defendant is not substantially affected by the consumption of the relevant drug, the threshold being only that there is evidence of other matters substantially informing or affecting the belief.

The example that is given is that the offence occurred in circumstances of family violence. I just highlight that is no more than an example, so it is expressly non-exhaustive. I appreciate that some emphasis might be placed in these circumstances on an ameliorating effect for an accused person, where the leading of that evidence might be open to—by the prosecution or the accused, and perhaps in combination—the note referring to there being such evidence. That might mean, for practical purposes, that there is an accused person who is substantially affected by the voluntary non-therapeutic consumption of a drug but that person is also substantially affected by, as the note says, other matters.

We have seen a lot of law reform over the past generation that has raised what was described for some period of time as battered wife syndrome, the circumstances in which someone is subjected to violence that is perpetrated over a sustained period of time and that person tragically perpetrates an assault or some serious attack upon the perpetrator of that sustained abuse on them, and the way the court deals with that, the circumstances where the person is not responding immediately to circumstances of acute violence but rather responding to what has been perpetrated upon them over a long period of time.

I hear the minister addressing the note perhaps in those terms. I just repeat and highlight again that the note is expressed in non-exhaustive terms; there may be other examples. That is the circumstance that has been highlighted by the government as a purpose of the note. I address those two matters in particular, in part as a means of noting the valuable input of the Law Society. I do not put it as high as the Law Society having come to a point of endorsing the change, but I do read the changes between the draft and what we are debating now as being responsive to those concerns.

Of course, I adopt and repeat a reflection on the human tragedy that has been a specific motivator for these changes. I think it is important to reflect upon that as legislators. It is important that legislation is of a general application in the public interest, but there are circumstances where legislation comes to this place motivated by and responsive to particular outrageous circumstances that are unacceptable in the community, and this is one such example. We all, I am sure, extend our condolences to the victim's family in this case. To the extent that the family of Synamin Bell is following the progress of this legislation and finds it in any way of comfort, then that ought to be noted and understood as we legislate in this place.

The partial removal of the entitlement to rely on the defence applies to the section 15 provision, self-defence. It applies in exactly the same way to the section 15A defence, that is, defence of property. I will just note that as well. It is expressed in exactly the same way with exactly the same note, so there is therefore introduced in both respects that amendment to the defence of self-defence. As I said at the outset, the opposition supports the bill and I commend its passage through the house today.

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (12:19): Within criminal law there are several defences which, in line with community expectation, must be reviewed and amended from time to time. It is important that

our laws reflect our evolving understanding of human psychology, trauma and social dynamics, particularly in cases involving domestic abuse and mental illness.

It is also vital that our community have confidence in our criminal justice system. I will summarise for the house a few reasons why that is. If our community believes that the courts are fair and sentences appropriate, they are more likely to accept the outcomes and cooperate within that system. As a result, it maintains respect for the authority of our criminal justice system and the alignment with our law enforcement authorities. Fair and consistent sentencing, as we know, can also deter future crime. When offenders are held accountable and sentences are seen as just, it can discourage others from committing similar offences and, as a result, supports social cohesion and community safety.

Public confidence in the fairness of process is also crucial for victims to feel that their suffering has been acknowledged and that justice has been served. In many ways, it is the lack of justice for victims and their families that has led to the introduction of this bill. This bill, referred to as Synamin's Law, is legislation that helped maintain the community's confidence in the criminal justice system.

As others have already explained, the bill was passed in honour of Ms Synamin Bell, who was horrifically killed by her partner. I extend my sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of Ms Bell, who have not only lost their loved one but who would also have been extremely disappointed and frustrated by the law that currently allows for a partial defence of excessive self-defence in cases where self-induced intoxication is a factor. I also recognise the advocacy of Ms Synamin Bell's sister Shen and her family and friends in seeking this amendment of the law.

The bill will now provide that excessive self-defence is unavailable if a defendant's genuine belief was 'substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug'. This bill amends section 15 and section 15A of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act to remove the availability of excessive self-defence for both defence of a person and property where the defendant's genuine belief is substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug to ensure that there is a consistent application of the partial defence.

As the member for Heysen noted, a note in the bill will clarify that a defendant's genuine belief may be considered to have not been substantially affected by self-induced intoxication if there is evidence of other factors which may have substantially informed the defendant's belief, such as where there is evidence of family or domestic violence. This provides some guidance to the courts in the application of the new provision and confirms it does not prevent the operation of section 15B.

'Drug' and 'non-therapeutic consumption of a drug' may have the same meaning as the consultation bill and mirror the definitions in 15C of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act. These definitions ensure that partial defence remains available to a person whose genuine belief is affected by intoxication which is caused by an unexpected reaction to prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication.

This bill addresses concerns raised in consultation regarding unjust outcomes for people with mental illnesses who may consume both recreational drugs along with therapeutic medication. The reference to the 'voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug' makes plain that it is only the non-therapeutic consumption of drugs that may operate to preclude the availability of partial defence. Domestic and family violence has no place in our society, and this bill complements other measures that the government is taking to prevent domestic and family violence.

I commend the bill to the house and thank the Attorney-General, his team and the department for their work in initiating this bill and ensuring that the community maintains confidence in our criminal justice system.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (12:24): I rise to support the Criminal Law Consolidation (Defences—Intoxication) Amendment Bill 2025. On 12 March 2022, the Millicent community—and indeed the broader South Australian community—was shocked and sickened by the killing of Ms Synamin Bell by her partner, Cody Edwards. The crime itself was horrific in the extremity of its violence. Ms Bell's tragic death had a tremendous impact on her family, leaving her three young children to grow up

without their mother and depriving many others in her family of a daughter, sister, family member and friend whom they greatly loved.

After killing Ms Bell, Mr Edwards was charged with murder, but he subsequently pleaded guilty to manslaughter. On 6 September 2024, the Supreme Court sitting at Mount Gambier sentenced Mr Edwards to 11 years' imprisonment with a non-parole period of eight years and 10 months. He was sentenced on the basis that as he was in a state of psychosis brought about by his voluntary consumption of hallucinogenic illicit drugs, he acted in excessive self-defence arising from a genuine belief that Ms Bell intended to kill him.

This distressing case made it starkly clear to the South Australian community that a person who has been charged with murder may have the opportunity to rely on a partial defence of excessive self-defence, reducing their criminal liability from murder to manslaughter, on the basis of a genuine belief that their conduct was necessary and reasonable to defend themselves, even in the event that such a belief was formed on the basis of delusions or hallucinations caused by self-induced drug intoxication.

While the defence successfully employed in Mr Edwards' case was a lawful one, it is certainly well out of step with community expectation that a person who knowingly chooses to induce a state of intoxication that may interfere with their ability to distinguish reality from delusion has the opportunity to use such circumstances to reduce a murder charge to manslaughter, and thus to avoid facing the full force of the law that would otherwise apply.

Ms Bell's family was quite rightly devastated by the developments in the case and by the sentence that Mr Edwards received. They began advocating strongly for reform in this area of law, hoping that no other South Australian family will have to endure the particular added burden of trauma that they have experienced during these exceedingly difficult years in their lives.

The bill before us, known as Synamin's Law in honour of Ms Bell's life and in recognition of her family's advocacy, seeks to amend the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 to exclude the availability of excessive self-defence when a person's genuine belief that their conduct was necessary and reasonable to defend themselves has arisen from the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug. For the purposes of the legislation, the consumption of a drug is to be considered non-therapeutic unless the drug is prescribed by and consumed in accordance with the directions of a medical practitioner.

Section 15 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 relates to self-defence. In South Australia, self-defence provides a complete defence to a charged offence. It is available where the defendant genuinely believed their actions were necessary and reasonable to defend themselves, and the conduct was reasonably proportionate to the threat that the defendant believed to exist. In the event that a defendant can satisfy the test for self-defence in relation to a particular charge, they cannot be found guilty and must be acquitted.

In matters where the charge is murder, a partial defence of excessive self-defence is available where the defendant genuinely believed their actions were necessary and reasonable to defend themselves but the conduct was not reasonably proportionate to the threat the defendant believed to exist. Under existing arrangements, this is the case even in the event that such a belief was erroneously formed due to self-induced intoxication. Defendants who satisfy the test for excessive self-defence will not be found guilty of murder but of manslaughter.

These are the arrangements that led to the outcome in the case of Mr Edwards following his brutal killing of Ms Bell. The partial defence of excessive self-defence was open to Mr Edwards, and there is no suggestion that the court or the prosecution deserves to be criticised. The deficiency is clearly one that exists in our laws, and this bill intends to address that deficiency. Cases like this one are rare, but of course that is of no comfort to the family of Ms Bell. This tragedy has been more than sufficient to highlight the inadequacy of our existing legislative arrangements, and there is broad cross-partisan recognition in this parliament that we must act.

The bill provides that the defence of excessive self-defence will not be available if a defendant's genuine belief 'was substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug'. Clauses 3 and 4 propose to insert new sections 15(2a) and 15A(2a) to

exclude the availability of a defence of excessive self-defence in relation to a charge of murder if the prosecution proves beyond reasonable doubt that the defendant's genuine belief that their actions taken for a defensive purpose were necessary and reasonable was substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug. The exclusion of the partial defence of excessive self-defence in these circumstances will apply to both the defence of persons and of property to ensure the consistent application of the partial defence.

Importantly, under the bill, a note will clarify that a defendant's genuine belief may be considered not to have been substantially affected by self-induced intoxication if there is evidence of other factors that may have substantially informed the defendant's belief. An important example to cite is where there is evidence of prior family or domestic violence. The application of the new provisions will not prevent the operation of section 15B of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, which addresses offences that have been committed amid circumstances of family violence.

Drug and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug have the same meaning as in the consultation bill and mirror the definitions in section 15C of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act. These definitions ensure that partial defence remains available to a person whose genuine belief is affected by intoxication that has been caused by an unexpected reaction to medication that was prescribed to the person and was consumed in accordance with the medical practitioner's instructions or over-the-counter medications that had been consumed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

The bill addresses concerns raised in consultation in relation to unjust outcomes for people with mental illnesses who consume recreational drugs together with their therapeutic medication. The reference to voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of a drug makes clear that it is only the non-therapeutic consumption of drugs that may operate to preclude the availability of the partial defence.

These reforms were developed following extensive consultation with law enforcement and the broader community. I would like to thank those who participated in the consultation, including members of the South Australian community who engaged with the YourSAy consultation and legal stakeholders. I want to extend particular recognition and thanks to the family of Synamin Bell, whose determination to see these reforms through is a testament to their love for her and to their desire to prevent other families from enduring the extent of hardship and trauma that they have gone through during this terrible period of their lives and that they must continue to live with.

It takes extraordinary strength to turn anguish into advocacy. Ms Bell's family has done a remarkable service to the South Australian community by advocating for these sensible and important changes to our laws. I am pleased to commend the bill to the house and I look forward to seeing it broadly supported.

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (12:31): There are moments in this place when our work feels especially heavy, moments when we speak not just as lawmakers but as human beings, as community members and as people who carry the weight of others' grief. This is one of those moments. Today, I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Law Consolidation (Defences—Intoxication) Amendment Bill, a bill also known by a name that now carries deep significance: Synamin's Law.

This bill is a response to a tragedy that should never have happened: the death of Ms Synamin Bell, a vibrant 30-year-old woman from Mount Gambier. She was a daughter, a sister, a mother, a friend, and she should still be here. Her life was taken by a man who claimed he acted in fear, a fear brought on not by a credible threat but by a drug-induced paranoia. And because of how our laws currently stand, he was able to use the partial defence of excessive self-defence, a defence he relied on despite his altered mental state being the result of his own voluntary and non-therapeutic drug use. He was not found guilty of murder. He pleaded guilty to manslaughter and he will be eligible for parole in early 2031, just nine years after taking a young woman's life.

Like so many South Australians, I find that incredibly hard to reconcile. Let me be clear: there is no fault with the court or the prosecution. The law as it stands allowed this and that is why we need to change it. South Australians rightly expect that the law will protect the vulnerable and not allow their memory to be diminished by legal technicalities that make no sense in real life.

When someone chooses to take drugs and their intoxication leads to violence, particularly lethal violence, the law must not excuse that choice. This bill seeks to ensure that the partial defence of excessive self-defence is no longer available when that belief, that perceived threat, is substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of drugs. In other words, if your fear was born from a state of intoxication you chose to enter, you cannot rely on that fear to escape full responsibility.

This builds on important legal reforms made in this chamber in recent years. It was before my time in this place, but others will recall the 2020 legislation to abolish the common law defence of provocation, a defence that, before it was repealed, allowed perpetrators to shift blame onto others, particularly in cases of domestic violence or perceived betrayal. That law change was long overdue. It recognised that our justice system must evolve with community standards and it placed the dignity and agency of victims at the centre of the legal response. Similarly, the bill will bring our laws on excessive self-defence into line with public expectation.

I want to speak briefly to what this bill will and will not do. This bill will protect the integrity of the justice system. It will close a legal loophole that allowed drug-induced paranoia to lessen the criminal responsibility for taking a life, but it will not impact those who act in genuine fear based on lived trauma or family violence. The bill includes a clarifying note that a genuine belief may still stand, even if a person was intoxicated, where that belief was substantially informed by prior abuse or other relevant factors. It does not override section 15B of the act that rightly allows the court to consider the broader context of family violence.

We have consulted carefully, and the bill has been crafted so that it does not disadvantage people living with mental illness or those who have adverse reactions to medications taken as prescribed. The focus here is on voluntary, non-therapeutic drug use, not prescribed medication, not Nurofen, not mental health treatment but only recreational intoxication that leads to violent behaviour.

I want to acknowledge the work of Attorney-General Kyam Maher for listening, for acting, and for crafting legislation that is compassionate but firm. I want to especially acknowledge Shen Bell, who is Synamin's sister, and all of Synamin's family and friends. In the weeks and months following Synamin's death, Shen turned her grief into purpose. She stood before the media. She spoke to MPs. She worked with advocates and lawyers and the wider Mount Gambier community to ensure that her sister's name would not be forgotten and that no other family would suffer the same injustice. I want to say to Shen: your strength is remarkable. Your sister would be so proud. We as a parliament are listening.

I know that laws like this cannot bring Synamin back, but they can honour her memory. They can draw a line in the sand and say, 'We will not let this self-inflicted intoxication excuse fatal violence. Not here, not in South Australia.' In my own community of Davenport, people are telling me that they want stronger protections. They want laws that recognise the value of life and reject excuses that shift blame onto victims, and they want a legal system that keeps up with their values. This is what this bill delivers.

But let's also acknowledge the deeper truth behind this legislation. It is not just about a single case, devastating as it was. It is about ensuring that our laws are strong enough to respond to the evolving ways in which harm is justified or minimised. It is about recognising that drug use cannot be a shield behind which perpetrators hide, and it is about rejecting the narrative, still sadly present in some courtrooms and corners of public commentary, that a victim's life is somehow worthless if the person who killed them was impaired. That is not justice. That is not what this parliament stands for. This bill says clearly that we expect accountability. We expect consequences for choices that lead to violence, and we will not accept diluted responsibility because someone chose to alter their state of mind.

I also want to reflect on the broader impact that cases like Synamin's have on community confidence in the justice system. When victims' families watch legal arguments unfold that seem to offer more protection to the accused than to the dead it shakes their faith. When sentencing outcomes feel out of step with community values it feeds cynicism, and when loopholes are exploited parliament has a duty to respond—not in haste and not for political pointscore but with courage, compassion and clarity.

That is exactly what this bill does. It says that, while we understand the complexities of human behaviour and while we continue to support rehabilitation, mental health treatment and harm minimisation, we will never confuse understanding with excuse. Taking a life is the most serious of crimes, and when that decision is made under the influence of drugs taken voluntarily the law must not allow that to be treated as anything less than what it is: a tragedy that demands accountability.

This reform matters. It matters for families, it matters for victims, and it matters for the credibility of our justice system. Most of all, it matters because it says Synamin's life mattered. Her name will now live on in South Australian law, not as a statistic or a footnote but as a symbol of how love, grief and advocacy can change a system. I commend this bill to the house.

Mr FULBROOK (Playford) (12:39): I rise to speak in full support of the Criminal Law Consolidation (Defences—Intoxication) Amendment Bill 2025, a bill born not just from a tragic case but from passionate advocacy, clear-eyed public concern and the recognition that the law must always serve justice in line with community expectations.

At its heart, this bill seeks to close a gap—a painful and consequential gap—in our criminal law. It addresses a loophole that, while legally sound, has left many South Australians bewildered and distressed, wondering how such an outcome could possibly be just. Let us be clear about what is at stake. This bill is about ensuring that those who voluntarily intoxicate themselves with drugs cannot hide behind that intoxication to lessen responsibility for taking another human life. Before I go any further, I want to speak about the reason this bill has come before us. That reason is Ms Synamin Bell—a vibrant, loved and cherished woman, whose life was tragically cut short.

On 12 March 2022, Ms Bell was killed by her partner, Cody James Edwards. During his trial, Mr Edwards did not deny causing her death. Instead, he claimed he acted in excessive self-defence, that he believed Ms Bell intended to kill him and, acting under the grip of a full-blown paranoia psychosis caused by his own consumption of psychoactive drugs, he struck first. He pleaded guilty to manslaughter, not murder, and on 6 September 2024 he was sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment with a non-parole period of eight years and 10 months. Because of time already served, he will be eligible for parole in January 2031.

Let us be absolutely clear: there is no criticism of the court in this matter. The sentencing was legally sound. The prosecution did its job, the legal framework was followed but the outcome has deeply disturbed many, especially the family and friends of Ms Bell, and the community that saw in this case something profoundly unjust. What followed was a truly courageous act of public advocacy.

Ms Bell's sister, Shen, and her family and supporters, channelled their grief into action. They did not sit in silence. They spoke up, they rallied others, they asked difficult but fair questions of the law and, crucially, they did not ask for vengeance. They asked for fairness. They asked that intoxication when self-induced should not serve as a basis to downgrade a charge of murder. Their call is being heard today and I want to take this opportunity to pay genuine, heartfelt tribute to Shen and all those who stood beside her. This bill would not exist without their persistence, clarity and strength.

So what does this bill actually do? In plain English, it removes the partial defence of excessive self-defence for people who claim they killed someone because they believed they were under threat but only came to that belief due to a mental state caused by voluntary drug use. Let me break that down.

Under current law in South Australia, if someone kills another person but says they genuinely believed they were in danger and needed to defend themselves, the law recognises self-defence as a complete defence. If the force they used was more than necessary, but they still believed they were under threat, the law provides a partial defence called excessive self-defence. This can downgrade murder to manslaughter. Critically, even if that belief was the result of a drug-induced psychosis, the law still accepts this.

This is what happened in the case Mr Edwards. He believed, under the influence of drugs, that Ms Bell was going to kill him, and that belief—even though it was delusional and drug-induced—allowed the partial defence to apply. I am pleased to say that this bill changes that. It says that if your

belief that you were in danger was substantially affected by the voluntary and non-therapeutic consumption of drugs, then you cannot rely on that partial defence. This reform makes intuitive sense to the vast majority of South Australians. We do not let people escape responsibility for their actions when they voluntarily drink to excess, and we should not let them do it with drugs either.

The law should not reward a person for placing themselves in a distorted mental state and then claiming diminished responsibility. This is not about removing defences entirely. If someone truly was defending themselves and that belief was formed in a sober, or medically justified state the defence remains. This is about removing a loophole, a narrow, but a very important one.

The bill has been carefully crafted. It does not apply to people who suffer unexpected side-effects from prescription medicine, or who follow medical instructions. The definitions in the bill make this clear. If a person has a psychiatric illness and takes their medication as directed and something goes wrong, they are not excluded from relying on a defence. But if someone consumes recreational drugs, or mixes them with medication against medical advice, they must take responsibility for those consequences.

We also ensure that victims of domestic violence are not unfairly penalised. The bill includes guidance that if there is credible evidence of family or domestic violence and that this, rather than intoxication, influenced the person's belief, then that belief may still be considered valid. This is a necessary and sensitive balancing act, and I believe the bill strikes that balance well.

Some may argue that cases like this are rare, and fortunately they are, but even rare injustices must be corrected, because one case, like Ms Bell's, is one too many—one family left to grieve a daughter, a sister, a friend and then told that the person responsible will serve less time because they were high when they committed the heinous act. That is a gap in the law that we cannot accept. This bill ensures that South Australia's laws better reflect our core values that include personal responsibility, justice and the protection of the innocent.

Before I conclude, I want to offer sincere thanks to those who helped bring this bill to parliament. To the family and friends of Ms Bell, thank you for your strength and your unwavering advocacy. Your campaign will leave a legacy for change. To the drafters at the office of parliamentary council, to the officials within the Attorney-General's Department and to those within ministerial offices, thank you for your diligent, thoughtful and timely work.

With this bill we are not simply amending legislation, we are recognising that intoxication, when chosen, cannot serve as a shield from full accountability. We are affirming that victims matter, that families deserve justice and that advocacy in the face of grief can lead to meaningful change. We owe it to Synamin Bell and to those who loved her to ensure that our laws reflect both fairness and reason. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence) (12:48): Can I please thank everybody who has contributed so thoughtfully and with such care for the family, the friends and the other loved ones of Ms Bell in particular. Thank you to those who have spoken: the member for Heysen, the member for Davenport, the member for Playford, the member for Black and the member for Florey.

I was listening to all of those speeches and it is very clear that our addressing of this particular shortfall in our legislation is something that all of us, rightly, agree is necessary. It is necessary because we know as community leaders, as a parliament, it is incumbent upon us to do all that we possibly can in legislation, and indeed in policy, practice and investment, to help to prevent the terrible scourge of domestic, family and sexual violence and to help eradicate it.

Absolutely at its heart, this legislation is progressing a legislative change that speaks to action that we have decided to take to address a shortfall in the suite of legislative policy and practice, measures around that shared aim to help eradicate the terrible scourge of domestic, family and sexual violence. It also reflects the expectation of community about how we deal with those who commit terrible acts of domestic, family and sexual violence.

I very much thank the Attorney-General, Minister Maher from the other place, and his ministerial office for working toward this very thoughtful legislation that has a very clear, practical

outcome. I also thank the officials from the Attorney-General's Department who have worked really hard toward this important piece of legislation.

As I did in my earlier remarks, I thank the family, the friends and the other loved ones of Ms Bell. To lose a loved one is utterly tragic and heartbreaking. To lose a loved one in these particular circumstances is just horrific. To be dealing with the grief that comes with that particular horrific and preventable loss and, whilst you are dealing with the grief of the loss of your loved one in a circumstance that should never ever happen, to then courageously advocate for change to ensure that that loophole, which has existed in our legislation and been brought to life through these terrible circumstances and which must absolutely be addressed is really brave.

I will continue to hold all of the loved ones of Ms Bell in my heart and in my mind. I am so pleased that we can take this step forward to prevent such a reliance on a defence that I think to our whole community is utterly unacceptable. I am pleased that we have been able to reverse the ability for a perpetrator to be able to rely on that particular defence. This is a really important step forward, and it is a step forward that sits amongst a range of legislative measures that our government has undertaken in our ongoing quest to do all that we can to tackle the scourge of domestic, family and sexual violence.

We are making sure that we are implementing measures and changes that work across those four domains that are articulated in the national plan to end violence against women and children. Those domains are prevention, early intervention, response and recovery, and healing. I am so pleased that both through our national partnership funding and through our state funding we have implemented a range of measures across those four domains, including really important legislative measures.

Amongst those legislative measures is the step that we are taking so importantly today. Also amongst those measures are the laws that we have already passed to include the experience of domestic violence as a ground of discrimination in the Equal Opportunity Act. That is so important for all those women who were telling us, amongst their experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, of the way that it impacted their lives and their ability to participate in the workforce. Through that law and through listening to those brave survivors, we have been able to make sure that when they are discriminated against—in the course of their work, or in the course of seeking accommodation, or in a range of other ways contemplated by the Equal Opportunity Act—finally, they have a recourse in the Equal Opportunity Act should they be discriminated against.

Similarly, importantly for those survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence, we have passed laws in South Australia to ensure that, again, those who survive experiences of domestic, family and sexual violence have an industrial environment where they can maintain their connection to the workplace and their means of earning a wage. The legislation that I am talking about, of course, is the legislation that we have passed that now enshrines 15 days of paid domestic, family and sexual violence leave into the state industrial relations system, the state Fair Work Act.

That means that the many employees in the public sector and the 11,000-odd employees across the local government sector can now access that paid domestic, family and sexual violence leave. The reason that is important is for all of those practical reasons that arise when a person survives an experience of domestic, family and sexual violence. It may be that particular time is needed to attend legal, medical, housing or finance appointments. It may mean that a particular experience that is happening or that has happened has rendered it very difficult for them to present at their particular workplace. It may mean that they are in a crisis situation where it is simply impossible to attend their workplace, sometimes sadly when they have fled particular situations.

For all those practical reasons, that legislation is incredibly important, but it is also incredibly important because, again, it maintains a person's connection to their workplace and their means of earning an income. When a person has experienced domestic, family and sexual violence, that is incredibly important in terms of their economic wellbeing and their ability to participate in work and in our economy. We know that particular piece of legislation is very important in terms of our need, in a broader sense, to grow and sustain women's economic participation in the economy. With those comments, I will conclude my remarks.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence) (12:59): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

UNCLAIMED GOODS (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

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

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (DISCIPLINARY MATTERS AND FIDELITY FUND) AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

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

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Auditor-General—Agency audit reports—Report 5 of 2025 [Ordered to be published]

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

Motor Sport Board, South Australian—2024 VAILO Adelaide 500 Event Summary Report
Public Sector Act 2009—Ministerial Staff Report 2025

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

Regulations made under the following Acts—
Electoral—Miscellaneous (2025)

By the Minister for Tourism (Hon. Z.L. Bettison)—

Public Sector Act 2009—Overseas and Interstate Travel—Report 21-28 April 2025

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

Regulations made under the following Acts—
Education and Children's Services—Fees Notice—2025

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I would like to welcome to parliament today students from Star of the Sea School down at Henley Beach who are guests of the member for Colton. It is fantastic to see you all in here. A great school!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Funnily, I have been asked whether I went to Star of the Sea. I didn't go there but my son went there, so there is a great family connection to Star of the Sea. They wouldn't have me. I did not pass the entry test to get in there. I was not smart enough. But all you bright young things, it is great to have you in here.

We also have members of the Port District Football Club who are guests of the Deputy Premier and member for Port Adelaide. It is wonderful to have you here.

We are going to have some Tongan MPs in here shortly. They are just on their way down from the Hills, so we will welcome them when they arrive.

Parliament House Matters

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

The SPEAKER: Before we get into questions, I just want to thank members of the Labor caucus and members of the Liberal party room for having me along to your meetings last week to discuss a few things that we are doing in the parliament. To update everyone, we are in the midst of writing to all former members of this house who did not get to make a valedictory speech when they left parliament. We will be inviting them to come along in October, to either come in here and make a speech or send one in that we will then publish on their page, on the former member's page, of the parliament's internet web page.

We also discussed the increasing number of students and other visitors to parliament. We are setting up a working group, with the help of the Clerk, the education office and members of parliament, so that we can work on resolutions where we get more students and other visitors through the parliament. Thanks again for having me to your meetings and for your cooperation.

Question Time

HOUSING SUPPLY

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:05): My question is to the Premier. How many houses will be complete on the government-released land sites by the 2026 state election?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:05): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question, which of course relates to housing policy and the effort that the government is making to address housing supply. As the Leader of the Opposition is well aware, this government isn't just committed to dramatically increasing housing supply but we are actually doing it. We are actually doing it. When you drive around metropolitan Adelaide and also regional South Australia, you will see thousands—thousands—of blocks currently under construction, in no small part because of the policies that we have instituted.

To which policies do we refer, Mr Speaker? A range of policies, many of which of course have been opposed by those opposite. This is a government that is putting huge amounts of water infrastructure in the ground as we speak, pipes that are the size that we have not seen installed in South Australia for literally decades, in some instances, going in the ground, making sure that we are delivering the water connections to allotments and greenfield areas that simply need water to be able to commence construction. As a result of that effort, in conjunction with tax cuts, like providing first-home buyers total 100 per cent stamp duty relief if they are building a new home, in conjunction with—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Leader of the Opposition says, 'What about existing?' And the member for Chaffey also interjects, always a welcome contribution from the member for Unley or the member for Chaffey, when they interject, 'What about existing?' The point is, they are existing. If it's an existing home, it's not a new home. And if it's not a new home, it's not increasing supply. Those opposite have a policy to make sure that existing homes remain existing—congratulations. We have a policy to actually develop new homes for new supply, and that's what makes a difference to the housing market, that's what makes a difference for new homebuyers.

When you add up our policy effort on land releases, water infrastructure and tax abolition, and when you add up what we are doing on planning reform, what do we get? We get the Business Council of Australia saying South Australia is number one in terms of policy, you get the Housing Industry Association of Australia saying number one state in the country in terms of policy: South Australia. And then what do you do, what do you get when the policy is right? You get more homes,

which is exactly why the Australian Bureau of Statistics in report after report, independently verified by the government, say the fastest-growing level of supply in the nation in housing supply—South Australia, number one: number one in commencements, number one in completions, number one in houses under construction. We are delivering more homes.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The member for Chaffey asks, 'How many?' Get your phone out, look up the Australian Bureau of Statistics and you will see how many homes—over 10,000 homes coming out of the system, a dramatically increasing supply. While those opposite sit around and formulate a way to destroy your budget credibility to create an in excess of half a billion dollars black hole in the budget, and while you work out how to do the budget harm without delivering one extra home, we are making sure we are delivering budget surpluses and a lot more homes with it.

The SPEAKER: I just remind everyone on both sides—

The Hon. D.G. Pisoni interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Member for Unley! I just remind members on both sides that interjections are unparliamentary. That got very rowdy, that answer to the first question of the day. Let's see if we can be a little quieter for the remaining 56 minutes.

HOUSING SUPPLY

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:10): My question is to the Premier. Did the government mislead South Australians in its February 2023 press release? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, sir: questions need to make sense in their initial expression without explanation. The idea that you can ask a question like that without—it shouldn't require an explanation to be valid. The validity of the question should be in its initial asking. Erskine May is very clear on this.

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: I will listen to the deputy leader's point of order.

Mr TEAGUE: The practice so far in this parliament, and particularly in the course of the Speaker's time in the chair, has included the government taking such a fine line on the introduction of facts that it has become the practice for there to be a question that has been left open to this extent. Leave is sought for an explanation and the house can determine whether leave is granted, otherwise the government is going to have to give latitude for questions to introduce just enough facts for what the Manager of Government Business seems to insist upon.

The SPEAKER: Leader, do you want to maybe slightly rephrase the question?

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Sir, I will have another go, and if not I will move to something else and we can work it out. My question is to the Premier: was the government's February 2023 press release factually correct? With your leave and the leave of the house, sir, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, sir: it is an open question. I don't mean to labour this point, sir. The government issued multiple press releases in February 2023 and the idea that the government can ascertain which press release he is talking about without an explanation is ridiculous, sir. The question needs to make sense on its own before it requires explanation. Erskine May is clear on this.

The SPEAKER: I hear you. We will try to work this out.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: If I may, sir: what I am happy to do is I am also happy to provide you with a copy of the release.

The SPEAKER: Can you mention what the release was, in the question, and then—

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Yes, sir, it's in the explanation. It's quite benign.

The SPEAKER: We are just trying to get some questions—

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: If you will allow me to ask the question, then you can determine. How about that?

The SPEAKER: Okay.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The government's media release dated 12 February 2023 said that construction on the first homes on its land release sites in Hackham, Dry Creek, Concordia and Sellicks Beach was able to begin next year. In estimates yesterday, the Minister for Housing confirmed that these timelines were not necessarily accurate.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Housing and members on my left will come to order. The Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:12): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think the Leader of the Opposition would do well to spend more effort familiarising himself with the remarks from the Minister for Housing and actually assess them in a bit of detail. The member for Hartley, the Leader of the Opposition, is right to scrutinise the government in terms of its policy settings around housing. The Leader of the Opposition is fulfilling his duty, I think quite aptly, to inquire of the government what results we are delivering in respect of housing supply. I will take the opportunity to furnish the Leader of the Opposition with some detailed responses in regard to those lines of inquiry because it gives a sense of where we have come from and where we are going.

In the March quarter of 2022 in terms of dwelling completions—this is homes completed, not approved or planned; this is homes getting built and people moving into them—in the last quarter of the life of the former government when we saw a construction boom occurring during the course of COVID—so this was not a statistical anomaly; this was a high watermark, so to speak, as far as the opposition was concerned—2,311 dwellings were completed in that high watermark for the government after a huge amount of stimulus in terms of demand in the March quarter of 2022.

As a result of all the policy effort that this government has instituted, at a time when the rest of the country is going backwards in terms of housing supply, in the state of South Australia in the December quarter, the most recent available quarterly data, we had 3,022 homes, in effect almost a 30 per cent increase or thereabouts—I am just guesstimating there—in terms of increase on the former government.

What we are seeing in the state of South Australia, because of concerted and very deliberate policy effort across a range of different areas, including across different portfolios represented here on the front bench, is a whole-of-government team effort to actually make the policy changes that are not just forecasting an increased supply but actually delivering it at a pace that the rest of the nation is genuinely envious of.

That is not to say that we do not confront a crisis still in terms of housing, because we see some of the lowest vacancy rates anywhere in the country in terms of rental vacancy rates here in South Australia. Notwithstanding talking points that the opposition might seek to prosecute, it is not lost on us that this is having a real-world impact on people in the rental market and it is having a real-world impact on first-home buyers. We are suffering the consequences of problems that in many respects are good to have. Because we have a faster growing economy than anywhere else in the rest of the country, we have demand for housing.

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order: 98A. We are here in the immediate aftermath of estimates and we have a question that is specifically in relation to sites at Hackham, Dry Creek, Concordia and Sellicks Beach. The substance of the question is one thing, it is very specific, but to hear an answer that is addressing macroeconomics is not addressing the substance of the question. The Premier needs to return to the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has the call.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am happy to refer back to the member's question in the context of those particular allotments being released, because what the Leader of the Opposition

refers to in his question and the deputy leader repeats in his point of order are the examples of the places where we have released the land. We have commenced the code amendments and we are the government seeking to actually allow construction to commence and get done in these areas, with the water supply that is required, in a way that is so dramatically in stark contrast with the policy of the former government, which was almost in effect constraining land supply, which of course was doing nothing to address the challenge we have at hand. We understand the real-world outcomes, and the outcomes are the record growth in housing supply that is not in dispute because it is individually verified in a way that you might not like.

SA SUPPORT SERVICES

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. What does the Premier say to workers in SA Support Services? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, Mr Speaker: Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* 25th edition 2019 says and I quote:

A question which cannot be understood without supplementary explanation is not in order.

Now the idea that the Premier can answer that question without an explanation, without leave of the house, is ridiculous, sir. The question should be self-explanatory and any explanation should just add to the question.

Mr TEAGUE: On the point of order—

The SPEAKER: Can you sit down, deputy leader? Can you just sit down? Can you sit down? Leader, thank you for your cooperation in the earlier question. Do you want to just have another go at doing this rather than going backwards and forwards?

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Is the question out of order? I am happy to do as I did last time to insert what I think is a pretty benign explanation. You might want to make a call on it.

The SPEAKER: Just have another go, in terms of efficiency and getting through as many questions as we can, otherwise it is going backwards and forwards.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The explanation is, in a lesser sense, to the Premier: the UWW have said, 'You can't fix ramping without fixing staff, and you can't fix staffing without respecting Support Services.' So what does the Premier say to workers in SA Support Services?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:19): During the course of the lunch break of the parliament, I took the opportunity to talk to them. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition would like to do the same. The former government obviously had a policy to actually restrict and cut services within the hospital system.

When the Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table and contemplated health policy during the course of the pandemic, he had some pretty novel ideas. He thought, 'Okay, it's a pandemic: time to cut nurses. It's a pandemic: time to close beds. It's a pandemic: quick, here is our opportunity. Here is our opportunity: let's get the corporate liquidators in.' That is okay: you were in government and you saw the pandemic as an opportunity. You saw an opportunity to cut, and we all know the consequences of that. Our policy approach is somewhat different. What we are seeing across the health system is a dramatic increase in the capacity of the system: more beds, more nurses, more doctors, more allied health professionals.

I very much appreciated the opportunity, during the course of the lunchbreak, to sit down and talk to other people who work within the health system—people who, while they might not wear a uniform that is immediately as visible and obvious to the public, are of course as important as any function within the hospital system.

I particularly enjoyed one conversation I had at lunchtime with a beautiful woman who works in the kitchen at the Lyell Mac. She was able to explain to me that the kitchen is worthy of, potentially, more support by virtue of the fact that that kitchen was built for 200 beds and, because of the work that the Minister for Health is overseeing, has now got over 500 beds that it is servicing. It is true that there are people within our health system who are working harder than ever before because this

government is working harder than ever before to grow the size of our hospital system to increase the capacity.

So we accept, on this side of the house, that we have a responsibility, particularly as a Labor government, to sit down and talk with workers and engage with workers in the system to understand and appreciate the pressures they are under and to use industrial negotiations during the course of enterprise agreements to not deliver real wage cuts, which is the policy position that those opposite employed so punitively and aggressively. Rather, on this side of the house, we are committed to real wage increases, including for people within the hospital system and including for people who work so hard behind the scenes. We will continue to negotiate and engage in good faith from a valued position: a position of genuine commitment to real wage increases, which everyone knows all too well is such a stark contrast to the policy position of the Leader of the Opposition.

HOUSING TRUST SITE SECURITY

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:22): My question is to the Minister for Housing. Will the government commit to reinstating the use of security patrols at selected Housing Trust sites? If so, when? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr COWDREY: The former Liberal government tightened rules on antisocial behaviour by reducing Labor's seven warnings to three and by ensuring that illegal activity was met with tribunal action. We also introduced security patrols at 18 sites, a measure that has been reduced under this government.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:22): As I explained in estimates yesterday, the regime is exactly the same as it was under the previous government. It's still a three-warning system—three written warnings—and we have eliminated—

Mr Cowdrey interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: Steady. We don't want to get into another willing argument. I answered these questions in estimates, and we went through it in some detail. I undertook to get back to the member about, I think, two sites. The other remaining four sites are the result of—the program remains in place and the security patrols are ongoing; they haven't changed. All that has changed is that some of the sites that the honourable member refers to are being refurbished, and so, as a result, you don't have security guards attending the sites. For the remaining two sites, I undertook to get back to the member and I will do so.

JETTIES

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:24): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure. Will the government provide extra financial assistance to councils whose jetties have been badly damaged during recent storms? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: Two days ago, the jetties at both Robe and Kingston in my electorate were partially destroyed by storms. The \$20 million Jetties Renewal Program, even with the additional \$5 million, isn't enough to maintain or fix these structures.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:24): Well, no doubt they were insured. Surely councils insure against storm damage? What council wouldn't insure against storm damage? My house is insured for storm damage. I am sure that councils would insure critical infrastructure for storm damage. No doubt, prudent mayors would do basic remedial maintenance on council infrastructure and keep their jetties fit for purpose and insure them for storm damage.

Any mayor who is in charge of any council who didn't do basic remedial management of key infrastructure would be considered to be perhaps not keeping the financial interests of their constituents at heart, given how important regional infrastructure is.

Mr Brown: It's negligent.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, it could be described that way, member for Playford.

An honourable member: Florey.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Florey.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They have chosen the wrong assistant minister to pick on—they have chosen the wrong one. There were a series of intense cold fronts that extended from the west of the state bringing rainfall and strong gale-force wind and gusts measuring in excess of 100 km/h at several locations across the state. Marine infrastructure can only withstand so much, and we accept that. When there is unforeseen marine infrastructure damage, the state will help. But there is an agreement in place, a contract as it were with the public, that councils who have this marine infrastructure in their care and control do regular maintenance, and that regular maintenance is critical.

If you maintain your infrastructure regularly, it can be easier to repair when there are unforeseen circumstances that hit it, like extreme weather conditions. So I would say to the members of this house that every single state-owned jetty is insured for storm damage. If that storm creates damage, the councils have up to \$10,000 worth of excess—as it were—damage; the state, up to \$100,000; and the relating damage is done by our insurance. What would risk that insurance policy is councils that have not maintained their jetties, councils that it can be shown and proven not to have done the regular maintenance that's required on their jetties.

That type of behaviour would rule one out from public office I would have thought—especially high office—if people wanted to seek office in, for example, the Treasury benches. If you were mayor of a jurisdiction and you had the care and control—

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Mate, listen—

Mr Brown: Don't identify yourself.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Don't identify yourself. Listen to your lawyer and keep your mouth shut. I would be very quiet here. The first thing is, just like the guy you watch—what's his name?—Tucker Carlson, right? The Fifth Amendment: the right to remain silent—you have the right to remain silent. If I were you, don't make any admissions.

Mr Telfer: What's this got to do with Kingston and Robe?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Don't make any admissions.

Mr Telfer: What's this got to do with Kingston and Robe?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, no—I am telling you, as a friend: keep your mouth quiet; as a mate—zip it.

Mr Telfer interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If I were you I would just zip it, because they take notes in these interviews, right, and all of a sudden you are in court and the—

The SPEAKER: Member for Giles.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Oh, my time has expired, sir.

The SPEAKER: Member for Giles, you have the call.

WHYALLA STEELWORKS

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (14:28): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier provide an update on the future of the Whyalla Steelworks?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:28): It was a really important day on Tuesday for the future of Whyalla, but also steelmaking in this nation, and it was a privilege to be onsite and also getting around and talking to so many people in the wider community, along with the Minister for Energy and Mining and Minister Ayres, federally, and hearing firsthand so many of the stories from Whyalla community members who are thoroughly enjoying the city being in a far stronger position today than what it was at the beginning of the year.

It feels like an eternity ago, but it was only at the beginning of the parliamentary year when there were active inquiries of the government as to, 'Well, what's your plan for Whyalla? What's going on?' and the people in Whyalla were asking that question far more frequently of the member for Giles more than anyone.

Of course, the government had a plan. The government was working behind the scenes to engage in one of the most comprehensive and decisive policy interventions in our economic industrial landscape that we have seen in almost the state's history, and the result of that is profound. In meeting with Tony from Avid Engineering, for instance, he has gone from having basically four staff in January to now having over 25 staff working in the steelworks, which is one example of a business now back at work in the way that it should always have been.

The steelworks itself has now employed over 75 additional people in comparison to where they were merely prior to the administration. The business and the safety of the operations have been very much stabilised in what has been a relatively short period. We know that this has to represent only the beginning of this effort. Our objective is to get the steelworks into new ownership and we are utterly determined to make sure that it doesn't just get a new owner but it gets the right new owner, which is why we are very deliberately working through this sale process, which we were able to announce as formally commencing on Tuesday.

This is going to be a lot of work. It is not going to happen quickly, but we are determined to get the right outcome. We very much hope that at some point during the course of the second half of next year we are in a position to be able to start working and delivering the steelworks under new ownership with a very clear plan to transform and realise the opportunity around the decarbonisation of global iron making and steelmaking, which is the policy pursuit that we are conducting in conjunction with the commonwealth as just an incredible partner.

I was heartened to hear Minister Ayres speak so enthusiastically about this endeavour being a key priority of the federal government, which has got us to the point where we are now. But beyond the steelworks and the contractors—even being at the school and taking the opportunity to go and spend some time in the men's shed.

Throughout the second half of last year there was what was a rather dark period in Whyalla. We were up there with a number of cabinet ministers for meetings earlier this year and you couldn't get a coffee, you couldn't walk through a park and you couldn't visit the supermarket without feeling it hanging over the heads of the people of Whyalla. Now there is an overwhelming sense of relief and optimism about the future, but a consciousness that it is going to require a lot of effort to get this thing closed. This government will not stop until we achieve that end because our country needs to be able to make steel for ourselves.

HOUSING TRUST SITE SECURITY

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (14:33): My question is to the minister for Housing. What does the minister say to Daniel, a Housing Trust tenant in Novar Gardens, whose property caught alight? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr PATTERSON: The Housing Trust property where Daniel lives in Novar Gardens was the target of an arson attack last week. Daniel lives with a disability that means he is unable to move from his house of over 20 years, despite living in fear for his life from the increasing violence happening right next door.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:33): Of course, any Housing Trust

tenant—and there are many who are victims of antisocial behaviour, crime or fire, whether it be accidental or deliberate—we have the utmost care and concern for which is why the trust reached out to the individual concerned to offer him temporary accommodation and to check in to see if the property was not fire damaged and the like. There have been some maintenance issues which came out of those interactions.

Of course, we want to see a safe and secure public housing offering, not just for public housing tenants but for their neighbours. We have to remember that the vast majority of the over 33,000 properties we have and the vast majority of the tenants we have are very good tenants and very good citizens, and we have a small range of issues around antisocial behaviour, criminality and the like.

In this case, it was not caused by trust tenants but rather by illegal activity in an unoccupied trust home. Of course we care about the trust tenants, and there has been more than one fire in and around Novar Gardens, so we are concerned about that. We have had our contractors properly board up vacant homes in the area with steel boards to discourage squatters, and we are working with South Australia Police and the Metropolitan Fire Service, obviously, to do all we can to discourage this behaviour.

HOUSING TRUST SITE SECURITY

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:35): My question is again to the Minister for Housing. Has the minister met local residents in Gilberton following the alleged murder of a resident at Bentzen Court and, if not, why not? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr COWDREY: It was reported on 15 June that a former SA Housing Trust tenant allegedly stabbed another tenant and then was involved in a home invasion. There have been longstanding concerns about this particular Housing Trust site at Walkerville Terrace, with local Jan Beasley saying on FIVEaa radio, 'We are terrified.'

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:36): Firstly, the matters that the member refers to are still subject to investigation by South Australia Police, so I won't comment on those. I have, however, met with Jan Beasley. I met with her on Monday and we had a discussion about her experience. She has lived there for 17 years and there has been antisocial behaviour at that site over multiple governments of multiple persuasions.

It would be fair to say that Ms Beasley is at the end of her tether, and understandably so. They have been through a very traumatic incident and I feel for them greatly. I asked the trust to treat this with the utmost importance. They have put a security guard on the site 24/7. We have begun to engage with Ms Beasley about the interface between the trust property and their home. I have asked the trust to look at improving that interface in the best way that we can to ensure their peace of mind and security.

Of course, with issues like this antisocial behaviour—and I said this in estimates before—we need to look carefully at the allocation policy relating to walk-up flats, because for too long there have been issues around walk-up flats. If you get the allocation wrong and you get antisocial behaviour, it is hard to remediate, and often the behaviours accelerate as compliance activity is undertaken. We do have to look at walk-up flats. They are an issue of concern for the government, both in terms of the allocation policy towards them and in terms of the upgrades.

Having met with Jan Beasley and her husband, John, we have undertaken to meet with the council, to obviously meet with them further and to try to do all we can as a government to improve the situation that they have experienced over the last 17 years.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Colton, I would like to welcome to parliament today the Assistant Clerk of the Tongan parliament and three members of parliament. The South

Australian parliament has a twin parliament arrangement with Tonga. In the past 12 months, we have been putting a lot of work into really energising that partnership. Each state and territory in Australia is twinned with a Pacific island nation. Victoria is with Fiji, Western Australia is with the Cook Islands and so on.

We really value our relationship with the Tongan parliament. I want to pass on my thanks again for the hospitality that you extended to the President of the Legislative Council, myself and the Clerk of the House of Assembly last year. It is good to see some familiar faces here, including the former Prime Minister of Tonga. We had a couple of lovely meals together, including after question time when we went out the back of parliament and were treated to a feast of an entire roast pig. If you are looking for a member of parliament to be able to reciprocate, it may well be the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. His dad knows his way around a spit and does a very good pig.

So I would like to welcome the Hon. Hu'akavameiliku, who is the former Prime Minister of Tonga. Thank you very much for coming here. To Lord Tu'ilakepa, thank you very much for coming here. I look forward to our meeting this afternoon. To Dr Mo'ale 'Otunuku, thank you for coming to Adelaide as well. It is lovely to see you again, and I am looking forward to catching up.

To someone who was very helpful on our visit to Tonga, the Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga, Dr Sione Vikilani, thank you again for all your help in the relationship. We have Callum Findlay here, who is the Second Secretary of the Australian High Commission in Tonga, and we have Tarie Dellora, who is an assistant director with DFAT. Thank you for making this trip possible. On behalf of all members of the Parliament of South Australia, we welcome you here and wish you a very good stay in South Australia.

Question Time

HOUSING TRUST

Mr COWDREY (Colton) (14:40): My question is again to the Minister for Housing. Will the SA Housing Trust engage in formal consultation with residents living near Drew Court, Oaklands Park in relation to the upgrade? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr COWDREY: In estimates, the minister confirmed that no letterbox drops were undertaken and that consultation had been limited to social media. Residents have raised concerns about the lack of direct engagement.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (14:41): We traversed this in estimates yesterday, and I gave the honourable member my answer, so I refer him to that particular engagement. I think I was happy enough to undertake a letterbox drop. I do not think that is difficult. The Housing Trust, as the member indicates, has been doing some online engagement. We do live in a digital world, but of course it is always good to remember that a good old-fashioned letterbox drop does not do anybody any harm.

We are always interested in hearing from local members of parliament. Members of the government write to me all the time, and of course occasionally members of the opposition as well, about particular sites and about the improvement of them. If we are undertaking upgrades or if we are building new public housing, communities often have views in the same way they have views about all developments. Of course, we do our utmost to listen to them and take their suggestions on board.

We have recently done it with Camden Park. Car parking was raised with me and there was anxiety about antisocial behaviour, and we are responding to both. We are improving the car parking offering because we understand that is important to the local community, and we have undertaken to think carefully about the allocation policy. As a parliament and a community, we are going to have to think carefully about allocation policy, because we need to make sure that the tenant is the right fit for the housing and the right fit for the community. We have to think carefully about how we are going to properly house people who have issues.

I just urge the opposition and everybody else to remember the Housing Trust is a landlord. It is public housing. It is not a referral. We cannot force our tenants to seek mental health treatment. We are not the police. We have capacity to deal with antisocial behaviour through the leasing arrangements, but we are required to go to SACAT to do that. Often, when we are going to SACAT, much of the behaviour accelerates.

I totally understand the community's attitudes to antisocial behaviour. We understand people's anxieties around it. We are doing our very level best. The Housing Trust and its officers do an excellent job every day dealing with a very difficult task in allocating properties and in deciding compliance action. Of course, where we are building new public housing, we want to give to the local community the utmost confidence that we are listening to them in terms of the nature of our developments and the ongoing tenancy. We are keen to be good neighbours and positively impact people's local neighbourhoods.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Stuart, I would like to welcome to parliament former Liberal leader and former member for Heyssen, Isobel Redmond. It is great to have you back in here, Isobel. I welcome your guests as well.

Question Time

BIRDSVILLE TRACK

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:44): My question is to the Minister for Transport. Can the minister update the communities around the Birdsville Track regarding accessibility across the Cooper Creek crossing? With your leave and that of the house, sir, I will explain a bit further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: With the recent rains in Queensland resulting in lots of water coming in to fill up Lake Eyre, which I will say is going to be an absolutely fantastic opportunity for tourists up there, and with the water coming down Cooper Creek, Cooper Crossing will be inaccessible to vehicular traffic in the future. I know that the minister has been trying his very best to get a solution for us.

The SPEAKER: Before I give you the call, I would like to say I was up there a couple of weeks ago. It is looking fantastic at Lake Eyre. I went out to Clifton Hill Station as well. It is a great part of the world.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:45): It would be totally out of order for me to also remind the house that Dr David Day is also in the house, sitting alongside the most talented Liberal opposition leader we have ever had. I thank the member for his question and I—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Liberal, I said—Liberal. He is Labor. I know it is a difficult concept for all of you to understand. There is a difference between the political parties. Ask Ashton, she will explain it to you.

The Premier has—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, see, you're doing a great job. The Premier has responded to this question when asked in the media and I want to thank the member for his question. The member for Stuart is deeply connected to regional South Australia, whether it is people living on stations, regional workers. If you want to know what is going on in the Mid North of the state and the north of the state, you speak to the member for Stuart. He knows exactly what is going on and he is a great barometer for the government.

It is a complex process which takes time. I know that the floods coming from Queensland are causing a great amount of disruption in our north, especially for our cattle graziers who are very concerned about how to get their cattle to market. The government is actively considering and will make a decision shortly on options that will best benefit the people of South Australia to make sure that we can keep people in regional communities connected to the rest of the state but also keep in mind the cost to the taxpayer. So there is an analysis here that we have to do and it is difficult to contemplate that in terms of remoteness.

Often people living in remote areas feel as if they make a very large contribution to the state, yet the contribution in reverse is very, very little. This government is acutely aware of that and the benefit that regional communities, especially our farmers and our cattle graziers, provide to this country and this state in terms of offering us protein and investment.

A lot of work has been going on. Obviously, there are some people who want us to build a bridge. Building a bridge for one in 20, 30, 40-year flood events is expensive and difficult, especially in that terrain. Given the very nature of regional South Australia, it would be difficult to build something that would be event-proof. So we are looking at many options.

The government has been in contact with a range of people associated with the livestock industry at the behest of the Premier and the member for Stuart and the Minister for Primary Industries and, of course, Minister Bourke, who has been up in the Mid North talking to those local communities. We are interested in what producers are saying; what the impacts are on our economy; what the impacts are on our abattoirs, especially in Murray Bridge and the like. We are talking about jobs, we are talking about grocery prices, we are talking about people's livelihoods. So we are acute to all of those concerns.

Of course, we have to make sure that this is a national problem, this is not an acutely South Australian problem. This is something that impacts the entire nation, not just the state. The commonwealth has a role here and it is important that the rest of the nation knows that South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia are the bread baskets of this country. We want to make sure that the rest of the country knows that when our primary producers in regional and isolated areas are in trouble, it is not the requirement just of 1.6 million taxpayers to take care of. It is the requirement of over 26 million Australian taxpayers to make sure that they know that there are requirements. We are making sure that this is a national issue.

BIRDSVILLE TRACK

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:49): Supplementary, sir.

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

Mr PEDERICK: To the Minister for Transport: is the government considering a new ferry for the Birdsville Track that will carry both vehicles and freight, and does the government rule out applying a toll for the use of that ferry?

The SPEAKER: I think the minister already covered that they were looking at a whole range of things. We might move onto the member for Davenport.

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (14:50): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Can the minister inform the house how the government is improving access to treatment for South Australians with ADHD?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:50): I thank the member for Davenport for her question and note her strong interest in this, and I think she's had significant interest from members in her community. Last week, I was joined by the member for Adelaide, who also has a strong interest in this matter, as well as the Mental Health Commissioner, Taimi Allan, and the Chair of the South Australian college of general practitioners, Dr Sian Goodson, to make an announcement in terms of how we are expanding the ability for South Australians to be able to access care for ADHD.

At the moment, it is very difficult for people to be able to access care for ADHD in South Australia. It is, unfortunately, a very expensive exercise, and people can wait a very long period of time to be able to access either a psychiatrist or a paediatrician to get a diagnosis for ADHD. People are paying in excess of \$1,500, sometimes \$2,000 or \$3,000, to be able to do that. It clearly means that, for a whole range of people, to get that appropriate health care, it is out of reach for them financially to be able to do so. We do not want to have a situation here in South Australia where appropriate health care is determined by people's bank balance rather than their need for that health care.

We have been working with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in terms of how we can make sure our general practitioners are operating at the top of their scope of practice and are able to assist South Australians who have ADHD to have diagnosis and to get the appropriate treatment. This is something that other states have been looking at as well. We have announced that, from next year, GPs who have appropriate training and expertise in this area will be able to undertake that assessment. This is going to mean a big difference for people who live in regional South Australia, in outer suburbs and people who don't have thousands and thousands of dollars to be able to get that appropriate diagnosis and care.

Since we made that announcement on Friday, the response that we have had has been overwhelmingly positive. We have been inundated with comments from the community in terms of people talking about their stories of how difficult it has been and what a difference this would make for them. I would like to read out a couple of those from South Australians. Elise said:

This is truly wonderful. It is incredibly expensive and laborious to get diagnosed and treated a couple of years ago. It nearly broke me pursuing the help I needed.

Susan said:

This will improve many lives. I have lived experience of a family member going from out of control to getting right back on track and in control of their life again. Affordable and timely diagnosis and treatment will help so many.

Karen said:

This is amazing news. I am so happy to hear this [because] I have been waiting over 2 years to see a paediatrician.

From Judy:

Thank goodness—the wait and cost has been abominable.

From Renee:

This could change my life. Thank you. There is nothing worse than feeling helpless. Knowing you need support, but not having the funds for diagnosis and care. \$1400 for an adult assessment is out of reach for struggling families. Finally I can see light at the end of the tunnel.

We even had the Mental Health Commissioner, Taimi Allan, who does a wonderful job, speaking about her experience and her personal journey with ADHD, and her family members as well, and what a difference it has made for her and her family. We will be working with the College of GPs as well as, of course, with the College of Psychiatrists and the College of Physicians in terms of making sure that we have the training program right for GPs to do this. We have incredible general practitioners here in South Australia who will be able to provide the appropriate care for people, to make sure they can get that in a more timely way, make sure they can get it in an affordable way, and of course safely as well, and to make a difference to people's lives across the state.

ELECTIVE SURGERY WAIT TIMES

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (14:54): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. What does the minister say to patient Sue Berndt, and what action will he take to help her? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the Leader of Government Business.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Reluctant as I am, sir, to interrupt the member for Schubert, that question on its own makes no sense.

The Hon. V.A. Tarzia: Why are you so grumpy today?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not grumpy.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, I am trying to listen to the point of order. Can everyone on my left just calm down and be quiet so I can hear the point of order? Thank you.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Erskine May is clear, sir: a question should be understandable without explanation. Sir, that question is obviously not understandable without explanation, and it should be ruled out of order.

The SPEAKER: Would you like to have—

Mrs HURN: Another go?

The SPEAKER: —or a little rework of the words?

Mrs HURN: Very happy to. My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. How does the minister respond to the experience of patient Sue Berndt waiting for an orthopaedic specialist appointment, and what action will he take to help her? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mrs HURN: Sue is a Barossa local who was a nurse for 50 years. She has been waiting years to see an orthopaedic specialist for her shoulder, which is so bad that she can barely dress herself. I first raised this with the minister in 2023.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Karna—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:55): I thank the member for her question. I spoke to Ms Berndt on Sunday after this issue was raised and assured her that we will be looking into this matter. I have asked the Northern Adelaide Local Health Network to look into this matter and I also spoke to the director of orthopaedic surgery for Northern Adelaide Local Health Network to look into this matter.

We know that we need to increase the number of elective surgeries that we are performing, and that is exactly what we are doing and that is exactly what we have done in the past year. Over the past year, we increased the number of elective surgeries that we performed by over 10 per cent. That is over 5,000 more South Australians who were able to receive their elective surgery operation than the year before. When the Leader of the Opposition was asked about that fact on radio the other day, he referred to it as 'cherrypicking' or something like that, but this is 5,000 more South Australians who are getting elective surgery—real people—than was the case the year before—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will come to order. Leader and Deputy Leader, you will come to order.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON: —and we are determined to continue to do so. That is one of the key reasons why we are, of course, expanding the size of our health service, adding more beds and adding more doctors and nurses so that we can make sure that not only are we dealing with emergency cases but also elective surgery cases.

It is also why we are engaging with the private health system. Recently, the Treasurer and I announced a new partnership with Western Hospital, saving Western Hospital from imminent closure. Part of that arrangement has been that we have enabled a pathway for public patients to be able to access that hospital for their surgery, particularly focused on orthopaedic patients and a direct pathway from the outpatient list all the way through their journey. This has been helping many patients in just the past few months that we have had it in place and we are going to continue to expand on those sorts of measures.

I am further advised in terms of Ms Berndt's case that on 28 February 2025, NALHN did reach out and left a message to her to look at whether she could be part of this pathway. Unfortunately, they were unable to reach her by phone, but clearly left a message in terms of whether

she would be keen to be part of that pathway. Of course, as part of that pathway, there will be clinical criteria that will apply as to whether people have comorbidities, etc., and whether the complexity of which will be possible to undertake in Western Hospital or other types of hospitals that we undertake that surgery in, or whether it will need to be undertaken in a major tertiary hospital such as the Lyell McEwin Hospital.

I will continue to look into the particular case that has been raised, but we will also continue to invest in additional surgeries so that more patients can be seen. We know that there are many more patients who are coming onto the list, so we need to increase the number of patients who are getting their surgery. We have done that already in the past year, but we will continue to do so.

MOUNT GAMBIER URGENT CARE CLINIC

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:59): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Has the urgent care clinic in Mount Gambier closed and, if so, what impact has that had on the Mount Gambier community and has the minister taken any action?

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (14:59): The clinic has and that is, of course, a matter for the federal government to provide that clinic. The federal government provides the Medicare urgent care clinics across the country. I understand that the primary health network in this case, the Country SA Primary Health Network that commissioned the contract with that service, is going to be actively out within coming days in terms of undertaking a new EOI for a new clinic to take place in the Mount Gambier region.

We have, of course, been in contact with both the federal government and also the primary health network about that. Obviously, the Limestone Coast Local Health Network is looking at what plans it can make in terms of making sure that if there is any increase in presentations at the Mount Gambier hospital it will be able to manage in the interim until a new service is established. Obviously, we hope that the federal government can re-establish that service as soon as possible because primary care services are vital right across the state, particularly in major regional centres such as Mount Gambier, to reduce pressure on our acute hospital system.

The other thing I would note is that the government is investing in the Mount Gambier emergency department, which is obviously within our area of health responsibility. We are expanding that emergency department at the moment and that expansion will be open this year and provide more care for people who have acute cases who need to get cared for at the hospital. We look forward, hopefully, to a new urgent care centre opening through the federal government and primary health network arrangements in coming months, and we will continue to work with the federal government on that matter.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION AGREEMENT

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. How does the minister respond to the Productivity Commission's recent report on the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: A new report from the Productivity Commission has delivered a scathing assessment of the agreement, with Commissioner Selwyn Button calling it 'fragmented, ineffective and unable to deliver on the systemic reform it promised'.

The Hon. C.J. PICTON (Kaurua—Minister for Health and Wellbeing) (15:01): Yes, there was a scathing report into the agreement that was signed by the Hon. Stephen Wade. That is obviously disappointing to read. It was two minutes to midnight before the last state election that that agreement was signed by my predecessor, the former Minister for Health and Wellbeing, the Hon. Stephen Wade.

The Productivity Commission has been looking into that national partnership agreement as we commence the new negotiations for a new Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement between the states and the federal government. Clearly, we will take on board the feedback from the Productivity Commission about how we can deliver a much better national partnership agreement than was signed by the previous Marshall Liberal government.

ILLEGAL TOBACCO STORES

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs. Will the government warn landlords whose premises have previously been raided in relation to the sale of illegal tobacco about the new penalties that they may face if raided again? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr ELLIS: Mr Brett Skinner, a legitimate tobacco salesperson from my electorate, is concerned that illegal tobacco shops seem to be operating immediately after having been closed following a raid and says that there should be more action taken to proactively shut these down.

The Hon. A. MICHAELS (Enfield—Minister for Small and Family Business, Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs, Minister for Arts) (15:02): I thank the member for Narungga for his question. It is a big task that we have been tackling, particularly in the last 12 months since CBS has taken it over.

The member asked specifically about the situation with landlords. He may be aware there was legislation that was passed through this parliament that commenced actually only a couple of weeks ago. In the last couple of weeks, when we do short-term closures, I am writing to those landlords as well to make them aware not only that their tenant has been caught selling illicit tobacco or vapes but also about the new offence provisions that have come into place. Now, any landlord that knowingly leases property for the purpose of selling illicit tobacco is subject to a new offence.

We have also made some changes to the Retail and Commercial Leases Act to enable landlords to terminate their leases easier when they do find out that that is the situation. So we are balancing it out for landlords being able to terminate those leases.

We have been doing a whole lot of work in this space in the last year. We have now taken about \$34 million worth of product off the streets. We have done close to 40 closures. We have prosecutions through the courts. In the last 12 months since we stood up the illicit tobacco taskforce within CBS, it has done about 500-plus inspections. We are working very closely with SA Police, and Operation Eclipse in SAPOL has been working very closely with CBS. There is obviously a very strong connection with organised crime, which is obviously a concern. We are definitely working with landlords in this, and we have publicised those changes. I have written to the Insurance Council of Australia as well, to try to set up a process where we can actually tell the insurers—

There being a disturbance in the gallery:

The SPEAKER: Security, can I ask you to remove the stranger from the Strangers Gallery, please? Thank you.

The Hon. A. MICHAELS: We know that one of the issues for landlords is ensuring that their insurance policy is still valid, and having illicit tobacco often invalidates those insurance policies. So we are trying to work through a process where we can write to the insurers as well, to let them know. That is often an additional prompt for landlords to do the right thing and get rid of these people on their premises.

All this work we have been doing in the last 12 months has been nationally recognised as leading the nation. There was a national scorecard on which we ranked with an A+. We led the nation in the changes that we have made. I am getting contact from other ministers in other states, who are asking us about our processes and what we are doing. There is a lot of work to do, but we are certainly tackling it. Fair warning to anyone who is involved in that sector.

Grievance Debate

STATE LABOR GOVERNMENT

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:06): As we reach the halfway mark of this parliamentary sitting year one thing is crystal clear: this Labor government is all spin and very little substance.

Do not forget that Labor told us that they had a whole range of election commitments and that they would deliver on them. Recently we heard about the Premier's Delivery Unit. I mean, let's go through some of these deliveries that they are supposedly supposed to be getting on with. Firstly, there was the delivery in respect of ramping. What happened there? They said that they would fix ramping. Remember that? What have they actually delivered? They have delivered 36 months of the worst ramping in South Australia's history.

What about when it comes to hydrogen, when they said that they would reduce energy prices by 8 per cent? What has the delivery unit delivered there? They scrapped the project. They have come in and said that they are going to get on with fixing the housing crisis, and what have we learned today? Out of the four land releases there is not one slab and not one brick laid on any of those sites. What an absolute disgrace.

The Premier is off, spending \$2.4 million on his own special delivery unit—all-stars like Rik Morris. Remember him? But what are they actually delivering? What are they actually delivering? Not much. What we have found out instead is that they are actually using the delivery unit more as a personal spy agency—a spy agency—because they do not actually trust what public servants are doing. That is what we learned during estimates. It is just absolutely out of control.

Of course, fixing ramping was not the only promise that the government made in respect of health in recent times. We have also heard today about how they are letting down people when it comes to elective surgery. I was out with my good friend the member for Schubert not that long ago, when we met with Sue and our friend Jenny. This poor lady has been a nurse for over 50 years—she has been helping out South Australians for basically her whole professional life—and alas, for three years she has been waiting for an operation, and still all we got today was arrogance from this out-of-touch inept health minister. She is still waiting for this operation.

In relation to technical colleges, we know that Labor also promised five of these colleges in the last election. But, in Port Augusta, unfortunately what we heard this week was just hot air: no timeline, no staffing plan and more spin in that regard.

What about our drought-stricken farmers? Despite our ongoing cries and the cries of farmers, especially in the Mid North of our state, for water and for fodder, the estimates unfortunately revealed that the minister could not actually explain how or when this drought relief will reach those who need it most. That is very disappointing because, in the same hearing, we also heard that this government has no current biosecurity strategy to protect our state's \$17 billion primary production sector. It is no wonder, with arrogance like that, that unfortunately we have seen many producers, especially in the tomato space recently, go to the wall because of this government's ineptitude. It has been an absolutely woeful performance.

We also found out that Labor is quietly scrapping literacy and numeracy tests for police recruits. Who would think that is a good idea, seriously? Do not forget that they wanted to very quickly brand this as a law and order budget. The reason they wanted to do that is because there was a report put together by SAPOL, but of course we cannot see it. Do you know why we cannot see it? Because they do not want the people of South Australia to hold them to account.

What we have seen from Labor governments in the past is currently continuing to occur again. Usually, the arrogance comes in after a few terms, but alas it is happening here under this government in record speed. You only saw a couple of weeks ago what they did to the Adelaide City Council. This is what happens when Mali thinks he is too big for his RM boots. He thinks he can just steamroll through, whether it is the Adelaide City Council, whether it is Ryan Harrison—I mean, who is next? This guy is carrying on a bit like Caligula, the Roman emperor: going from party to party pillaging. He just does not care—and members opposite laugh. Well, do you know what? I would be worried if I were you. I would be worried, because I do not think your Mali is tough. I would be worried too. Last year, Labor tried to axe 27 research roles at iconic galleries—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: They don't like the truth, they can't handle the truth.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Member for—what are you now? Florey? You need people like me.

The SPEAKER: Normally I would pull everyone up, but the Tongans are enjoying it.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: What can I say? Nothing but spin and arrogance from this government. Not only will we continue to hold this bad government to account but we will continue to make sure that we shape our alternative vision, our positive vision for the people of South Australia.

The SPEAKER: To our guests from the parliament of Tonga, that does not normally happen. There was a fair bit of carry on, but you seemed to be enjoying the show. Given you were not here in March for the Fringe, we wanted to treat you to a little bit of special entertainment. Please pass on my regards to Lord Speaker when you get back to Tonga as well.

MARION BAY BOAT RAMP

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (15:11): I rise today to make a contribution about an unfortunate incident unfolding down at the bottom of Yorke Peninsula, and that is the state of the Marion Bay boat ramp. It can be a difficult thing for a government or council to admit that an infrastructure program, which has been the benefit of some significant investment, has not necessarily gone to plan and the outcome has not achieved the goal it set out to, but unfortunately that is the case at Marion Bay. I think now, as a council and as a member of this state parliament, we need to admit that it has not worked and that we might need to go back to the drawing board to come up with an alternate solution to serve the people who use that boat ramp.

It is quite unfortunate. That boat ramp was the subject of calls over many years for an upgrade. It has long been considered faulty down there, and it must be said that the YP Council does deserve credit for undertaking that work. As I said, it has been the subject of some longstanding calls for improvement, and the YP Council acted on it with investment from the better boating facilities fund and endeavoured to try to fix that ramp. Unfortunately, the product that we have now provided the boaties of southern Yorke Peninsula is not fit for purpose and the condemnation is widespread. Almost everyone I talk to finds it unusable and unsafe, and we now need to look at what we can do to make it better and more usable.

Over the past few weeks, I have had significant consultation with different people to see what they think. I headlined that by visiting Marion Bay the other day and had a chat to the community about what the popular view is amongst them, and it was quite clear that some changes needed to be made. The chief concern amongst the people who use the ramp is that the rows of pylons that populate both sides of the ramp, each side of the ramp—so four rows of pylons—can create a reasonably unsafe environment from which to try to launch a boat. It is a relatively unprotected ramp, with swells rising quite often and boaties finding themselves battered up against those poles in between their boats, leaving them in quite a dangerous situation.

It is not just about their personal safety but also about the danger to their boats. They might get dented, scratched or worse as a result of that swell buffeting the boats against the poles, so people would like to see those poles removed. They also object to the pedestrian ramp that is down the middle of the boat ramp as they feel it is holding up seaweed and creating a massive deposit of wrack on the ramp, making it all the more difficult to use. It has resulted in a person having to go daily to clear wrack off the ramp so it can be used but, by the time those boats get back in after their day at sea, they often find that the seaweed has returned and the ramp is unusable again.

I mention that I have consulted with the community. I know Ryan from Reef Encounters Fishing Charters has been leading the charge against this ramp. Being a charter boat operator, he has a relatively big boat that he tries to launch from there and he is finding it extremely difficult to launch it. Such is the narrowness of the ramp between those rows of piles he is finding it very dangerous and very difficult to launch and would like to see those poles removed almost immediately. It is causing his business great distress and it is making it very difficult for him to take people out and show them the wonderful waters off Marion Bay.

I also spoke to Asher from RecFish SA and he is experiencing the same feedback that I am experiencing from his membership, that being that it is tremendously unusable and unsafe. He also would join the chorus, I think, in saying that it needs to change and there needs to be reinvestment to try to realign the ramp with what the people who live down there and use that ramp expect, and I

know that his membership have encouraged change as well, and he is working behind the scenes with the government and with the council to try to make that happen.

Importantly, and just as a final mention for the people I have spoken to, I talked to the flotilla leader of the Edithburgh Sea Rescue. This is a flotilla that has responsibility for the southern part of the peninsula and has launched their boat from that ramp previously, but they have discovered and they have determined that they will no longer be doing it. In their estimation it is unsafe for their membership to do it and they will not take their boat down to Marion Bay to launch from that new ramp.

That leaves us in a tremendously dangerous spot. That means from Edithburgh all the way around to Port Vic on the other side will not have sea rescue coverage if someone were to get in trouble in their boat off the coastline. So that is a really pressing concern. I commend the Edithburgh flotilla for having the courage to make a stand and say that they are not going to put their membership in harm's way, but it leaves us in a very short spot.

I would like some accountability for how we have managed to find ourselves in this position. Council deserve credit for undertaking this work and answering the community's call, but they are not experts in marine design. The engineers that supply these design options to council that they can choose from to construct this ramp need to be held accountable for the designs that they submitted. How on earth they were able to submit this plan, which was so obviously deficient and which the community suspected would be as such right from the get-go, is a real travesty, and I hope there is some accountability and some adjustment moving forward so that we are not left in this spot going forward and that the designs presented to future councils are fit for purpose for the area that they intend to serve.

FROME ELECTORATE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:16): At the halfway mark of the parliamentary year, I rise to review the government's commitment and investment in infrastructure and water security as it pertains to my electorate of Frome, and it will be no surprise to my side of the chamber that I find them wanting. Water should not be a luxury or an optional extra. It is, in fact, our most precious commodity and it is fundamental to our way of life.

We know the environmental impact that has concerned many with the algal bloom that we have seen prevalent on our coastlines, and that is just one source of water, or watercourse, that gets our attention. But the further we go inland to the electorate of Frome, around the Adelaide Plains, the Mid North, Clare Valley and beyond, it is water that comes up time and time again as a pressure point, a cost-of-living measure, a basic human necessity, a finite source and something that really drives families to reach out in a public way where they might otherwise just get on with it. Of course, this has happened, with the water insecurity that has been taking place in the worst drought in a generation which does exacerbate a family's ability to access water.

The families I talk about are not just the farming families, who are especially impacted by the drought, but also the families running the businesses in the small communities or living on hobby farms, who, without access to mains water, are dependent on the investment in their own infrastructure that they might have made with as many tanks onsite as possible, drilling bores and relying on that, and if they are lucky they might have a dam on their property.

What we have known for the last six months, as the Liberal opposition has recounted in this chamber, is that those dams are empty, those bores are salty and the tanks are dry and they spend as much time booking water for carting back to their properties as they might have spent on any other important family decision. Communities like Armagh, which is just over the Spring Gully Hill where I live, have not ever been on mains, and that is an important starting point.

It is fair for a community like Armagh or Manoora to look at the signals that the government is sending different communities across the state, where their first use of the word 'emergency' in relation to water was for the Adelaide Hills community, which also has salty bores and empty dams. Armagh and Manoora are no less worthy, as this government regales for the media and the mainstream public how it is investing taxpayer money in water infrastructure.

I continue to flag with the Minister for Education about the Manoora Primary School, that it is reliant on electricity to run the generator, to pump the bore, to get the water up to the toilets so that they will flush. These are basic needs in a government asset in a primary school, and there should be an equitable access of services for all primary school students.

As I reflect on other communities in the electorate of Frome across the Adelaide Plains, communities that I have been doorknocking, like Two Wells, have reported reduced pressure in their homes. This is echoed in Wasleys, in Templers and in Freeling. I think it extends as far south as Munno Para West in some of the government's own electorates, yet there is no compassion when it comes to their rolled gold promises about the infrastructure they promised they are rolling out and the service that someone experiences in their home where sprinklers do not pop up and where families are deciding which appliance to use first. We know that gravity-fed tanks will not ignite the gas heating.

Now we look at the Concordia code amendment and wonder, as we eventually wait for a slab to be laid there, whether those communities are also going to experience low pressure. The government does not have an answer for this. The government and its representatives really do not have a plan to solve these challenges, and the way that they are spending our money means they just cannot afford the solutions. The Premier's Peter party is happening in the city and country people are not invited.

FRIENDS OF THE UPPER AND LOWER FIELD RIVER

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (15:22): I rise to talk about the Friends of the Lower and Upper Field River today. I have been doing a tour of all of the friends groups that are within my electorate. Today, I want to pay tribute to them and also recognise the Field River system that winds through Adelaide's southern suburbs before reaching the sea at Hallett Cove. As a lesser known but ecologically significant metropolitan waterway, this seasonal river plays a crucial role in connecting the Hills to the coast, supporting biodiversity, filtering stormwater and offering green space for the community.

The Field River and its surrounding catchment area are a part of the traditional lands of the Kaurna people, who have lived along its banks for thousands of years. European colonisation in the 1800s led to significant land clearing and degradation in the Field River catchment. The lower section of the river, particularly from Trott Park through to Sheidow Park to Hallett Cove, has been heavily impacted by urban development from the 1970s onwards, with natural habitats reduced and water quality affected by stormwater run-off.

In response to these environmental pressures, the Friends of the Lower Field River was formed in 2004. This community group has since been working tirelessly to rehabilitate the river corridor, protecting native species and improving public awareness. Their work focuses on weed removal, erosion control, rubbish clean-ups, revegetation of native plants and educating the local community about the river's importance. They have planted thousands of native trees and shrubs to restore habitat for local wildlife, including birds, lizards and insects.

The friends group collaborates with local schools and council and environmental organisations, offering volunteer events and guided walks. Thanks to their efforts, sections of the Lower Field River are beginning to recover, providing ecological value and recreational spaces. I recently visited the Friends of the Lower Field River and met with volunteers Jennifer Watson, Greg Westlake and Trevor Westlake. The group taught me a great deal about the importance of the work that these volunteers have done to protect the environment. It was fascinating to learn about the discovery of the diprotodon fossils in the Lower Field River by Trevor Westlake. Diprotodon, giant wombat, fossils were found in 1992. It is, of course, a megafauna, the world's largest marsupial. It lived between 150,000 to 10,000 years ago. These fossils are now on display at the Cove Civic Centre for people to go to check them out.

I also want to talk about the exciting development that was announced during the by-election, which I announced with the Deputy Premier, regarding the declaration and gazetting of the Kauwi-marnirla Field River Conservation Park, which is really considered the Upper Field River. The Aboriginal name, Kauwi-marnirla, translates to 'two good waters'. This new park provides a significant opportunity to protect, restore and rewild this metropolitan river corridor along the Field River catchment. In total, consisting of in-kind and direct financial support, about \$13 million is going to be

invested into the establishment of the park, which will be managed by the national parks service along with Kurna practitioners.

My family and I have walked along and enjoyed exploring the Field River. It is exciting, the work that will be done to provide new walking trails and signs throughout this area. I recently went on a tour with representatives from Green Adelaide and the national parks service. It was terrific to see the work that has already been occurring to remove and clear weeds and introduced species, in particular, as per a number of the other conservation parks in my area, olive trees. Thanks to Green Adelaide, the Kurna Firesticks team, the Friends of the Upper Field River group and the City of Marion for the work that they have done to date.

A management plan for the park is currently in the development stage and will be released for public consultation later this year. The Kauwi-marnirla Field River Conservation Park will be a wonderful addition to my community's reserves, open spaces and existing parks. I again want to put on the record my thanks for the efforts of the Friends of the Upper and Lower Field River groups in the work they do to preserve our beautiful environment along with rangers from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

SOUTHERN BAROSSA BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:26): Last Wednesday, I had the pleasure of attending the Southern Barossa Business Awards. It was held in the Red Room at the Lyndoch Hotel. It really was such a wonderful night of celebration. I do think there is something really special about coming together as a community just to celebrate all the hardworking people behind our fantastic small businesses. They really do make our communities tick, and they make our communities all the better for their existence.

I would like to thank and congratulate Bridgette and the Barossa group for putting together such a really thoughtful and well-run event. Of course, I would like to congratulate all of the nominees and the award winners. I would like to read on the record for the house all of these winners across so many categories:

- First of all, we had the Cellar Door/Brewery award, sponsored by Inwood Real Estate. The top honours were taken out by Robbers Dog Distillery, with the runner-up being the Ministry of Beer.
- The Club or Community award, which was sponsored by me as the local member of parliament, was won by Barossa Wildlife Rescue, with the runner-up being the Lyndoch and District Bowling Club.
- The Event award was sponsored by Lyndoch Grand. The Lyndoch Christmas Street Party took out the top honours for that award, with the runner-up being the Barossa Rodeo.
- The Hospitality award, which was sponsored by David Moen Legal Counsel, was won by the Lord Lyndoch, with the runner-up being the Mount Pleasant Bakery.
- The Professional Services award, sponsored by Barossa Fun Factory, was won by The Ads Manager, with the runner-up being Vita Nova Conveyancing.
- The Beauty and Wellbeing award was sponsored by Lou Miranda Estate. The winner was Little Glamour Room and the runner-up was Styled by Gemma.
- The Tourism category was sponsored by Barossa Shiraz Estate, and that was taken out by Barossa Helicopters, with the runner-up being the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market.
- The Trades category was sponsored by God's Hill Wines. The winner for that category was BMP Mechanical, with the runner-up being the Bearded Monkey Garage.
- The Services category was sponsored by Matt's Mowing and Contracting SA. It was won by Lead the Way, with the runner-up being the Lyndoch Post Office.
- The Retail Business category was sponsored by the Ministry of Beer, and that was won by Lagana IGA, with the runner-up being Lyndoch Motors.

- The Accommodation category was sponsored by Robbers Dog Distillery and was won by Lyndoch Grand, with the runner-up being the Old Barossa Bakery B&B.

I would like to congratulate all those winners and the runners-up and everyone who was nominated because our small businesses really are the heart of our local community. It is so important that we formally acknowledge them through forums like the Southern Barossa Alliance and put on the record in the house their successes because they make our community all the better. All the businesses that I have just read out are really worthy recipients and they do a lot, not just to employ people across our region but they back one another. They back our local sporting groups and they really add to the vibrancy of the Barossa Valley, in particular the southern Barossa. So a big well done to Bridgette and the entire team. I am looking forward to continuing my support of that local group.

There is another issue I would like to put on the record as well. It is one I have raised with the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport—and I just had the pleasure of speaking with him about this a short while ago—and that is in relation to the condition of the Sturt Highway as we are heading out of Gawler towards the Barossa Valley.

This is a national highway that many people in this house would frequent, and in the past week alone we have seen two really serious incidents occur here. We had the two-truck crash at Kingsford and last week a caravan rolled four times in near Daveyston, and it was quite a miracle frankly that there were no lives lost. But that is not always the case. In fact, between 2019 and 2023, the RAA reported that 20 lives have been lost on this road, yet there has been no significant investment made here since 2019. I welcome the fact that an investigation has been launched into the condition of this dangerous stretch of road, particularly between Shea-Oak Log and Nuriootpa. But we cannot just have another investigation, we need to see action here. We cannot wait for there to be a tragedy, it is time to act now. I am looking forward to continuing my advocacy for this important issue.

WHYALLA AIRPORT

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:32): I rise to speak about a couple of issues: the upgrade of the Whyalla Airport and hopefully, time permitting, the steelworks. On Tuesday there was a visit to Whyalla. I was very grateful for that because it got me out of chairing estimates for a whole day, so I got to move around and I got to see people other than the people in this chamber.

The reason for the visit to Whyalla—the Premier went, the Minister for Energy and Mining attended, and Tim Ayres, the federal industry minister, also attended—was to do the official opening of the runway in Whyalla after what was a very significant \$30 million-plus investment in the runway in order to make the runway capable of landing Q400s, a bigger plane. They are 75-seaters, as opposed to the 50-seaters that were and are landing there at the moment. The South Australian government contributed \$13.8 million to the project, the federal government \$16.2 million, and the council \$2.4 million, so it was a very big project and a very good partnership between the three levels of government.

This was an essential upgrade. If this upgrade had not happened, there would be no commercial airline in all probability servicing Whyalla. That would have had real implications, not just for the community of Whyalla but also for Port Augusta and for the surrounding smaller communities. A whole range of businesses use the airport. Importantly, medical services, visiting specialists, allied health services and a range of other people who are not of a mind to live in your community need efficient air transport. Certainly, the capacity to be able to fly from Adelaide to Whyalla in half an hour is a real plus for those people.

This was an essential upgrade, and the federal government and state government came to the party. The council owned the airport, and there was no way that the council could fund the upgrade that was needed. Indeed, there are some real issues with the airport. I think there is a maximum of about 70,000 passenger movements a year. That reduced to in the 40s around COVID and post COVID. It has now got up to just a bit over 50,000 passenger movements a year. The council finds itself, even with the current expenditure when it comes to the airport, in a very difficult position.

In fact, the Essential Services Commission, when it looked at the Whyalla City Council, indicated that the airport itself and the operation of the airport was the thing that was potentially pushing the council into financial unsustainability. It is a lesson. It is a lesson about local government taking over major infrastructure. This happened many years ago, of course. The federal government offloaded regional airports around the country. Councils often picked them up, and councils often found themselves in a difficult position as a result, if the passenger numbers were not high enough. Even with high passenger numbers to cover recurrent costs, they were never going to be able to cover the capital upgrades necessary every now and again at airports. That partnership between the federal government and the state government in order to help out the council was very welcome indeed.

The other thing that we did when we were in Whyalla on Tuesday was, of course, go to the steelworks and meet with a whole bunch of workers. My son was not on a shift, so I did not get to see him. I have not seen him for while. It was, once again, a very positive day. We had one of the contractors there, Avid Engineering, headed up by Tony Angel, telling an incredibly good story. That was one contractor that was looking at facing the wall, getting down to four employees, but is now employing in excess of 25 employees, getting work and, importantly, getting paid for the work.

This is the story now across the board in Whyalla because of the unprecedented intervention. It is only a Labor federal government and only a Labor state government that would have put together the sovereign steel package and made that commitment to ensuring we have an integrated steelworks in Australia that continues to produce rail and structural steel.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:37): I move:

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 19 August 2025 at 11am.

Motion carried.

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2025

Estimates Committees

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:37): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the Votes and Proceedings.

Motion carried.

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (15:38): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr HUGHES: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the Votes and Proceedings.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (15:38): I move:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (15:39): I indicate that I am not the lead speaker, tragically. The opposition, as we outlined during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, supports the bill. It is appropriate to do so. Estimates is the tradition by which we go through the scrutiny of the appropriation in detail. Different parliaments have different processes. I have been through 16 estimates now; this was my last one. I am not going to say that it is with enormous sorrow that I am unlikely to sit through another one, but there are things about the process that I will miss.

As Steven Griffiths, the former member for Goyder, used to say when he was here, estimates is a tremendously interesting process to go through if you are paying attention. You can learn an extraordinary amount about the things that the government does. It is a process whereby ministers will usually try to find an opportunity to highlight those things of which they are particularly proud, but in a more lengthy form than they usually get the opportunity to do. Opposition members will highlight issues that they are concerned about and will have the opportunity to process those in some detail, and they will also seek to get to the grit of things that are otherwise unclear.

I remember that Iain Evans, the former member for Davenport, when I entered the place about 15 or 16 years ago used to encourage us all to really respect the estimates process. He said that when he was a minister—and I am certain he said this publicly; I think he said it in his valedictory speech, so I do not think I am talking out of school—estimates was a wonderful time to ensure that as a minister you were actually across everything that the department might not otherwise want to tell you about, because they would be relying on you during that estimates process to be their spokesperson and the person who would be presenting whatever issue they were uncomfortable about in the best possible light.

Reams of parliamentary briefing notes are prepared and presented for the minister to have an understanding of either the reasons behind some otherwise potentially awkward-looking decision, or, indeed, the detail that they think the minister should say and the detail that they recommend the minister keep in their own confidence.

Over the years, it has been a regular thing to highlight the inefficiencies of the estimates process. Certainly, there are administrative opportunities for improvement that are fairly easy, in some senses, to do. I think that the Standing Orders Committee of this parliament might care to take half an hour to bash together a dozen dot points. I am sure the Acting Speaker, the Treasurer, the member for Finnis and I could do it after these comments and we would get some excellent ideas. But I do not want to get bogged down in those details; those sorts of administrative improvements that might streamline the process are fairly obvious.

I highlight that every parliament has its own variation on budget estimates. The federal parliament does it all in the Senate, the upper house, rather than the lower house. They do it three times a year—I assume they still do this; this was at the time when I was working there—and they use it as an opportunity to bring public servants and officials in to be questioned directly, rather than the minister having everything funnelled through them. Is that better than our process? I do not know. It is a different process.

There is something to be said for the Westminster tradition of the minister taking responsibility for every aspect of their portfolio. I think the point that Iain Evans made about the minister as the spokesperson having everything brought to their attention means that even if those questions are not necessarily asked in the estimates process, there is, of course, the benefit to the parliament and the people of South Australia of the public servants hopefully being more on their toes. It highlights, I think, the critical importance of a minister who is curious, a minister who is questioning, and is not just going to assume that their public servants know everything.

I do not say that as a slight on the Public Service; I say it as the duty of a minister in that role because without that duty you might as well not have elections. We would have a technocratic approach. Let's face it: the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is made up of some really smart people who, on every cabinet submission, will put forward a paper on what they recommend the cabinet does on that submission, and an opportunity is available for every cabinet decision just to be to agree with whatever the Public Service has come up with.

By and large, we would go along okay if that was the case, but we would miss some terrific opportunities. We would not have moved year 7 into high school and we would not have undertaken

substantial reform of early years literacy in 2013. We probably would have by the time the Liberal Party was elected in 2018 because by that stage the Public Service had reached that point. There would not have been a second city high school in 2008 and 2009, when people were calling for it, but they would have gotten there by 2015 and 2016. There are opportunities that the elected government must bring to improve the decision-making of what would otherwise be on the Public Service.

When the Marshall government was elected in 2018, Steven Marshall made it very clear to all his ministers—to all of us—that as a new government it was critical that we show respect to the Public Service. As new ministers, we may have had our portfolios for some period of time, but that we did not know everything, and that while we should be curious, engaged and challenging to our public servants, it was critically important that we demonstrate respect at all times. I hope for the large part, we did that. I certainly hope for the large part that I did that.

In that vein, I want to thank all those public servants who supported the committees that I participated in. The advice that they give to ministers has had enormous amounts of energy put into it. There are some things about process that we sometimes find interesting in the Public Service. In an education sense, I am sure it will not come as a surprise to members that they may have come across a local constituent issue, where the constituent may have approached the education department and they might have spoken to a teacher, they may have spoken to a principal, they may have spoken to the complaints line, and then as a last resort, they may have spoken to their local MP.

The local MP may write a letter to the minister or approach the local education director. They may approach the minister in the parliament. That question will often then go through a series of processes where, ultimately, the minister's office would approach the bureaucracy to seek advice on how to respond, and the executive director would seek a response from the director, who would seek a response from the education director in the local area, who would seek a response from the principal, who would seek a response from the teacher, and then it goes all the way back up the line.

That is replicated all across the Public Service. You can understand how these processes happen because you want to ensure procedural fairness. But sometimes also we just need to get to the point. That is also the duty of a curious and engaged minister who understands their brief and who is able to add value to the processes of the department through their judgement, through their understanding, through their knowledge, and through their hard work and diligence.

Estimates is a good time to get a sense of how those ministers are going. I think there are some ministers who have done well during the estimates process and some who have highlighted their opportunities for improvement. I commend ministers in a general sense when they do not take too many Dorothy Dixers, if you like, too many government questions. I certainly resemble a minister who did take the occasional government question.

There are occasions when you need to highlight or certainly want to highlight good work that the government is doing. Especially in some of the longer sessions, a couple of government questions can actually be of assistance to the shadow minister, who might otherwise have been going for 2½ hours straight without a break in flow, to think, 'How can I best use the next allocation of time I have here? We have been talking, potentially, about this one topic for the last hour. Maybe I should allocate the remaining time more effectively in that two or three minute break while the minister takes a government question.'

I recall earlier on in my parliamentary career a couple of examples where ministers would take the mickey. I am not making the habit in this contribution, because I hope people will take it in good faith, of naming names, but maybe they can make some guesses as to who the minister was that I was directly responsible to as a shadow a bit over a decade ago, who, in a one-hour session managed to take three opposition questions in between the 13-minute opening statement and the six government questions that they managed to get themselves asked by having the chair of the committee go to the government side first.

It was not the member for Light, I can assure you. It was not a portfolio, I would have thought, where there was any fear of it making constant front page news. It was remarkable to me that this happened. Anyway, it was an experience that fortunately we did not see on this occasion. Indeed, I

commend those ministers who took no government questions, or at least if they were taking government questions, kept those answers brief.

I think that there are opportunities in estimates to highlight to parliamentary colleagues issues that are really important for a minister or a shadow minister, and bringing those issues to the fore is really interesting. One of the things that sometimes comes out of this is, if *The Advertiser* or other media publications are paying attention to estimates, that journalists can learn some extraordinary and interesting things too. I am really interested in how the government is going to go, and I do not mean this in a particularly loaded, critical way. I certainly hope it goes well.

There are new accommodation facilities that are associated with the technical colleges in Mount Gambier and Port Augusta, which we spent a bit of time talking about in the session on Monday—the member for Light was chairing the session. I did not anticipate that we would spend so long on the topic, but the way that the information was provided through that session was interesting in that it raised more questions. Hopefully the process of estimates will bring those more to the attention of indeed not just the minister but potentially the chief executive of the department, if they had not been giving as much attention to those issues.

The question of 44 students doing weeks at a time in a government boarding house—15-year-old to 19-year-old students, males and females—away from their parents for the first time and many of them at a really interesting age in their lives, I do think is going to have some complexities and some challenges to it. I think what the government is trying to do with this—if you are going to have brand-new facilities to encourage kids into pathways to work, then absolutely bringing in kids who are able to come from other areas and stay there is a worthy goal. I hope that the government has put in place every possible mechanism and matrix to ensure that this is going to work.

The matrix within which this is being organised within the Department for Education is, as I understand it, from the camps unit within the education department, so the camps and the program have rules about kids from schools who are going on overnight or even longer-term camps for a period of time. If that is the framework that we are doing for longer-stay boarding houses, then that might work and might be sufficient. I certainly hope it is, but I suspect that the boarding houses will present challenges that the camps and excursions team has not dealt with before.

I trust that there are some really dedicated public servants working on this, but it is ultimately the government's responsibility. Having talked for some time about this issue in estimates, I am sure that the minister and the minister's office will now be giving it a large amount of attention in the coming weeks as Port Augusta comes on track ahead of those first students who are going to be there.

I will be interested to see how often those boarding houses are used, because I understand that they are not going to be used for months at time. Indeed, it is more likely to be week-long blocks for students who are coming in for a period and then going back to on-the-job training, and then coming back to the technical college for a period and then going back to on-the-job training.

What that means for the staffing allocations will be something that I would have thought the Treasurer would be very interested in if the education department is uncertain as to how many students are expected or anticipated to actually be using this boarding facility for a period of time, but that boarding facility in the meantime needs to maintain expert staff. I understand Port Augusta is due to be open in six weeks if the building is finished. They already have five full-time staff and presumably will need more. At the moment they are looking after an empty boarding house that has not started yet. That may be necessary to recruit the staff to have them ready to go, and if it is going to be full for the rest of the year that is happy days—it has been a good investment. But we will certainly be interested in exploring more information.

I say all these things with respect. It could be an outstanding addition to the public education system. It is not entirely a novel addition, but it is certainly a massive expansion. I think it is Lucindale Burra and Cleve that currently have boarding schools within the public education system. I visited the accommodation at Cleve. I think it was run by the department of what used to be called Families and Communities; I imagine it may be Housing SA now. Those facilities were certainly not state of the art: those facilities needed a lot of work when I visited in 2020 or 2019. I would have loved to have seen more work done in that space, but obviously the second half of my time as education

minister was utterly dominated by COVID, and indeed we were not encouraging large numbers of new boarders during that time due to the complexity of arrangements in looking after those boarders. That was a small number of students, I think up to about 12 in about two or three houses, and they were all within a certain cohort.

From memory, either Burra or Lucindale is not run by the government at all—it is a private boarding facility that is adjacent the school—and the other one is similarly of modest numbers. It is much smaller in size than the two new ones. This is a big expansion of what the government is doing and it is the sort of thing you learn about through the estimates procedure.

I encourage those ministers who are coming out of estimates—maybe they feel very relieved; maybe they feel very proud of themselves that there was no scandal that came out of the process, or at least not yet, and that their answers have not identified any problems. I recall a story that came back to me about one of the early ministers that I was shadowing. He got back to his office, and he was so proud that he felt he had dealt with everything—or she; it could have been a she, but, in any event, that he or she had dealt with everything very well, but the public servant responded: 'But you took 133 questions on notice.'

From an opposition's point of view, we love it when ministers take questions on notice. There is an obligation that an answer is going to come from an estimates procedure that does not exist necessarily at other times. You can have a minister in question time saying they will take a question on notice and, as a result of this government's decision not to renew the standing order requiring an answer to be provided that the Marshall government imposed on itself, we may never hear back—but we will hear those answers back from an estimates process. So for all of those questions taken on notice, I commend the public servants preparing those answers to be taken on notice for the work they are doing. The opposition looks forward to receiving those, and the information therein I am sure will garner some public interest.

I do not propose to detain the house any longer than is necessary. I commend the *Hansard* of those estimates processes to the chamber, to members to have a look at, for those ones that they missed. There were assiduous viewers in the gallery, and the member for Light will report that Estimates Committee A had twice as many viewers as Estimates Committee B—which suggests to me, frankly, that there are more public servants from those ministers' departments tuning in and not doing any work. But for those members of the public who were watching, I hope they found it a useful process. I certainly express my gratitude to those public servants who supported the information being provided to the public. I hope that, as they prepare those answers to questions on notice, they will do so in the context of providing as much information as possible, because at the end of the day the public has a right to know how their money is being spent.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:57): I would like to make a few observations of committee A—or team A—of estimates. As the member for Morialta correctly pointed out, we certainly had more attention from the public than the other committee did. I think it was three times as much, not twice as much.

Mr Whetstone: It's whether the Chair had control.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will let others make that judgement; it is not for me to do that. The estimates process is an important part of interrogating the annual budget, as the member for Morialta said. From my observations, committee A was in the main civil, and it stayed civil, and all members made every attempt to use the process to its best benefit. I think the Chairman of committee B was the same: we were reasonably lenient with the questioning and allowed some questions which perhaps strictly speaking would normally be ruled out, but it was moving along fine. Like a good umpire, you just get in there when people start to get a bit fiery. Certainly in my committee, the ministers endeavoured to answer all the questions. In fact, where they did not, they actually gave a commitment to provide answers on notice.

Committee A looked at the State Governor's Establishment, Audit Office SA, Defence SA, Education, Energy and Mining, Housing and Urban Development, Human Services, State Development and also some items by Treasury and Finance, including Premier and Cabinet.

The Premier and Cabinet session tended to focus a lot of attention on the Premier's Delivery Unit, which I think plays a very important role in ensuring that the commitments we made in the lead-up to the 2022 election were being delivered in this term of government. Certainly the Premier's Delivery Unit is making sure that they do that and I have often had discussions with them to make sure that the commitments which were made to the people in my electorate are being delivered. I can say with 100 per cent certainty that every commitment made has either been delivered in full already or is in progress and will be delivered in the next few months.

There are some projects that have been delivered which were not committed to, but some which were identified since then have also been committed to. There was an issue around pedestrian safety on Lyndoch Road that was raised by the Lutheran Primary School and the government responded and made money available to make changes there, which have been extremely well received by the school and also by the pedestrians who have to cross the busy Lyndoch Highway.

So the Premier's Delivery Unit I think is a good investment. It enables the Premier, who ultimately is responsible for the whole of government in some ways, to make sure that he can be reassured that all the commitments that were made at the last election have been delivered and any commitments made during this term of government are also being delivered upon. I know others have given a different interpretation of that, but I think if the delivery unit is helping to ensure that we deliver on our commitments it is money well invested.

I think the member for Morialta was the lead in the education area and asked a number of questions. I certainly found that a helpful and useful exercise. There were some things I learnt throughout the process that I was unaware of, so I think the detailed line-by-line questioning is a useful exercise.

The only hiccup in the committee A sessions that I chaired was that for some reason the opposition spokesperson had difficulty coming to terms with the fact that when a minister declares a conflict on a particular matter, they cannot answer the questions and so it has to be answered by the minister where the delegation has been granted. We made the necessary arrangements to make sure that line was opened in Estimates Committee B, and the minister was alerted, so those questions could be asked there.

That conflict actually came up in Estimates Committee A last year and is ongoing, so I would have thought a person doing their reasonable homework would have known that and prepared for that eventuation. However, we were able to help them through the process because the minister was quite clear she had nothing to hide. It was quite clear what was happening and what was intended there.

Mining and transport obviously got quite a bit of attention, particularly from opposition and Independent MPs, regarding roads and a whole range of infrastructure, and that was certainly the case in the electorate of Frome about some key road infrastructure required in that area. The Minister for Energy and Mining, quite rightly, talked about the success of this government in actually investing in the necessary parameters to enable private companies to invest, and the industry is travelling quite well in that regard.

The Minister for Education, Training and Skills was able to highlight the improvements we are making in skills acquisition through the technical colleges—and that is something the member for Morialta has already touched upon, so I will not cover that again—and, as the Premier has said, we are now ensuring that every child can be successful in life without having to go to university. There are a whole range of new opportunities open through the technical colleges and further education.

The Minister for Human Services addressed a whole range of questions, and I think the member for Chaffey was the lead questioner there. In my view, the minister was able to highlight the fact that this government is doing as much as it can to help those people in need with cost-of-living support, supporting the volunteer effort in our community, and certainly trying to improve access to services so people can age well. There is a whole range of other programs offered by the minister's department that I think are delivering good outcomes.

These are just some of the observations I would like to make about the estimates committee. As I said, it was quite a civil event, in my view. Members from both sides, including the Independents, in the main were quite respectful. Even though at times some of the questions were not quite on the mark, I think it was still a worthwhile exercise. I would like to thank all the committee members for their participation, as well as the ministers and the public servants who provided all the information.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (16:05): I will make a contribution to the estimates process. It was quite an interesting season, I might call it, this year. Obviously, a number of individuals performed better than others: ministers, shadow ministers and the teams around those people of high office. I must say that this has been a prolonged exercise for a long time. It was my 15th estimates this year, and I have seen estimates come and go. I have seen good budgets come and good budgets go.

As has been fairly well reported and documented this year, it was quite a lacklustre budget. It was a budget that has seen South Australia position itself into significant debt. What we have seen through the announcement of the budget and what we have seen through the scrutiny of the budget, through the estimates process, gave me an opportunity this year to look much deeper into the scrutiny of the budget.

I was busy. I took the lead on nine sessions and assisted in 11 sessions. What it showed me this year, no more than any other year, was the high-performing ministers and the low-performing ministers. It really did reassure me that the estimates process consumes a huge amount of time and a huge amount of resources. I will start off by thanking my office for doing an outstanding job. A lot of work goes into the budget papers to take the lead on those nine sessions, and Josh did a great job.

Thank you to the executives who sat next to the ministers and to the public servants who have put their lives on hold almost to prepare documents and to prepare the folders so that we can scrutinise the budget and have credible answers. I think a good estimates process is about a conversation: good questions being answered, a minister across their brief being able to answer those questions or, if not, using the resources that are sitting next to them.

I take this opportunity to also acknowledge the committee Chairs who had to keep control. There were some fiery moments, and I probably was a part of that, having a committee Chair, who is not here at the moment, threatening to close down the process because the minister refused to answer questions. It is what it is. I stood firm on not backing down on my accusations of scrutiny, and I think it was fair.

In this place, by and large we are held to account in a lot of instances by the media. The media are a gauge. They are not the be all and end all, but they are a gauge of who is performing and who is not, who can tell the story, who is across their brief and who is not. On both sides of this chamber we have performers and we have those who are not performing as well as others. In my earlier days, I gave a grading to some of the ministers. That did not go down very well. I remember it very clearly. I gave each minister a grading out of 10, and that was not received in the highest light by the government of the day. I also felt like the media took it as me taking away their reign on gauging who was and who was not performing in that estimates process.

This place is one team versus another. We have the leadership teams, we have the on-ballers, we have the back line, and we also have the emergency players. We have those who need to get better and those who have been part of this process for a very long time and use it as second nature. Potentially, the media need to be a little bit more bolshie and put a grading on the performance of the government of the day and the opposition so that there is a gauge. I hope it would be a fair gauge on who needs to perform better, who is performing better and who is part of a good, robust budget process.

As I said, of those 20 sessions that I was involved in, there were some very frustrating parts. My shadow portfolio responsibilities saw some ministers who refused to answer the questions. They fudged their way through their sessions. I am not going to name and shame because I do not think that is part of my contribution today, but what I would say is that some of the very alarming comments, statistics and revelations that came out of some of the answers were probably nothing new.

Some performed better than others. Some of the answers we probably knew were coming. There are areas of portfolio responsibilities that I think are more important to the economic side of the running of a government. There are the social aspects, and there are also the other elements of the scrutiny that comes to ministers. Some of those ministers were new, some of them were experienced, some of them were a bit older. I think that normally tells the tale of the day.

One of the issues that has come to me is the bread and circuses that South Australia is currently experiencing. We have a very popular Premier who is very focused on all the good things that come to South Australia, but when it comes to putting the focus on the real things in South Australia, it is always: 'Look over there; nothing to see here.' Some of those very popular events that come into South Australia are exactly that: they are very popular. But there is always, I think, not enough scrutiny, not enough emphasis put on what is real, what needs to be addressed.

That is, by and large, the health system. By and large, it is the social aspects of law and order and also making sure that people are better off today than they were yesterday. It is making sure that South Australia is a great place to live, work and play. It is making sure that South Australia is top of the metrics when it comes to scrutiny, when it comes to some of those industry bodies that are actually scrutinising, putting a gauge or a grade on where is a better place to live, where is a better place to do business and where is a better place to invest your dollar. By and large, on a global stage, I think South Australia has always been an underdog when it comes to investment, visitation and population growth.

My view of the world is that South Australia needs to have a government that is there for all of South Australia. As a regional MP, it really does worry me that we have a current government that has by and large focused on their favourite space, and that is the inner city seats, and I do not say that lightly. I say that with concern that the majority of South Australia's economy is driven out of the regions. A lot of the administration is here in Adelaide; I understand that. But what I witnessed through the estimates process was somewhat alarming.

Particularly in employment—the growth of employment, the job opportunities here in South Australia—we look at some of the areas of concern like Invest SA where the target was 8,000 jobs over the last two years. They came up over 6,000 jobs short. Now that tells me that there are alarm bells ringing when there is an agency that is spruiking about all the good times, all the jobs that they are going to create, the economic activity, but they came up at 6,120 jobs short of an aspiration. The questions of that minister were: what are you going to do about it? He said, 'I am going to aspire to do better. I am going to aspire to create more jobs.' That is not what the business world wants to hear—a minister aspiring.

It is all very good to be ambitious, it is all very good to go out there and spruik these large numbers of jobs, but when you cannot deliver you actually have to have a good look in the mirror and understand why. I think that really is something that just typifies programs that have failed—a 23 per cent failure when it comes to job creation here in South Australia. Now, I will not dwell too much on individual spots, but that is one that really did ring alarm bells.

I must say, in Human Services, we looked at community safety, youth, and we looked at understanding: why is youth detention getting worse? We look at police numbers. Why are they finding it hard to attract? Why are they finding it hard to retain? There are a lot of factors involved, and I know the minister is here. The government have to look harder, they have to look at alternative measures in how they are going to do better.

We know that police are under severe strain and stress, doing their job with the resources that they have, particularly out in the regions of South Australia. If I look around my electorate, I have the town of Renmark of over 10,000 people and it does not have a police station. It has been closed. For three years the police station had a sign on its front door, 'temporarily unattended'. Why is it that we cannot have strategies put in place to better protect our communities, to better incentivise and get our youth engaged in some of those law and order programs so that they can be a part of our future? They can be a part of keeping our communities safer and they can be a part of making South Australia a destination as a safe state. That really did ring alarm bells when the minister would not answer numbers of youth in custody, youth on home detention, youth who are monitored.

I know that the minister did say, 'Always a mother, always a mother' but that is not the answer that South Australians want to hear. Emergency services also—I must say that I was quite concerned that every portfolio, as I understand it, every portfolio blew their budget. Every portfolio.

Mr Teague interjecting:

Mr WHETSTONE: Consumer and business services? I am not looking at individuals, I am not looking at people, pointing the finger, but it is a trend that the government has demonstrated to this chamber, and many South Australians would not have a clue about what is going on. But, in the bigger picture someone has to pay the bills eventually. We can continue to create debt, we can continue to create an uncertain future for our children, but at some point in time, we have to stop the rot and address the ongoing debt that, at some point, one generation or another is going to have to pick up.

We look at our emergency services; it is concerning. I pleaded with the minister to look at new initiatives to attract volunteers, to attract personnel. There are some really good initiatives, some good strategies, out there that are being used all around the world to attract people, to retain people. Are we looking at young volunteers? How do we look at ways that we can incentivise young people to volunteer, to be part of a community, to contribute to their community?

I left the minister reassured that I am happy to work with her, happy to give her ideas, that we need to look at some of the levels of discount we can put on HECS debt, some of those incentives, carrot and stick approaches, so that we can make sure that if our youth are seriously wanting to engage with their community they get rewarded for it. In this day and age, as has been explained to me, everyone is busy, everyone has different priorities. The majority of our communities are looking elsewhere when it comes to volunteering. We have to re-engage our communities to make sure that we can have them feeling a sense of responsibility in becoming a volunteer.

As I said, it is not just Human Services, it is not just Emergency Services, it is not just our sporting codes that are screaming out for volunteers to step up. It is about making our communities better. I think the government has a significant role to play here in incentivising those communities to be better role models for the young ones. I understand what has been explained to me. I am not old and I am not crusty, but the Gen Alpha are a different breed. They are driven by algorithms, they are driven by a sense of self, and what it means is that they too need to be approached differently when it comes to their responsibility for community service, their responsibility for what role they will play in the future of common good. I must say that it is a concern.

The funding that seems to be drifting out of the MFS is a concern. Response times are growing. There is a set target for MFS to respond in the city or in the metro area. It is a real concern that at seven minutes in a metro setting, 11 minutes in a regional setting, it has been achieved 75 per cent of the time in a metro setting but only 65 per cent in a regional setting. The MFS feel as though they are the poor cousins to other frontline first responders, and I think rightfully so. They need to stamp their feet a little bit louder so that the government hears them and makes sure they get the level of funding and incentivisation to make their organisation comply with the government's parameters in responding to emergency situations.

As an opposition we always have to actually respond. We cannot just criticise government. Being in government is a tough role. It is a tough gig. A minister has scrutiny on them every day, and rightfully so, but there is a level of responsibility that they must adhere to.

I think the opposition is starting to release some very good, robust policy. There will be more to release. We are scrutinised by the media at the moment and we are scrutinised by the government at the moment, but if we look back four years I remember there were not too many policies coming out of the opposition back then, early in their term in opposition. What we saw was that they came in very late and they came in hard and fast.

Under a Tarzia Liberal government, scrapping the GP payroll tax is, I think, a very good initiative. It will be easier to pay bills by abolishing the \$85 water bill price hike and reinstating the home battery scheme. It will be easier for young people to buy their first home by removing stamp duty for first-home buyers up to \$1 million. It will be easier to do business by lifting the payroll tax threshold up to \$2.1 million. Slashing red tape and fast-tracking apprenticeships to build more homes

is, I think, an outstanding exercise. This opposition, should we go into government, will stand with regional communities and will give meaningful relief to drought-affected farmers.

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (16:25): As Chair of Estimates Committee B, I thought I had better rise and add a few words. I would like to acknowledge the member for Elizabeth, who enabled me to do the fly-in visit to Whyalla on Tuesday for some important events: the opening of the runway, an essential piece of infrastructure, and the positive announcements at the steelworks. I was grateful to get out of estimates for a day and actually move around. It was very good.

I have to say that Estimates Committee B, overall, was a very civil affair. I think the opposition did well. They asked the questions they needed to and they did not get aggro too much. They got frustrated every now and again. Ministers are at liberty to answer questions however they see fit under the rules, but I think there was an effort to answer questions and respond to what the opposition was saying.

The member for Morialta was, I think, in a bit of a reflective mood, given this has been his last estimates session. He indicated that over the years there has been discussion and debate around what format estimates should take. He made reference to what happens at a federal level. It happens in other states in different formats. We can have that argument about formats and what have you, but I think irrespective of the shape that it takes, it is something that is important: that after the budget, there is that opportunity to scrutinise the budget. It is a way of holding government to account and extracting information.

I am more than aware of all the work that goes on behind the scenes: all the public servants collating the information, anticipating the questions, the minister and the minister's office anticipating the questions. A lot of work goes into it, and most of the questions are never asked. But as the member for Morialta said, it is an important process. It is an important process for the minister because it does re-emphasise the importance of being across your brief, and it is important for other members here.

I have always found the *Hansard* reports that come out of estimates to be very useful for the following year. It is a good source of information that you can go back to and have a look at—this is going on here, this is going on there—because you often get questions from constituents about particular things, so the *Hansard* reports of estimates have been a very useful tool.

When you look at estimates and you look at the institution of estimates, it is just one amongst a whole range of checks and balances that we have within our system. It is particularly useful, not that many people look in on it, and I will get to the member for Light's comments in a minute about the spectatorship of committee A as opposed to committee B.

Given the nature of the answers from ministers, it is all done in the open. It is one of those things where there is that degree of accountability, openness and transparency. Sometimes people are very cynical about our political system in this country and some of the other western countries and we do maybe have an unfortunate drift towards authoritarianism and the hard right in a number of places, but the thing about institutions like this is they are incredibly important. Each little bit makes up something that is worthwhile looking after and preserving, because when stuff like this is gone, it is gone and we end up in a bad place.

There are many countries around the world where the sort of opportunity afforded through an estimates inquiry just simply does not happen. It is one element—maybe a small element—of what makes up an open and democratic society and so we should value it, irrespective of what ultimate format it might take in the future.

As a Chair and usually in the proceedings, when it comes to the omnibus questions I think, 'Why can't we just table those questions? Why do we have to have this repetitive reading out? It is the same stuff, essentially, year in, year out. Can it be tabled?' It was interesting to hear that when it comes to the reading of the omnibus questions, the former member for Mount Gambier, Rory McEwen, holds the record for the reading out of the omnibus questions. As part of my entertainment, I was recording everyone. I put the stopwatch on to see if they got anywhere near the record. I would have to say that nobody did.

It was a politician who told me so I hope it is not misinformation and I hope it is accurate and I have no reason to believe it is not accurate, but I was told he had the ability to read out the omnibus questions in two minutes. I will challenge you all to go away quietly and try to do that. Hopefully, next year, someone can indicate that they are going to have a go at this record. It is a record of Olympian proportions so I think you are going to have to go away and start practising now and just maybe you will get close to that two minutes. I do not know how he did it, it seems like an impossible task to me, but he did it.

Appearing before my committee were incredibly important portfolios such as child protection with billions of dollars of expenditure, which, irrespective of government, is always going to be a challenging portfolio given some of the issues that we confront as a state and a nation. We had women and preventive violence and it was good to hear some of the things that have been done in the domestic violence sphere.

In my electorate, there are often complaints that the police do not turn up. I am not talking about domestic violence in particular, I am talking about in general, that they are delayed or they do not turn up. The police minister is more than aware of this. The amount of time that is taken up now with domestic violence in our communities is deeply concerning. There is clearly a range of initiatives in place to address that, but we have a long way to go.

Once again, irrespective of the government that is in power, this is going to be an ongoing issue that we need to get on top of. It is not just a coincidence that it is nearly always women who are on the receiving end, and there are impacts on families and long-term implications. All the empirical evidence indicates that a disproportionate number of males who as children are exposed to domestic violence go on to be perpetrators themselves—it is when you do not see respect and love in the home. It is a deeply concerning issue.

Estimates Committee B had the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. That portfolio is obviously another incredibly challenging area, the largest area of state expenditure. We are, believe it or not, doing a lot of good things in terms of employing a lot more doctors and nurses and providing more beds. What we have done, when it comes to the Ambulance Service, is to have more facilities and more crews. Those are all good things, but, in common with other states and around the world in western countries, the challenge when it comes to health is going to remain a huge one. We do have an ageing population and we do have more chronic disease, and I guess there needs to be—and it is always difficult when the acute part of the system is competing for dollars—more emphasis on the preventative area.

We had the Treasurer, as I said before, in Estimates Committee B. As usual, he handled himself really well. I am only saying this because he is in the chamber at the moment, but he was his usual very professional self. We also had defence, space and police. It was mentioned that, in country areas, attracting police is a challenge and retaining police is a challenge. Attracting experienced police is especially a challenge; we often get new graduates. One of those good things in the budget was about the police security officers: a whole tranche of police security officers will be employed to go out to regional South Australia—I think the number was around about 80. That should have an impact in freeing up police time when it comes to the whole range of issues that they have to deal with. If you can free up some of that time you are going to have more police out on the frontline.

Primary industries and regional development obviously was an incredibly important area of the budget, given the profound challenges that our farming community is facing. I come from a regional community, but obviously not one—especially given the particular nature of my electorate at the moment—where farming as such has a direct impact. It will have indirect impacts, and obviously there are the vast pastoral areas.

The challenges that are being faced are incredibly profound, given the nature of this particular drought. It is good to see some rain, but clearly more is needed, and far more widespread as well. Hopefully the winter will improve when it comes to rainfall events, but it is going to take a long time for some of our primary producers to get back on their feet. As has been said many times, primary industries is a massive contributor to the state, more than \$18 billion. It is an incredibly important part of the economic fabric of South Australia.

We had Consumer and Business Affairs and the Arts, and that was all fairly easygoing. I missed out on the Attorney-General on Aboriginal affairs and industrial relations because that was the day that I was in Whyalla. Once again, I thank the member for Elizabeth for taking on the chair. We had multicultural affairs, tourism—there is some good stuff going on in tourism, some pretty positive stuff. We had rec and sport and then, to cap it off, emergency services, corrections and autism. That was a newbie minister when it came to estimates, and I thought she did very well during the hearing.

As I indicated at the start, a lot of people—many of whom we do not see—play an important role when it comes to estimates in putting together all the documentation that is needed to hopefully answer the questions that are posed. Also, estimates can be a bit of an endurance event, especially if you are in the chair from 9 o'clock to 6 o'clock. I have always found the parliamentary officers who assist us to be very helpful and good-humoured. It is always good to have those people sitting next to you in case there is something you do not know that they would invariably know. Of course, there is all the work that is done by Hansard recording all our words of wisdom. It is a lot of work. I always like to acknowledge the security guards sitting up there hour after hour. What is going through their minds having to do that?

I will finish on a note that I think some people face estimates with a degree of trepidation or 'here we go again', but it is a mechanism that is very useful when it comes to holding the government to account, to getting information out on the table and having a record of everything that was said. As I said, I find that a good resource to use. During the year, you can nip back into it and find out the answers to some of the questions that your constituents might have. With those words, I will resume my seat.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:41): I rise to make a contribution in regard to the estimates process. For all my sins, it was my 20th estimates and it is always an interesting process. As the member for Giles said, there are some long days, and you do get a little bit of information sometimes, but at other times it can take a long time to get an answer. I am certainly very privileged to have a role as the shadow minister for veterans' affairs, and it was good to hear about employment programs for those people who have stood up to serve our country and then find themselves looking for employment after that service.

Part of the conversation was around whether or not the government had progressed with a standalone Korean War war memorial. As I have indicated in this place before, I had two uncles serve in Korea, and one of those had previously served in World War II. I want to acknowledge Colonel Peter Scott, who sadly passed away recently. I had a fair bit to do with Peter. He was a huge advocate for a Korean memorial, and it is my passion to make sure that we do get that memorial in place, whichever side of politics is in power.

Wherever I sit in this place, I will be dedicating that to Colonel Peter Scott. He was a great man, and a great service to our country, and I would just like to acknowledge the many, many tens of thousands of South Australian veterans who have served right across this state and right across the world. I have said multiple times that I have the utmost respect for those who are prepared to put their hand up to defend our nation and to do so potentially with their lives. I truly salute them.

Another issue, under my portfolio of regional roads and regional roads, is that they have a \$2 billion backlog. What we found out through the estimates, whether it was with the Treasurer or the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, is that there is only about \$100 million a year being spent on the maintenance of regional roads, so it is going to take forever to catch up on that backlog. But as we know, in the meantime all the roads are wearing continuously. So there is a lot of work to do. I think there should be a lot more money allocated to regional roads so that people's movements across the state can be facilitated a lot better, and there is also the freight task that we need in place.

Certainly it was disappointing today to not get an answer to a supplementary question I asked about the Birdsville Track, which closed at about 11.30 this morning between Marree and Birdsville. We already know the Strzelecki Track has been cut by the floodwaters up north near Moomba and Innamincka, and Cooper Creek coming over the border was bringing about 1,000 gegalitres of water a day when it was at full noise. That is about two Sydney Harbours a day coming across the border and it has to go somewhere.

It has been many weeks coming to get to the Birdsville Track, and what has the government done about a replacement ferry? There has been a small ferry that was in place, I think it was about 15 years ago; it was probably used before then as well. It is just a ferry that sits up there in the sand. It has a single cable and they put a couple of outboards on it, but it could only take a single vehicle. The issue for people who want to access the north, or for producers in the north that want to get their stock—it is mainly cattle, there may be some sheep, but mainly cattle—down to the southern markets, is that you just cannot do it.

The minister would not elaborate when he was asked a question by the member for Stuart about options that were being looked at. I have heard in the background that there are options for ferries that are a bit like a giant Meccano set that are made in Perth, that they were off the shelf and they would carry freight. You would have to break up the road trains into the separate units, like the three trailers, obviously, and bring them over one at a time. That would be a massive boon to the Far North.

Then, disturbingly, I have heard that there might be a toll attached to the use of a new ferry crossing for the Birdsville Track. I find that really disturbing, when the minister has always pushed back on toll roads in South Australia. Is this the start? Is this the first toll road to be established? I hope not and I hope the government does the right thing by all South Australians and gets an appropriate freight and vehicular ferry in place, so that stock and trade and supplies can go up and down the Birdsville Track. I note that the big event of the year, the Birdsville Cup, is on in early September, I think around 5 and 6 September, and that will have a lot of people trying to get to Birdsville from down south.

The Strzelecki Track was a project that we started back in about 2020 when we were in government. It was a \$215 million project, and that has obviously been set back with floodwaters and rain damage. I have not been up there for a couple of years, but it is really disappointing to see the state of the Della Road directly east from Moomba, which 40-odd years ago used to be like an outback highway and now, essentially, it is a farm track. It has been reduced to nothing. The company speed limit up there that Santos institutes not just for its workers but the contractors as well is 60 km/h. You do not want to go too fast because you get flat tyres in that stony country, but when you are doing only 70 km/h or 80 km/h you are going past a triple-trailer road train that has to be sitting at 60 km/h.

There is a lot to do with roads. There is a lot to do right across the state. We do need to look at the bigger projects as well. We do need to look at the extension of the duplication of the Augusta Highway, which is close to 180 kilometres past the section from Lochiel, that section from Port Wakefield to Lochiel that we instigated and has finally been opened, I understand. The Sturt Highway and the Dukes Highway that cuts through my property both need to be duplicated. As I have indicated, on about five-year-old costings, that would have been about \$9 billion or \$10 billion, but it would create a lot of safety if these roads were duplicated.

I remember getting home after estimates and after a multicultural event in Murray Bridge on the Friday night. The UHF radio in my car had a very strong signal that something had happened not far up and a lady had gone off the road. Anyway, a long story short, I went up the road and worked with a couple of truck drivers who were first on the scene and someone in a ute. There was a police officer driving past from Murray Bridge highway patrol who turned up pretty quickly. He just happened to be coming back from the border.

The local CFS turned up, and I must congratulate the Coonalpyn crew who cut the roof off what was almost a perfectly good VT Commodore, but not anymore, because the lady had neck and back injuries. She was conscious and talking. We tried to keep her comfortable. The Tailem Bend ambulance turned up and they did a great job. Jaensch's crash repairs from Tailem Bend were there as well. Apart from the priority of obviously getting the lady to the emergency department—I assume she went to Murray Bridge first—the car was taken off about midnight, so that operation was cleaned up in about two hours, so I commend everyone involved.

Sadly, we see incidents like this when things go wrong on overtaking lanes, and this was on an overtaking lane; it is the one that goes past my farm. People either get in the wrong lane or they get spooked by oncoming lights. I am not apportioning any blame, but something went wrong and

this poor lady ended up in the trees. So we do need to work on what we can do to make our roads safer right across South Australia.

I want to talk about primary industries, where I sat in with the member for Flinders and the member for Finniss. It was interesting. For 30 or 40 minutes we were trying to get some answers around the \$80 million blowout to the primary industries budget, and we just could not get the answer out of the minister. We just could not get a finger on the pulse of, of the \$73 million that has been offered to primary producers in drought relief funding, how much had actually been spent. We believe it is probably about \$20 million out of that, but it took so long to try to get these answers, especially when we are in such terrible times.

I know we have had a little bit of rain, but it has not been everywhere. We have had enough rain at Coomandook. A lot of crops had gone in dry across the Mallee. Some had come up and then got ripped by wind, and people have gone in and sown again and then they have been ripped again this week. These are terrible losses for producers just trying to produce for their family and trying to make some money out of the land. I contacted a local only today and I think we only had three millimetres at home this week. It will be interesting when I get home on the weekend to see how many trees have been pushed over with the winds and to see what damage has happened to the crops coming up.

So it is not all roses. Yes, some coastal communities and some a little bit inland have done pretty well and got falls of sometimes 25 or 26 millilitres and some even heavier in recent days, but there are a lot of people who have not had much at all. There is a lot at stake, people's complete livelihoods.

I certainly think there has been a missed opportunity—and I have said it here before—for no-interest or very low-interest loans. I know the federal government offer a low-interest loan package. I think it is at 5.18 per cent. But that is still a lot of money when you look at the amount of money that someone might have to borrow to put a crop in. There are plenty of stories of people having to borrow an extra half a million dollars. I heard one story the other day where someone spent \$4 million putting their crop in alone without paying for the expensive machinery to do it.

They are tough times out there, and our farmers do need more support. They need real support. Yes, the Rural Business Support group and the counselling services do great work. It has been good to have the barbecues instituted across the state. I worked with the ag bureau with someone from Woodchester who was organising one there the other day. I hope they had a good night. They were combining a couple of agricultural bureaus to have a barbecue event. I think they are good events for people just to get together and know that they are not alone in that cause. We have a long way to go yet. Farmers have had the worst drought in more than living memory, and this year has a long, long, long way to go.

There is barely a bale of hay left to buy in South Australia. If you want to buy a big square bale of oaten hay that is about 700 or 750 kilos, it will cost you around \$400. Hay out of Western Australia is \$300 on site in Western Australia and \$250 a tonne to freight here, so that is \$550 a tonne. It is expensive. I know feedlotters that are doing all and sundry to get all sorts of hay, whether it is rice husks or sorghum. That could be coming out of New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory. I wish all our primary producers the best moving forward.

It has been a budget that has not delivered much to the regions. Certainly, getting back to the roads issue, there were no clear answers with the Greater Adelaide Freight Bypass and what will be built first. It is \$400 million short of the \$1.05 billion dollars that was budgeted for the freight bypass, which includes the Swanport Bridge, about 100 kilometres of road towards Halfway House on the Sturt Highway and back towards Truro, and then obviously a dual lane each way bypass for heavy freight to go around Truro.

I think the minister was having a bit of a bet each way during estimates, saying it might be Truro or it might be the Swanport Bridge. They both need to be done. The government need to get more funding out of the federal government if they are going to go with the 80:20 split model, and then they will need to top that up as well because the state government have only put in \$125 million. There is \$565 million between the state government and the federal government for that project of

more than a billion dollars. So which bit misses out? Is it the Swanport Bridge, is it the road between Monarto and the Sturt Highway and ongoing up to Truro, or is it the Truro freight bypass?

It is wait and see, but by looking at the timing in the forward estimates, it will probably be about five years before we see anything major in that freight bypass. I have seen surveyors out near the Swanport Bridge doing some survey work, so whether that is something to do with it; it may be. Certainly, I would welcome that whole project being completed so we can not only make the freight delivery safer but also increase its efficiency to a 53-metre, three-trailer road train capacity, which would benefit not just country areas but city areas as well.

One real concern I have in regard to what is happening in the health budget is about the helicopter landing pads that have been in place for years now for MedSTAR retrieval at our hospitals. They have had to be upgraded for a new contract with new heavier helicopters coming in. I have one at Mannum and one at Murray Bridge in my electorate. I think there is one down at Victor Harbor in the member for Finniss's electorate. My understanding is that these landing pads have been worked through. I think there were some issues with fencing that was potentially a bit high, but there has been a lot of work and a lot of concrete poured to get these landing pads up to scratch.

They are right next to the hospital and vital for that life-saving work to protect lives. The issue for me is that these landing pads, from what I am told, are ready to go, but now there is industrial action that the pilots will not land there. If that is the problem, that is outrageous, and the health minister and Peter Malinauskas need to fix that problem for the safety of our regional communities.

I am not having a crack at the MedSTAR staff. They do marvellous work. They will land on highways, they will land on paddocks, they will land right next to the scene. So, for the life of me, if there is an industrial dispute around these landing pads outside country hospitals, the government needs to fix it immediately so that we can ensure, not just the safety of country people but the safety of people from outside the area, and city people included, who travel through and may have an accident or have a health problem while they are visiting a regional area, and know that the MedSTAR helicopters can land on the appropriate landing pad and get them to safety. There is a lot of work to do in the state budget and we will be following it with a keen eye into the future.

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (17:02): As members of parliament in government, we all look forward to the delivery of the state budget by the Treasurer of the day and to the opportunity of speaking about the positive ramifications, the outcomes, that it can deliver to our local communities and also to the state. This year's budget focused on the Malinauskas government's key priorities, including funding for police, road safety, courts, law and order, housing, health, cost-of-living measures, and education.

Of course, following the delivery of the budget, we have budget estimates. This year I was assigned a number of budget estimates committees, and I have to say I was very pleased to be assigned to Estimates Committee A focusing on education with the member for Wright, the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, at the helm.

As a former teacher, and as a parent and member of parliament, I understand the value of education and just as the foundation of a house is crucial to its long-term standing, the preparation of a canvas tools to an artist, the development of fitness to an athlete and an instrument to a musician, a sound educational foundation can be crucial to the life journey of an individual from birth through to adulthood. It is education really that provides a window to the world.

I want to thank today Tahlia Marafiote, a 2024 Avenues College graduate, who is about to begin her university pathway studying psychology. She enthusiastically researched the budget estimates paper A on education for me. I know this just adds another learning experience to Talia that she will take with her on what I am sure will be a very successful career pathway.

Investment in education is crucial for children and young people today and into the future, and this year the Malinauskas government and the commonwealth government signed the new Better and Fairer Schools Agreement, providing an additional \$1.25 billion joint investment in education over 10 years with the state contributing \$340 million. Questions regarding this investment were asked in the budget estimates committee. In this budget, the government outlined a \$40 million investment over four years to support improving the amenity of government existing schools and

preschool infrastructure. I know that is something that my local community is keeping their eyes on and looking forward to, hopefully into the future, benefiting from that.

There was \$1.5 million over four years to support the full suite of Embrace programs across the state, helping young people build positive body image, develop resilience, reduce the risk of mental illness and eating disorders, and increase participation in sport and learning. It is good to know that right across the parliament people are listening to that. Questions on all of these matters were asked during budget estimates.

An estimated \$50 million over years is allocated to provide schools with greater autonomy to respond to students with disability, including to establish new specialised education options in schools. From this school year, \$48.3 million is allocated over three years to support secondary students at risk of disengaging from learning. This is going to address greater school oversight and provide more appropriately trained and resourced school staff. It is so important that we do what we can to help these students stay connected and to re-engage.

I know that the Minister for Education truly values these programs, knowing that it is not just about today but about the future of these students. The Malinauskas government also committed to investing in early childhood services, with the investment in the introduction of preschool for three year olds. Again, this program featured in budget estimates.

Reintroducing technical colleges in our high schools and delivering what can only be described as a historic boost in skills and training attracted a number of questions for the minister. Just last weekend, I had the pleasure of joining the minister, along with the member for Newland and the member for Playford, on a visit to The Heights Technical College, where aerospace leader Boeing Defence Australia (BDA) signed on as an employee partner. They will work with the Department for Education on the design of learning programs and the workplace experience needed for students to prepare themselves for a career in the industry.

The technical college will address the limited vocational pathways to entry-level roles within the state, assisting with the provision of skilled workers at the \$200 million Deep Maintenance and Modification Facility at Edinburgh being delivered by both the Malinauskas and Albanese Labor governments. The huge four-bay aircraft hangar will facilitate the specialist maintenance of the Australian Defence Force's Boeing 737 variant military aircraft. I was particularly interested in the comments by the managing director of Boeing Defence Australia.

I say that because the member for Chaffey was talking about programs and putting money into programs when there were not going to be jobs. This is a quote from the managing director of Boeing Defence Australia, when she said:

Our agreement with The Heights Technical College will give more young South Australians the opportunity of working at the cutting edge of aerospace with companies like Boeing.

With one of the largest aircraft maintenance workforces in South Australia, focused particularly on the support of Royal Australian Air Force P-8A Poseidons, and with more than 30 aircraft technician roles to fill over the next two years, we rely on a pipeline of candidates who are equipped to support the frontline aircraft we maintain and upgrade for the Australian Defence Force.

The Heights will support the future growth of local aerospace companies like Boeing Defence Australia...

She then went on to thank the South Australian government for the opportunity of being able to partner with The Heights Technical College. The Heights Technical College, as we saw on the visit, is in the final stages of construction. It has been designed to feel like a workplace to help students obtain the necessary skills and experience to transition to work. This was revealed in the questions being asked of the minister in budget estimates.

This purpose-built facility includes workshops where students can focus on industry pathways, including aero skills for careers as aircraft maintenance technicians in defence and civil aviation, advanced manufacturing and engineering for careers as fabricators, welders and engineers, building and construction for careers in those industries, and a state-of-the-art 270° screen.

We had students from Findon Technical College there. They were really interested in this and they were very much impressed by what they saw. It is a state-of-the-art 270° wraparound projection screen covering three entire walls. This will further create an immersive learning

experience for students, simulating what it is like to fix the underside of an aircraft. Other technologies on site included welding simulators, 3D printers and an IT suite with industry-standard software and equipment.

During the budget estimates we heard that The Heights, like the other four colleges, is open for enrolments from students currently in years 9 and 10 for enrolment in years 10 and 11. These opportunities for students were made very clear by the minister in answering his questions. There were a whole lot of areas surrounding education. There are so many that we could talk about, but on this occasion we need to stick to the budget estimates committees. I would like to conclude by mentioning some of the other areas that I am so pleased we were able to touch on: the initiatives advancing gender equality; addressing domestic, family and sexual violence; improving health and wellbeing; and empowering women to fully engage in the South Australian economy.

Budget estimates is an opportunity for both sides, in a sense, to highlight whatever it is that they want to raise and put out there in the public arena. I know that in opposition, budget estimates is something that is quite exciting. Sometimes in government when you are on the backbench you sit there, you listen and you have the opportunity to ask some questions that you want to ask, and it flows a bit like that.

I think it is fair to say that this budget estimates round, from my perspective and from what I saw on the days that I appeared in budget estimates as a backbencher, was a very successful budget estimates in getting information out that needed to be out there for the community. I know that the ministers put so much work into it, as do their staff, and we really appreciate the work that the staff and the departments put in throughout the budget estimates process.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:12): I rise and indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition. I will reflect somewhat on the estimates committee process that has just passed, and I might flag that I am going to focus—obviously it was wideranging, covering the whole of the Appropriation Bill—on the results of the estimates process in child protection and I will have a word or two to say about the Attorney-General's Department, more particularly the Forensic Science SA centre that has been long awaited.

First, in terms of framing where we are at, I think really in the first moments after the Treasurer made his second reading contribution, now a couple of weeks ago, my first thought in this regard was, 'Well, what a disappointment.' I think the member for Elizabeth was in the chair at the time. I just want to mark that moment because nothing that I have heard—and I was in a fair bit of the estimates, although obviously not all of it—has moved me from that initial observation: what a disappointment.

I flag two matters that I then addressed in that immediate aftermath of the Treasurer's second reading contribution to this bill. The first is that South Australians had just then heard that the state's debt was blowing out from an all-time record with a great big *Advertiser* newspaper front page, the Treasurer's face emblazoned on it, with \$44 billion of state debt—that was last year—to this year having been told by the government that state debt blows out to \$48.5 billion. That ought to send a shudder up the spine of all South Australians, particularly those of us who plan on remaining here, along with our children and future generations, who are being lumbered with this truly extraordinary staggering amount of debt.

I am alive to the political mood of the day, and we all do our best to be tuned into it, and state debt remains not the most fashionable topic in South Australia, but to put it bluntly, a Premier who took his shirt off a few years ago remains the flavour of the month. Just around the corner, South Australians are going to zero in on what *The Advertiser* has already well and truly belled the cat on as early as the very next day after this second reading contribution from the Treasurer, saying, 'Debt bomb, \$48.5 billion announced by Malinauskas Labor three years in.' So \$44 billion goes to \$48.5 billion and I think I said the next time we all look at it, lookout folks, because South Australia is going to be staring down the barrel of being known as the \$50 billion state debt territory.

You do not have to look very far to the east to see that Victoria now well and truly uncontroversially is regarded as an economic basket case, the result of far too many years of Labor in government in that state. You do not even have to look very much further to see the turmoil that has afflicted Tasmania, as they are all grappling with a state debt that is a tiny proportion of what

South Australia is going to now be saddled with for the years ahead. And that is figure number one: state debt.

Going along with that is very much what we then grapple with in the course of the estimates, that is agency by agency working on performance and competence. What we have seen year on year from this government—and it contributes to that state debt—is incompetence, agency by agency, to the tune of a total of more than a billion dollars again this year.

I have used the words 'budget blowout' a few times in the course of these agency processes. What has been clear again is that one of the significant contributors to overall state debt is simple agency incompetence by individual ministers blowing their portfolio budgets, in many cases, by hundreds of millions of dollars.

I have said I will focus on Child Protection and subsequently on the Attorney-General's Department. The Department for Child Protection was the subject of estimates last Friday, 20 June. I had the opportunity to ask questions of the minister, first in relation to that budget management task, secondly, the matter of full-time equivalents employed in the department, and thirdly, some revisiting of the performance indicators that tell a story of success or failure to some extent on the face of those budget papers.

The first of those matters, agency performance, is yet again a tale of complete incompetence. In fact, I would go so far as to say it is a wilful dereliction of any sense of duty to respond to budget constraints and to explain reasons for overspend. I think what the estimates process revealed, and I think I said so in the course of it, was that we saw a minister who—far from having a command of the budget, the budget process and budget oversight for that department, and far from having explained the making of a case to the Treasurer, let alone explaining the reasons for the failure of budget performance against budgets year on year—was at no point referring in any coherent way to the management of the Department for Child Protection's budget at all.

I put at the outset the proposition—and I think this appears at page 82 of the relevant *Hansard*—that the budget for 2024-25 had allocated to the Department for Child Protection the amount of \$793 million and that that is a really large amount of money. It is significantly more money than we have seen year on year, and it continues to grow.

While we are putting that into some context, for several years now I have been saying to the minister, 'Is more money in child protection a sign of success or is it a sign of failure?'—let alone budget management from there.

Just using the budget figures for this year—and I can tell the house that the same story has applied year on year in the past as well—the Department for Child Protection's budget of \$793 million for this past year is an enormous amount of money. The estimates committee is well within its rights to ask the minister, 'What have you done with that money? Why haven't you managed to discharge your obligations to serve the best interests of South Australia's most vulnerable children while applying budget discipline when provided with that very substantial amount of money?'

The Department for Child Protection, under the responsibility of the minister, reported a projected budget performance for this last year not of \$793 million spent, not of some kind of variance at the margins—the Department for Child Protection's actual spend was a bit in excess of \$948 million. It is \$156 million more than what was very generously budgeted for in the last budget. So, as members might expect of me, I asked the minister to explain: what was the need for that \$155 million, how did that occur, and how are you going to address the year ahead?

What we also see on the face of those budget papers is that such is the profligate overspend in this year's budget papers, from \$793 million out to \$948 million, that the minister's own government, in the budget that the Treasurer has presented to this parliament, provides for an \$82 million cut against that budget performance for the year ahead.

So the house has seen, on the face of the budget papers, first a startling overspend in budget by the agency. I can stand here and tell the house that from my perspective, and on the face of the record as well, the committee was afforded no explanation, or certainly no substantial coherent explanation, for that at all. Let alone that, there was absolutely zero to explain how the Department for Child Protection was going to reduce spending for the year ahead by the necessary \$82 million

in order to meet the budget for the year ahead. Now, just flash back for a minute to the first year of the incoming Malinauskas Labor government a few years ago.

The Department for Child Protection was an exception to what were then generally applied operating efficiencies across agencies: budget cuts, budget reductions across agencies. Agencies were expected to perform better. They did not on the whole—but leave that aside. The Department for Child Protection was an exception. Hence, my question in the first year of budget estimates: is more money for child protection a sign of success or failure? We have been on that course ever since, and we can have that argument.

But the point is that child protection has been afforded lots of money—more and more and more. What it has done each year is it has blown the budget by a substantial amount and, in the last couple of years including this one, by so much that even where the Treasurer—in all of his capacity to adjust and provide in areas of need—has not been able to come at the child protection performance with anything remotely close to what the Department for Child Protection actually spends.

In what might be interpreted as the minister endeavouring to own certain virtues about the way in which the Department for Child Protection is going to be run under this government, the minister told the committee that the minister would just continue to spend and spend and spend, and claimed to be proud of that, and that would be endless. That extended to the second topic that I raised, which was by direct reference to full-time equivalents employed at the Department for Child Protection, which had exceeded by I think 31 the number of full-time equivalents that were budgeted for for the year.

So the Department for Child Protection spent \$155 million more than was budgeted, ended up employing 31 or so FTEs more than were budgeted, and the minister—who was given plenty of opportunities in different ways, including by analogy to individual unidentified cases, and by any range of reference points—could not or would not provide any explanation as to how South Australians can have confidence that money applied in child protection is money well spent, and money blowing the budget of child protection is budgets well blown, as it were.

Leave alone any kind of resemblance of a concept of how you are going to meet this \$82 million cut that the government is requiring of child protection. To put it bluntly, the minister did what the minister has done repeatedly now at budget estimates processes and provided, in answer to fairly straightforward questions about the budget, long, generalised answers that were non-responsive to questions and appeared to me to consider that that was somehow satisfactory. It was not—far from it.

I go a step further to say that the minister displayed a lack of command of the budget—but more than that: it was an apparent disengagement with the process of seeking new money, because the budget also contained what I described as a so-called measure for the provision of additional funds to the Department for Child Protection over the course of the budget estimates. That was described in very specific terms—first year, second year, going out to the third year, diminishing amounts of money—and the minister was given an opportunity to address the committee to answer: what are those additional funds going to be spent on? The best that the minister could come up with in response to any of these questions was, 'Well, we'll spend and spend and spend, whatever it takes, and we'll employ and employ and employ, and we will continue to do that and we are proud of it, and we will just do that.' I was left putting the proposition: is the budget in child protection really essentially a meaningless exercise?

You do not apparently go to the Treasurer and say, 'Treasurer, I really need this amount of money to achieve these outcomes, so I can talk to the budget process about what will be achieved with those funds.' That is what we saw across the board in so many different agencies. We saw a very specific analysis of what you get for your money, whether there has been responsible output for input and what we can derive in terms of confidence for budgets provided to agencies.

I have some thought about what the Treasurer must have to go through in terms of having to work out how to deal with the Minister for Child Protection in a budgetary sense, and what we are left with, if one is looking at the budget, the best you can do is you can say, 'Whatever you see written on the page in terms of the budget, don't rely on a word of it, and what you see next year will tell you

an even more startling story of a complete disconnection between what is budgeted and what is spent.'

So there is \$793 million in the budget, \$948 million spent, a \$155 million blowout contributing to a \$1 billion-plus blowout to budget in spending, all without any substantial rationale. To the extent that performance was revealed and addressed on the face of the budget papers, it was further curious to see that the government this year has walked away from a standard that has been applied consistently for many years, in terms of the response time for responding to cases. A completely different measure was applied this year, and once again on that measure the government was called out for what looked like a process of applying a gloss to a department that has been, in one form or another, in a continuous state of crisis now for years and years.

The Treasurer knows about this, the Premier knows about this. Both of those ministers addressed public inquiries last year about reasons for the overspend in child protection. Both of them addressed the fact that that was due to costs of employees and service providers in various ways. They have been on notice about this for at least the last year, and yet, what do we see, this startling and extraordinary and staggering budget blowout in child protection.

To paraphrase the words of Simon Schrapel back in February this year, Simon Schrapel who was recently farewelled after his storied career leading Uniting Communities, 'Child protection does not need to be something that is characterised by crisis. It can be something that we are proud of in South Australia. It can be a source of confidence. It can be, with proper reform, an area in which government can be proud of the way that it stands in and steps up for our state's most vulnerable.' However, right now it is a story of budgetary dysfunction that is coupled with performance that one expects to see in what has been a multiyear and ongoing crisis.

In the short time that is available just now, I said I would briefly address the Attorney-General's Department and one or two specific matters that emerged. I want to stress, as I do each year in budget estimates, when it comes to the Courts Administration Authority and the administration of our justice system, that I addressed at the outset a question via the Attorney-General to the Chief Justice or the Chief Justice's representative, first a question in general terms of, 'Are the courts adequately provided for?' Having that assurance that a provision is made, I thank the courts for the work that they do in the interests of our state's justice system and the people of South Australia.

However, there were a number of key examples of what I have described in the broadest sense at the outset of these remarks. Perhaps given their singularity in terms of being individual projects that are able to be analysed—and I might say I got a relatively more straightforward and candid response from the Attorney-General than what I got from the Minister for Child Protection—first of all, we saw a further two-year blowout in the time for completion of the Sir Samuel Way facade repairs. That is a relatively discrete project.

Surprisingly, a bit like the government's hydrogen project that was continually flagged as being at this fixed cost of \$593 million that was not changing, we see it still in the budget papers as a project costing \$11.5 million, despite having a two-year blowout. That is all on the record, so we can analyse that to our heart's content. What that led to was something far more serious, and that is something that South Australians might view as a subset or as a relative comparator to another significant project, the new Women's and Children's Hospital. That is costing somewhere in the region of over \$3 billion.

The new Forensic Science SA centre is costing somewhere around one-tenth of that, but for years now we have seen it recorded in the budget papers as a project with a cost of \$348 million and a completion date of June 2028. This year, in the budget, out of the blue, the figure has changed on both the completion date and on the project cost. What do you know, we now see it is now going to be three years later, off beyond the horizon in June 2031 and, by the way, it is going to cost somewhere close to \$14 million more than we thought. Instead, it is now going to come in at around \$362 million.

The people of South Australia would expect me to ask the Attorney-General, 'What does that mean? What is the reason for the delay and what is the reason for the cost blowout?' This only happened on Tuesday, and I had already been the subject of the minister's responses on Friday in child protection which were, frankly, not terribly responsive. So I was really pleased actually by how

clear and to the point the Attorney was in the sense that I had a clear answer that the reason for the three-year delay is purportedly justified by nothing more than someone turning their mind to the lease and seeing that the lease runs a bit longer than 2028 so maybe we can hang our hat on that.

It is something that has been known at all times, as far as I am aware. The premises at Divett Place is dilapidated and in urgent need of replacement. We have all known that and applauded the project being underway. No longer is it going to be completed in June 2028 but, for the reason only that somebody has had a look at the lease and said, 'Well, they can stick there a bit longer,' we now see project delivery three years late, in 2031, and \$14 million more associated with the build. I was prepared to give the Attorney credit and say, alright, three years late probably comes with \$14 million of extra costs.

I will come back to this in just a moment, I am assured. I will not be all that terribly much longer, but it is important to get this on the record, reporting out of the estimates process. I seek leave to continue my remarks and will continue in a moment.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting extended beyond 18:00 on motion of Hon. A. Koutsantonis.

Parliamentary Procedure

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (17:41): I move without notice:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the adjournment of the house to be extended beyond 7pm.

The SPEAKER: There being present an absolute majority, I accept the motion.

Motion carried.

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2025

Estimates Committees

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

The SPEAKER: I expect the crowd is going to stay to listen to the end of this.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:42): I will not be surprised, because this is really startling stuff. What the Attorney did instead—and I give him credit—was put it back to me as though he were writing the script for the *Utopia* episode that was unfolding.

The Treasurer will be interested in this, in a different way to how I suspect he is interested in having to wrestle with the Department for Child Protection, in that there was this interesting exchange in which the Attorney said to the committee in response to a question from me:

It would of course be very hard to complete a building project like this without any land. You need to build on the land. So that takes into account the acquisition for the funding of the land—

That was what we had. Those of us following along for the last few years have seen the project cost \$348 million to complete the new forensic science centre—much needed, urgent, important for the best people in South Australia doing the most amazing work in South Australia—and they are going to have that by June 2028. They have just been told, on the face of this budget paper, that no, they are not: they are going to have it by June 2031 now. There is a not very good explanation for that, as might have been appreciated.

The explanation for the \$14 million of extra cost was: 'That is just the money for the land that we need to build the building on.' So somebody has had a bright idea about that in the last year or so. For those who want to follow that in any greater detail, there it all is. I have made reference already to the government's illusory hydrogen project, the \$593 million hydrogen project that was

supposed to be up and running and delivering power by 2025, which was about now when last I looked.

We have had reference already to what is still kind of in the mix in terms of being able to pin down cost and time for delivery of the new Women's and Children's Hospital. We will continue to interrogate by how much that is blowing out in terms of dollars and time. But what we had here in the course of an otherwise pretty well performed, orderly Attorney-General's budget process was this almost ludicrous, almost risible subject matter of a *Utopia* episode where you have somebody now accounting for the cost of land for a project that has been on the books for years and a three-year delay for no good reason whatsoever.

So I say, as we come back to the house following that process, that members of this house on all sides will be very concerned indeed on behalf of those world-leading experts at the forensic science centre of South Australia, concerned to ensure that they do not end up with the same outcome as those who were in an office that used to exist at the hydrogen office of this government, who found that the product of that project, that \$593 million project, turned out just to be illusory, with no hydrogen generated. As the minister breezily tells us, such component parts that might have been partially constructed might end up getting delivered so that they can be sold off for parts down the track, but otherwise there is nothing to show for the \$593 million project that has been described for years.

We can add the forensic science centre of South Australia to that sorry checklist for the time being, and it is a sad duty to report that particular outcome from this estimates process. It is all there from Tuesday's estimates, and I refer particularly to page 252 of *Hansard* in that respect.

To return to where I started, in the biggest picture sense, South Australians will have a clear realisation that what this government has brought to them over the course of these now three long years and more is a burden of state debt that is unprecedented, heading out to \$48.5 billion, yet another year of agency by agency budget incompetence to the tune of a billion dollars or more of budget blowouts, and that has been demonstrated so very clearly in just those two agency areas that have been the subject of part of that analysis.

It is all there for South Australians to see. South Australians deserve better and we would all do well to pay close attention from here until March on that checklist, not of how much we have spent and how many have been added over budget to the books of each agency, but what outcomes have been delivered against promises? What management of scarce resources has been demonstrated by responsible ministers, or irresponsible ministers as the case may be? What capacity has this government demonstrated to South Australians for the responsible management of scarce public funds?

We of course have a lot more to say over the journey about what policy reform looks like to guide improvement. For the moment, the focus is on the budget as it properly is. The estimates process has served its purposes, including those that I have enumerated just now.

We will continue to hold the government to account over these final months of its term in power. South Australians can look forward to a bright new future beyond next March where, with a change of government, we can see a return to the responsible management of scarce resources, a day-to-day competence in service delivery, and the keeping of faith and trust that South Australians deserve.

With those short words, I conclude my remarks in terms of my contribution to the report on the estimates committee. There will be a lot more to say over the months ahead.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (17:51): I move:

That the house be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

Motion carried.

Sitting suspended from 17:51 to 18:19.

Bills

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE 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 3, page 3, line 20 [clause 3, definition of *project*—After 'course and' insert ', subject to subsection (2),'

No. 2. Clause 3, page 3, after line 23—After its present contents (now to be designated as subclause (1)) insert:

- (2) The definition of the *project* in subsection (1) does not extend to the development of any accommodation (whether in the form of a hotel or other temporary accommodation facilities or in the form of housing for ongoing occupation) and nothing in this Act—
 - (a) authorises or permits the development of any such accommodation on the project site; or
 - (b) has the effect of causing such development to be taken to be classified by the Planning and Design Code as deemed-to-satisfy development for the purposes of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

No. 3. Clause 18, page 10, after line 7—After subclause (1) insert:

- (1a) The Minister must ensure that a differential price structure applies in respect of access to the public golf course such that persons who are able to produce evidence (of a kind determined by the Minister) establishing that they are resident in the State will be entitled to pay a lesser fee for that access than persons who are not able to produce such evidence.

Consideration in committee.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendments be agreed to.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2025

Estimates Committees

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (18:21): I just want to make some brief concluding comments. Firstly, I thank all those who put such an extraordinary amount of time, effort and preparation into estimates: the staff of both houses, who ensure that the process of estimates goes so smoothly and is so well organised; then all the government agencies and departments that put such a huge amount of time and effort into preparing the briefings and other materials that the ministers rely on so much in order to be able to respond to the questions and queries that are put through the estimates process; and also the members of the opposition, because it is an extraordinary task to be able to pore through the budget papers, identify issues that are of note or concern, to frame questions and to then come into the committee and prosecute those questions and try to glean some more detailed information. Particularly for those members who were present in a number of committees with different ministers, it only highlights just how much work is required to be able to do that day after day, minister after minister, so thank you very much for that effort as well.

We have had a number of members reflect on the estimates process, and I listened with interest to the comments of the member for Morialta who, in his 16th year in this place, has seen quite

a few of these processes—not as many as the 136 that the member for West Torrens has lived through, but still quite an extensive amount of experience of the estimates process, and I think it is fair to say it can be a variable process for those engaged in it. Sometimes, it is genuinely illuminating and interesting getting to the bottom of some of the issues that are of concern to the opposition today, sometimes it can be a bit more perfunctory, but none of that takes away from the level of effort and the amount of time that is invested in the process.

To all of those who have been engaged in that, as well as the committee members themselves, particularly in those committees that do not tend to have a large number of questions from the government benches, it can be quite a long day. It provides the opportunity to work, not so much other recreational pastimes, which some members of bygone eras have been identified as engaging in during estimates, but it is a large effort.

I also want to pay credit to the member for Heysen, who was able to provide some of his reflections on this year's estimates. For those of us who regrettably missed the member for Heysen's engagement in this year's estimates process, we were lucky enough to have the *Wide World of Sports* highlights re-presented for the benefit of the house a little earlier today. I recognise and admire his vim and vigour in ensuring that the house was made aware of some of the more interesting proceedings as far as he saw it.

Thank you very much to all who have been involved. Thank you to those members who provided their comments back to the house to report back. Even though it is a flagrant breach of standing orders and clearly unparliamentary, I draw attention to the fact that we have a guest of the house who is wearing the Port Adelaide prison bars, which are always welcome in this chamber. With that, I conclude my remarks.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (18:26): I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

Third Reading

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (18:26): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

At 18:27 the house adjourned until Tuesday 19 August 2025 at 11:00.