

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 20 August 2025

Parliamentary Procedure

SPEAKER, ABSENCE

The CLERK: Honourable members, the Clerk has been advised of the absence of the Speaker. Pursuant to standing order No. 17, the Deputy Speaker takes the chair.

The Deputy Speaker took the chair at 10:30.

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER read prayers.

Bills

NATIONAL ENERGY RETAIL LAW (SMALL COMPENSATION CLAIMS REGIME) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (10:31): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the National Energy Retail Law (South Australia) Act 2011. Read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (10:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I rise to introduce this bill today as a follow-up action from the power outage that occurred on 14 March. Astute listeners to this parliament might well remember the fact that our region, my region, our community suffered from a power outage on Friday 14 March that lasted for at least 20 hours. It was longer in some places, but at least 20 hours in all places, and it covered the entirety of the Yorke Peninsula, basically the whole of my electorate, and it was an extraordinary event.

It was something that I certainly do not recall having experienced in my lifetime, and it was something that had a profound impact both on the private residents of our electorate and the business community. I think that by and large the feeling across the peninsula was that it was just simply not good enough. The fact that in this day and age, in 2025, that we can suffer from an outage of 20 hours or more, and really go without what is basically a human right in this day and age—electricity supply—was really quite an extraordinary thing.

Since that time, of course, we have been fighting for compensation because in the aftermath when we finally had the lights back on, when we could finally turn our computers back on, etc., it emerged that there was no compensatory scheme that was available to anyone in my electorate who had suffered any loss whatsoever as a result of this outage, which is really quite an extraordinary thing, in my view.

We rely on electricity more so than we ever have for our phones to work, for our fridges to work. For the basic human right things that make our lives tick, we rely on electricity, and to be so profoundly let down on that day was really quite staggering, and then to have no repercussion—or seemingly at least no repercussions whatsoever for those people who provide our electricity—was an extraordinary thing, and really aggrieved the people who did suffer that loss in my electorate.

There is, of course, a guaranteed service-level scheme that operates for SA Power Networks. That is a scheme by which there are certain levels that must be met, and the initial level is 20 hours over the year without power. Once you can prove that you have gone 20 hours without power over the course of the year, you will become eligible for \$100 in compensation. I can tell you,

Mr Deputy Speaker, and I am sure you are quite aware, that is an allowance or a compensation that will not go very far in covering the costs for some of these businesses that are out of pocket.

What is worse is despite the paltry amount that was on offer under that scheme for our situation, it was not even applicable. Because this was deemed to be a transmission failure as opposed to a supply issue and SAPN was not at fault and it was an ElectraNet issue, that guaranteed service-level scheme was not even available to the people of my electorate, so they were not able to get that.

Further, there is a relatively new small claims compensation scheme which this current government has introduced and trumpeted as a raging success because it is designed to address a gap in the wider insurance market. This is a scheme—frankly, one that I would applaud as well—that applies to energy users who use under 160 megawatts of electricity per year and would be able to claim compensation when a failure of SAPN's electricity infrastructure lease or voltage variation caused property damage or food spoilage.

This is a good scheme. When a consumer of electricity, through no fault of their own, suffers a voltage variation and their fridge is fried or their food spoils or whatever happens, they are eligible, whether or not SAPN is at fault, to claim compensation from this scheme. This is an excellent thing. But for the life of me, I cannot understand why it does not extend to power outages.

What is the difference for Joe Blow, a person on the ground, when it comes to the mode by which they have lost their fridge or lost their food or suffered their loss? What is the difference to them whether it is a power voltage or a power outage? If they go 20 hours without power and all the food in their fridge spoils or if they are a baker and all of their pastry is destroyed, what does it matter whether it is the fault of a power voltage or a power outage?

This bill that I am introducing today will attempt to expand that scheme to more wide-reaching consequences so that it can include those things, so that when my community is facing a similar situation—if it does happen again—then there will be an avenue via which they can pursue compensation from the people who provide electricity.

The excuse that we were given at the time was that it was an extraordinarily dry summer—which it was—it was extraordinarily hot, it was windy, and the insulators that are critical to the success of the power network had become so dirty that this was triggering faults in the electricity. That may well be the case, but it has stayed dry. I am not sure that we have cleared 200 mm of rain on the peninsula so far this winter. It is facing another dry summer, as best I can tell without being a meteorologist. I am fairly certain that those conditions will persist through summer and we might well be facing the same circumstances that caused the power to go out for 20 hours again when this summer rolls around. So it might well happen again.

This scheme is important and we need to take steps to do it. I am sure it can be done, because it managed to happen successfully everywhere else in the state of South Australia. As best I could tell over the summer, despite those dry conditions persisting in different parts of the state—on Eyre Peninsula, in the Riverland and to a lesser degree on the Fleurieu—the power seemed to stay on. As far as I am aware, there was not another 20-hour outage that happened anywhere else in the state across South Australia over the summer.

The power companies have managed to successfully keep those powerlines clean and on and have not subjected any other regions to extended outages like they have ours. I am sure that based on that fact they can take that treatment they have provided to other parts of the state and extend it to our network to ensure that that power stays on and we can continue to have it going forward. I will be pushing that.

I will be pushing this change in the scheme on behalf of my constituents, because a great deal many suffered a significant loss on that Friday 14 March event. I would like to give a couple of examples. I will not give every example that came to me because we do not have the time, but just a couple of examples: one of a business and one of a private individual who suffered loss and I think should be eligible for some form of compensation—and if this scheme does not provide it then perhaps it should be expanded to include them.

First is a gentleman called Adam Lobb. Adam is reliant upon medication to sustain his life, and that is not an exaggeration. It is a fact of life that he needs medication to ensure that he can

continue to live a happy and fruitful life. Now, that medication needs to be refrigerated; it cannot exceed a certain temperature for fear of spoiling.

When the power went out for 20 hours, he was faced with a choice of sitting at home, crossing his fingers and hoping that it would come back on in time to preserve that medication and ensure that it lasted or packing up everything, driving to Adelaide or somewhere where the power was on—anywhere outside of our electorate, basically, hoping the power was on—whacking it in a fridge there and sitting outside of his home, outside of his comfort zone, outside of his community, waiting for the power to come back on but safe in the knowledge that his medication was preserved and able to be used.

He did pack up to go to Adelaide. He did take his medication to Adelaide, but if he had stayed in his home and waited for the power to come back on, it would have inevitably spoiled and (a) he would have been placed in a life-threatening position and (b) he would have been out of pocket for what is a rather expensive medication that he needs—it is not a choice—to survive. In that setting, I think that this compensatory scheme should be expanded to include people like Adam so that they can claim compensation to replace, if there is loss, that medication.

The second example I would like to draw to people's attention is the Minlaton Bakery. This was an infamous example at the time. Luke Martin and his wonderful wife did a number of interviews on radio and associated mediums to share the plight of businesses in our region at that time. They were faced with a terrible dilemma. The power was out quite early in the morning and they were faced with the choice about whether to call their bakers in to get started on working. From memory, I think they did. They called them in and had a wage bill that they had to cover. They then lost quite a bit of stock from their fridge, which left them with a rather hefty bill, and so on.

That business was quite out of pocket as a result of the power outage and the uncertainty about whether it would come back on, and they were not alone. There are many businesses that rely on refrigeration and other electrical-powered machinery to keep their businesses running that were out of pocket as a result of this power outage. In my view, they should be eligible for compensation as a part of this or a similar scheme so that, when and if this happens again, they are not out of pocket because, ultimately, it happened through no fault of their own.

I would like to pick up on a point that arose in the media release that the government disseminated celebrating the small claims compensation scheme and its virtues. It is designed to address a gap in the wider insurance market. That is exactly what we have found in the aftermath of the power outage. There have been precious few insurers that are willing to pay out insurance claims for loss as a result of this power outage. We are finding that most are getting rejected on account of it being not eligible under the terms and conditions that have been imposed upon them by their insurers.

If that is a virtuous enough reason to establish a small claims scheme in the first place, for that specific reason of voltage variation, would it not be the same for a power outage? If there is a gap in the insurance market that is leaving these businesses and individuals out of pocket through no fault of their own and the insurers are not coming the party to fill that gap then I submit that this scheme should be expanded to include it, so that is what I will be seeking to do today.

By way of explanation of the bill, it is very simple. It literally just expands that scheme to include power outages—not every power outage: this specifically includes unplanned outages that last for eight hours or more. As an Independent member of parliament, without the means of a bureaucracy or party behind me, I did not have a great deal of support in coming up with this bill, so eight hours is a rather arbitrary number.

We have reached that number because we have roughly estimated that that is how long food might well last in a freezer without power on with the door shut. However, I would like to make it clear to this parliament and to any stakeholders and constituents of mine who might be listening that, now that this bill has been tabled, I am very much open to assistance from the government, from stakeholders and from the community as to how it might best work.

I think that this scheme should be inclusive of the sorts of perils that I have just mentioned. However, as I said, as an Independent member of parliament, I have limited means at my disposal. Now that this bill is on the table, I am more than open to suggestions and input and feedback from

different people as to what that time duration should be and what the triggers and thresholds should be to meet them.

It is basically open for consultation now. I am open to changing it and to working with the government and opposition and anyone else to ensure that it gets passed, because in my view the most important thing that we could do is fix this gap. It is a gap. We have talked about the guaranteed service levels. That does not apply. We have talked about the small claims compensation scheme. That does not seem to apply. We have talked about the fact that insurance companies do not seem to be coming to the party to cover those gaps either.

When a business or individual is left out of pocket and is facing significant financial hardship through no fault of their own, that is an issue that should be redressed, and I am seeking to do that. I do not think it should necessitate an increase in power prices. I think that we already pay the exorbitant power prices that we do currently and there should be means within those bills to ensure that our power can be kept on and those insulators can be kept clean. I completely reject any argument put forward that this will require that power prices increase, and I would like to think that we can get it done within the bills that we pay already.

In conclusion, I feel that there is likely a prevailing view within government, within the bureaucracy, that when issues happen in regional South Australia and they do not affect metropolitan Adelaide, if they sit tight long enough they will eventually blow over and go away. This is not one that I intend to let go away. This was a terrible event that happened in our region. In 2025, it should not occur. There should be no way that we are left without power for 20 hours or more in this day and age, and I intend to do something to provide compensation when it does, or if it does, but also as an imperative to the power companies to ensure that they do not let it happen.

I think this stick should ensure that they take proactive measures, more so than they are doing now, to ensure that the power stays on. The fear of having to pay out compensation will hopefully trigger some further action, or more action, from those companies to ensure that it does. I commend the bill to the house. I want to reiterate the fact that I am open to working with any party or stakeholder or constituent to find the perfect model that works so that it can secure passage. I do not necessarily contend that this is it, but I would like to think that it is a good starting point and something we can work on to build a new compensatory scheme that includes this gap in the market.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (USE OF VACANT LAND) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (10:48): I seek leave to move that this bill be now read a second time.

Leave granted.

Mr ODENWALDER: On behalf of the Minister for Urban Development, I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I want to make it clear that I move this bill a second time in order to vote against it, in order to bring the bill alive in the house to vote against it.

Mr Telfer: You have changed your mind.

Mr ODENWALDER: No, to vote against it and remove it from the *Notice Paper*. I want to be absolutely clear: I do not support this bill. The government does not support this bill, and I urge all members to vote against it.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10:49): I rise to speak against this abomination of a bill that has found its way here with the support of the Malinauskas Labor government through the Legislative Council just a few weeks ago. So here it is on the *Notice Paper*, this bill that would provide for the compulsory lease of land at the whim of the minister or a council for an undetermined period, and with a prohibition against any form of rent or other compensation being paid to the owner of said private land.

It is an abomination of a bill and that it has found its way through any part of this parliament is cause for a shiver to run up the spines of all South Australians. Just to make this really clear, bringing it close to home, I was visiting, as I do from time to time, a full-hall gathering at our local retirement village in Stirling at Sevenoaks, one of the great retirement villages in our state, full of wonderful people who have spent their lives making a contribution to our local area and across the state.

To be in the room with that group this time last week and to hear the fear that they had for what might become of various parts of the open space in and around the Sevenoaks village just brought it home to me that when we talk about the basic rights with private property that have underpinned the development of land, community, interaction between individuals for the nearly two centuries of South Australia's proud history, we are here in 2025, having to debate a bill that has been brought here by Malinauskas Labor supporting what, to be fair to the mover in another place, was not even of a character that the mover in the other place thought was going to pass muster. I think we have that on the public record.

The Hon. Rob Simms in another place has told South Australians that this bill is not worthy of passing the parliament, but that was not good enough for the Malinauskas Labor government. It thought, 'Right. No, we will support this,' and here we are dealing with a bill that would compulsorily deprive a private owner of their use and enjoyment of their own land. This amendment would sit directly alongside the longstanding provisions for the compulsory acquisition of land in the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act. Just to compare those two spells out what an abomination of an arrangement this would be.

People are aware of compulsory acquisition. They are aware of it in the context of the state, and they are aware of it in the context of the federal government as well. Of course, as all of us can recite, when it comes to the compulsory acquisition of land in the federal context, we have *The Castle* as our benchmark and the requirement that land that is to compulsorily be acquired is acquired on just terms and only in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

Even at the state level, the requirements for compulsory acquisition include the relevant minister being satisfied as to the reasonable necessity of doing so and only on the advice of those expert in the department as to that necessity. There is no such provision in this compulsory lease arrangement, which goes out of its way to say all you need is the minister, whoever that might be—we are presuming it is the super minister, but we have not heard from the super minister in this debate—who just forms a view as to the appropriateness of this compulsory lease, or a council.

I expect this is going to come as news to those in the leadership of the four councils that are in some part comprising the electoral district of Heysen, the dominant one being the Adelaide Hills Council and also the councils of Mount Barker, Onkaparinga and Alexandrina. They are all going to be empowered to form a view about the taking of a compulsory lease for no rent on private property anywhere throughout the nearly thousand square kilometres of Heysen.

The Adelaide Hills is home to some of the most beautiful open space that this state knows about. It sends a shudder down all of our spines to think that someone, a minister or council, might decide that some of that open space, privately owned, is not being used sufficiently and that it is time to just take a compulsory lease for who knows how long at no rent from the person who is hapless enough to own it and be coming into the less than good graces of the relevant person.

Just so we are in no doubt, let's spell it out. It is a short bill. Clause 2 provides for this infamous what would be new section 243A in the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act. It says, 'if a designated entity is satisfied', whatever that means, that the owner of land is unwilling or unable to undertake development to use it to the satisfaction of the relevant minister or council, because the designated entity, we learn, is the minister charged with responsibility for this provision or a council, and they form a view—they do not need to be satisfied even as to the necessity for the forming of that view; they just need to be satisfied—and, moreover, they just need to sort of decide that it might be appropriate to use the land for some undisclosed public purpose, then what do they do? They just go to the *Gazette* and they make a declaration.

There is no requirement that they take advice, no requirement that they achieve some sort of public urgency or exceptional circumstance or anything like that. It is all just here on the face of it. It might be that the minister or the council woke up that day and thought, 'Guess what? We're going to deprive another person of their private property.' Once they have done that, at new

subsection (2)(c) there is not just sort of an open-ended arrangement about what compensation is going to be paid to the owner. No, it is all spelled out really clearly. It says that the lease that is to be entered into with this designated entity 'must not provide for the payment of rent by the designated entity under the lease'. They can sort of make good on things like rates and so on, but no rent, compulsory lease—it could be anything up to perpetuity—and off we go for the purpose that has been decided by either the minister or the council.

Why, in any set of circumstances, a responsible government in this state could have seen fit to go anywhere near this bill is bewildering. I think people are going to be having a very close look at what Malinauskas Labor really is all about, because we hear all sorts of things about the party times and the circuses and all this 'look over here', while the list of failures against every promise, from the biggest one on fixing ramping all the way through down the line, is adding up to the list of failures from this government. Now we see this abomination sent through the Legislative Council before the break and here now so that we can see private owners in this state deprived of land. It is an abomination and it should be voted down.

Mr TELFER (Flinders) (10:59): I rise to speak strongly against this outrageous bill that we are being asked to debate, and I am amazed that it has got to this point of the debate. It is a bill that originated in the upper house and has passed one half of the parliamentary process with the support of the Labor Party, and now for it to get to our point of debating this bill I think is outrageous. If only people in the public knew that consideration was being given to a bill that gives the power to a designated entity—defined within this legislation as either the government or, in relation to land within the area of a council, that council—to temporarily control privately owned vacant and so-called underutilised land for public purposes, notably for emergency or portable housing.

This goes to a basic tenet of who we are as Australians: the rights of private landowners to have control of the land that they own without the need for the government to come in and take over. We see that within this bill landowners who are deemed unable or unwilling to develop their land can be subject to statutory leasing by the state or the relevant council, depending on where, without their consent, without any sort of discussion and without any sort of compensation.

Looking at the debate in the other place, which is the reason why it is here for us to debate in our house, I was flabbergasted. Indeed, I know my colleagues in the upper house were as well when the member who was speaking on behalf of the government indicated that they 'do not oppose this planning, development and infrastructure bill in principle'. This is why it is here in the lower house. I am not sure what has suddenly happened in the few weeks since it was debated in the upper house. To quote again from the other place:

The government supports the intent of the bill and is open to discussing sensible reforms that see vital land that is being banked made available for housing.

'The government supports the intent of the bill'—something has obviously changed, whatever it might be, and they are trying now to cover up that support that has meant it has gone through half of the parliamentary process that is necessary for legislation to get through and become enacted. When we see some of the quotes that have come out of the debate in the other place, it is amazing that the government can now be pretending that they have a completely different position. To quote again:

The government acknowledges the intent of the bill and is open to considering and progressing reforms in an alternative manner that would see vital land that is being land banked being made available for housing.

The Liberal Party, the opposition, want to speak very strongly against not just this bill as a whole but the intent of the bill—the intent that, in the other place, the government was saying they support—because this is something that should ring alarm bells for communities right around our state.

There is no structure around what would be considered an underutilised parcel of land. There are no guidelines. Indeed, during the committee stage in the other place, and I was interested to look at that, a question was asked of the mover to perhaps expand a little bit on an entity being satisfied—that is, 'satisfied that the owner of prescribed land is unwilling or unable to undertake development'. What sort of definition is there around 'satisfied'? The answer was that it 'has been deliberately not prescriptive in terms of what might inform some of those considerations'.

It has been deliberately open-ended so that the designated entity—whether that is a minister with these powers in the state government, or whether it is the council itself in relation to land within the area of a council—can decide on a whim. There are no structures. We do not know what the

intent was when the discussion was being had in the other place. Some of the points that were being made really mean the capacity is there for a minister, council or a council officer, depending on how they are feeling on the day as to being satisfied, to say 'Yes, I am satisfied. We want to take control of this privately owned piece of land.'

This is an outrageous bill. It is outrageous that it has got to this point of the debate in our house when we are looking at some of these aspects, in particular, of what is a short but very dangerous bill. The first aspect where it says, 'If a designated entity is satisfied'—and we do not know what that satisfaction looks like—that the owner of the prescribed land is unwilling or unable to undertake developments on, or make use of the land.'

This is getting worse and worse. It is becoming more and more of a parody. 'To the extent considered sufficient by the designated authority,' whatever extent that is that they are satisfied to the extent considered sufficient, so it is completely up to that designated authority, and 'within a period considered appropriate by that designated authority'.

If we were living in a jurisdiction that did not have the same democratic structures that we do, perhaps that might be something which is acceptable. For a democracy like Australia, for a democracy like South Australia, for a community like ours where the property rights of the individual should be central to our society, this is something which clearly and without any sort of doubt would undermine those property rights and give the power to a designated entity—a minister, a council—to say, 'You are not doing what we think you should, we are not satisfied. We do not think the extent to which you are going to undertake development on this land is sufficient, so we are going to take that control.'

As we were considering this bill, it never crossed our mind that it would go any further than an outrageous thought bubble from a lefty Greens' representative in the upper house. For it to be here now, the reason for our house to be discussing it is because it has been waved through by this Labor government and not just waved through—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TELFER: —thank you, sir, for your protection—not just waved through, but waved through with some definition. The lead speaker in the other place said, 'The government supports the intent of the bill.' It is not just that it has happened to have gone through. No, the government indicated, indeed, they support the intent of the bill.

I listened to the attempted interjections where they were talking about processes and the like. The government control the numbers. The government could have killed this off in the upper house. We could be in a situation where we are not debating this bill at all. But they acknowledged the intent. They are open to considering and progressing reforms. When the lead speaker rose on behalf of the government to indicate, 'We do not oppose this planning, development and infrastructure bill in principle'—the script changes depending on the whim of the politics and this Labor government have been found out for who they really are.

They are always making deals. They stand on no principle when they support in principle this bill and now, for us to be debating it in our house, I think it is an indictment of the foundations of this government, it is an indictment on the judgement of this government and it is an indictment on any sort of values base that this government professes to stand on when they are willing to indicate that they do not oppose a bill which takes away those important property rights that we all hold dear.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:09): I rise, too, to speak against the utterly ridiculous Planning, Development and Infrastructure (Use of Vacant Land) Amendment Bill. Who would have thought, as the member for Flinders has so well explained, that this legislation would even hit this house? It was debated in the upper house, in the other place. It was a dirty deal—lefty, green legislation—that the Labor Party agreed to. They support this legislation and all of a sudden they support it enthusiastically. All of a sudden, they have had a brain fade, something has changed. What has happened in the Labor Party party room? They champion themselves: we speak as one. There might have even been a debate about this at some stage.

They have completely flipped 180° on something so vital for not just South Australians but Australians, and on the ownership of land, housing and property. It is completely outrageous

legislation—it should never have entered this house. Yet, here we see the good whip—I am a former whip—the member for Elizabeth, the fall guy, having to introduce this legislation while the super minister, the Minister for Urban Development, is here in the house. What the heck! What is going on? The whip had to take the fall—it is just outrageous. He had to sacrifice himself because he is doing his job as the whip, and I find that outrageous as well.

Mr Odenwalder: Doing my job.

Mr PEDERICK: I just admitted that, and shielding the super minister. I have seen echoes of this in China directly, because this—

The Hon. N.D. Champion: Come on!

Mr PEDERICK: I have. No, you could have spoken earlier, super, you could have spoken earlier. You could have introduced it. I have seen this. I was briefed on this.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Hammond will come to order and he will not accuse people in here of behaving like people in China, and everyone needs to just calm down and stop yelling at each other.

Mr PEDERICK: People on the other side saying that they do not support this legislation: yes, you did, because you approved it in the upper house, in the other place. I have been in here for nearly 20 years and the Labor Party speaks as one, because if you do not you will end up in Outer Mongolia—that is where you end up. I have seen people run out of this place. I have seen people run out of the other place—that is exactly what happens. You speak as one, and all of sudden we have had a mental mind block and something has changed. And, yes, I have seen this in China. I was over there about 10 years ago and I had a briefing, and it was quite interesting, with a group—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: No, very short on private land in China. But there were farmers who were allegedly farming their own land. The briefing we had was, 'Well, we moved the farmers off their land and we moved them into these 20 to 30-storey apartment blocks and they're very happy with that'. I thought, of course they are—like hell! That is what this is, that is exactly what this is. This is exactly what this legislation is—it is communist legislation. To think that this legislation could even make it into this house is completely outrageous. We are not in China, we are not in Russia, we are not in North Korea.

My family has been approached by governments over many decades. I have spoken many times about compulsory acquisition: 1939 at Angle Vale, again at Angle Vale in 1950, weapons dumps in 1939, Edinburgh air base in 1950, and the early 1970s at Coomandook, when they wanted to move the Dukes Highway. What would have happened under this legislation then, if it was similar legislation? 'We will just take your 7½ acres. We will not worry about re-fencing that three kilometres, we will just take it. We will just take it and you just have to live with it.'

What an outrageous load of rot, just completely outrageous. It is completely outrageous that the Malinauskas Labor government are so arrogant that they think, 'We will suck up to the Greens in the other place,' because they think they need the votes and the preferences, and then all of a sudden, 'We will just run down here and change our mind.' My God, you have all supported it—you on the other side. The Labor Party has supported this legislation. It is completely outrageous.

I wonder if they would like someone knocking on their door and saying, 'We're just going to take your land. We'll take the lot.' We have seen this before with the Greens bill on capping rents. I had small investors in Murray Bridge and surrounding areas coming into my office and saying, 'Adrian, I have been to the accountant and we are just getting out. I have six but, no, I'm selling them. On the accountant's advice, I'm just getting out with this sort of debate going on in the parliament of this state.'

That is what this legislation does. Why would you own a block of land or own anything, for example, if you have the government of the state, the Malinauskas Labor government, agreeing that it is okay to take over vacant land without compensation? It is completely outrageous. What is the point when you are up against the council approval process? 'Alright, we will take the vacant land. What happens next? Do we wait 18 months, do we wait two years, do we wait three years for that

land to go through an approval process to build a dwelling on it?' That is what happens in the real world, sadly.

I am still not sure to this day, but I have gone to councils like the Rural City of Murray Bridge and said, 'Just get rid of your planners and just have private certifiers.' That is where the hold-up is. The hold-up is at development approval level. We have seen in my area, on the current boundaries of Murray Bridge without Gifford Hill, around 5,000 allotments that could be developed. What we need are fast-tracked approvals and that land will be developed over time.

Then we go over the road to Gifford Hill near the Murray Bridge Racing Club where the Costa Group from Melbourne and Geelong are going to develop that. They have to go through that extensive approval process. There will be, over time, over three to four decades, 17,000 homes built there. Over time and into the future, there will be more homes built as Murray Bridge and surrounding areas become part of the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan.

It is a great idea, but this legislation is not the way to do it. It just beggars belief that in this liberal democracy this legislation has actually hit the floor of this house. The Labor Party has the numbers in the other place but, 'Oh, well, we'll just do a dirty deal and we'll just come downstairs and no-one will notice the difference.' Surprise, surprise—when you look at the flagrant abuse of liberal democracy and the thought that anyone can just turn up and take your property with no compensation, no rights and just bulldoze through.

I will relate to the environment and food production area legislation where there are farmers in my area and other electorates between Kapunda and the south coast—in the member for Finnis's electorate—and because there have been lines drawn on a map you cannot have another dwelling. A lot of farmers might have a 2,000 hectare property and they would love to perhaps put a house on the corner of the property for a son or a daughter, but they are simply banned from having it. They are not trying to build the place out, they just want to have another house. This legislation had to be amended for horticultural people in the Adelaide Plains area so that they had the opportunity for people to effectively farm their properties.

There are other ways to increase housing and availability in this state. We do not need this radical left-wing stuff that has come straight out of Beijing. It is just crazy stuff. I do not know what goes on in the party room of the Labor Party. I do not know whether the Premier walks in and says, 'Today this is what we're doing,' and everyone just nods their heads like sheep and says, 'Yes, we speak as one. We speak as one and we will do it.' Then, all of a sudden, we will have a brain burst and it is, 'Oh no, we have changed our mind all of a sudden; we will do something else.'

It is fascinating that we have the super minister here today, the minister responsible for this legislation, and that he was not game enough to introduce it into this house of parliament. It is completely outrageous, and this legislation needs to be put in the bin, where it should have been in the other place.

Parliamentary Procedure

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (11:20): I move:

That the time allotted for all remaining stages of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure (Use of Vacant Land) Amendment Bill be until 11.30am.

Motion carried.

Bills

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (USE OF VACANT LAND) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed.

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (11:20): Can I congratulate the whip, the member for Elizabeth, on this motion. I fully support the fact that you have done a 180 and looked at this seriously. I think we really need to look at this. There are a couple of sayings or expressions that I want this parliament,

the politicians in this place, to recognise. One is that people say that every day we sit is every day we do damage. Let me tell you, if you bring in legislation like this it absolutely validates that comment. That is not to suggest that we do not do some good either.

The other point I would make about this amendment is that this is like the canary in the coal mine. Why is it like the canary in the coal mine? When this sort of stuff comes up through one of the chambers and is given serious consideration and then passes, and is seen as an answer, it actually tells us that this place and who sit in it are clueless as to why we have a problem and what we are trying to address here: we have a shortage of housing, we have homeless people and we have a lack of development. Not only that, we do not look at why.

I sit on the ERDC. I respected a former Labor member there, Minister John Rau, when he helped to condense the planning act from 23,000 or 24,000 pages to 7,000 pages, just to simplify building in this state. It is working to a large degree. There are still some issues with it—local governments still struggle with it to a degree—but it is a condensation of red tape and makes it easier to build houses. One of the things I do when I sit on the ERDC is to approve everything that wants to build a new home and as many homes as possible that would be tolerated by the community.

When you move to these sorts of answers and you look at why these answers are being sought, we know that we now have 700,000 migrants coming into Australia rather than the around 400,000 migrants five years ago. We know that these migrants come unskilled. We know that these migrants do not have a home and that they need a home.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr McBRIDE: That is true. They need a home and this is creating a logjam. It is not being recognised. Not only do they need a home but they do not know how to build one if you want them to go and build. We know that this country has not had any productivity gains in 10 years. We know that the workers who have been building these houses—the cost of a house in the last five or 10 years has gone from \$150,000 or \$200,000 to \$600,000, which is out of the reach of first-time homebuyers and people who are trying to start out in life.

To come back to the earlier speakers and about what vacant land meant to the Australian dream: 50, 60 and 70 years ago, in the 1950s and 1960s, recently married couples would buy their vacant block of land for \$500 to \$1,000, and they would sit on that vacant land and that would be their dream home in 10 or 20 years when they could afford to build the home—and then they would be able to build their home later. These sorts of clauses delete and devalue and remove the validation of being able to buy your small vacant lot and then say, 'When we are ready, we are going to build our dream home for our family, and we will go there and live there.' This sort of legislation deletes and removes that type of possibility, but that is how we got to where we are today—and it is like it did not even exist.

I have to say—very quickly, because I know that in another five minutes I have a meeting with the Minister for Health—that I absolutely applaud the government for recognising this. I am disappointed with whoever it is in the upper house—it does not matter whether the opposition voted against it, which they did, and it does not matter whether the Labor government sought to see that this might be an answer to back a Greens piece of legislation. What we have to be responsible for is that we all belong to the one institution, making rules and regulations about homes and housing, and when you come up with ideas like this it tells me that there are not too many ideas out there to solve this problem.

When you start looking at this seriously, you see that you do need productivity, you need to remove red tape and you need to build as many houses on vacant land as possible. I am a big supporter of that process through the ERDC and in backing up the Chair—sorry, I cannot remember the name. It is a good committee in the sense that it is there to actually make sure that the community concerns are heard but that we also are addressing the issues—or trying to address the issues to whatever that extent is—to make sure that houses are built in numbers that absolutely meet the objective of the housing demand that is out there.

The only thing I have to say that I have a little concern about—but I am happy to say that the numbers are there—is that we love to see this greening of Adelaide, we love to see trees being protected, we like to see space and what they call the eastern suburbs being translated out to the

western suburbs, the north and the south. That will have a cost and will bear some impediment on all the housing that could be a potential in Greater Adelaide or the condensed city of Adelaide.

However, it is out of my control. I have to say I am more about removing trees and building houses than worrying about some shade. That is my perspective of it, and that is fine. I know that there are green suburbs and leafy suburbs and I know there are other suburbs that love a tree. However, we do not want homeless people: we want more homes, we want more houses and this is why we end up with legislation like this. I welcome the whip, the member for Elizabeth, and his motion to remove it. Congratulations to the government on waking up to this and thank you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (11:25): I oppose the Planning, Development and Infrastructure (Use of Vacant Land) Amendment Bill. The Liberal Party opposes this vacant land bill. The Liberal Party has opposed this bill since it was proposed by the Greens. This is an area where we differ from the government. The government supported this bill in the Legislative Council. The Labor Party supported it. They clarified that on the record in the Legislative Council, and I will quote from the Labor Party's spokesperson on this bill when this was dealt with in the upper house of the parliament. She said:

The government supports the intent of the bill and is open to discussing sensible reforms that see vital land that is being banked made available for housing.

Consequently, the Liberal Party, through our shadow minister Michelle Lensink, articulated very clearly our staunch opposition to this bill. We are opposed to this bill because it is a betrayal of property rights. We are opposed to this bill because those people, through their work, their effort, have put money aside. Many of my constituents have said to me and Scott Kennedy, the Liberal candidate for Morialta, that they consider it their superannuation potentially. Many of them are migrants to this country who have worked hard, who expected that when they entered into the contract to purchase their land those property rights, that contract right, that basic fundamental principle in a democratic society, would be understood, that that was their land and they were able to apply it as appropriate.

For this bill to come forward from the Greens, supported by the government in the Legislative Council, that would see their property rights abrogated, that would see the government capable of imposing a compulsory lease over their land as a government priority with no compensation to the landowner, with not even the opinion of the landowner taken into consideration, is utterly despicable. It is an extraordinary state of affairs.

Sir, as you know, this is my last year in the parliament. I am working really hard not to use hyperbolic rhetoric in my speeches. I consider myself to be a peacemaker—I try to get along with everybody—but this bill is an utter failure in the duties of those Labor members who considered this bill in caucus and said, obviously, to their Legislative Council colleagues, 'Let's support this bill. We are comfortable. We support the intent of this bill.' So the Liberal Party in the lower house will oppose the motion proposed by the Labor Party today.

I am encouraged at the proposition that potentially the entire house might oppose this motion. The Liberal Party has been talking to people in the community a lot about this issue in the last few weeks, certainly in Morialta. I know Scott Kennedy tells me that when he is out on the doors he hears every second day from somebody who is very concerned about this bill. He certainly has said to me that he would oppose this if it ever comes up, if it ever rears its ugly head again in the future.

In the meantime, I am pleased to vote against this. I am pleased to vote against this bill and I hope—it is my sincere hope—that every member of this house will oppose this bill and send a clear message to the Greens, and a clear message to anyone in the Labor Party who thought this was a good idea to the point they encouraged their caucus to support this in the Legislative Council, that it may never see its head again. But what the voters in Morialta and the voters across South Australia can be assured of is that Scott Kennedy in the Liberal Party in Morialta, and the Liberal Party more generally, will never support this legislation that so abrogates people's property rights and hopefully we can knock this on the head right now.

The SPEAKER: Thank you for your contribution, member for Morialta, and your calmness and your cool approach, as you vowed you would take, to this debate.

Second reading negatived.

*Motions***DECRIMINALISATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY 50TH ANNIVERSARY**

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (11:30): I move:

That this house—

- (a) recognises that 2025 is the 50-year anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in South Australia;
- (b) acknowledges the leadership of Premier Don Dunstan and Attorney-General Peter Duncan in ensuring South Australia was the first Australian jurisdiction to undertake this important reform;
- (c) celebrates South Australia as being at the forefront of progressive reform in Australia; and
- (d) remembers the sacrifices of the LGBTIQA+ community in ensuring this reform, particularly the late George Duncan.

I rise today to mark an important anniversary in the history of our state and our nation. This year, 2025, represents 50 years since the decriminalisation of homosexuality in South Australia—a reform that placed our state at the forefront of progressive change in Australia and sent a clear message that discrimination and prejudice have no place in our laws. It is fitting that we recognise the leadership of Premier Don Dunstan and Attorney-General Peter Duncan in bringing this reform to fruition in 1975. Their commitment to equality and justice was steadfast, even in the face of resistance. They demonstrated that political courage can achieve profound and lasting change.

South Australia has long been a leader in progressive reform, from being the first place in the world to grant women the right to vote and stand for parliament to advancing Aboriginal land rights, to being the first jurisdiction in the nation to recognise the dignity and rights of LGBTIQA+ people. These milestones reflect the values that underpin our state: fairness, equality and respect for all.

In commemorating this anniversary, we must acknowledge the sacrifices of the LGBTIQA+ community, whose determination and resilience made this reform possible. For too many, the years prior to 1975 were marked by fear, injustice and stigma. People risked their careers, their safety and their relationships simply to live authentically. We particularly remember the late Dr George Duncan, a respected academic, whose death in 1972 in a suspected hate crime shocked our state and became a catalyst for reform. While justice for Dr Duncan was never fully realised in the courts, his name became synonymous with the movement for equality and the demand that our laws protect—not persecute—our citizens.

The passage of the decriminalisation legislation in 1975 was not the conclusion of this struggle. In the 50 years since, the fight for full equality has continued through the recognition of same-sex relationships, marriage equality, antidiscrimination protections and greater visibility in public life. Yet our work is not finished. Discrimination persists and prejudice can still be found both overtly and subtly in our communities. For instance, the use of a homophobic slur by our role models, despite having extensive training, and knowing the consequences, can change the trajectory of how someone perceives their value as a human being, and it can therefore change their life. Words matter.

This anniversary serves as both a moment of celebration and a reminder of our ongoing responsibility to ensure that equality is a lived reality for every South Australian. As we honour this milestone, we recommit ourselves to the principle that no-one should have to hide who they are to be safe, respected and free. We reaffirm the belief that love in all its forms is a fundamental human right. Fifty years on, South Australia can be proud of its legacy in leading this historic reform. Fifty years on, we commit to continuing this leadership with compassion, with justice and with the unwavering conviction that progress must never stand still. I commend this motion to the house.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:34): I rise to support the motion and commend the member for Gibson for bringing it, and for her contribution to the debate and leading the motion. The motion is in this year, 2025, drawing particular attention to the significant anniversary of 50 years since the decriminalisation of homosexuality in South Australia, and it is cause for reflection that that is the territory that the public debate was in, in South Australia, as recently as the mid-seventies.

That we are here standing in this place speaking up against all forms of discrimination still today shows that we might have moved some way away from a debate about decriminalisation, but there is still a live and important need to speak up about the significant achievement 50 years ago, and about the ongoing need to speak up against all forms of discrimination—and that is both in the public and the private sphere.

I had the fortune to be invited just a couple of hours ago now to speak briefly to several hundred year 10 students who had gathered for the Active Citizenship Convention just over the way at the Adelaide Oval. In giving a short outline of what it is to be active in representing communities, I just highlighted that aspect of something I hope is relevant for even high school students in their day-to-day lives, which is the ongoing process of developing a multicultural South Australia and the history of our multicultural origins over the better part of the last couple of hundred years, and that we are now at a point in the world where we are properly moving, I think in terms of our debate, to one of active antiracism. I think that that increasingly sits alongside an ongoing debate against discrimination, and that is really where the work is ongoing.

There is another important point to be made in the context of this motion, and that is drawing particular attention, as it does, to the death of Dr George Duncan in 1972. Dr Duncan was entitled to live his life—and to do so privately—and to be living his life, as it was, of achievement at the university, alongside colleagues and those he was working with day to day, free from discrimination.

He did not need to be a public advocate or a celebrated figure for reason of his sexuality, and it is really a terrible thing to reflect on the fact that the death of George Duncan in 1972 in those violent circumstances could have been a catalyst—as it clearly was—to the actions that were taken in that year and then in subsequent years, ultimately towards the decriminalisation in 1975. George Duncan was entitled to his privacy. It is a further tragedy that he and his death have to be so centrally the subject of the public outrage that catalysed the reform.

I want to recognise the Dunstan government for ultimately achieving that decriminalisation in 1975. I also want to recognise the Liberal member of the Legislative Council, Murray Hill, for having introduced the first legislative attempt to decriminalise homosexuality in July 1972, just shortly after the death of George Duncan. These steps—clearly the decriminalisation—are a matter for legislation and a matter for public debate and a public step. So much of this concerns the private lives of people who are entitled to live free from discrimination and, if they choose, free from the public spotlight on their sexuality.

Might I just reflect, as well, on where we have come over these last 50 years. Let us remember: the Sydney Mardi Gras that might be mistaken for a great big party these days in Sydney—it is a big event—had its origins very much in the context of criminalisation, a protest against police brutality and a protest against violent treatment against those who were wanting to speak up in Sydney back around that time. So we have certainly come a long way over the 50 years from a debate around decriminalisation to a debate about anti-discrimination.

I certainly add my voice to speaking up for the work that is still to be done from those younger in our community all the way through to those who can remember the process that has been the subject of these last 50 years since that moment of legislation in 1975. I commend the motion.

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (11:43): The 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of male homosexuality is indeed a year for us to reflect on many things that have happened in our community. It is very special to so many South Australians. This legislative reform paved the way for other states to consider how they could reform their discriminatory legislation. It was achieved through grassroots community activism, as are so many good progressive changes in our community. The brave politicians also challenged systemic injustice to bring about this change.

South Australia was the first Australian state to take this step on 17 September 1975, when SA under the excellent Don Dunstan's Labor government became the first Australian jurisdiction to pass a bill to decriminalise male homosexual activity. This landmark reform was prompted by the attack of Roger James and Dr George Duncan in 1972—both men brutally attacked and thrown into the Torrens from the footbridge. Of course, we know and history will tell us that Roger James survived this attack and managed to raise the alarm, but Dr Duncan, who could not swim, drowned.

George Duncan's murder case was never solved. His death, however, has changed Australian lives forever. Three years later was when South Australia became the first English-speaking state in the world to decriminalise homosexuality. The bill was brought via a private member's bill by then Attorney-General Peter Duncan. I will use the beautiful words of Katina of Flamboyance Tours, and some members here may have been on one of these excellent Adelaide-based walking tours. She said:

In many ways, the case helped lay the groundwork for greater social acceptance, even though justice for George never fully materialized. The unresolved mystery of his death remains an emblematic part of South Australia's history, reminding us of the importance of fighting for equality and justice—no matter how elusive that justice might seem.

Those words mean a lot to me. These rights that were secured can never be taken for granted and they are not a given. In fact, after being such groundbreaking and leading reform, it was in 2020 when South Australia became the last state to repeal the gay panic defence. We as legislators must stay vigilant and ready to champion the cause for freedoms fought for and still needed to be won for cohorts who may not have a loud, active or heard voice.

This special anniversary of 50 years has a team of very quiet people behind it, leading a charge of extra special celebration and commemoration. I will note the Premier's commemorative committee, with the Hon. Ian Hunter as the Chair and other members: the Hon. Michelle Lensink and the Hon. Rob Simms from the other place, and from our chamber the member for Adelaide, Lucy Hood, and the member for Unley, David Pisoni.

Also worth noting is the wonderful work of three of those people, in Michelle Lensink, Lucy Hood and Rob Simms, who co-chair the Parliamentary Friends of the LGBTIQA+ Community. While all members of the committees are doing and have done a wonderful job, I would like to spend a minute particularly mentioning members from the other chamber, the Hon. Ian Hunter and the Hon. Rob Simms.

These men are incredible leaders, brave, bold champions. I am happy, delighted and proud to call them friends. These are both openly gay men. They do an outstanding job representing South Australia in our parliament, with the Hon. Ian Hunter, a member of our Australian Labor Party, having served in the South Australian Legislative Council since 2006, championing many, many causes. He has also served as a minister across a range of portfolios for many years and led many committees—standing committees, select committees—and helps to whip everyone in line in the other chamber and make sure that everyone is there saying what they need to say, when they need to say it, and doing what he does as the whip.

In fact, he made history in 2012 as the first openly gay sitting member of an Australian parliament to marry. There are many people in this place who would remember that special occasion and some who would have attended it. He left Australia to marry his long-term partner, Leith, in Spain because, shamefully, Australia still at that point had legal restrictions on same-sex marriage. Ian has been a huge and vocal advocate for the LGBTIQA+ community, for their rights and their voice, often changing policies that conflict with his commitment to equality. He is brave and bold and speaks out, and he is an incredible resource for all of us here in parliament and a really wonderful advocate.

Rob Simms serves as a member of the South Australian Greens in the other chamber. Rob was the first openly gay man elected to the federal parliament, in around 2010, from memory. As I understand it, Rob remains the only openly gay South Australian man to be elected to the federal parliament. I am sure that will change at some point.

While in federal parliament, Rob was a strong and consistent proponent of marriage equality and many LGBTIQA+ rights, and he continues to be a powerful voice here in our state parliament. Both Ian and Rob continue to play crucial roles in advocating for the rights of the LGBTIQA+ community in South Australia and reflect the state's commitment to inclusivity and equality. On our website, the Department of Human Services shows all the celebration events commemorating this occasion that we are involved in this year. I would encourage members to explore that and attend as many events as they can. I have been to a few myself. It is well worth it.

I would like to thank DHS for being an enduring and proud advocate for this community. I thank them and all the members of what we call the QMAC committee, people with lived experience who work so hard, and have worked so hard—the current and past members—to provide me with

direct conversations and input around policies affecting the LGBTIQA+ community. I commend this excellent motion by the member for Gibson to the house.

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (11:51): I rise today in support of the motion put forward by my good friend the member for Gibson, recognising that this year is the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in South Australia. I know many in our community, particularly younger South Australians like Charlie, who is a year 12 from Unley currently in my office doing work experience, would be shocked to hear that being gay was illegal in our state only 50 years ago, during my parents' lifetime and the lifetime of many members in this place.

Today is an opportunity for us to all reflect on the courage, leadership and sacrifice of the LGBTIQA+ community that brought South Australia to the forefront of equality and justice. This anniversary also reminds us of South Australia's proud tradition as a leader in progressive reform. From women's suffrage to Indigenous land rights, to the milestone we are recognising today, our state has consistently stood at the forefront of justice in this nation.

In 1975, South Australia became the first jurisdiction in our country to decriminalise homosexuality between consenting adults, three years before New South Wales and a full 22 years before Tasmania finally followed suit. At a time when prejudice and fear were written into our laws, this reform was a profound statement that love and identity should never be criminal offences. This achievement was not accidental. Today, we recognise the vision and determination of reformers like Premier Don Dunstan and Attorney-General Peter Duncan, leaders who guided our state through a moment of moral clarity, ensuring we removed one of the most shameful stains on our legal system.

We must also remember the context that led to this legislative reform. As has been raised by others, in 1972 University of Adelaide lecturer Dr George Duncan was killed by a group of men. At the time, the southern bank of the Torrens River near Kintore Avenue was a popular place for gay and bisexual men to meet. It was here that Dr Duncan and Roger James were thrown into the river, and Duncan, being unable to swim, drowned. Out of fear for their own safety, none of the witnesses of this attack would identify the perpetrators, who are believed to be police.

Dr Duncan's death was a national shock, revealing to many Australians, unfortunately for the first time, the devastating consequences of intolerance and hatred. The decriminalisation of homosexuality cannot be separated from this story, and neither can it be separated from the countless LGBTIQA+ South Australians whose lives were diminished, hidden or destroyed under these unjust laws.

In supporting this motion, we also honour the sacrifices of so many who suffered under laws that denied their humanity. While Dr Duncan's death was a catalyst, it was the courage of everyday South Australians, from activists to students to allies, that turned grief into change. Throughout the 1970s, queer South Australians took to the streets. They marched, they protested and they demanded to be treated with dignity.

The first gay and lesbian rights protests in our city were not just celebrations; they were acts of defiance in the face of adversity. Those who marched risked losing their jobs, their families and friends, and even risked their safety. Today, the LGBTQIA community continues to draw strength from these moments in history. The progress that has been made in marriage equality and anti-discrimination protections stands on the shoulders of the brave South Australians who took to the streets more than 50 years ago.

I am proud today and every day to be part of the Malinauskas Labor government and we have contributed to building that history. With the passage of the Conversion Practices Prohibition Act last year, our government banned harmful conversion practices as of April. This ban sends a clear message to all South Australians of diverse genders and sexualities: you are not broken, you do not need fixing, and you are loved and valued for who you are.

Today, let us recognise and celebrate this motion, but also know the fight is not over. Queer people still face discrimination, violence and mental health challenges, with higher rates of suicide and suicidal distress. I want to thank members of the community and organisations like SARAA, Thorne Harbour Health, and SHINE SA, that have shared their experiences with me as the Premier's Advocate for Suicide Prevention.

I also want to recognise that trans and gender-diverse people in particular are still fighting the same kinds of battles that gay men fought and won 50 years ago. I am very proud to support this

motion, proud that South Australia continues to lead the way, and proud to reflect on the shared history that fuels our present struggle. I commend the motion.

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (11:56): I am very pleased to stand up here as a South Australian born and bred to know that back in the seventies we did lead the way here in South Australia to decriminalise the act of male homosexuality because it was never illegal for women to be in same-sex relationships because Queen Victoria would not sign off on that. She could not see how women could do it and so, consequently, it never became law in Britain. Obviously, in our early stages as a colony of Britain, our law very much mirrored what was happening in Westminster.

The Hon. Murray Hill, who was Senator and Minister Robert Hill's father, first brought a bill into the other place, as a member Legislative Council, to limit the decriminalisation of homosexuality. That was unfortunately unsuccessful, but it did start the process.

I am very proud that it was a federal Liberal government that delivered a change in the Marriage Act that enabled people of the same sex to marry. I remember at the time that I was never really a fan of the plebiscite model, but in the end it was so successful with, I think, a 63 or 64 per cent yes vote in support of same sex marriage that it has taken it off the political agenda forever. If that was a decision that was made in the parliament, I think people would still be talking about it today. It was a very strong signal from the people of South Australia.

I cannot help but think that those who came up with the plebiscite idea were from the conservative part of the Liberal Party. I am sure that they were so out of touch with their communities, particularly Tony Abbott, whose electorate voted overwhelmingly—one of the biggest yes votes—for same-sex marriage. He was convinced a plebiscite would fail if it went to the people. The Australian public showed just how supportive they were of equality in marriage and equality in the community in general by supporting that by two-thirds.

Ironically, the federal seats that returned a no vote were predominantly seats in Western Sydney, seats that were heavily populated with Islamic communities and seats that had large numbers of other ethnic groupings. We still have work to do, of course, because there are still some cultures that believe that it is not an acceptable way to live. We see it internationally on a regular basis. We know that there are some cultures where the punishment for homosexuality is death. It is an extraordinary situation that in the 21st century we still see that.

The plebiscite example reminded me of what is the nearest comparison we have in this chamber. If you look at the portrait of Joyce Steele up on the wall there, she was elected to this place 65 years after women were given the right to be elected to the South Australian parliament. It was the first place in the world for that to happen, yet that again was the result of conservatives trying to sabotage the bill at the time.

After New Zealand became the first place in the world to allow women to vote, South Australia brought their own legislation into this place. Those members who thought it was just outrageous that women would be able to have a say on who their elected members were going to be thought that they might be able to stop this outrageous and radical legislation by amending it to actually allow women to run for parliament as well.

They supported that amendment, believing that it would be too radical for those who were sitting on the line on this legislation and they would not support the legislation if it also allowed women to become members of parliament. But of course the amended bill passed, and not only were women able to vote in South Australia but it was the first place in the world where women could also stand for elected public office. That is something that I am very proud of as a South Australian.

We had reforms in the 1970s, a lot of social reform. I think that it was very much welcomed; it was very timely. With social reform, social licence is an important factor. I think we saw in the case of Joyce Steele that the social licence took a little while to catch up to the parliament, which was ahead of the day. It was 65 years from when women were able to be elected to this place that a woman was actually elected to this place.

We move into the early 2000s, 16 years of continuous Labor government, and this state was the only place in the country where the gay panic defence was still available for somebody who may have beaten up a gay man because he might have asked them if they wanted to have a drink or go out to dinner. They were so offended by that that they would beat that person up, in some instances

maybe resulting in manslaughter. It was a lesser offence because you were so put out or so upset, so provoked because somebody had asked if you were interested in a relationship.

I thank Vickie Chapman for taking that on. She was the first South Australian female Attorney-General to bring that to this place and successfully get it through. What she also did was make sure that that change to the law—this was an excuse that Michael Atkinson used to use for not changing the law—made sure that women could still get out of domestic violence situations in extraordinary circumstances without being trapped with the removal of the gay panic defence.

There was mention of the conversion practices bill. I know that, generally, the gay community were disappointed with that bill because it exempts religious organisations. Quite frankly, they are the only organisations that practise conversion therapy. Neo-Nazis who might parade around wanting to get rid of the gay community, or some other extremist groups not connected to religion, do not offer or force conversion therapy. It is churches that force conversion therapy. It is a much bigger thing, of course, in the United States than what it is here.

Unfortunately, the bill that went through this place under this government ignored those practices in the religious context, so there is still more work to do in that space because that is where the damage is done. The coercive control legislation, again, only dealt with intimate partners. It did not deal with children, and there are practices there with adult children in particular who may still be under the influence of their parents. So we still have a lot more work to do when it comes to liberties and the treatment of people as equals.

Ms HOOD (Adelaide) (12:07): I also rise in support of this motion. The reform we recognise in today's motion was born of great tragedy, the brutal murder of Dr George Duncan on the banks of the River Torrens, and the courage of those who refused to let his death be in vain: people like Peter Duncan, Murray Hill, Don Dunstan and the incredible Anne Levy. I also want to acknowledge my former employer, *The Advertiser* newspaper, which ran an editorial in July 1972 with the headline 'Legalise homosexuality'. Half a century later, we honour not just this law change but the generations of LGBTIQ+ South Australians who have fought for and continue to fight for equality, dignity and visibility.

I am greatly honoured to be on the Premier's commemorative committee for the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality, along with the member for Unley in this place and in the other place the Hon. Ian Hunter, the Hon. Rob Simms and the Hon. Michelle Lensink, and I do want to in particular acknowledge the Hon. Ian Hunter for the way in which he has led our committee.

It was wonderful to all come together for the launch of the program at Hotel Indigo just a couple of months ago and to be able to celebrate and acknowledge the number of events that we are organising to recognise this anniversary. Many are great celebrations: we have recently had the Pride Gala awards, the famous Marys Poppin will be having their street party this year, and we have the wonderful Feast Festival and the Picnic in the Park, which will have a new venue in my community in Whitmore Square in the CBD. Excitingly, that event will be free to enter and will be for all ages. I look forward to going along with my children.

It is not just about the parties; it is also about the conversations that we are having on this topic and just this week the Hon. Ian Hunter will give a 40-minute lecture as part of the Equal Opportunity SA Pride in Law, Charter Hall and the Law Society of SA event which will be under the title of Equal Opportunity in South Australia: Looking Back and Looking Ahead.

Next Thursday I will have the great honour of being part of a series of speakers at the University of Adelaide talking about 50 years of law reform in this area and importantly we will be joined by Adelaide-based historian Dr Tim Reeves, who is the acknowledged authority on the Dr Duncan case, which was the catalyst for this reform, and we are very much looking forward to his insights over this reform period of 50 years.

As well as being on the Premier's Commemorative Committee, it is my great honour as well to be one of the cofounders of the Parliamentary Friends of the LGBTIQ+ Community, alongside the Hon. Rob Simms and the Hon. Michelle Lensink. We established this group a couple of years ago to say that this place is a place where you have allies for the LGBTIQ+ community, and it has been a really wonderful group to be able to bring people and members of that community together

to acknowledge our achievements such as the banning of conversion practices, and also work together on how we can move our community forward.

With those brief remarks, I want to say that on this anniversary, we recommit ourselves to building a state where every person is free to live, love and be who they are without fear, prejudice, and with great pride.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (12:11): I would simply like to say thank you for the very thoughtful and considered contributions made on this motion by the deputy leader; the Minister for Human Services, Nat Cook; the member for Elder; the member for Unley; and the member for Adelaide.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just before I put this motion—and I thank the speakers—I would like to add a few comments myself. I think this motion is an important one. It is interesting, given the debate we are having at the moment about sport and this topic, and a whole range of other topics. Really the principle should be that any behaviour or language that diminishes another person is just not okay, full stop, that is it. I think if we live by that principle we would get along quite well.

Motion carried.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:12): I move:

That this house—

- (a) notes that Vietnam Veterans Day was commemorated on 18 August;
- (b) expresses its gratitude to the almost 60,000 Australians who served during 10 years of involvement in the Vietnam War;
- (c) reflects on the bravery, teamwork and endurance that Australians displayed through the war; and
- (d) remembers the 523 Australians who tragically died during the conflict.

Vietnam Veterans Day, originally known as Long Tan Day, is commemorated on 18 August every year as it pays respect to those who were involved in the Battle of Long Tan in 1966. The Battle of Long Tan was the most significant moment in Australians' involvement in the war, but it came at a great cost: 18 personnel were killed and 24 were wounded, which marked the largest number of casualties in one operation since Australia's involvement in the war.

On 18 August 1966, 108 personnel of D Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, fought a heavily outnumbered battle against over 2,000 North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops. The battle took place for four hours in torrential rain, but against all the odds the Australians managed to prevail. Three years later, in 1969, D Company returned to Long Tan to erect a memorial cross for their fallen comrades.

In the years following, 18 August became synonymous with all Australians who served and died in the Vietnam War. In 1987, then Prime Minister Bob Hawke officially declared the day Vietnam Veterans Day. Sixty thousand Australians, including ground troops, Air Force and Navy personnel, served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1973; 2,400 were injured during this time. Sadly, as I indicated earlier, 523 lost their lives, and 59 of those lives lost were South Australian personnel.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War at the time was quite contentious and caused a lot of social and political tension. Protests were held and, as the death toll rose, the Australian public grew more uncomfortable about the country's involvement in the war. Sadly, this meant that Vietnam veterans were often the subject of negative public sentiment about the war, with many treated poorly upon their return to Australia. Instead of returning to cheers and applause, they were met with verbal and physical abuse, such as being spat on. They were even excluded from participating in ANZAC Day parades, as other veterans considered them unworthy of the tradition.

It took more than 10 years after their return from Vietnam for the veterans to be given the welcome they deserved. In 1987, a welcome home parade was held in honour of their service and sacrifices. Over 22,000 veterans marched through Sydney, with crowds amassing to more than 100,000. The Vietnam War was certainly an interesting time. Yes, there was political discussion, social discussion, as it was the first television war. I can remember as a child seeing it come through

on the news reels—live footage of what was going on in Vietnam. Sadly, when these troops came home they were treated extremely poorly, to say the least.

Thankfully, that has long since changed. Vietnam veterans, as do any veterans, fight in difficult circumstances—circumstances that those of us in the civilian world really have no idea about, unless you were there. I sincerely take my hat off and salute every member of our forces, whether it be Air Force, Army or Navy, and every person who signs up for military service, who is willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice for those of us who stay at home. You cannot have a greater gift than that.

I will briefly talk about a man who is still alive in Murray Bridge, John Ali. He was a civilian contractor, I suppose. I have mentioned him in this place before. He was brought in to the office of Malcolm Fraser, the Minister for Defence at the time, along with I think three other colleagues, to work with International Harvester, to work with the military, to deliver trucks, unload trucks and trailers off at Sydney and take them through Vietnam to Cambodia. As far as I understand it, John is the last surviving member of this group. He served 18 months continuously doing the job that he was requested to do by the government as essentially a civilian mechanic working for International Harvester. He did his job diligently and he came under attack at times. I have heard stories where soldiers at the time might just be in a bar on a bit of R&R when a grenade was thrown in.

Despite John having an active service number and having made that vital contribution, as he was requested to by the government of the day, in what was realistically a secret operation, he has not been adequately recognised for his service. Despite myself and the member for Barker getting in touch with or contacting different federal veterans' ministers, we cannot get the message through that John should be entitled to the gold card, and I think that is actually outrageous.

This is a man who actually has a service number. Yes, he was a civilian, absolutely, but he is the only one left. For the price he paid, it is a very small request for this country to provide some recompense for his service, not only for him but for his wife and his family. We will keep pursuing that cause to hopefully get a result while John is still on this earth. I commend the Vietnam veterans, especially because of the reception they got when they came home. I note that, as time progressed, a lot of them were told to change into civvies so that they did not get abused when they came home, which I find utterly offensive. Let's just hope that that never ever happens again to those who serve.

I digress a little bit to think about the victory in the Pacific, which was commemorated recently as well, and the 80 years since it happened, after the fall of Japan, and think of all those service men and women who served this great country.

Getting back to Vietnam, it was great to attend a 9th Squadron event last Saturday at the Torrens Parade Ground, where a Huey helicopter flew overhead. Sadly, he could not come below 1,000 feet but as I heard the 'wop, wop, wop'—as they would have heard in Vietnam thousands of times as those chopper pilots either delivered men to the field or came to retrieve them in a dust-off operation or, sadly, to pick up fallen comrades—I really salute those pilots who did that extremely dangerous work. They are to be truly commended.

I note also the veterans' walk. I could not get to the opening of that walk between Coobowie and Edithburgh. It is a beautiful part of the world on Yorke Peninsula. I commend the veterans who established that walk in memory of veterans. I note that General Sir Peter Cosgrove was over there alongside many others to launch that project.

I return to Vietnam Veterans Day and commemorating the Battle of Long Tan, 59 years ago. It certainly invoked the ANZAC tradition, going back obviously to World War I, when a New Zealand gun crew mounted the batteries at Nui Dat to give some protection to our heavily outnumbered men on the battlefield. There were some hard decisions being made in the command about who to send out and what to do in defence of the situation. If it were not for that artillery—and it is reputed that they sent out 3,500 shells to defend those men, and that is alongside the crews that came out as well, in the armoured personnel carriers with 50-calibre machine guns mounted on top, to assist.

One of the highest moments of bravery was the two Huey pilots who, from what I understand, went against what they were told, went against orders, and loaded up with ammunition and dropped it directly near the men who were basically fighting for their lives. They were still fighting for their country, but they were fighting for survival, and the pilots dropped the ammunition right in place, right next to them, so that those who could would survive the day.

It is interesting to note that after the battle—on the next day, when the Army went back through, the other platoons went through, to assess what would happen and to retrieve, sadly, the bodies of those who had lost their lives—I believe there were at least two who were found alive. They could keep them alive and they brought them home.

It was a truly terrible war. We were there with the Americans and others as part of a situation, fighting for democracy, fighting alongside South Vietnamese, and doing our bit. I truly salute those who went in. I still find it odd when you look at the conditions they fought under: it was sort of going out from support bases like Nui Dat and flying out into an engagement, or patrolling to an engagement, and getting retrieved but not holding ground. It seems very odd, but that was more or less the way the Vietnam War was fought.

I truly salute everyone who served in that war. As we know, a lot of people were conscripted with a roll of the dice—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: The marbles, I am reminded. That was their luck of the draw, and a lot of those people sadly paid the ultimate sacrifice. Let's not forget those who returned home and the endless torment that lot of them have had since—the mental torment of what they saw and what they had to go through. I not only salute the veterans but I salute the nurses, the doctors and everyone who assisted them where they could. I truly salute everyone who serves this great country.

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (12:27): I rise in support of this motion. In doing so, I want to honour the service and sacrifice of those Australians who served in Vietnam, as well as their families and the communities that have carried this history forward with dignity and care.

In fact, last night I had the pleasure of dining with a Vietnam veteran and his wife and family, and hearing the stories and hearing about the difficulties that even his wife faced in not hearing at all about her husband's welfare from Defence at the time. I have been thinking and reflecting on how much that has changed for me as the wife of a defence personnel and veteran.

Also on this past weekend, I had the privilege of attending the RSL Payneham Sub-Branch for their commemorative service for Vietnam Veterans Day, which they have early. Standing alongside veterans and their families, current serving military personnel, the proud young cadets who formed the catafalque party, and members of our community, I was struck by the quiet strength with which these men and women continue to carry their experiences. In speaking with them afterwards, I could see in them the stoic resilience, humour and humility that so often characterises those who have served. For many, the memories are still vivid and painful, yet they continue to share their story so that others may understand and remember.

Vietnam Veterans Day, observed on 18 August, is marked on the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, a moment etched into our military history. It is a day when we acknowledge the almost 60,000 Australians who served over a 10-year involvement in Vietnam. It is also a day when we remember the 523 Australians who never returned home and the more than 2,300 who were wounded.

The Vietnam War remains one of the most complex chapters in Australia's military story. Between 1962 and 1975, around 60,000 Australians served: approximately 42,000 in the Army, over 3,300 in the Navy and 4,400 in the Air Force. Each of them carried the weight of a conflict fought far from home, and many returned to a country that did not at the time recognise their service.

Today, we have a duty to ensure their contribution is not forgotten. Here in South Australia, the connections to that service run deep, with many local men and women deployed to Vietnam, and today we are home to a strong and proud Vietnamese community, people who fled the conflict and built new lives here. They have enriched our cultural and economic life and their presence is a reminder that the legacy of the war is measured not only in service and sacrifice but also in lives rebuilt and communities strengthened.

This humanitarian aspect was perhaps most vividly illustrated in Operation Babylift in April 1975 when orphaned and at-risk Vietnamese children were evacuated as Saigon fell. Among those children were some who would grow up here in South Australia, their lives forever linked with both Vietnam and Australia.

Last year, with my family, I travelled to Vietnam as a tourist. While there, my husband and I visited the War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City, where we were both deeply moved by the exhibits. In particular, the images and testimonies showing the harrowing effects of the conflict on innocent civilians were profoundly confronting. It was a sobering reminder that the cost of war extends far beyond the battlefield and that we must never forget the lessons of war: to value peace, to protect the vulnerable and to commit ourselves to preventing such suffering now and in the future.

Vietnam Veterans Day is therefore a moment to reflect not only on courage, endurance and sacrifice in war but also on the humanitarian legacies of conflict. We are fortunate in South Australia to have people and places dedicated to ensuring these stories live on. Bill Denny AM BM has been instrumental in this regard as a longstanding member of the Veterans' Advisory Council, founder of the Vietnam War Memorial and co-chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial fundraising committee. His work has enriched our collective remembrance, giving local community spaces to reflect and honour.

A particularly significant example of remembrance is the Vietnam War Memorial Walk in Edithburgh, which was officially opened this year on 18 August. This remarkable project stretches along the Walk the Yorke trail between Edithburgh and Coobowie. It features 29 detailed laser-cut signs and numerous bench seats, with every Australian unit that served in Vietnam represented. This is local vision made real by Roger Hogben and John Edwards, whose determination has created something of both local and national significance.

The South Australian government proudly contributed more than \$15,000 in grant funding to support its completion. It is projects such as this that ensure remembrance is not an abstract idea but something tangible, a place where schoolchildren, families and future generations can learn and reflect.

When I think of Vietnam Veterans Day, I think of the men and women I meet each year at services such as at the Payneham RSL, people who answered the call of their country, who served with bravery and endurance and continue to serve by keeping memory alive. I also think of the Vietnamese Australians in our community who carry stories of displacement, resilience and renewal, and I think of the families, the wives, husbands, children and parents who bore the burden of separation, loss and return.

This motion allows us to say unequivocally that this house acknowledges and respects that service. We remember the 523 Australians who did not come home, we pay tribute to the tens of thousands who did, many carrying wounds both visible and invisible, and we give thanks for the lives that have been rebuilt and the communities that continue to honour and remember.

On Vietnam Veterans Day, and on every day that we encounter these men and women in our communities, we owe them more than gratitude—we owe them remembrance, respect and the assurance that their service will never be forgotten.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (12:34): It is with great privilege that I speak on the motion of the member for Hammond regarding Vietnam Veterans Day. On 18 August each year, we as a nation pause to acknowledge and remember the great sacrifices that many Australians made while serving our country during the nation's 10-year involvement in the Vietnam War. Those 10 years were very traumatic and, in many cases, resulted in many deaths and long-term injuries. Some injuries were evident at the time upon returning to Australia after the war; however, there were lots of issues that came out for many of our gallant diggers that were not evident at the time they came back when the rest of Australia moved on from the war.

Several of my friends enlisted and many were also drafted in the marble lottery. If a marble was drawn that had your birthdate on it, then you were compelled to serve alongside others who might have also been regular soldiers who had enlisted of their own accord. Those in this category were conscripted. Many of them had only just started in new jobs or—as was the case for many—had just come out of school with very little knowledge or interest in military life.

When many of my mates came back, they were not welcomed back by the public. In many cases, those returning military personnel were shunned, and this caused great stress for those returning diggers and their families. These people were military people, whether they were soldiers, airmen or sailors, or whatever they may have been. They were following orders as do members of

any military organisation. It was the federal government at the time that basically forced the war upon these people and Australia.

Vietnam Veterans Day is more than a date in our history. It marks the battle of Long Tan, fought on 18 August 1966 in the pouring rain of a South Vietnamese rubber plantation. It was here that 108 soldiers from Delta Company 6th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment faced a force of more than 2,000 Vietcong and North Vietnamese troops. For many hours, these men held their ground under intense fire and, by the end of the day, 18 Australians had been killed and 24 wounded. This was the costliest single battle for our forces in Vietnam and became a testament to their courage, their discipline and also their mateship.

On the third anniversary in 1969, veterans returned to the battlefield and erected the Long Tan cross—a simple memorial to those who died. So began Long Tan day. This grew over time to honour those who served in Vietnam. In 1987, the Prime Minister at the time Bob Hawke formally declared 18 August as Vietnam Veterans Day.

As has been mentioned earlier, more than 60,000 Australians served in Vietnam over the years; however, 523 never came home. It is those 523 that we must also remember, because they fought there and sacrificed their lives for us in Australia. Thousands more carried wounds, either visible or invisible, for many years. My late brother, Peter, served in the Australian Regular Army and served two tours of Vietnam on two occasions during this war. He retired after 26 years in the Regular Army, having reached the rank of captain.

I mentioned to the member for Narrunga a few minutes ago that during that time, my brother went on two tours. When he came back, he still had the memory and suffered the impact of what he saw over there. But he had the opportunity and he wanted to do it. He enlisted and he wanted to fight for the freedom of not only Australia but also other countries.

Many of my friends are still carrying the wounds of this war and they will never completely recover, especially those who to this day still carry the memories and the mental anguish. Many of my friends came back after being shunned by the general public, carrying these wounds and memories, and unfortunately a few have committed suicide because of the trauma. They have lost their families and lots of things. They never really recovered from what happened over there.

Our RSL in Port Pirie has a great military museum and in 2009 I was able to assist them in obtaining a Huey helicopter from Queensland. It is this piece of equipment that allows many who may still have the trauma of the war in their minds, and have not fully recovered, to sit in the cockpit. This allows them, with the noise of the background, to meditate for a few moments, and this assists them in their movement forward, recovering from the trauma of what has been troubling them for many, many years.

During my time as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, I had the honour of attending many services across all of South Australia, including the service of the South Vietnamese community, who are forever grateful to our gallant diggers for their services in South Vietnam and in the Vietnam War. If it were not for us, they would not have had the freedom that they do have today.

So on 18 August we remember not only the men of Long Tan but also the nurses, the pilots, the Navy, the support crews, the families and everyone who bore this burden of this war. As has been mentioned in this house earlier on—and I compliment the member for Hammond as the opposition's shadow minister for veterans' affairs—we have been to many occasions, and Vietnam Veterans Day is something that is bipartisan. We are all here to remember those people who gave their services.

My marble did not come out, so I do not have the knowledge or the trauma of having to serve in a war that I did not particularly agree with at the time but, as I said earlier, I have lost lots of my friends. When I was working at the smelters, lots of my friends had to leave their employment because they just could not maintain their attention. I still have friends who, when we go to Vietnam Veterans Day, want to talk about the old days. They want to talk about what they did and some of the things that happened. I find that that is something that is consoling for them. It helps them through the trauma. It helps them to live another day. Certainly, it has been one of those journeys in my personal life that I have seen.

As I said, my dad was in the Army, my brother was in the Army, my late brother was in Vietnam—he did two tours there in the Regular Army—and my uncles were in the war. We need to

pay tribute to those people who gave the supreme sacrifice for what we have here today in Australia. In closing, I just say to all our Vietnam veterans: thank you for your courage, your service and your sacrifice. I commend the motion to the house.

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (12:42): Vietnam Veterans Day is always a solemn day in the electorate of Narungga, but it did take on a special meaning this year particularly. As has been mentioned already by a couple of speakers, we had the opening of the Vietnam War Memorial Walk in Edithburgh on Monday, and it was truly an extraordinary day. I drove down there not knowing exactly what to expect, but I can report that there were well over 1,000 people there, all there for the opening of the memorial walk, which was truly an incredible sight to behold and one which should give the proponents a great deal of joy after having seen it come to fruition.

Those proponents who have already been mentioned, of course, are Roger Hogben and John Edwards, and they have done an extraordinary job bringing this vision to life. I remember meeting with them right at the start, and they brought this vision to me. It was, in my view, pie in the sky sort of stuff. It was a really ambitious target that they had set for themselves, and it is really pleasing to see them having delivered it and seen it the whole way through.

We would all see, I think, as members of parliament, people who bring really good meritorious ideas to us for community initiatives or infrastructure but inevitably find themselves stymied by bureaucratic interference and obstacles. It happens regularly where people with good ideas are stymied just through the war of attrition that is placed upon them. This makes the achievement that John and Roger have delivered all the more extraordinary.

In basically two years, they have gone from go to whoa and delivered this walk between Coobowie and Edithburgh and had tremendous success the entire way through in seeking support from the various departments and benefactors to make sure that it happened. Congratulations to John and Roger. I think I got off lightly, based on the speeches we heard on the day. I reckon they only called in to see me 10 or a dozen times. It sounded like quite a few other people had quite a few more annoyances than I did, but credit to them for making sure that it was delivered.

On the day, we gathered in Edithburgh to celebrate the opening. We heard from Sir Peter Cosgrove himself, who came down to do the official opening, which was a sign of how big an event it was. He did a stellar job in opening that and telling us some wonderful anecdotes about the war, about Vietnam and about the obstacles that people have faced. It was really special to have Sir Peter there. We also had Dr Matt Anderson, Director of the Australian War Memorial, there as well to conduct the opening. It was a really special occasion to have such distinguished guests in our presence, and they certainly delivered on ensuring that it was a memorable experience for all of us.

We also had an ex-Vietnam War Huey helicopter fly over and land on the golf course for all of us to see. This was a really extraordinary thing. Being relatively inexperienced, I found it quite a loud helicopter—you could hear it coming, that is for certain. It came down and landed in front of all 1,000 of us, which was a really memorable thing.

That helicopter came all the way over from just south of Wollongong. A volunteer crew of four flew it all the way over from Wollongong. I had a chat to them, and I cannot quite remember but they must have had five or six stops to refuel along the way. It was another feat of extraordinary work by John and Roger and the council to ensure that that was delivered. They stopped five or six places along the way, managed to get fuel at all of them, and managed to fund that trip so that they could get there. It was a real benefit for all of us there. After that, later in the afternoon it landed on the oval so we could all have a proper look at it and get some photos and whatnot. It was a really neat thing to have that helicopter there for the day—as I said, it was an aircraft that served in Vietnam, which made it all the more special.

Another incredible feat that John and Roger managed to deliver was that John Schumann and the Vagabond Crew—formerly Redgum of *I Was Only 19* fame—came down and performed a concert in Edithburgh that evening. This was a really memorable thing and a tremendous day for all. Credit to Roger and John mainly, but also to the Yorke Peninsula Council, particularly Nick Perry, who has been driving this and received a special shout-out from Sir Peter on the day. He deserves a bit of a shout-out here as well, because he has been a really dedicated servant of this project and a really key part of making it all happen.

The details have been mentioned briefly but I thought I would retouch on them. It is a near-on four-kilometre walk between Coobowie and Edithburgh, and a picturesque walk at that. I would encourage anyone who is thinking about going down to do it. It is a really beautiful walk along the coastline. There are now 25 signs in place along that walk and they all look especially great. They will withstand the coastal conditions: they are marine-grade aluminium tubing and marine-grade aluminium plasma-cut and laminated signs which will last the test of time. As you walk past you can certainly see visually that they are nice, thick, solid structures. There are also nine sponsored seats along the walk which will allow people who are undertaking it to break it up and have a comfortable seat looking out over the ocean in the meantime.

It truly is a wonderful initiative. John and Roger have delivered, with the help of the council, and have made Vietnam Veterans Day all the more special this year. I am really thankful that they were able to get it done, I am really thankful to them for allowing me to be slightly involved in the project, and I am really thankful that the community has been so welcoming. The RSL, the town and the progress associations have all contributed to making it happen.

This is now a unique thing in Australia. As best we understand the situation, there are no other memorial walks around the country. It will hopefully bring a nice healthy allotment of tourists to our region to do the walk and enjoy Edithburgh at the same time, because Lord knows at the moment with the algal bloom and the impacts we are feeling in that part of the world we need those initiatives to attract people to our region. Hopefully it has that effect. The 1,000 people who turned up on Monday is a good start.

Thank you to all those who made it happen. In particular, I re-emphasise a massive congratulations to Roger Hogben, a Vietnam vet himself, and John Edwards on making it happen, driving it and coming up with the idea. Credit to you and thank you for your service to our community.

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (12:49): I rise to support the member for Hammond's motion and, in doing so, honour one of Mount Gambier's own: Lieutenant Anthony 'Tony' Austin Casadio, Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam, who gave his life at just 22 years of age. Vietnam Veterans Day on 18 August asks us to remember the 60,000 Australians who served, to reflect on their bravery and teamwork, and to mourn and remember the 523 who did not come home. Tony is one of those names and, for our community, his story makes the statistics personal.

Tony was born in Port Lincoln on 30 December 1945, but he grew up in Mount Gambier and attended Marist Brothers' College. In 1964, he joined the Royal Australian Navy, trained as a helicopter pilot and, after graduating from the RAAF, flew from HMAS Melbourne. In 1967, he volunteered for the first contingent of the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam, an extraordinary unit that embedded with the US Army's 135th Assault Helicopter Company. The combined unit was known as the Experimental Military Unit (EMU), where they flew Huey utility and gunship missions under constant fire in support of allied forces.

Service in the EMU was hazardous in the extreme, as later recognised by the Unit Citation for Gallantry awarded to the flight crews who daily flew combat assault missions with an expectation of being fired upon every second sortie. That honour, presented by the Governor-General in 2018, acknowledged not just a unit but a culture of courage and teamwork that defined the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam.

Tony embodied that courage. In just over 10 months of active service, he was decorated four times and, in November 1967, he received the United States Distinguished Flying Cross for 'heroism beyond the call of duty' after landing a badly damaged helicopter and saving his crew. On 21 August 1968, Tony was leading a light fire team of gunships flying at tree level from Black Horse to Nui Dat when his aircraft was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade.

The helicopter crashed in a clearing. Tony and his fellow Australian crew mate, Petty Officer O'Brian Cedric Phillips, and two American crew members were killed on impact. The loss was felt profoundly across the tight-knit EMU contingent, which held a memorial service at the base. Tony was 22. He was laid to rest at Carinya Gardens Cemetery in Mount Gambier on 10 September 1968.

Our community has never forgotten him. Friends and colleagues of Tony from both the Fleet Air Arm and the 135th Airborne raised funds to establish the Casadio Award, first presented at Tenison Woods College (formerly Marist Brothers) in 1969. To this day, the award is presented annually at Tenison Woods College by Mr Bob Sandow, President of the Mount Gambier RSL.

Since 1970, Mount Gambier Air Force Cadets have also honoured his legacy by presenting the Casadio Trophy each year to their most outstanding candidate. Alongside this, the Mount Gambier Italo Australian Club, recognising the only son of an Italian immigrant family, named its grounds Casadio Park in his honour, a decision taken unanimously in 1970 and officially opened in 1972. To this day, Casadio Park hosts local soccer and community events, and Tony's name continues to be spoken at ANZAC commemorations and club matches.

To Tony's family and to the veterans of our region and across Australia, we express our gratitude, we recognise the hardship of service and the too-often hard homecoming. We pledge that our remembrance will not be seasonal, it will be lived, in the way we tell our young people these stories, in how we support veterans' health and in how we preserve places like Casadio Park as living memorials. I commend the motion and may we always remember Lieutenant Anthony Austin Casadio, pilot, son of Mount Gambier, and an enduring example of bravery, teamwork and endurance in the service of Australia. Lest we forget.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:54): I would like to thank the members for Dunstan, Stuart, Narungga and Mount Gambier who made such heartfelt contributions to this motion. Something we must never forget is the service and sacrifice of the people who serve this country, certainly in regard to our Vietnam veterans, who not only had their struggles abroad but had their struggles at home and are now well recognised as the leadership of a lot of the RSLs, if not most of them, in this state in making a contribution to veteran welfare and not only thinking about themselves. I salute their service in the past, I salute their service now, and I salute their service into the future.

Motion carried.

AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (12:55): I move:

That this house—

- (a) acknowledges that Australia's oldest continuing contemporary dance company, Australian Dance Theatre, will mark its 60th anniversary in 2025;
- (b) acknowledges the important cultural, social and economic contribution that Australian Dance Theatre delivers to the South Australian arts and cultural sector;
- (c) recognises the importance of Australian Dance Theatre in showcasing some of the best interstate and international artists; and
- (d) encourages all South Australians to celebrate and attend Australian Dance Theatre's 2025 program in its 60th year.

It is with great joy and a fair bit of awe-inspired admiration that I rise to move this motion celebrating an icon of Australian contemporary culture, the Australian Dance Theatre, which this year marks 60 years of bold, breathtaking, boundary-pushing performance. ADT is Australia's oldest continuing contemporary dance company, proudly based in Norwood within my electorate of Dunstan since 2018. While they have called several parts of Adelaide home over the decades, they have been an Adelaide-based company since their founding in 1965.

For 60 years, ADT has done something quite remarkable: they have challenged us artistically, emotionally and intellectually with dance that does not just entertain but moves us to think, to feel and to reflect. I know I can count on the support of those across the aisle and on the crossbench for this motion, and I thank them for that.

The kind of work ADT creates is not necessarily the sort that leaves you wanting to try a few of their moves on your own. It is deeper than that. It is the kind of work that stays with you long after the curtain falls. It is visceral, exhilarating, and often hauntingly beautiful. It leaves you walking out of the theatre changed and quietly pondering ideas or storylines you perhaps had not considered before.

How did ADT come to produce such profound and creative work? As Premier Peter Malinauskas said, South Australia has long been a hub of arts and culture, but this did not happen by chance. It was built through deliberate effort, and of course that effort has not just been driven by various governments. It has come from the determination of the drivers of the arts in South Australia. I knew something of the arts in South Australia in the seventies and eighties,

because my own grandfather was drawn into it from his home base in Sydney in the 1970s. I remember him talking about it when I was a young child.

Before I was even thought of, in 1965, when The Beatles were topping the charts, Australia was changing rapidly. Amidst that era of transformation, a young and visionary artist named Elizabeth Cameron Dalman founded a company with a clear purpose: to make dance that was relevant, experimental, connected to the world and, crucially, connected to this place, our country, our culture, our people. That spirit of innovation has never left ADT. It is in their DNA. It is in every movement, every gesture, every electrifying stillness.

What a moment it was earlier this year during the Adelaide Festival when ADT premiered the extraordinary new work *A Quiet Language*, a deeply evocative piece codirected by Elizabeth Cameron Dalman herself, now in her 90s, and the company's current artistic director, the trailblazing Daniel Riley. It was an intergenerational dialogue through dance, a quiet, powerful conversation between past and present, a reverent nod to legacy and a bold statement of intent for the future. It was truly magnificent.

Daniel Riley's leadership marks another pivotal moment in ADT's story. A proud Wiradjuri man, Daniel is the first Indigenous artistic director of the company. His appointment is more than symbolic; it is transformative. Under his guidance, ADT is exploring deeper truths, grappling with our collective history and forging a more inclusive and truthful artistic path forward. Daniel's work is rooted in culture, in country and in storytelling, and it resonates far beyond the stage. His choreography is not just movement; it is memory, resistance, reclamation and hope. His vision ensures that ADT does not just continue; they evolve, they lead and they inspire.

What does it mean to be a powerhouse of the arts, as ADT undoubtedly is? Firstly, ADT employs full-time dancers, one of the few companies in South Australia to do so outside of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

Debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: We have some guests with us today. I would like to welcome to parliament year 9 students and teachers from Navigator College in Port Lincoln, who are guests of the member for Flinders. Welcome to Adelaide. I hope you have a good time while you are here and that you enjoy your time in parliament. The member for Flinders is always one of the very best behaved members of this house, and I am sure he will be very quiet today while you are in the chamber.

We also have some guests from the Victorian parliament, four staff members from the Victorian parliament. We welcome you to the South Australian Parliament and hope you enjoy your time here too. We also have a group called the Red Hat Rebels. Would you mind putting your hats on? Apparently, according to this book back here, it is unparliamentary and out of order for you to have those hats on in the gallery, but I am willing to turn a blind eye to your lovely red hats for at least a few minutes because the Red Hat Rebels are a nonprofit group of mature-aged ladies who are ageing disgracefully and having lots fun.

Thank you for the kindness and the positivity that you bring to your community and the community of South Australia. Whatever it is you are doing with those red hats, we applaud you for it. It is fantastic to have you in the parliament today. Maybe, so as the Clerk does not ask me to get you to take them off, just take them off in a couple of minutes. It is great to have you ladies in here. We really appreciate your visit to parliament.

Parliamentary Committees

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr ODENWALDER (Elizabeth) (14:14): I bring up the 67th report of the committee, entitled Subordinate Legislation.

Report received.

*Question Time***ALGAL BLOOM**

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:14): My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier stand by his answer to the house yesterday? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Yesterday, I asked the Premier if he had asked the federal government to declare the algal bloom a natural disaster and, if so, when did he do it. The Premier said, 'Yes. I have not just said it publicly, I have also said it privately.' Today, in the Prime Minister's press conference, the Premier said that the Prime Minister has done everything the Premier has asked of him.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:15): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. The answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question is obviously yes. It is also true to say that despite the fact that the state government and I have made it clear that we believe the algal bloom is a natural disaster, it's also true to say that every request that was made of the Prime Minister for financial assistance or support or investment in research, grants for business, investment in the work that we are doing with rec fishers, the investment that we are doing in the work in terms of preparing for recovery and restoration have all been honoured.

I am also appreciative that today the Prime Minister made further announcements while he was here in Adelaide regarding the algal bloom. We, of course, as a state government are pulling every lever at our disposal to address this unprecedented crisis. It is exceptionally unique. It is dynamic and it's evolving almost by the hour in fact, and we continue to monitor it very closely.

I guess what as a government we have to be mature and honest about is that there are some things that we can't control here: we can't make the bloom go away. No individual or no policy in its own right or no government decision made the algal bloom appear, it is a force of nature. Or course, what we can do is focus on the measures that make a difference to those who are being affected and also make a difference to the environment where we can.

I am very proud that I lead a government that has been rather active in the environmental policy space with a range of measures that have been led by the Deputy Premier. This is a government that has invested more in the environment in both policy effort and in the department itself than our predecessors. I think that stands us in good stead. In respect of the algal bloom, of course, we have to focus on the areas that make a difference and that's where all of our attention is going.

Last night, I was at a really productive community forum in Hallett Cove with the member for Black. Tonight, I will be in the member for Colton's electorate speaking to that community. We have been around the state. I was in Victor Harbor last week. We are working anywhere and everywhere with anybody who is willing to engage with us productively to make a difference on the ground.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): My question is to the Premier. Did the Premier call on the Prime Minister while he was in South Australia today to declare the algal bloom a natural disaster and, if not, why not? When did the Premier make a formal declaration of a state disaster to the Prime Minister?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:17): The most recent occasion on which I spoke to the Prime Minister about the declaration was yesterday. The Prime Minister made his position clear today, but he also went further than that. The Prime Minister also announced his intention to establish a critical ecological event line of funding that will be available to people in the community.

Clearly, I am not here to speak for the Prime Minister, but the Prime Minister in his remarks in the press conference this morning made clear what has informed his judgements, namely that the natural disaster arrangements associated with NEMA's declarations, which is a body free of political interference, as it should be, makes its judgements in accordance with natural disaster settings when we contemplate natural disasters in the more familiar context, that is, when people are losing their

lives or when people are losing their homes. Clearly, that is not the case here, thankfully, but it is nonetheless a major event.

In our view, we are very comfortable in the government calling it what it is, which is a natural disaster, but whether you call it a natural disaster or a major or significant ecological event, what matters to the people we care about, those people being impacted by the algal bloom, what matters to the environment and the marine life that is experiencing devastation where the bloom exists is that we invest policy, money and resources into making a difference where we can. There is no-one on this side of the house who is preoccupied with exaggerating the scale of the challenge in order to induce fear in the community. All we are interested in is getting accurate information out into the public realm and investing in resources where we can make a difference.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:19): My question is to the Premier. What does the Premier say to small business owner Mostyn Brown? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Mr Brown owns the Gotcha Fishing Tackle store in St Morris and, despite his business being on the brink of collapse due to the algal bloom, he does not qualify for government assistance. In a letter to the Premier and the member for Dunstan he said, and I quote:

I have been borrowing heavily against my home loans and have gone into overdraft on the portfolio account heavily. Can't sustain this for much longer, will be forced to sell my home soon and that will put my family out on the streets, homeless.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:20): I received—when I say 'I', my office received—correspondence, along with the Leader of the Opposition, from the businessman late yesterday afternoon. Within moments of the receipt of that email, my senior policy adviser, who is working for me in respect of engagement with business around the support grants, called the gentleman to which the Leader of the Opposition referred, and got to understand his circumstances. He had not actually made an application.

My advice is he had not yet made an application for the grants. When we tried to understand why that was the case, the gentleman explained, I understand, that in his judgement he might fall just outside of the 30 per cent downturn criteria. Our advice to him is to apply for the grant, because there have been a number of instances where the government has exercised its discretion in conjunction with the Treasurer, and we are erring on the side of being as flexible as possible to provide support to those who need it.

I think it goes without saying—and I would have thought the leader of a Liberal Party would also share the view—that where we are expending taxpayers' money to private enterprise and businesses, we are providing that support to those who can demonstrate the need. We believe that a 30 per cent downturn in trade represents an appropriate level. If you haven't experienced a downturn in trade, then clearly it wouldn't necessitate a government subsidy or payment.

I note that the 30 per cent downturn in trade is a far more generous proposition than some of the business support grants that were applied during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was a 50 per cent downturn. We have gone for the 30 per cent downturn threshold. So we believe that's an appropriate setting. This is a government that is sincere about supporting those businesses that are affected.

But do you know what's interesting? And this is really important, and I invite all members to consider this. I have spoken to a lot of these businesses—a lot of them—and the one thing that has been consistent has been their desire not for government grants, although they need them and appreciate them, but their desire for customers. I don't know a business owner in this state who won't always put an emphasis on their ability to have customers over government support and subsidies, and we want to support them with both.

We want to support them with government support and subsidies to get them through this period, but we also want to make sure that they have customers, which is why on this side of the house we are not engaging in fearmongering, which is why on this side of the house we are out there delivering information, which is why on this side of the house we don't—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Which is why on this side of the house we will cook fish in white T-shirts if we think it's going to support the industry, which is why on this side of the house we are not going to run down the rabbit hole of conspiracy theories and ask questions in the other place to try to keep that bubbling along. It's why on this side of the house we will engage with industry and say, 'How can we help you?' and make it happen. It's why we are not talking about people not being able to walk on the beach when they can, it's about making sure that we are not out there sending a signal that you can't go to Eyre Peninsula or the west coast of Yorke Peninsula when it's perfectly safe to do so.

On this side of the house, we are clear-eyed focused on the facts, providing the support where it's necessary, not engaging in politicking or fearmongering—just engaging in helping those people who need it, investing in the environment where we can and making sure that, whatever happens, every South Australian knows that this government stands with them in their genuine time of need.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:24): A supplementary to the Premier, or a new question if you will. Will the Premier amend the criteria to ensure that Mr Brown is provided relief?

The SPEAKER: That is a new question. The Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:24): I think what this government has demonstrated in action and in deeds is flexibility regarding business support criteria. We made a substantial adjustment on Monday. We are very proud of the fact that this government has sought to accommodate more businesses through more generous means than we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is not just about adjusting the criteria. Wherever you draw a criterion, it brings with it a degree of inflexibility within its nature. So we have catch-all provisions that provide discretion to myself and the Treasurer and we have officials in the Department of State Development who are working to process these applications at unprecedented levels of speed—they have now got this to a 15-day turnaround. Where a business provides all their information, we are seeking to process that within 15 days; in fact, in some instances we have surpassed that target. So, speed, flexibility and generosity. These are the sorts of characteristics that we have sought to embed in the support program and will continue to do so where we think it is necessary.

REGIONAL ROADS

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (14:25): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Can the minister explain to the house what works are being done to improve the condition of the road between Naracoorte and Bordertown? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and the leave of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: My office has been contacted by numerous constituents who have blown tyres and damaged rims after falling off this road. In some cases, a drop-off can be as much as 15 centimetres.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:26): That is clearly unacceptable. I thank the member for raising this in the parliament so the parliament can know of the travails of his constituents. It is important that regional members ventilate these things in the parliament. I have a lot of correspondence from people in the South-East about the state of the maintenance contract. The maintenance contract was outsourced by the previous government after government had conducted that contract—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Here we go. It is amazing how it is all care and no responsibility once they are in opposition, despite having their fingerprints all over the actual cause of this.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So if we break a contract we are creating sovereign risk; if we don't break a contract we don't care. It is a great sort of a scam they've got over there. I am advised that the department has recently completed shoulder sealing of approximately 17 kilometres of Naracoorte Road from Meatworks Road to Stott Road. These works were jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian Labor governments under the Heavy Vehicle and Safety Productivity Program—that was \$7.4 million. Shoulder grading on the remaining section of Naracoorte Road is continuing, with hazard warning signs to identify an edge drop. A 15-centimetre edge drop is considerable. It is anticipated that the works will be completed by the end of September.

I have also been advised by the department—because the member wrote to me yesterday as well about this; he is quite diligent on these things—that it will continue to bid for funding through various available federal programs to complete the shoulder sealing of the remaining lengths of Naracoorte Road south of Stott Road to the Riddoch Highway. The commonwealth government are very keen for us to improve the resilience of these roads and are looking to assist. We will be progressing those asks of the commonwealth government.

Of course, the issues on the Naracoorte to Bordertown road are symptomatic of a wider problem, one that is very prevalent in the electorate of MacKillop. Again, I go back to the privatisation of the road maintenance contract in 2020. It wasn't just the privatisation of that contract, it was the scorched earth behind it: the sale of the depots, the sale of all the equipment, so if the contract was unsuccessful we couldn't restart the works ourselves. They made sure—they salted the earth after them. This is what they tried to do with the Adelaide 500 as well, you might remember, so they have form on this.

So when I get letters from the shadow minister and from Liberal members about road conditions in regional South Australia, I hope people in the regions realise through that four-year period the damage members opposite did in contracting. I have to say that the vandalism by members opposite on this was ridiculous. The pavement backlog—

Mr TEAGUE: Point of order.

The SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the deputy leader.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is it in the book?

Mr TEAGUE: Standing order 98: it is impermissible debate. The minister needs to answer the substance of the question.

The SPEAKER: He's got about 35 seconds to go. I reckon he's getting there.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: In 2018 the backlog of road maintenance was \$750 million. When we came to office that had grown to \$2 billion and then they complain about why we haven't fixed it. They let it blow out, they let it more than double, and then they complained to us why haven't we fixed it in three? I've got to say that I find that type of attitude appalling, which is probably why members opposite are in the situation that they are in.

SEAFOOD QUALITY TESTING

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (14:30): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the house on matters relating to seafood quality testing capabilities?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:30): I want to thank the member for Gibson for her question. The member for Gibson is not just the MP for a coastal community, the member for Gibson is also a person of great intellect and has great interest in environmental policy more broadly and I know, having represented professionals in our state, appreciates the power and the importance of being able to appropriately have testing regimes and science to inform policy going forward.

To that end, today was a really important milestone because, as it currently stands, somewhere in the order of 10-ish per cent of the state's oyster production has been compromised by the algae. Much of this is complex, but the *Karenia mikimotoi* doesn't in and of itself create a brevetoxin, but the brevetoxin has been a consequence of the algal bloom itself.

When brevetoxin gets into our oysters and is detected through a testing regime, it excludes that oyster production area from being able to contribute to the sale of oysters. The vast majority of oysters in our state are actually doing exceedingly well—in fact, the oysters feed on the algae, and they always have and always will. So for many, they are actually doing very well indeed and products are going to the market and it is important that we keep buying them.

But for the ones that are affected, the challenge has been that the place they have to get tested is in New Zealand and that brings with it a substantial time lag. There is no testing capability in our nation for the brevetoxin in bivalves or in shellfish or, more specifically, in oysters. One of the things that we have sought funding for—or we have funded as a state government in conjunction with the commonwealth—is for South Australia to establish one of these testing regimes, the first in the nation.

It takes a long time to be able to get the testing regime in place. It has to meet a whole range of international standards and accreditation efforts. We pulled together a team within the state government to see how we can rapidly expedite the effort to be able to bring this to fruition. One great South Australian company, Agilex, contacted my office, in conjunction with others, and we have been able to today, within a month, establish that this company, based in Thebarton, will now be the nation's first to be able to do the testing. We announced today that in four to six weeks from now they will be able to start the testing regime.

This is an extraordinary South Australian business, demonstrating all of its ingenuity and innovative capacities to not just respond to this challenge but to do it quickly. It is quite a remarkable effort and speaks to the ingenuity that we have in a South Australian enterprise that our government seeks to partner with. Today I was there with the Prime Minister to speak to these extraordinary people who are making this happen at such short notice.

On top of that, the government continues to invest in other scientific efforts, including real-time monitoring that is, in effect, a SARDI-leading technology that we are seeing being deployed around our coastal communities and, more than that, the federal government today also announced more new money for scientific research. So this is us leaning in on the science, leaning in on making a difference if we can. We are not denying science, we are not having internal arguments on this side of the house about what science is real and what science is fake depending on the politics of the day; what we are focusing on is running towards this science, embracing it, and then deploying it to ensure we have a thoughtful public policy response to this unprecedented challenge.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the leader, I would remind him to stop interjecting. It was very annoying. There are a lot of people in my electorate, like there are in other electorates around the state, affected by this, and I was trying to listen carefully to what the Premier had to say. I didn't appreciate that constant noise that you were making throughout that. Like so many things that come before this house, they are very serious matters, and there is absolutely nothing stopping people asking questions about what the government is doing about stuff. Let's just show a little bit of respect when someone is giving an answer. I would appreciate that.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:35): Thank you, sir, I will take that on. My question is to the Premier. How many businesses impacted by the algal bloom have applied for small business support grants, and how many grants have been approved?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:35): I am advised that, for the fishery-related grants, there have been 11 applications, which either have been paid or are still being assessed, and only three that have been submitted and declined. Of the small business support grants, there are 30 that have been either paid or 17 being assessed. So, of the more than 30 applications, only six have been declined.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (14:36): My question is to the Minister for Small Business. Why was a letter to the Treasurer regarding extenuating circumstances around criteria eligibility for an algal bloom-affected business referred to the Office of the Minister for Small Business? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BASHAM: On 31 July, I wrote to the Treasurer with a request for consideration regarding specific circumstances for Kombi Surf and the Horse Drawn Tram experience, because the grant guidelines say, 'Eligibility under exceptional circumstances will be considered by the Treasurer.'

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:37): I am happy to take it on notice and bring back an answer for the member but, as we have done with the support packages, whether it is for the River Murray floods, for the drought or now for the algal bloom, when we have made those funds available and established the criteria, as the member's question alluded to, there remains a discretion that can be exercised, and it is usually exercised by me as Treasurer. So I will have a look at the circumstances and get to the bottom of what has happened in that particular case.

GREAT STATE VOUCHER SCHEME

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:37): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. When will the government launch the Great State Voucher scheme for all coastal communities? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: In a press conference this week, the Premier declared that the vouchers are being considered as part of his summer plan.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:38): I thank the member for her question. We have made it clear that, as a government, we are developing a summer plan. That needs to be comprehensive in its scope. It needs to contemplate the environmental—because ultimately this is the environment we are talking about—and the economic, as well as the public health and social considerations. There are a number of different themes of public policy areas that the summer plan is seeking to address.

With respect to the economic, we have made clear that we believe the Great State Voucher program or the Riverland recovery-type voucher program that we had have proven to be effective in a number of different contexts. We called for it when we were in opposition, in COVID. We did it in the Riverland, and it works. We have made it clear that we are open to doing that and that we are turning our minds to it. We are more than turning our minds to it, we are planning for it.

The one thing I would say, though, and this goes back to a point I was making earlier, is we have a duty and a responsibility on behalf of communities—let's take the tourism sector, for instance, which has been affected by the algal bloom—to not just look after them but also think about those who are unaffected by the algal bloom.

Getting that balance right is something we owe to taxpayers because it would end up being a perverse set of circumstances where the South Australian taxpayer were having their funds going to the subsidisation of holidays, for instance for tourism operators in the name of the algal bloom where the algal bloom doesn't exist. Just think about that for a moment.

Imagine if we found ourselves where in a part of the state, say, in the Far West Coast or in the South-East, where there is no algal bloom, we found ourselves having to support those communities for the algal bloom where the algal bloom didn't exist. It would be like using flood funding to support places that weren't flooded or bushfire funding for places that were nowhere near the bushfire. That would be perverse.

We don't want to find ourselves in that situation which is why we have got to do a little bit of work in making sure that we all accept the responsibility, if you are serious about caring for taxpayers' interests, in making sure that we bridge the delta between the real and the perceived in terms of where the algal bloom is having a bit of an effect. So that is what we are working on as a government.

We have demonstrated how serious we are about supporting the tourism part of our economy. The Minister for Tourism hasn't just worked on events programs or direct flights or the creation of new accommodation services or new marketing campaigns—all of these things we have done—but on top of that we are also making sure that as part of the summer plan and the preparations of it that we turn our mind to the way we get people into accommodation places where the algal bloom exists.

We are going to do it in such a way that makes sure we are not just giving due consideration to those extraordinary men and women and businesses that work in these areas but that we also do it in a way that is appropriate when it comes to the expenditure of taxpayer funds. We see an opportunity here to get that balance right and that is what we are working to achieve.

NYRSTAR

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart—Minister for Local Government, Minister for Regional Roads, Minister for Veterans Affairs) (14:41): My question is to the Minister for Energy. Can the minister update my community and the surrounding areas on the assistance that was recently announced for the future of the Nyrestar Port Pirie smelter and also the Hobart plant by the federal government and state government and also the Tasmanian government? With your leave and that of the house, sir, I will explain further.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK: There has been some community uncertainty leading up to this announcement for the potential opportunity for Port Pirie to further produce precious metals for the world.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (14:42): Again, I want to thank the member for Stuart for his advocacy. It's fair to say that the people of Stuart, especially Pirie, have been through a tough couple of times, and each time it has been the same local MP who has stood up and fought for them. He has done a lot for his community and he loves that community; he is from that community, he is of that community. To see his advocacy and the passion he has for Port Pirie and its surrounds is impressive. I just want to pay tribute to the member for Stuart for that because he is a real regional hero.

The tragedy of what is occurring with the smelter at Port Pirie is not a case of a company that is mismanaging or not running its smelter properly. It is the fact that a foreign country is using its resources to deliberately attempt to bankrupt other smelters that produce similar types of multimetals. The truth is a lot of the rare metals, the critical metals—not critical minerals but critical metals—that we get out of lead smelting are very valuable and necessary. For example, the United States has a strategic reserve of antimony. They require to have a 12-month strategic reserve of antimony but that has now withered down to about a month's worth. They have no lead smelters. Smelting is the only way to attract and extract things like antimony and bismuth.

Antimony is very, very important. Antimony is one of those critical metals that countries like ours rely on in extreme circumstances and those extreme circumstances are quite frankly war, when we need to defend ourselves. We cannot allow the coalescence of this one critical metal to be in one country. We can't allow their economic policies to drive the production of those critical metals into their arms at the expense of the Western world having access to them freely in a market-based situation.

The truth is: Port Pirie would be profitable, and would be operating profitably and need no government assistance, had it not been for the actions of Chinese smelters. What they are doing is paying extraordinarily high prices for the raw materials and charging next to nothing for the processing costs. Those losses are being worn by state-owned enterprises and those state-owned enterprises are being underwritten by a foreign country. If we allow that pattern to continue, we will see all manufacturing of critical metals coalesce in one or two countries globally. We cannot allow that to occur.

Most recently, the head of Trafigura was in the United States and, in fact, had just come from the United States when he met with me, the Premier and the member for Stuart in Port Pirie. He said to us that when he was in the United States, as the Trafigura head, the question he was asked most often by everyone on the hill was, 'What's the cost of gasoline going to be around the midterms?', wanting to understand exactly what the cost of petrol would be in and around an election. The question he was getting constantly throughout, from national security meetings right through to congressional meetings and senate meetings, was, 'How do we get our hands on antimony?'

They knew exactly where Port Pirie was. They wanted to know exactly what the Australian government is doing to make sure that we can sustain that level of production in this country so that there is a market-based approach from a country that is part of the Five Eyes, a country that is part

of a Western alliance, to make sure that they can get hold of these critical metals when they need to, and Port Pirie is the way to do it.

ALGAL BLOOM

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:46): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What, if any, additional funding for coastal tourism marketing has been allocated since the discovery of the algal bloom, and if none, why?

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:47): We announced a \$28 million package in conjunction with the commonwealth that talked about public campaigning, and of course that is a key part of that package: talking to people about certainty, building confidence about what we do know about the algal bloom, when it is safe to go and what the conditions are. It has always been a key part of our package; we were very clear on that from the very beginning.

Can I just take the time to thank the shadow minister for attending last night the transport and tourism forum. It was a great opportunity for us to come together to have a discussion about tourism in South Australia, and many members of parliament attended. Last night I spoke about the opportunities that we have with tourism, the events that we are focused on and those international aviation links, but I also talked about the algal bloom as a challenge for us. We talk about the environment and we talk about the future and the restoration, but we are very dedicated to understanding the economic impacts of it.

We have shown time and time again, when we have had these natural disasters, the role that tourism plays in the recovery. I have a strong belief—and we have detailed some of the work that is happening today—that this will be a role that we play again. I have been up to Yorke Peninsula three times already. Obviously we are very excited about them leading off with their destination management zone, but what it did give me was an opportunity to sit with operators to understand the impact of the bloom and to talk about those opportunities when we have stood up in the past and will stand up again in the future.

ALGAL BLOOM

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:48): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What does the minister say to the managers of the Ardrossan Caravan Park, Sonya and Shane? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, sir.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of Government Business with a point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That question cannot be in order without an explanation. The idea that you can just—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: To ask outside of parliamentary practice, 'What would you say to Jack or Jill?' and then seek an explanation to make the question in order, sir, is out of order. The question must be able to stand alone and then the house will decide if leave is given to add further explanation. If the question doesn't stand on its own, it can't be in order.

The SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. The member for Frome, do you want to maybe slightly rephrase the question?

Ms PRATT: Thank you for the opportunity, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Has the minister visited the Ardrossan Caravan Park in the last month? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: Caravan park managers Shane and Sonya have reported they have experienced a downturn in bookings, but because they design their own discount package, they do not qualify for any financial support.

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:50): As I said, I have actually been up to the Yorke Peninsula three times, and on that

very first day, on 28 July, I met with a variety of tourism operators. I understand that they were at that round table, and if that's inaccurate I will come back to the house and explain. The opportunity there was to actually talk face to face to people about how this impacted, at what time it had impacted. And, of course, we had our discussions about our small business grants, to make sure that caravan parks were included.

You have heard the Premier and the Treasurer talk today about being agile and looking at those exemptions as well. We want to be there, to have a support package that supports people, and we want to hear what's happening. I also had the opportunity to host one of the community forums in Minlaton for which we had a very good turnout. You were there yourself, and the member for Narungga was there. It was an opportunity for people to talk about the package and their concerns, where it was working and where they wanted us to reconsider it as well. We have done that. You saw that announcement on Monday. We have expanded what we are doing with the package, the timing of the package and different aspects towards it. We are listening.

I know myself, as tourism minister, who's very connected to the industry, that we want to make sure that people who are being impacted by this are shaping how we support them. We did this in relation to the river, and we did three rounds of vouchers. Of course, we were not able to add houseboats until the third round because they were not ready and they were not able to come back. That happened because we are listening to people. We are very well connected. We will be guided by the needs of people and hearing what's happening to them.

This is what the summer plan is about. The summer plan is acknowledging that, for our coastal regions, this is when they make the most of their money. This is when they see the highest proportion of clients come through. For many South Australians, particularly on Yorke Peninsula, this is part and parcel of what summer is about. It is going out to our beautiful regions and spending time with their families there. We know that, we hear that, and that is why they were included in the small business grant round, and I encourage them to continue to apply.

REGIONAL TOURISM

Ms PRATT (Frome) (14:52): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Can the minister verify reports that seven out of 11 regional tourism managers resigned in recent months, and have those vacancies been filled yet?

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (14:52): I would have to take the question on notice to understand the exact number, but I do not employ regional tourism managers. Of course, the Tourism Commission supports them, but often they are employed by their local tourism regions, and the RDA's involved, the council is involved. I have made no secret of my dedication to championing our regions and to look at those areas, which is why I have done the regional review. I was so pleased when Mid North and Southern Flinders, with Yorke Peninsula, made the decision to be the pilot zone. They did that because they want to build tourism in their area. The previous model was not achieving what we wanted to do.

I was particularly motivated by seeing what happened during COVID, when South Australians discovered their own backyard at levels they never had before, and we saw an increase in the spend in our regional areas. What I wanted to do as minister was to consider what we can do to make sure our regions shine. When I talked to stakeholders, there were very mixed responses as to what that regional tourism contact person did. What we did after last year's budget was to increase the amount of money, because we felt that that needed to happen. We looked at the marketing expenditure and we committed to \$2 million over a period of time to do that regional review and add additional money.

To me, we are nothing without our regions. Often people come into Adelaide and it is a catalyst but then they push out into the regions and they love what they see. They love connecting with nature, and we want to make sure that is happening, but we want to be collaborative. That is what these zones will do—they are regionally lent, because we know that people will be ready and will put their hand up and say, 'We want to be a regional zone.' It is just as we did in the Southern Flinders and Yorke, because we want to work together.

We want to think about tourists and we want to think about these regions and the products and the experiences we have had, as a tourist does. We want them to come to an area but we want

them to stay longer and see what it has to offer. I think we can do it better and that is why we have been supporting these regional tourism zones, and that is why we want to support regional tourism contact officers in the work that they do.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr ELLIS (Narungga) (14:55): My question is to the Premier. Will the government consider indemnifying community groups holding their annual events in areas affected by the algal bloom? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr ELLIS: By way of example, Port Vincent is preparing to host its annual gala day this summer and it is already spending quite a bit of its own money for infrastructure and supplies. The Progress Association are concerned that if no-one turns up because of the impact of the algal bloom they will be out of pocket and are concerned as to where this will leave them financially.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:56): I thank the member for Narungga again for raising an issue which is obviously front of mind for his community. As part of the \$28 million financial assistance package which the state government has announced in partnership with the commonwealth, there was an allocation for community purposes. But I think what we would seek to do is to try to encourage the community to attend those events regardless of the impacts—perceived or actual—of the algal bloom.

Nonetheless, if community groups want to make approaches towards accessing some of that funding that has specifically been set aside for community purposes, we are very open to having those discussions. It's not just a feature of the package that we provided in response to the algal bloom, but it's something that we have also done for the drought assistance package and what we have done previously for the River Murray flood package as well. It has proven a success in both of those contexts, so perhaps we can speak further and get some of the details and get some information back to your constituents.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (14:57): Can the Treasurer please update the house on the state of the South Australian employment market?

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN (Lee—Treasurer, Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Minister for Police) (14:57): Fortunately I can, Mr Speaker, and I am very pleased to do so because the South Australian labour market has continued to demonstrate just how strongly job opportunities and employment outcomes are continuing to grow in the South Australian economy. It was only a few days ago that the ABS released its latest monthly labour force statistics for the month of July, and it shows a new record high for the number of people employed in South Australia: just a smidge under 980,000 South Australians are now working.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: It's an economic term, smidge. That is a further increase of 2,700 on the previous month, which is a really pleasing increase. That means there are now over 79,000 more South Australians in work than there were in March 2022, which is an extraordinary amount of additional jobs that have been created in our economy.

Although we are seeing the national unemployment rate continue to trend up, and South Australia's has increased from the record lows that we have achieved over the past two years, where regularly we would see an unemployment rate of something starting with a three, it is pleasing that our unemployment rate slightly changed. It fell by 0.1 per cent to 4.3 per cent, and while that is significantly lower again from what it was in March 2022, what we have also seen is an increase in the participation rate. To achieve a drop in the unemployment rate at the same time that the participation rate has increased again shows just how strong the labour market is in South Australia. The participation rate is now at 64.3 per cent or 1.1 percentage point higher than what it was back in March 2022.

Despite having so many additional jobs being added to the state's economy, despite the increase in the participation rate and the fall in the unemployment rate, South Australia continues to

record the highest number proportionally of job vacancies in the nation. There are still more than 20,000 job vacancies being reported in the South Australian economy, which is absolutely remarkable. South Australia has recorded the best performance in terms of job vacancies over the last 12 months compared with anywhere else in the nation.

That is great news for those South Australians who are either looking to get into the labour market or maybe even looking to change what they do for a living. There is so much economic opportunity still in the state's economy. We see that particularly private sector job vacancies have increased by more than 5 per cent over that year as well. It is the reason why economic commentators such as the Commonwealth Bank through their CommSec State of the States report continue to commend the performance of the South Australian economy. As the Premier mentioned in question time yesterday, we are the second best performing jurisdiction in the nation, which is basically the best performing when you consider that the other state, Western Australia, is benefiting from the remainder of the country's justifiable taxation revenues.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: It was welcomed by Rob Lucas and Steven Marshall. They thought it was a great deal.

The SPEAKER: The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition will both come to order or they can go to the tearoom and have a conversation. I would like to hear the Treasurer.

The Hon. S.C. MULLIGHAN: This is further great news for our state's economy.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:01): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier restore certainty in our coastal communities and guarantee no beach closures into spring and summer?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (15:01): Correct me if I am wrong but I think that was almost the exact same question that was asked yesterday. I am happy to confirm to the house that the advice that the government is in receipt of hasn't changed in the last 24 hours.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Water. What specific measures is the government taking to preserve and restore fish stock in affected regions to ensure a sustainable recovery for the industry? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr WHETSTONE: The former Liberal government implemented a further fish stock assessment: they bred fingerlings for fish stocking releases in both gulfs, deployed and built artificial habitats known as reefs, did extensive promotions to enhance rec fishing effort, closed catch on fish species that were under depletion and supported charter boat operators through that time of uncertainty.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (15:02): Of course, I am not the primary industries minister and will allow for her to add anything necessary to my answer, but generally, of course, what we are seeing through this bloom is the great clarity of the health of the environment being essential in order to have the health of the local economy. It has never been drawn more to our attention that unless we have a healthy marine environment we don't have healthy fisheries, as indeed the member has been pointing out.

Alongside the work that is being done to make sure that there are clear lines of communication about the bloom, that there's support for industry and communities that are affected, there is preparation for summer known as the summer plan. We are working hard on what will be a recovery plan, how we make sure that as the bloom recedes that recovery is accelerated so that nature comes back as fast as possible in order to facilitate healthy fisheries, coastal community life and so on. The scientists are working on that at present but elements of that are pretty clear. One is the idea of artificial reefs that can accelerate the return of oysters and other marine life that become the fish nurseries for the return of healthy fish stocks.

The member refers to reefs that were opened under the previous term but, of course, had been, as I understand it, funded and negotiated—including with the federal government and assistance from the Nature Conservancy—to have these reefs established. There is one off Glenelg that is still in good condition the last time a diver went down and checked very recently and there is one off Ardrossan. We went to our country cabinet there and met with the council and oyster fishers—very successful in hosting particularly oysters.

As has become clear I think—and all of our science literacy about the marine environment has increased in the last few months—bivalves, but oysters in this case, are important in the response to blooms because they eat algae. They are filter feeders, they clean up the seas and they eat algae. In fact, if we had all of the native oysters that we had 200 years ago that were cleaned out, we would not have had the experience of the bloom that we are having at present; we would have had a far more robust ecology in dealing with the bloom.

There have been attempts to start to restore those, as has been mentioned by the member. The Premier announced recently as part of our response an additional 15 shellfish reefs to be established over 15 different hectares. That will be rolled out by the environment department and also by the University of Adelaide, along with communities—including Aboriginal communities and schools—to build these small-scale reefs. There was an announcement alongside RecFish SA of a \$300,000 recreational fishing reef that is being established, and I have no doubt that, as we move into the detail of the recovery plan, addressing the question of fish stocks, building up fingerlings and restoring them to the gulfs, and any other species that it might be possible to repopulate, is all being worked through in detail as part of this recovery plan.

It has never been clearer that we are utterly dependent on the health of nature. We have asked too much of nature in the past—for example, the way that the native oyster beds were removed in the first 50 years or so of European arrival here—and there is an utter necessity for us to pay attention to what science has to tell us about the way in which we can accelerate recovery in order to continue to have healthy fishing, both for commercial and recreational purposes.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:07): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier take responsibility for the government's response to the algal bloom crisis? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The crisis has moved from a manageable environmental problem to what experts are now describing as an untreatable ecological disaster.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (15:07): The Leader of the Opposition is the alternative Premier of the state, which means he is invested with a duty and a responsibility to himself understand the science and understand what we know about the algal bloom. The Leader of the Opposition would do well if he sought to familiarise himself—and we make available to him, as you would expect in a moment like this, access to briefings from public officials and people who are close to the science—with the fact that there is no off-the-shelf chemical or solution or machine, or any other intervention that you can think of, that would have made the algal bloom go away.

The Leader of the Opposition, as the alternative Premier, can hold a press conference after question time or tomorrow morning. He could go on radio and say, 'I, the Leader of the Opposition, leader of the Liberal Party, hereby would deploy solution X to stop the algal bloom from happening,' or 'Had I been Premier, I would have done Y and that would have stopped the algal bloom from happening.' And I tell you what—I will be listening, mate. I will be listening. If you go on the radio or go into the public realm and proffer any solution or intervention that you would have made—

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: —to make the unprecedented algal bloom disappear, we want to hear it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Chaffey, you are on your final warning.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: But in the absence of your sort of theorising about solutions that no-one else can proffer, what I suggest you do is familiarise yourself with the science and come up with some ideas and thoughts that might actually make a difference rather than contribute to speculation and conspiracy, because that is where you're at.

On the weekend you stood up and announced your candidate for the seat of Waite and there he was, in the Legislative Council yesterday, asking questions about the desal plant. What is he asking about today: Chinese warships? And you actively endorse him as he seeks to avoid shaking your hand. That is for you to contemplate. That is for you to answer. But we are not going to be on the conspiracy bandwagon; we are going to focus on solutions and interventions that actually make a difference.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:10): My question is to the Minister for the Environment. What advice did the Deputy Premier receive from scientists in April in relation to the algal bloom and what subsequent actions were taken?

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (15:10): Well, of course, the algal bloom started in March and by 25 March, I think it was, we identified that it was *Karenia mikimotoi* that was the species. So as we moved into April, we were starting to really pull together the expertise in that particular form of algal bloom.

We started off with a cross-agency working group, which started on 3 April, as you are asking about April. We held a round table with local government and government agencies on 9 April. That was in order to present to local government in the affected communities all of the information and advice that we had to date. Of particular interest and importance, of course, at that time was that from SA Health, to know what the health impacts might be. We offered a briefing for the affected MPs—being yourself, of course, and the member for Mawson and the member for Narungga—on 17 April in order to make sure that you and others had an opportunity to make any suggestions and ask any questions.

The information that we were receiving from the scientists—including the Bureau of Meteorology—during April was that what has previously happened with blooms of that species, including in South Australia back in 2014, is that they tend to pass within a few weeks, particularly when there is the break in weather into winter. Normally the break in the weather occurs around 25 April and the expectation was that it was likely to occur at that point. That was the advice from the scientists and it is the experience of most places in the world that have experienced a *Karenia mikimotoi*.

At that point, it was also very clear from all of the scientists that there was no intervention that one could deploy in order to deal with it—and that remains the advice from the scientists. We discussed in some detail the use of clay and modified clay in our waters. In fact, if there were a magical way to deal with algal blooms from the start, you wouldn't see a country as rich as the United States having near-annual impacts of algal bloom in Florida and also off the coast of California. If there were something magical, I am pretty sure they would have deployed it.

There are promising signs with the use of modified clay, as well as some warning signs, and we are absolutely interested. But to pretend that there might have been something in April that could have been done—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE: I don't know how you listen when you are talking so much. It is quite an interesting skill you have there. That was the kind of effort that was going on in April with the deployment of SARDI and the environment department. The EPA was involved at that point in time also, alongside the Bureau of Meteorology and the health department.

HOUSING ROADMAP

Mrs PEARCE (King) (15:13): My question is to the Minister for Housing and Urban Development. Can the minister provide the house with an update on development activity in South Australia since the Malinauskas government's initiation of the Housing Roadmap in June 2024?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Before I call the minister, the leader, I asked you very politely earlier on and you have done nothing but chip away, chip away, chip away for the rest of question time. If we see a repeat later this week—tomorrow, into next week—I will ask you to leave. If everyone can just listen to the answer; it is our last one for the day. The Minister for Planning.

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (15:14): Look, it is all good news post the Housing Roadmap and post the release of the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan. Just to alert the house, new certificates of title in the last financial year, up by 13.66 per cent, so that's good news. Plans of land division in 2024-25, up 14.1 per cent, so that's good news. As the Treasurer alerted you to, CommBank State of the States has us number two, but has us number one in construction work done, 16.7 per cent above the decade average. So that's good, isn't it? Dwelling starts, 22 per cent above the decade average.

For the second time in 18 months, the HIA—no friend of the Labor Party normally—has declared South Australia top in the nation, scoring 88 out of 100 on their Housing Score Card. That's good news, isn't it, following the good news on the economy. ABS Construction work data shows that South Australia's construction work done reached \$4.59 billion, a 7.7 per cent increase compared to the same time last year and that surpasses the national growth average of 3.5 per cent. The Crane Index, again in the March quarter, had us on the highest index rating since reporting began in 2015. In the Premier's electorate alone we have tower cranes up on: Arc Bowden, 145 apartments; Uniting on Second, 70 apartments; Lot 6003 in Bowden, which is a mixed use commercial building by Citify; Muse Bowden another 36 apartments; and Lot 51 is just about to commence so there will be another crane up over Bowden.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: I know those opposite are interested in their water and sewer infrastructure. Well, how is that going? We have installed 18,367 metres of pipeline—which is about 18,300 and something more than you guys. We have executed 202 developer agreements covering 7,236 allotments across the state, which is the highest on record since DAFIs were first recorded in 2013.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION: So isn't that good. That's allotments; that's good news; you should be celebrating, saying, 'Yes, this is good.' More positive interjections. So it does not matter whether you go to Seaton, Bowden, Prospect Corner, Noarlunga, Playford Alive, or any one of the many, many private sector developments that are going on across the state, it's all good news on housing.

Grievance Debate

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr PATTERSON (Morphett) (15:17): Marine life is dying, beaches we love are suffering and industry is on the line and the devastation from the algal bloom has locals very concerned, not only for the ocean but also the beaches from Somerton Park, Glenelg South, Glenelg and Glenelg North that are instrumental to the fabric of the Morphett community.

My family and I are members of the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club as nippers or volunteer surf lifesavers and so I understand the affection that locals have for this beautiful part of the coastline. In fact, that is why each year I run Clean Up Australia Day events along those beaches and along the Patawalonga to give locals a way to have practical action for their local environment as well.

The devastating algal bloom is killing marine life along our coastline at unprecedented rates. Over 400 marine species have been affected. Our fish, our stingrays, even dolphins and seals, are

washing up dead on our beaches, including in Morphett. The response from the state government has been nothing more than slow and fragmented, with *The Advertiser* reporting in July:

Mr Malinauskas has been a largely absent figure in any material sense on the algal bloom. Indeed, much of the state government's response has been simply to hope that the weather somehow sorts things out. That hasn't happened.

So after months of campaigning, the state Liberal opposition have successfully pressured the government into action. Shamefully, the South Australian Labor government only sent a formal request to the federal government just over two weeks ago. Locals I speak to regularly say there has been a lack of clarity about what is going on. There are immediate questions around our local beaches and access to them, but also: what does the future look like?

That is why, at the start of the month, I hosted an algal bloom community forum. It brought together marine biologist Anita Thomas; sustainability scientist Andrew Lake; KI Ocean Safari's Tony Coppins; a commercial fisher from Port Wakefield, Bart Butson; and resort owner Steve Finlayson. You will remember Anita was instrumental in constructing the Glenelg shellfish reef that I was proud to be a part of funding back in 2020.

The Glenelg shellfish reef is the size of two Adelaide Ovals, made up of native oysters. They filter the seawater but also provide habitat that supports crabs, sponges and fish. The algal bloom forum quickly reached capacity, showing the huge level of community concern about all the marine life being killed and washing up on the shore. Anita explained how the algal bloom is expanding, that it is not only replicating by splitting but also sexually via cysts. What really hit home to the audience was when Anita related that the overseas experiences of similar algal blooms have lasted for long periods of time, such as in Ireland back in the eighties where it lasted five years, went away, then came back a decade later.

Andrew explained how nutrients, especially nitrogen, coming from stormwater and land use were a key enabler of the algal growth. He made the point that sheeting home the blame entirely to climate change will just cause inaction and delay, which is certainly what we have seen from this state Labor government. He said that, internationally, algal blooms are treated as local problems and are therefore acted upon locally. He also impressed upon us the need to act quickly to get on top of it early.

From a fishing and tourism perspective, going out fishing or boating is very confronting, with the surface of the ocean littered with dead fish in parts and minimal fish to catch or see. The speakers also identified the need to develop a long-term plan to increase resilience as it is more than likely that the algal bloom will happen again. But there were positive takeaways because, despite the algal bloom decimating a lot of marine life, the oysters on the Glenelg shellfish reef were thriving as they filter the algae from the water and help get the local marine ecosystem back into balance.

The Liberal opposition has repeatedly called on the government to expand its relief package and hold a royal commission into the cause of the algal bloom and what steps the government can take. Last week, I welcomed the federal Leader of the Opposition, Sussan Ley, to Morphett, and we stood near the Broadway Kiosk and both called on the federal government to acknowledge that the algal bloom is a natural disaster. Both the Liberal opposition and I will fight for action, for accountability and for protection for our coastal communities.

NO STRINGS ATTACHED THEATRE OF DISABILITY

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (15:22): I rise today to acknowledge the extraordinary work of No Strings Attached Theatre of Disability, an organisation based in my community that has enriched our arts community and our society by providing people with disability the opportunity to create and perform on their own terms.

Recently, I had the quite extraordinary privilege of attending their production *The Construct*, beautifully written by J.W. Smith and masterfully directed by Catherine Purling, with fantastic lighting design by Nic Mollison. The play tackled subjects that, sadly, can still be too often avoided: mental health, psychosis and schizophrenia. These themes are not easy to face, yet they were explored with incredible emotional authenticity, courage and humanity.

I want to particularly acknowledge the profound and outstanding performance of Fig Kershaw in the lead role. Watching Fig on stage was deeply moving. The performance had a depth and authenticity that just blew me away, to be honest. It was, for me, one of those moments in theatre

when what we have experienced stays with you long after you leave. In me, Fig, you have a huge fan.

The Construct reminded me why theatre matters. It can shine a light on what is too often hidden, and it gives voice to experiences that deserve to be heard. None of this work is possible without those who stand beside these performers, people such as CEO, Dr Kari Seeley, and director, Paulo Castro, whose beautiful dedication and vision enabled these stories to be told with such strength and authenticity. As South Australian filmmaker Christopher Houghton has so powerfully said:

We need to hear the diversity, humour, tragedy and honesty that only people who live with disability every day can offer. It is not enough to facilitate others telling their story. We need to hear their stories through their words, stories and faces.

This is precisely what No Strings Attached achieves. That same ethos is at the heart of the *My Stories Matter* film trilogy, another groundbreaking project under the direction of Paulo Castro. In collaboration with South Australian filmmakers Tim Carlier and Tim Hodgson of House of Spaghetti, No Strings Attached has already created two films in this trilogy, *My Stories Matter* and *My Stories Matter Reloaded*. These films are made in the fictional documentary style of Swedish director Roy Andersson whose performers speak directly to camera in a single unedited take. This requires focus, courage and great skill. Importantly, the project provides paid professional opportunities for disabled artists to share their stories in their own voices.

The films have received widespread acclaim for their bold storytelling and authentic representation. Screenings in 2024 reached audiences in Perth, Lisbon, Algarve and Berlin, and screenings are already scheduled for Melbourne in 2026 and Austria in 2027. In just six weeks' time filming will begin on the third and final instalment, *My Stories Matter Grand Finale*. This work challenges stereotypes, broadens our understanding and ensures that disabled performers are seen, heard and celebrated on their own terms.

When I think back to *The Construct*, I am reminded of the power of theatre to move us, to make us think and to help us see the world differently. That is what Fig Kershaw achieved with such brilliance. This is what No Strings Attached Theatre delivers time and again. To the performers, directors, crew and everyone involved, I extend my deepest gratitude. Their work is courageous, their art is vital and their stories remind us all of the importance of ensuring that every voice has the opportunity to be heard in its own words and in its own way.

FROME ELECTORATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:26): I want to update the house on the problems that I see bubbling away in my electorate. My electorate of Frome is groaning under the impact of a number of environmental disasters. You only need to go back 18 months where the Adelaide Plains were impacted by the arrival, unprecedented in our country, of the tomato virus. The grapegrowers in the Clare Valley have been impacted by frost two years in a row. Of course, all the farmers across the Mid North of my electorate are still calculating the cost of the drought.

It might not be known to many but the electorate of Frome is proud to capture and host the Samphire Coast which extends just past the Gawler River from Port Gawler, Middle Beach, Thompson Beach up to Port Parham and beyond. The communities that live along there are proud of their environment. They love the peace and solitude. They look after their environment and they are worried about their environment, and they are right to be worried. But they are not leaving the responsibility of the preservation of that Samphire coastline to local government or government alone. They are hands-on.

I was delighted to join a number of volunteers as part of the Friends of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary. It is not well known. It is an extraordinary, pristine environment just west of Dublin. The project over the weekend, for a membership of about 30 people but nine volunteers who were attending on Sunday, was to plant out 250 seedlings of she-oak, native pines, quandong, lomandra and dianella to revegetate that area.

Why is that important? Well, of course, that provides cover and nesting areas for these migratory shorebirds; 27,000 of them would call the bird sanctuary home, if we asked them, but they are part of a five million-sized flock that flies between Siberia and my electorate. They are pretty hungry when they get here. They will fly for 10 days without stopping. The smallest bird that lands at

the International Bird Sanctuary is called Tim Tam, affectionately, weighing only 30 grams. It goes 10 days without food. The biggest is a curlew. When they land at Port Parham, they are pretty hungry, and the algal bloom is sadly at risk of compromising that essential food source.

These birds feed on the mudflats around the area, looking for worms, molluscs, shellfish and insects. It is not that the bloom causing the death of those food items, the natural food source, would kill the bird, but when that food source is diminished there is going to be less for 27,000 birds to consume. I was informed of all these details by Mary-Ann and Lucy, who are part of the friends group, and I was pleased to meet Alessandro and Adam, who are part of the SA park rangers program.

The Samphire Coast in my electorate is being impacted by the algal bloom, and we see that with the fishing community as well. I met a fisherman called Andrew Pisani when I was at the Minlaton forum last week. The efforts that fishermen are having to go to—abandoning quotas and licences that they have and paying extra money to find a licence somewhere in less affected waters—are certainly compromising that industry and we know that they are hurting.

Professor Mike Steer is doing a great job of informing our community about the algal bloom, but I think it is passing strange that when satellite images from March to July showed the growth, expansion and increase of chlorophyll hotspots, which are a proxy for the bacteria, and purple spots on these images that reflected the fish kills, the government was not in a position to act faster. The Premier is tying himself in knots when he talks about the communities that do not know which beach is affected and which is not. The opposition continues to call for the tourism voucher to be rolled out across the state. We think it is positive, proactive and practical.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (15:31): I rise to speak about the algal bloom that is severely impacting parts of the South Australian coast, including in my community from South Brighton to Hallett Cove. There have been short-term algal blooms in South Australia before. They occur around Australia and internationally from time to time, and they usually resolve within a matter of weeks. An algal bloom of this scale and duration is unprecedented and, unfortunately, at this stage the scientists cannot tell us how or when it will end. There is no cure and nothing we can apply—nothing we can add to the water, no process to remove the algae—and its impact is a disaster for our marine environment.

Beyond our environment, it is also impacting our commercial fishing, seafood and tourism sectors. It is a demonstration of the intrinsic link that exists between our environment and our economy. It is also a demonstration of the link between our environment and our personal wellbeing. We love our beaches and we love our marine life, and when we see our marine life dying or when we feel prevented from doing the things we love, it can impact our mental and social wellbeing. I recently attended a beachside vigil organised by the City of Holdfast Bay at Brighton. The vigil was led by students from our local primary schools, and it was powerful to see these children simply yet forcefully show their concern for our environment and ask us as adults and leaders to make decisions that protect our environment.

The level of concern and engagement in our community presents an opportunity for our state and our nation. The engagement of our community should reinforce our state and federal parliaments and governments to continue to make laws that protect our environment, such as targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protection for the Murray-Darling river system. A particularly impressive area of engagement has been the many citizen scientists and community members who have been recording and documenting the algal bloom and the various fish deaths. The importance of citizen scientists has been identified in the next stage of the state government's support package, which includes a rapid meta-analysis of citizen science records to provide a baseline understanding from which to assess recovery.

Some of the other aspects of the next stage of the \$28 million support package jointly funded by the state and federal governments include \$13 million in science and research initiatives, such as an expansion of the coastal monitoring network; a new national testing laboratory in SA for harmful algal bloom and brevetoxin/biotoxin testing and the assessment of fish stocks and fisheries to quantify impact; and grants to support impacted business operators, including commercial fisheries and tourism operators, and it has been pleasing to see that a number of businesses have already applied for and received their support grants.

Beyond science, research and grants, the public information aspects of the package are important to emphasise. There will be a series of public information campaigns, and there has been a series of public forums for impacted coastal communities, including mine. We had the second public forum last night in Hallett Cove. These events are an important opportunity for our community to hear firsthand from the experts and an opportunity to ask questions.

I want to speak briefly from personal experience about how important trusted information about the algae is for our community. Recently, my family managed to get down to Foul Bay at the bottom of Yorke Peninsula. Foul Bay did not at that time have any current evidence of algae, although it has been there previously and has had a devastating impact. The water was clear and without foam. As a result, we were able to continually walk our dog Juni up and down the beach. We would have gone for swim but it was very cold. My son Albie and I also managed to catch a feed of mullet off the beach, and they were great eating.

It is important that our community understand they can eat seafood, both the fish and shellfish they buy, along with the fish, crabs, prawns, lobsters and squid they catch themselves, as long as they follow the normal cleaning and gutting processes before cooking. Sadly, it was very quiet on the Yorke Peninsula. I feel for the Yorke Peninsula communities, along with other coastal regional communities that rely on tourism, aquaculture and fishing, that have been impacted by the algal bloom. It is important that our community understand that they can enjoy, like my family did, the beauty of our coastal regions, like the Yorke Peninsula, even with the algal bloom, by following the advice of the chief health officer. By doing so, they will be supporting our regional communities.

The algal bloom is a disaster for our marine environment and one that, quite rightly, our community and parliament should be very concerned about, but it does not have to be a disaster for our tourism operators, commercial fishers and seafood businesses.

GREAT SAUSAGE RUN

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (15:36): I would like to make a contribution today about the great sausage run. This all started at Spring Cart Gully on the Sturt Highway, just up the road from where I live in the Riverland. Sadly, at about the time of the algal bloom, there was a big truck rollover. It was a road train carrying a couple of thousand sheep. It was a four-decker and it rolled over at the roundabout. Sadly, of the four decks, the sheep in the three lower decks died, but there were a few escapees that got out of the top deck and made their way through some of the countryside.

I managed to come across two two-tooth wethers, and they were aptly named Willy and Wonka. They were Willy and Wonka, the wethers. They were Merinos and they were two years old. Because we had record prices at the markets, over \$400, I thought I should feed them, I should water them, and I should look after them until I could find the rightful owner. When I did find the rightful owner, he said if you can catch them, you can keep them. So, over the course of three months, I managed to fatten them up; I managed to take good care of them.

Then, all of a sudden, it got to the point where they were starting to damage my home. They managed to break windows, they managed to break tiles, they managed to prune all of my roses—I have a couple of hundred roses, too, by the way—and they managed to eat a lot of my Kikuyu lawn. Over that time, they were in pristine condition, but it was time to say goodbye, and so I sent them off to the chocolate factory. I thought, what am I going to do with two magnificent specimens? I decided, after much concern and concerted effort, what to do. I was going to supply my men's sheds with sausages. I would like to have supplied them with chops and legs of lamb and all the rest of it, but I overfed them with the wrong sort of feed and they lost a lot of their fat, but they had very good meat content.

We managed to bring about 50 kilos of sausages together, and I hit the road. I started the journey from the Loxton Abattoir down to Waikerie. When I got to Waikerie I visited the men's shed down there and I ran into Don Higgs who explained that they would make good use of those sausages. They also had a program, as one of my men's sheds, restoring and recycling pushbikes. Once they had a trailer load full they would take them up to the APY lands and drop them off to disadvantaged children up there to give them an opportunity to experience what riding a bike is all about.

I then headed down the highway and called in to see John Hughes at Barmera and to drop the sausages off to him. I also noticed that he was restoring old beds and turning them into park

benches. It just shows you what the difference is between one men's shed and another. I then travelled up to Berri and met with Ian Campbell. They are doing a lot of community restoration of furniture and the like. They are doing some great work.

Up at Renmark I ran into Neil Minther. He is addressing a lot of mental health issues with a lot of his mates. They are all car enthusiasts. They are also all cooks and they really put the sausages to good use. I then travelled over to Loxton to see Des Schliebs. At the Loxton Men's Shed their signature pieces are tin dogs. There is a program they run selling tin dogs for the benefit of the community.

Then it was over to Karoonda and Gerry Paay. It is a small men's shed but they are doing great community work over there. Then it was down to Swan Reach where I dropped off sausages to Mark Wheeler. They are only a small group, as well, but they are doing great work helping the community by restoring and fixing furniture and the like.

Then it was over to Morgan, and that was probably my most unique experience. Rob Bruce heads up the men's shed—and the men's shed is on Lovers Lane. What they are doing there is a lot of 3D printing but the shed that I walked into was amazing. There was a motorbike collection of somewhere over 100 motorbikes. I did see my favourite motorbike, a 1933 Harley-Davidson.

I want to say thank you to Kelvin Westbrook for surrendering those sheep. Well done to Nigel Rollbusch from Rollbusch Meats at Waikerie and Barmera for butchering and making the sausages, and to all the people who are recipients of those men's sheds. I say well done, and thank you for your community support.

FROME ELECTORATE

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (15:42): I would like to discuss a few things here today regarding the electorate of Frome which I am the Labor duty member for. I recently had an opportunity to attend some events in that electorate, and there are a couple I would just like to bring to the house's attention.

First of all was the Undalya Cemetery which I attended, and so did the current member for Frome, and we were there for a plaque-laying ceremony by the Auburn and Moonta National Trust. It was a collective activity by both groups. The reason I mention that, in addition to the plaque which commemorates Paddy Ryan who was the person who actually discovered copper at Moonta—putting aside his interest in history and the history of many others who lived in that area and also in other parts of South Australia; and his history has been covered quite well—is that it shows the important role that local historians play.

Often we enjoy the stories and we enjoy going to places like museums, etc., but often a lot of these events occur because a lot of local historians in our community painstakingly search out information. I would like to pay tribute to Robyn Knight, who is a senior volunteer researcher with the Moonta History Centre, who actually has researched the life of Paddy Ryan.

It came from a whole range of documents, from here to Ireland, to actually put this person's life together. Some of the documents are sometimes inaccurate for a whole range of reasons. Sometimes they are missing, etc. But what local historians do is spend a lot of their time—and they are all volunteers—piecing together bits of information and then telling the full story, and also providing some context for that story, which is really important.

You can actually go to a cemetery or historical site and that is what you see but it is not until you actually hear the stories of the people, how they lived, what their history was that brings the whole thing to life. Local historians are really great at bringing together all those loose threads of information to actually tell the story. I would like to congratulate Robyn on the incredible work she has done to find information about this family because after he died his wife and children went back to Ireland and she actually then followed that story up to see what happened to the family in Ireland. This was going back to pre-1900s, so you can imagine that trying to find documents is not the easiest thing to do. So I would like to pay tribute to our local historians in our communities.

I would also like to pay tribute to one of the service clubs I met with in Clare recently. The Lions Club of Clare invited me to attend their second-hand shop, for want of a better word. It is more a warehouse than a shop; it is a huge place. This is where the Lions Club actually collect furniture, repair furniture and resell it and all the money they raise they put into community projects. For

example, they provide some scholarships for students to study. They provide scholarships for young people to do Operation Flinders and they provide a whole range of other programs and support other programs in their community.

It is incredible how much money this group has raised through this endeavour. Obviously, it requires lot of work. They hear about some furniture that is no longer loved, no longer needed, and they go out and collect it, clean it, repair it as required and then sell it. On the day I was there they told me the day before they had sold about two and a half thousand dollars' worth of furniture. I said most small businesses would be happy with that on one day. Because they get the furniture for nothing—there are costs involved, of course—they actually do raise a lot of money for their community groups, so I would like to pay tribute to the Lions Club of Clare.

Another group I would like to quickly pay tribute to is the Two Wells Country Fire Service. I attended their open day on Sunday with Adam Harris and his team. The brigade has about 40 members and they do a wonderful job in protecting our community. In addition to the various demonstrations about hazards, etc., they do fundraising. One of the things they do now is make up little lunch boxes in the shape of a fire truck. Of course, I bought some for my nieces and nephews. It is the sort of thing they do to raise money and they are serving an increasing population. Congratulations to them.

Private Members' Statements

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:47): I have a quick update on all the fantastic students and young people who live in my electorate of Frome who over the last few weeks have been really busy. I give a shout-out to Clare High School, who came on a parliamentary tour to visit me here and, of course, the education office does a great job. I was looking forward to receiving Hamley Bridge but unfortunately their field trip was cancelled, but it gave me an opportunity to catch up with the years 3 to 6 classes in Miss Oxley's room and conduct my own version of a civics and citizenship lesson. I have done them in the past and they were kind enough to let me come back in and talk about what student voice means to them and the links between their experience of student voice and how there are similarities to what we do here.

Clare High School recently hosted a fantastic career expo day and schools from across my district—Riverton, Kapunda, Eudunda, Balaklava, Burra and Jamestown, and also Nuriootpa from the member for Schubert's electorate—made their way to this high school to see what is in store for them in the future. It is a credit to the principal, Natasha Dunn, and the career pathways coordinator, Kim Maynard, who is now acting principal at Balaklava. It is fantastic.

Finally, I just give a shout-out to my two scouts groups in Two Wells and Clare: Christine Graham in Clare and Brad Burrow, who do a fantastic job offering an alternative to young people.

Mr BELL (Mount Gambier) (15:49): Today, I rise to pay tribute to one of Mount Gambier's most successful and respected for sporting figures, Richard Hill, who has recently stepped down as head coach of the Mount Gambier Pioneers after 13 years in the role. Richard first took the reins at the end of the 2011 season, preparing the Pioneers for the 2012 SEABL competition. From that moment, he set about building not just a winning team but a culture of excellence that became the envy of the league.

Under his leadership, the Pioneers secured five consecutive SEABL conference championships from 2013 to 2017 and three SEABL national championships. He was recognised as league coach of the year on four occasions—a testament to his skill, professionalism and the respect he commands across the sport. But Richard's legacy is far greater than trophies and the statistics—he has been the embodiment of Pioneer passion, inspiring players, volunteers and supporters alike. He has given countless hours to the club and to our city, mentoring young athletes, fostering community spirit and representing Mount Gambier with pride wherever the team travelled.

For any of those who have been in the locker room, or on the sidelines, they will tell you that Richard is not just a coach—he is a storyteller, a motivator and, on occasion, master of the perfectly timed spray when his team needed firing up. He could turn a tense half-time into a moment of belief with just a few words, sometimes calm, sometimes fiery, but always with the players' best interests at heart. The contribution Richard has made to us in our community over more than a decade is

nothing short of extraordinary. It is fitting recognition that on Saturday night he was named the 2025 NBL1 South Men's Coach of the Year.

Mrs HURN (Schubert) (15:50): Every day, locals, tourists and truckies rely on Eden Valley Road in my electorate, but right now the condition of the road is unfortunately letting them down, and in many spots it is a hazard. Whilst resurfacing works have been carried out recently, the condition at the moment is far from acceptable and it is causing great frustration right across my local community because the surface has been left with a gravel-like state and it does seem unfinished, particularly when you are driving on it at Hurns Road and also towards Yalumba in Angaston.

One constituent has recently contacted me because their daughter had their windscreen smashed. I have had truckies contact me about their concerns and, when locals are going to get their vehicles repaired, it does seem pretty obvious that this is not an isolated incident and that there are up to six to 10 people who are having their windscreens repaired. Frankly, it is not good enough.

I have raised this directly with the minister. I have asked the question as to why our roads are not now being properly sealed. Is it a change in standard? Is it a budgetary issue? One thing that is clear is that this is a new practice and it is poor. Either way, shortcuts in road maintenance do come at a cost to motorists and they ultimately come at a cost to taxpayers when work has to be redone sooner. Our community deserves safe and reliable roads, better than half-finished roads that are putting lives at risk, and vehicle damage is becoming more and more prominent in my local community.

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (15:52): In 2023, on International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I stood in this place sharing the story of the fear and terror too many children in Gaza were experiencing. Today, not even two years later, Al Jazeera reports that at least 17,000 of those children have been killed, with only around 15,500 being identified.

Please take a moment to let that sink in. It is not just a number—17,000 children—it is the equivalent of more than 10 per cent of our state's entire primary school student population. If that thought makes you feel physically ill like it does me, so should what is happening in Gaza. Seventeen thousand children: every single one, a life cut horrifically short.

In 2024, I and others in this place called on our nation to show leadership, to match our values of justice and fairness with actions and to recognise the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. Today, I take this opportunity on behalf of the community who elected me to this place, who have consistently urged me to use this platform to strive for equality here and elsewhere, to again show our support for the people of Palestine.

We welcome the federal government's recent announcement that Australia is joining the overwhelming majority of the international community to formally recognise the State of Palestine at the upcoming UN General Assembly next month. This recognition comes with important conditions that offer a pathway towards a peaceful, secure, two-state solution. While it does not solve every challenge or immediately stop the horrors being inflicted on innocent people in Gaza, it is a vital step towards peace and freedom.

Bills

NORTHERN PARKLANDS BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (15:54): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to establish the Northern Parklands and the Northern Parklands Trust, to provide for the establishment of other parklands and statutory trusts, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. N.D. CHAMPION (Taylor—Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Minister for Housing Infrastructure, Minister for Planning) (15:55): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Northern Parklands Bill 2025 seeks to create a new statutory authority responsible for establishing and maintaining a new Northern Parklands proposed in the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan, also known as the GARP. The GARP is a long-term vision for an over 30-year period to support the growth of Greater Adelaide and accommodates approximately 85 per cent of our state's population and development activity. It identifies key opportunities to create and develop thriving and active communities underpinned by high-quality social and physical infrastructure.

The creation of parklands has always been part of Adelaide's modern history and identity, from Light's 1837 Adelaide plan establishing a green belt around the city through to the River Torrens Linear Park in the 1980s and 1990s, and more recently the Coast Park connecting a 70-kilometre stretch of Adelaide's coastline. The northern suburbs of Adelaide have been doing the heavy lifting for the urban growth of the state. As these new suburbs around Kudla, Angle Vale and Evanston grow, so should the parklands and natural beauty surrounding them.

The history behind the Kaurna name 'Kudla' means 'level ground' or 'open'. This level ground was traditionally the open space green belt separating both Gawler and suburbs to the south, inclusive of Munno Para, and was identified in the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan to support thousands of new homes. The establishment of the Northern Parklands will support, enhance and define the character, amenity and identity of the open space of Kudla and surrounding communities.

Spanning up to 1,000 hectares, the Northern Parklands will be one of the most significant public open space investments in South Australia's history. It will support regional recreation, biodiversity, connectivity and community health, combining linear parkland with sporting precincts, passive open space and climate-responsive landscapes. The vision of the Northern Parklands is to be established from the ridgeline following One Tree Hill Road, the future urban growth areas surrounding Kudla Railway Station, through to the banks of the Gawler River via Karbeethan Reserve.

The Northern Parklands Bill sets clear objectives for the establishment of the Northern Parklands. These will include:

- ensuring that the parklands are a sporting, cultural and recreational complex of statewide significance;
- promoting and encouraging the use of the parklands by the public, inclusive of tourist attractions; and
- developing and maintaining parklands so that they support and reflect a diverse range of environmental and social values and activities that should be protected and enhanced.

In addition, the Northern Parklands will deliver high-quality, well-designed play spaces, bike paths and walking trails. It will provide spaces for cultural activities and entertainment and will be a significant drawcard for Greater Adelaide and the state.

The Northern Parklands Bill will establish the initial phase of the Northern Parklands through a plan lodged in the General Registry Office, known as the GRO. The GRO plan will identify existing land owned by both the state and local governments which will form part of the initial stage of the Northern Parklands. Upon commencement of the act, the land identified within the GRO plan will immediately fall into the care, control and management of the Northern Parklands Trust.

Timing and staging are critical in ensuring the successful delivery and sustainable operation of the Northern Parklands. The bill seeks to achieve this through the following timeframes. Stage 1 of the Northern Parklands will be completed by 2030, with the Northern Parklands Bill requiring land identified in a second GRO plan to be acquired within five years of the commencement of the bill. This land is currently owned privately. In developing this second GRO plan, efforts have been made to reduce the impact on private landowners where possible, while still maintaining the integrity of the green corridor of the Northern Parklands.

Stage 2 of the Northern Parklands will be completed by 2040. Further land will be identified in a third GRO plan and will be acquired between 2030 and 2040. This land is owned by both government and private landowners. To create and maintain the Northern Parklands, the bill seeks to establish a new governance body to be known as the Northern Parklands Trust. The Northern Parklands Trust has been modelled on the successful West Beach Trust, established under the West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987.

The Northern Parklands Bill requires the Northern Parklands Trust to be comprised of seven members with the following composition:

- three members appointed by the minister, including one presiding member;
- two members appointed by the minister following the nomination of it by the adjacent local councils;
- a member of the Green Adelaide Board, or an urban ecologist nominated by the minister responsible for the administration of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019; and
- a member who is a First Nations person within the meaning of the First Nations Voice Act 2023.

The Northern Parklands Bill requires members to have experience or qualifications in a range of areas which are vital to the trust's operation, including:

- biodiversity or environmental planning or management;
- recreation or open space planning or management;
- cultural heritage conservation or management;
- landscape design or park management;
- tourism or event management;
- Aboriginal culture and practice;
- financial or business management; and
- local government.

In addition to establishing the Northern Parklands Trust, the Northern Parklands Bill also:

- allows for the initial establishment of the Northern Parklands as well as future land acquisitions to expand the Northern Parklands;
- provides a mechanism to recoup the costs associated with acquiring the necessary land for stages 1 and 2 from landowners who receive an uplift in the value of their land as the result of a future rezoning process;
- defines responsibility for ongoing management and maintenance of the Northern Parklands, including responsibility for future development such as recreational caravan parks and the issuing of leases and licences;
- provides a power to levy rates or charges from local council in order to fund the ongoing maintenance costs of the Northern Parklands, with the local council then being able to recoup these costs through council rates;
- requires the Northern Parklands Trust to establish an annual business plan and a long-term strategic plan for the Northern Parklands to guide its ongoing management and financial sustainability;
- provides a mechanism to enter into agreements with local government to utilise their existing resources for ongoing maintenance to achieve deficiencies;
- ensures the ongoing protection of the Northern Parklands from disposal by a future government; and
- provides an ability to establish additional statutory trusts through regulation should other parklands be established under the Northern Parklands Bill.

The Northern Parklands will also incorporate carefully planned commercial uses that contribute to the site's activation, identity as a destination and long-term financial sustainability. These commercial uses may include nature-based tourism, hospitality, events or other facilities aligned with the Parklands' broader vision and the objects of the bill. Revenue from these uses will be reinvested into the maintenance, screening and ongoing sustainable operations of the Northern Parklands.

Additionally, the Northern Parklands Trust will be able to partner with both the City of Playford and the Town of Gawler. This will allow for the utilisation and development of existing council workforces for the operations of the Northern Parklands to drive a sustainable operating model and avoid duplication of resources between the Northern Parklands Trust and local government.

Looking forward, the government's vision for the Northern Parklands will be expressed in a master plan which will be developed over the next 12 months. The master planning process will involve significant engagement with the community and impacted landowners through ongoing consultation and dialogue. The master plan will guide the future development of the Northern Parklands and the Kudla Growth Area and will act as a catalyst for private investment and enable and support vital housing growth in Adelaide's north.

The development and vision of the Northern Parklands will change the landscape of northern Adelaide and establish a legacy for future generations. It provides opportunities for people to have access to high-quality urban space, parklands and facilities, which will make Adelaide renowned on the global stage.

GARP has provided a significant step change and approach where we identify infrastructure requirements before houses have been built. This is inclusive of schools, hospitals, emergency services and parklands. This enables communities to have confidence knowing that their new homes will be supported by amenities and services from the outset.

This bill has been made possible by many people, and they should be recognised for their ongoing efforts, hard work and dedication to both the South Australian planning system and the Public Service. The development of GARP took in excess of 24 months and had over 1,400 submissions, which helped shape the GARP and key details, such as the Kudla Growth Area and the Northern Parklands.

I would like to take some time to thank key contributors for the development of this bill and the vision and execution of the Northern Parklands: firstly, both the City of Playford and the Town of Gawler, which continue to be strong partners for the development of the Northern Parklands. On this note, I would like to take the opportunity to recognise and thank the former Mayor of the Town of Gawler, Karen Redman. Mayor Redman served the Town of Gawler for over 10 years as mayor, with the utmost conviction, dedication and vision to make Gawler the thriving community that it is today.

The State Planning Commission, led by Craig Holden, has been instrumental to the development and delivery of the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan. David Reynolds, as the Chief Executive of the Department for Housing and Urban Development, continues to lead a brilliant team, along with Sally Smith who, despite having left the department, was instrumental in the development of GARP and its implementation.

I would also like to thank Chelsea Lucas, Mark Voortman and Ben Sieben, who have all been key contributors to the bill and the commencement of the master plan within the Department for Housing and Urban Development. With that, 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.

3—Interpretation

Definitions are inserted for the purposes of the measure.

Part 2—Establishment etc of parklands

Division 1—Northern Parklands

4—Northern Parklands

The Northern Parklands are established.

5—Care, control or management etc of Northern Parklands

The care, control and management of the Northern Parklands is placed in the Northern Parklands Trust.

Division 2—Other parklands

6—Establishment of other parklands

The Minister may establish other parklands.

7—Care, control or management etc of other parklands

The Minister may place the care, control and management of parklands established under the Division in a statutory trust.

A linear park may be placed in the care, control and management of a statutory trust.

Division 3—General

8—Sale of land

Land within trust parklands may not be sold or otherwise disposed of except in accordance with a resolution passed by both Houses of Parliament.

9—Roads

Provision is made in relation to road areas in trust parklands.

10—Related matters

These provisions are technical.

Part 3—The Northern Parklands Trust

Division 1—Establishment of Northern Parklands Trust

11—Northern Parklands Trust

The Northern Parklands Trust is established.

12—Membership of Northern Parklands Trust

Provision is made in relation to the membership of the Northern Parklands Trust.

13—Application of Part 5 to Northern Parklands Trust

Part 5 (other than Division 1 and Division 7) applies to the Northern Parklands Trust.

Division 2—Functions etc

14—Functions of Northern Parklands Trust

The functions of the Northern Parklands Trust are set out.

Division 3—Annual business plan

15—Annual business plan

The Northern Parklands Trust must prepare a business plan for each financial year.

Part 4—Northern Parklands levy

16—Contributions by constituent councils

Provision is made for the constituent councils for the Northern Parklands region to make a contribution towards the costs of the Northern Parklands Trust performing its functions relating to the Northern Parklands in respect of a particular financial year.

17—Payment of contributions by councils

Provision is made in relation to the payment of contributions by councils.

18—Funds may be expended in subsequent years

This provision is technical.

19—Imposition of levy by councils

The constituent councils for the Northern Parklands region must impose a levy on rateable land in the Northern Parklands region to reimburse themselves for the amounts contributed (or to be contributed) to the Northern Parklands Trust under the Part.

Provision is made in relation to the application of Chapter 10 of the *Local Government Act 1999* to the levy.

20—Costs of councils

The Northern Parklands Trust is liable to pay to each of the constituent councils for the Northern Parklands region an amount determined in accordance with any requirements of the Minister on account of the costs of the council in complying with the requirements of the Part.

Part 5—Statutory trusts

Division 1—Establishment of statutory trusts

21—Establishment of statutory trusts

The Governor may, by regulation, establish a statutory trust.

Division 2—General

22—General

This provision sets out the nature and certain powers of a statutory trust.

Division 3—Ministerial control

23—Ministerial control

A statutory trust is subject to the control and direction of the Minister.

Division 4—Membership etc of statutory trusts

24—Appointment of members etc

Provision is made in relation to the appointment of members of a statutory trust.

25—Allowances and expenses

Provision is made in relation to allowances and expenses of members.

26—Validity of acts

This provision is technical.

27—Procedures at meetings

Provision is made in relation to procedures at meetings of a statutory trust.

Division 5—Staff

28—Staff

Provision is made in relation to staff of a statutory trust.

Division 6—Committees and delegations

29—Committees

A statutory trust may establish committees.

30—Delegations

Provision is made for a statutory trust to delegate any of its functions or powers.

Division 7—Application of Part 4 (trust parklands levies) and annual business plan

31—Application of Part 4

Part 4 (which relates to contributions to trust parklands by constituent councils and the recovery of contributions by the imposition of a levy) may be applied (by regulation) in relation to trust parklands for which a statutory trust is the responsible statutory trust.

The regulations may modify the measure in connection with the application of Part 4 in relation to trust parklands.

32—Annual business plan

A statutory trust must prepare an annual business plan for a financial year.

Division 8—Financial provisions

33—Dealings with money and borrowings

34—Accounts and audit

35—Power to advance money, to act as guarantor etc

These provisions are technical.

Division 9—Other matters

36—Tax and other liabilities of statutory trust

This provision is technical.

37—Register of leases and licences

A statutory trust must keep a register of leases and licences granted by the statutory trust over any trust parklands.

38—Damage etc to property of statutory trust

It is an offence to damage (or do other things to or on) property of statutory trust.

39—Power to resume land in trust parklands

The Governor may resume land in trust parklands if satisfied that the land is required for a public purpose.

40—Agreements between statutory trusts and councils relating to enforcement

A statutory trust may enter into an agreement with a council (or councils) in whose area trust parklands for which the statutory trust is the responsible statutory trust are located for the enforcement by the council (or councils) of provisions of the measure in relation to the trust parklands.

Division 10—Performance agreements and long-term strategic plans

41—Performance agreements

Provision is made in relation to performance agreements for statutory trusts.

42—Long-term strategic plan

A statutory trust must prepare a long term strategic plan.

Part 6—Miscellaneous

43—Delegation by Minister

The Minister may delegate any of the Minister's functions or powers under the measure.

44—Approvals by Minister or Treasurer

This provision is technical.

45—Acquisition of land

The Minister is authorised to acquire land in accordance with the *Land Acquisition Act 1969* for the purpose of increasing the area of any trust parklands.

The Minister is required to acquire certain defined land within specified periods for the purpose of increasing the area of the Northern Parklands.

46—Recovery of costs of certain acquisitions

The Minister's reasonable costs of acquiring land that the Minister is required to acquire for the purpose of increasing the area of the Northern Parklands are to be recovered from the owners of specified land.

47—Regulations and fee notices

Provisions is made for regulations and fee notices under the measure.

Schedule 1—Transitional provision

1—Transitional provision

A transitional provision is inserted for the purposes of the measure.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. D.G. Pisoni.

CRIMINAL LAW (FORENSIC PROCEDURES) (BLOOD TESTING) AMENDMENT BILL*Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 15 May 2025.)

The Hon. D.G. PISONI (Unley) (16:07): I indicate that I am the lead speaker on this bill, and I rise to speak. This bill amends the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Act 2007 to make sure that offenders who bite or spit on police officers or other emergency workers can be compelled to undergo blood testing for communicable diseases. It is intended to give greater support to those who

put themselves in harm's way for the community, and I indicate from the outset that the Liberal Party will be supporting it.

The party has considered issues of violence against emergency workers before. In 2019, the then Marshall Liberal government and Attorney-General the Hon. Vickie Chapman introduced the Criminal Law Consolidation (Assaults on Prescribed Emergency Workers) Amendment Act. That act created specific offences for assaults on emergency workers acting in the course of their duties. Those laws have been important. Since their introduction, more than 2,700 defendants have been charged under those provisions. That figure demonstrates the scale of the problem.

Our frontline emergency workers continue to face violence and aggression as part of their daily work. The bill before us today builds on those early reforms. The types of conduct we are talking about, spitting and biting, are deeply confronting. They are degrading acts and, for the person on the receiving end, they cause far more than momentary distress.

The impact is not only physical but there is also the psychological toll that comes from fear of contracting a serious disease such as HIV or hepatitis. Even when the risk of transmission is low, the anxiety during that period before test results can be confirmed is significant. It affects not only the worker but their entire family.

The bill makes several changes to address those concerns. Firstly, it expands the definition of a prescribed emergency worker. In addition to existing frontline emergency workers, the bill also expands the definition to include police security officers, registered health practitioners in hospitals, and those employed under the Correctional Services Act or the Youth Justice Administration Act. These are people who also face risks in the course of their work and deserve the same protections.

Secondly, the bill removes the requirement that actual harm must have occurred before the blood test can be authorised. It recognises that the risk of exposure and the fear that follows can itself cause harm. Thirdly, it updates the definition of 'prescribed serious offence' and includes the specific offences introduced in 2019 dealing with assaults on emergency workers and the deliberate use of biological material.

Finally, the bill replaces section 20B of the act. Where the conditions are met, and the worker makes a request, authorisation for testing will no longer be discretionary. It will be mandatory. At the same time, the bill preserves the existing safeguard for protected persons—children and people unable to understand the nature and consequences of forensic procedure—so that vulnerable individuals are not unfairly subject to it.

The Liberal Party has always stood with our frontline workers—we did while in government and we do so now. We value their service and we recognise the dangers they face every day in protecting the public. When a police officer, a nurse or a youth justice worker is spat on or bitten, they should not be left with the uncertainty about what might have been transmitted. They deserve clarity, reassurance and a process that puts their wellbeing first.

The parliament has a responsibility to back those who put themselves in the frontline for the community. This bill does that, and the opposition is pleased to support it. This legislation sends a clear message that spitting on or biting our frontline workers will not be tolerated. It ensures that when such conduct occurs, the law will back the worker, not the offender. It is about giving peace of mind to those who serve. It is about ensuring that the police officer, the paramedic, the nurse or the youth justice worker can continue their duties without the added burden of uncertainty hanging over them, if they are unfortunately victims of such an action. With those remarks, I commend the bill to the house.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (16:12): I rise today to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Amendment Bill 2024, a bill that delivers on our election commitment to keep our frontline emergency workers safe. The central purpose of this bill is to mandate blood testing of individuals who spit on or bite police officers and other emergency service workers where a request is made by that affected worker. This is about protecting those who protect us—our police officers, our paramedics, nurses, corrections officers and many others—who face not only the daily risk of physical harm but the psychological trauma that can result from biological exposure in the line of duty.

In 2015, the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing for Diseases) Amendment Bill 2015, an election commitment of the then Labor Party, was introduced and passed. Prior to that

date, there were circumstances where an emergency worker was exposed to bodily fluids capable of transmitting an infectious disease and there was no means by which to compel the individual to provide a blood sample for the purpose of testing for infectious diseases.

The 2015 amendment and the now current law provides that any offender who is reasonably suspected of having committed a specified offence of violence against a police officer or other stated category of emergency worker can be compelled to undertake a blood test to test for the presence of infectious diseases where that emergency worker was exposed to the offender's bodily fluids and there is risk that the emergency worker in being so exposed could have contracted an infectious disease. The 2015 amendment also extended protection from just police officers to other categories of emergency workers who were at risk of contracting infectious diseases owing to the violence inflicted on them in the course of their duties.

In the current law, however, the power to authorise blood testing rests with a senior police officer, and it is discretionary. That discretion is guided only by internal South Australia Police policies rather than clear statutory requirements. The Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Amendment Bill removes that ambiguity. Under new section 20B, where an affected worker requests testing within the statutory timeframe, the senior police officer must authorise the procedure, subject only to the exclusion of protected persons such as minors or individuals incapable of understanding the procedure. This ensures that no worker is left wondering whether they will receive the support they need after a traumatic exposure.

This is not about punishment; it is about peace of mind and timely medical intervention. It is about answering quickly and conclusively the terrifying question that runs through the mind of an emergency responder who has been spat on or bitten: have I just been infected with something deadly? The origins of this bill lie in our policy document 'Keeping our police safe: For the future'. In that document, we promised to implement mandatory blood tests for those who assault police by spitting or biting. In a pandemic or post-pandemic environment, the fear of infection from communicable diseases—be it hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV or others—has only deepened. The stress and anxiety caused by biological exposure is real, persistent and unjustifiable.

This bill provides certainty and structure where previously there was discretion and some confusion, and it builds in appropriate safeguards. A senior officer is still empowered to authorise testing outside the mandatory scope in cases where a request is late or where circumstances demand discretion. Where a worker has taken the initiative to request testing promptly, the authorisation will be automatic.

Following extensive consultation, this bill goes further. It expands the definition of 'prescribed employment' to better reflect the modern landscape of emergency service provision. Under the amendments, the scope now includes non-emergency ambulance personnel; police security officers; youth justice officers and training centre staff; registered health practitioners in hospitals—not just doctors and nurses but also physiotherapists, radiographers and more; and other workers who may be added by regulation, ensuring the framework remains responsive and adaptive into the future. This is not just about protecting our police. It is about safeguarding the broader emergency response and healthcare workforce across South Australia.

The bill also updates the definition of 'prescribed serious offence', ensuring it captures modern and relevant forms of biological assault. These include new offences in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, such as intentionally causing human biological material to come into contact with another person. These are disgusting, cowardly acts, and they must be met with some serious legal consequences and serious procedural safeguards for those who are affected.

We have also supported two amendments from the Hon. Mr Simms that enhance clarity and fairness. Amendment No. 1 inserts a clear statement of purpose at the start of new section 20B. It makes explicit that the procedure is solely for detecting communicable diseases through blood samples. This ensures transparency and avoids any misuse or misunderstanding of the procedure.

Amendment No. 2 introduces flexibility to the seven-day timeframe for worker requests. If a worker is injured or otherwise incapacitated, they can still make a request within six months, and the authorising officer retains discretion. This ensures compassion and common sense are built into the process without compromising its integrity. Importantly, we are inserting a note into section 28 of the act to confirm that a procedure authorised under the new section is a 'suspects procedure' under part 3 of the act, making the law clearer and more navigable for those administering it.

At its core, this bill is about respect: respect for the sacrifices our frontline workers make every single day. These are individuals who willingly walk into danger, chaos and trauma, often to pull others out of it. The least we can do in return is to provide them with legal protections that are robust, reliable and fair. Assaulting an emergency worker is a serious criminal act, but spitting or biting—particularly in the context of communicable disease transmission—are an affront not only to the individual but to the community as a whole. These are acts that must be met with swift legal authority and immediate medical clarity.

I would like to acknowledge how hard our first responders work to protect the community. They deserve peace of mind, all the peace of mind we can give them, when they know that they may have been exposed to transmissible disease. Medical practitioners, nurses and midwives in our hospitals and those who work or volunteer in our emergency services are equally deserving of the potential peace of mind this measure may bring. They also work extremely hard to ensure the health and safety of our community. This bill reflects the values of a government that backs its frontline workers. It honours our clear election promise and provides the tools our emergency workers need to feel safe, respected and supported. I commend the bill to the house.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (16:19): I rise today to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Amendment Bill 2024, a critical and timely piece of legislation that delivers on a commitment made by this government to the people of South Australia and in particular to our frontline emergency service workers. This bill is the direct result of a key election commitment made by the South Australian Labor government as part of its policy platform of 'keeping our police safe for the future'. That commitment was simple and uncompromising. If you spit on or bite a police officer, paramedic, nurse, firefighter or other emergency responder, you will be compelled to provide a blood sample for testing.

Every day emergency service workers put themselves in harm's way to protect our community. They attend dangerous incidents, de-escalate violence, treat the injured, and respond to crises with professionalism and compassion. But increasingly these workers face unacceptable abuse, particularly in the form of deliberate acts such as spitting and biting. These actions are not only degrading and traumatic but they also carry the real risk of disease transmission, including HIV, hepatitis B and C and other bloodborne viruses. The emotional toll on affected workers, who may have to wait weeks or months to know whether or not they have been infected, is immense and enduring.

Prior to this bill, there was no clear mechanism to compel offenders to undergo blood testing in these situations, leaving frontline workers in a cruel and unnecessary state of medical uncertainty. This bill changes that. The SA Labor policy document 'Keeping our police safe for the future' recognised that the growing number of assaults on police and emergency workers demanded not only tougher penalties but also practical legislative tools to protect their physical and psychological wellbeing.

This bill gives effect to a key policy proposal in that document. We will introduce legislation to allow for compulsory blood testing of individuals who deliberately bite or spit on police and emergency workers, so affected personnel can get answers quickly about potential exposure to disease. That promise was made in good faith to our emergency workers, to unions representing those workers and to the wider community, who expect that assaults on frontline staff will be met with swift, sensible legal consequences. Today, through this bill, we honour that promise.

This bill would not exist without the tireless and passionate advocacy of South Australia's trade unions, particularly those representing emergency service personnel. The Police Association of South Australia has long called for a clear legal mechanism to support officers assaulted in the line of duty. They have made it unequivocally clear that officers who are spat on or bitten should not be left in limbo while waiting for test results. Their advocacy on this issue has been consistent and deeply rooted in the lived experience of their members.

The Ambulance Employees Association and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation have similarly stood up for paramedics and nurses who are frequently exposed to violent or abusive behaviour in high-pressure environments. These unions have been instrumental in ensuring that the bill applies not only to police but to all emergency service workers because no frontline worker should be treated as expendable. The United Firefighters Union and representatives of Correctional and child protection staff also added their voices to the call, recognising that this is a

cross-sector issue affecting all corners of our public safety infrastructure. These unions have provided real-world case studies, expert advice and legal insight that shaped the bill before us. They have done more than advocate. They have co-designed a legislative framework that is just, proportionate and workable.

The Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Bill empowers senior police officers to authorise the taking of a blood sample from a person reasonably suspected of biting or spitting on a prescribed emergency service worker during the course of their duties. Key elements include: mandatory blood testing authorised without consent in cases of assault involving spitting or biting; applicability to a broad range of emergency workers, including police, ambulance officers, nurses, doctors, child protection staff, corrections officers, firefighters and SES volunteers; strict procedural safeguards, including time limits on testing, qualified medical collection and rights of review; provisions to safeguard the privacy and dignity of both the alleged offender and the emergency service worker; and clear pathways for victims to access the test results quickly so that early treatment or intervention can be sought if necessary.

This bill has been developed in consultation with unions, health professionals, including infectious disease experts, and privacy and legal experts to ensure compliance with human rights and due process. Their input has helped shape a law that is firm, fair and fit for purpose, a law that respects the rights of all parties while placing the health and welfare of our frontline workers first.

This bill is not about punishment, it is about safety, certainty, and peace of mind. It is about preventing psychological harm to workers who, through no fault of their own, are forced to live in fear of infection after an assault. The legislation is carefully designed to balance the rights of the accused with the rights of workers. It includes appropriate oversight and mechanisms to ensure that it is not misused. But at its heart is a simple truth: workers deserve to be protected from health threats as much as they do from physical violence.

This bill sends a strong and unambiguous message that assaults on emergency workers will not be tolerated, and where such assaults involve spitting or biting we will act quickly to protect those who serve our community. This bill is a clear example of what can be achieved when government and trade unions work together in the interests of working people. It fulfills an election promise. It honours the experience and advocacy of our unions, and it delivers practical change for the better. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (16:26): I rise today to speak in support of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Amendment Bill 2024, a bill that delivers on a clear election commitment from the Malinauskas Labor government to better protect those who protect us.

Across our state, emergency service workers, police officers, paramedics, nurses, security officers, and corrections staff turn up each day not knowing what challenges they will face. What they do know is that their safety cannot be taken for granted. While it is tragic that legislation like this is necessary, it absolutely is, because behind every clause in this bill is a real person, a real story, a real moment of fear, distress and trauma.

I recently met with a local police officer who patrols the southern suburbs and is well known in our community. A few months ago, during a routine call-out to assist a distressed person, she was spat on, directly in the face. At first she kept her cool, finished the job and did everything by the book. But later, sitting alone at Flinders emergency waiting for her blood test results, the reality hit her. She was thinking, 'What if I just contracted something? What will I tell my partner? What about my kids?' No-one signs up to wear the uniform expecting to face that kind of uncertainty, not because of the nature of the work itself but because of the violent, degrading actions of others.

This bill is about restoring a sense of control and dignity to workers like her. It strengthens the law to ensure that if you spit on or bite an emergency service worker you will be required, not optionally requested, to undergo a blood test if the affected worker asks for it. That request will not be subject to a discretionary process; it will be mandated under law. This is not about punishment, it is about peace of mind, about alleviating the waiting game, and about protecting the mental wellbeing of workers who are already giving so much.

Importantly, the bill also expands the categories of workers who can request a blood test in these circumstances, because it is not just frontline police officers at risk, it is paramedics, it is nurses, corrections staff, youth justice officers, hospital pharmacists and even security personnel assisting

with detainees under the Mental Health Act. In fact, in my own electorate I have heard from paramedics who have worked for St John and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, those who operate on the frontline of crisis in regional and remote areas.

One described an incident when a patient under the influence lashed out in the back of an ambulance. He was bitten. He did not report it at the time because he did not want to make a fuss but he spent weeks worrying in silence and that is just not okay. This bill means that if that same incident happened today and that paramedic chose to request a test, that request would have legal weight. It would not rely on internal discretion, it would be acted upon.

The legislation also reflects modern realities by expanding the list of applicable offences. No longer will outdated definitions or technicalities prevent a frontline worker from getting the answers that they need. It also allows for future categories of workers to be added via regulation, ensuring we can keep up with emerging roles and risks as the nature of emergency and healthcare work continues to evolve.

To be clear, this is not about removing safeguards. There remain appropriate exemptions, such as where the alleged offender is a child or person unable to understand the nature of the procedure. This is a carefully considered bill that strikes the right balance between the rights of the individual and the rights of the worker placed at risk. I want to acknowledge the police officers, ambos, hospital workers and correctional staff across my electorate of Davenport who have spoken to me about this important issue. I know this change matters to you and I want you to know that we have listened. I also want to thank the Minister for Police and the Attorney-General for the work done to bring this bill to the floor, including the extensive consultation process that helped strengthen and clarify its provisions.

At the heart of this bill is a simple principle: no worker should be left in limbo after being assaulted with biological material. The fear of communicable disease, especially in the wake of COVID, has only heightened and we owe it to our emergency service workforce to give them the tools and the reassurance that they need. What often gets lost in discussions about legislation like this is the long tail of psychological harm.

It is not just the act of being spat on or bitten, it is the anxiety that follows, the sleepless nights, the Google searches, and the silent dread while waiting for results. I have had healthcare workers quietly admit they did not tell their families about an incident because they did not want to cause worry. They just carried it on alone. That is not sustainable and it is not fair. This bill gives those workers a tangible way to begin the process of reassurance and recovery.

To those who say this bill is heavy handed, I ask you to consider the trauma of waiting days or even weeks to know whether you have been exposed to something serious. To those who say it is unnecessary, I urge you to spend a day on the job with one of our paramedics or correctional officers. This legislation is not theoretical: it is real, it is urgent and it is long overdue. We have relied too long on internal policy to manage these situations, but policies can shift, they can be inconsistently applied and they can leave workers guessing.

That is why this bill matters. It turns a discretionary process into a legal right for the people on the frontline and it provides consistency and certainty so that when something traumatic happens, there is no ambiguity about what can be done next. Workers should not have to fight for a process; they should be able to rely on it.

The people of South Australia value fairness, they value decency and they expect that those who keep us safe will be protected in return. This legislation reflects those values. It is a measured response, carefully designed and informed by real-world experience. It sends a strong message that spitting on a nurse or biting a police officer is not just abhorrent, it comes with consequences and it ensures those consequences are not just punitive but practical, focused on protecting health and restoring peace of mind. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (16:33): I am pleased to rise in support of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) (Blood Testing) Amendment Bill. This bill seeks to deliver on an election commitment by the Malinauskas Labor government to legislate to compel offenders who bite or spit on South Australian police officers or emergency workers to undergo blood testing for communicable diseases.

It is unfortunately the case that police and other emergency workers, in the course of undertaking their crucially important work across our community, are sometimes subject to incidents

in which they are bitten or spat upon. This is deplorable behaviour, but regrettably it does occur and there is a potential for ongoing consequences to arise from such incidents. For this reason, it is important that we act to ensure that the laws of our state enable appropriate support for workers who become subject to assaults of this kind.

Section 20AA of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act includes, under existing arrangements, specific offences that deal with offenders who assault or cause harm to a prescribed emergency worker who is acting in the course of their official duties. These offences rightly attract significant penalties, reflecting that this type of offending is taken seriously, as it should be. This type of antisocial behaviour puts police and emergency workers at risk. It is completely unacceptable, and it is entirely out of step with the standard of social behaviour that reasonable South Australians expect from one another.

We have seen the figure indicating that, as at 26 February last year, 2,711 defendants have been charged with assaulting or causing harm to emergency workers under those provisions of the act since they came into operation in October 2019. In addition to assaults or harms of this kind potentially giving rise to physical and psychological injury on the part of those who are subject to them, the risk exists for the transmission of a communicable disease. Although it is not typical, it is possible.

When a person is exposed to bloodborne diseases, including HIV or hepatitis B or C, it is possible for a substantial period of time to elapse before an infection becomes detectable in that person's blood. This period between the time of exposure and the time when detection becomes possible, which is sometimes referred to as the window period, can last for several months. Understandably, police and emergency workers who have been exposed to biological material in the course of their work may experience high levels of stress and anxiety during this so-called window period.

The aim of this bill is to ensure that workers who have been subject to incidents involving exposure to biological material are able to make the choice to ascertain in a timely manner whether they have been exposed to a communicable disease. The intention is that these reforms will support such workers to avoid the anxiety that may be experienced during the window period, as well as to make informed and timely healthcare decisions.

The bill seeks to build on existing provisions in division 4 of part 2 of the Criminal Law Forensic Procedures Act 2007, which provide a mechanism for a senior police officer, who is referred to as the 'authorising officer', to authorise the taking of blood from a person who assaults a police officer or other emergency services worker. Section 20B(1) of the act currently gives the authorising officer a discretion to authorise the taking of blood samples from a person who is suspected of a prescribed serious offence if the authorising officer is satisfied that it is likely a person engaged in prescribed employment came into contact with or was otherwise exposed to the suspect's biological material as a result of a suspected offence.

Relevant definitions, including those of a prescribed serious offence and prescribed employment, are laid out in section 20A of the act. The bill proposes to delete section 20B of the act and to substitute new section 20B, the key changes of which are contained in subsections (1)(a), (2) and (3). Under new section 20B(2), if the person engaged in prescribed employment requests authorisation of blood testing within the prescribed time period following the exposure, and in a manner determined by the Commissioner of Police, the authorising officer must grant the request. That time period is seven days or a longer period if the authorising officer considers the person did not have a reasonable opportunity to make the request in that timeframe due to injury or other extenuating circumstances. Such a longer period will not exceed six months.

The authorising officer must still be satisfied that the requirements in section 20B(1) are met before granting the authorisation; that is, the authorising officer must be satisfied that the person from whom the sample is to be taken is suspected of a prescribed serious offence and that, as a result of the person's suspected offending, the affected worker came into contact with or was exposed to the person's biological material. Provided these conditions are met, new subsection (2) provides that the authorising officer must authorise blood testing to be undertaken in accordance with the request of the affected worker.

Under subsection (3), the changes in subsection (2) do not apply if the authorising officer knows that the person on whom the forensic procedure would be carried out is a protected person

defined in the act as a child or as a person physically or mentally incapable of understanding the nature and consequences of a forensic procedure. A senior police officer would still retain the existing discretion to authorise blood testing in cases where no request is made by the affected worker or where the authorising officer knows that the person is a protected person.

Within section 20B, a new subsection—which was moved as an amendment to the bill by the Hon. Robert Simms in the other place and which the government has supported—aims to make the purpose of these provisions abundantly clear. Their intention is to facilitate blood testing of a suspect for the purposes of testing for the presence of any communicable disease which may be detected in blood.

The bill also makes changes to some of the definitions contained in section 20A of the act. Firstly, an authorisation under section 20B of the act may only be granted following contact with, or exposure to, biological material by a person in prescribed employment. The bill amends the definition of 'prescribed employment' and the related definition of 'emergency work' in section 20A of the act to include additional categories of workers who perform emergency work or who are understood to be at a similar level of risk of being bitten or spat on.

Under the current provision, the categories of workers include police officers; certain hospital workers, including medical practitioners, nurses and midwives; correctional services workers; and those employed in emergency work in the SA Ambulance Service, the Country Fire Service, the Metropolitan Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, St John's Ambulance, Surf Life Saving SA, Marine Rescue or the accident and emergency department of a hospital.

The bill extends the scope of these provisions to include all persons authorised to provide emergency and non-emergency ambulance services under section 57 and section 58 of the Health Care Act. This will include police and security officers, health practitioners within a hospital, and youth justice officers. The bill also provides a mechanism for further classes of workers to be prescribed by regulation, which enables responsiveness to future need if such need should arise.

I recognise and commend the Police Association of South Australia for its contributions to the development of this bill and more broadly for its commitment to advocating for improvements in the safety and wellbeing of our police officers. This bill, on top of the strengthened criminal penalties already put in place by the Malinauskas government, forms an important part of the broader work that the government is undertaking to improve conditions for police and emergency workers, who are greatly deserving of the support that we as legislators can provide.

They are people whose work crucially underpins the wellbeing and safety of our community. Taking measures to protect their wellbeing and safety in turn is an objective that rightly enjoys broad support in this parliament. I am pleased to commend the bill to the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): The member for—

Ms STINSON (Badcoe) (16:41): Badcoe.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Odenwalder): Badcoe. It has been a while.

Ms STINSON: Commonly referred to as 'the member for Ashford', but I am the member for Badcoe. I answer to both. I would not say I am thrilled to be speaking on this bill, because it is quite depressing to think that we even need legislation to cater for situations such as this, but I am glad that our government is doing something about it.

I am particularly pleased that this will fulfil an election commitment that the Malinauskas government made at the last election, because obviously we are a government that delivers on our promises. So, once again, this is an example of us delivering on the commitments that we made to the community at the last election.

Mr Acting Speaker, I am sure that quite unfortunately, given your past career as a police officer, you are probably very familiar—more familiar than most in this house—with some of the situations that give rise to this legislation being required. You would be quite familiar with the taxing work that police officers do and the incredible stress and strain they must be under when they do their jobs to the best of their ability to protect others and they find themselves exposed in such vulnerable situations. The rest of us in this place can only imagine what that is like, but I understand that from your hands-on experience in the police workforce you would have direct experience of that.

I am pleased that this bill is not just looking at police, though: it is also looking at other emergency services workers. One of my sisters is a paramedic, so I am pleased that this bill extends to ambulance officers as well as to a range of other workers in our health services: police security officers—who we are very pleased to have the support of in this place to do our work—training centre officers, youth justice officers and correctional services officers.

It is terrible to think that these workers occasionally are forced to put their health and their wellbeing—the welfare of themselves but also their families—in peril because of the actions of others. But that is the world that we live in, and as lawmakers it is our responsibility to make sure that we are taking on their views and their experiences and doing what we can to support them in their very difficult work. I am pleased that there is a great range of individuals on our frontline emergency services who will be covered by this bill should we be so fortunate as to pass it.

One of the key changes here is moving from a discretionary responsibility to the compulsory testing that is required under this bill. Previously, if an individual—a worker—believed that they had come into contact with biological material, they could request of a senior police officer that they conduct a test on an alleged perpetrator to be able to ascertain if that person did have communicable diseases and, of course, what that might mean for the worker in terms of their exposure.

What this bill essentially does is state that that is not an optional extra anymore. That is not something that the worker has to plead their case on, or that a senior officer has the individual discretion to make a decision on. What we are saying as a parliament is that we really do find this situation so appalling that we are willing to infringe on a right—on the bodily autonomy of someone—and compel them to submit to such testing.

I actually think this is quite a serious thing to do, to ask a person to submit to a blood test. There are other circumstances under the law in which that is required, or indeed an alleged offender may have an option to take—for example, in our drink and drug driving testing. However, it is a big step to say that we are compelling someone to do it, essentially saying they do not have a choice whether they submit to it or not.

Of course, there are some caveats and some tests in the bill to be able to protect people, recognising that this can be a vulnerable situation that the alleged perpetrator is in, and I might go into that in more detail in a moment. I do think on balance that what might be regarded as a heavy-handed approach in infringing on the personal liberties of a person is warranted when we are looking at the health and personal liberties of another person who may have been exposed to a communicable disease. I did think long and hard about this bill when it was raised on our side of the house some time ago about whether this is justified and, on balance, unfortunately, I think it is.

The other thing that is worth noting in this bill is that these tests will happen at the request of an affected worker, so it does not mean that a test is automatically applied to an alleged perpetrator. That only occurs when an affected worker requests such a test. What we are removing is the discretion of that senior officer, that authorising officer, to be able to say no to the affected worker. Basically, if an affected worker asks for one of these tests to be conducted—with reasonable grounds—on an alleged offender, then the senior officer must comply with that and must authorise such testing to go ahead.

Some workers may not feel that is necessary, or may not want to go down that path, and they will have the option to not engage in that, although I have to say that if it was me I would certainly be availing myself of the ability to know earlier if I had been exposed to a communicable disease.

At the time we started talking about this—and I know the Police Association were very active in pushing forward this idea and advocating on behalf of their members—of course, we were living in the shadow of COVID and coming off the back of that experience, an experience in which we all learned a great deal. Certainly, at that time, I think it really focused our minds, both as policymakers and also as individuals living in our communities, as to the impacts of communicable diseases, of how they are spread and of the consequences of some of those diseases spreading. For most of us something like COVID was a mere inconvenience, but for others there were life-ending consequences to them contracting COVID.

People who are already vulnerable with pre-existing conditions, people who are older and people who are quite young can all be more susceptible to infection by various diseases than the rest of us. I think that period really highlighted the importance of knowing what we were dealing with

and being able to look after ourselves and our loved ones, especially more vulnerable loved ones, if the need arose.

Certainly, this scenario does not only affect the affected worker. They may be the one who contracts a communicable disease, but of course their loved ones—their partners, their children, their elderly relatives—may then have that disease or that condition passed on to them, so I think that this does provide a broader community benefit. Of course, then there is the question of the mental health of the affected worker.

The member for Davenport provided the house with some really valuable insights into what her community has said to her about the incredibly stressful impact of thinking that maybe you have been exposed to something and having to wait an extended period of time for maybe that condition to develop or being subject yourself to a large number of tests but also long periods of waiting before there is any certainty—and sometimes there might not be any certainty—about whether you have come into contact with something that could affect your health or that you may pass on to others. I thank her for her contribution. It certainly added to the experiences and insights that my community have provided me, particularly from those who work in emergency services.

Of course, chief among those understandings, as I mentioned earlier, is that my sister is a paramedic. She was very fortunate to train here but then moved to the UK to work in the London Ambulance Service, and she is back here in Australia again now. Certainly, listening to some of the absolutely petrifying experiences that she has had out on the road fills me with terror, to be honest. I really worry for my sister. She is the most level-headed person I know. She is so calm and so compassionate towards others. Of course, she has an amazing amount of skill and experience now, even though she is still much younger than me, as well as expertise and training. Despite that, I still really worry about her safety out there.

You would think, if a paramedic is called to a situation, that someone is in need and that people would recognise that and be very grateful for the emergency medical assistance that is being provided to them. However, unfortunately, sometimes people are either not in their right mind, they are affected by drugs or alcohol, they have mental health challenges or they are just really not great people who attack our ambulance officers. From time to time there have certainly been cases of spitting, scratching and biting by individuals who paramedics are trying to help, or they are trying to get those people out of the way so that they can help someone in need.

For all of those who have relatives who work in emergency services, I think this bill will come as some tiny comfort to the risk that their loved ones face every day when they go out there and do their jobs, jobs that exist to help us and to make our world a safer place and to assist people in their moment of need.

As I said, the bill has some caveats and tests to, I suppose, limit this great power that we are providing to senior officers to authorise blood tests but also to empower the affected person to be able to take advantage. Some of those tests include limiting this compulsory blood testing to a person who is suspected of a prescribed serious offence. What does that mean? Well, a prescribed serious offence is defined in section 20A of the act and, broadly, it includes various assault and 'cause harm' offences.

You would expect, of course, that a person would be charged with those in the event that they had bitten, spat on, scratched or otherwise hurt an emergency services worker. But it also expands that definition to include causing harm to or assaulting a prescribed emergency worker, contrary to section 20AA of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, and also committing a prohibited act by intentionally causing human biological material to come into contact with another person, which is contrary to section 20AB of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act.

So this is not a free for all. This is quite defined to a certain set of emergency services workers who are on the frontline. Further, it is refined to only relate to those charged with or suspected of, accused of, that fairly narrow set of physical offences, offences against the person. As far as the range of people go who are included in this, emergency work is defined, of course, in relation to police officers, certain hospital workers like doctors, nurses and midwives, and correctional services workers.

But the bill also updates the definition of prescribed employment and the related definition of emergency work. So this bill extends that, gratefully, I say, to persons authorised to provide

emergency ambulance services, like my sister, but also non-emergency ambulance services and ambulance services that are run under different legislation to our state Ambulance Service—for example, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Babcock Mission Critical Services, and the commonwealth Department of Defence.

In addition, it extends to police security officers, who we are very lucky to have look after us here in Parliament House. Very rarely do they have to deal with anything approaching what we are talking about here today, but in the event that they did, and we hope they do not, they would be able to avail themselves of this change to the legislation as well, which of course is a good thing. We are also talking here about training centre employees and youth justice officers who will be added to the definition of emergency work and emergency prescribed employment, as well as people employed in a hospital as a registered health practitioner and in our correctional services facilities.

I, for so many reasons that I have expressed, support this bill. I would hate for the situation to arise for my sister to be bitten or spat on or scraped or injured in some way that could see her exposed to a disease. I cannot imagine the mental strain that would cause her, her partner and her family.

While that in itself is something that we seek to avoid, but unfortunately does happen, I hope that this might bring some comfort to her and her colleagues that we in this place are looking out for them, that we know the difficulties that they face, and we are quite serious about doing all that we can to make sure their working environment is safe, but on the occasion that it is not, that they are supported in every way possible.

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (16:58): I am delighted to close the debate for the second reading of this bill. I have in fact learnt much from people while listening to them in the course of their contribution on both sides of the chamber. I have been grateful for the individual stories that have been shared and also the insight about what it is like to work in those environments where one is at more risk of being infected or indeed receiving other injuries and the gratitude, I think, with which this bill will be received by those people.

We do not like to, as governments, generally, create too many pieces of legislation that force interventions in a physical sense on people. We are, as a liberal democracy, loath to put those kinds of requirements on people. But there are instances where the greater good is served and the balance of benefit is served through that kind of intervention, and I think this one has been designed in a very judicious way in order to protect people, to give certainty and security to people, but in a way that is respectful also of all those who are involved. I therefore commend this bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

The Hon. S.E. CLOSE (Port Adelaide—Deputy Premier, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Workforce and Population Strategy) (17:00): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

HARBORS AND NAVIGATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 June 2025.)

Mr HUGHES (Giles) (17:00): I rise today to obviously support the Harbors and Navigation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025. Coming from the seat of Giles, I have an interest in harbours and ports; in fact, it is a longstanding interest in harbours and ports, and not just the ones in my electorate but the various proposals at different times around Spencer Gulf and the good sense—or the lack of good sense—when it comes to some of those proposals.

There is a series of ports directly within my electorate. Obviously, there is the port of Whyalla, which is made up of two elements. One is Outer Harbour, which is essentially a jetty that was commissioned in 1968 to fulfil an iron pellet order for the Japanese at the time, and that jetty has gone on to operate up until today. Of course, it was built in conjunction at the time with the pellet plant at Whyalla, which has also found a life beyond those original Japanese orders.

There is also the Inner Harbour at Whyalla. That is largely an export harbour in terms of tonnages, but it also imports product. At the moment out of Inner Harbour in Whyalla we export copper concentrate; that will come to an end in the not too distant future with some of the changes that are occurring with BHP and Carrapateena, but at the moment we do export the copper concentrate from Carrapateena. We also, of course, export iron ore from the Inner Harbour and, indeed, from the Outer Harbour as well.

The harbour also imports a number of products that are essential for the functioning of the steelworks. We import coking coal; we no longer make that ourselves, so we have to bring in the coking coal. We used to import the metallurgical coal to turn into coking coal. We also import dolomite and a number of other materials used as flux in the ironmaking process.

Not far away from Whyalla, we also have Port Bonython, which was commissioned back in 1982. Port Bonython exports hydrocarbons and imports diesel to a diesel storage facility. The jetty at Port Bonython is owned by the state and is leased to Santos. Over recent years there has been a lot of work and refurbishment on that jetty. The Weatherill government committed over \$30 million to maintenance on that jetty, and indeed the Marshall government also committed \$30 million or thereabouts to the work that needed to be done at that particular jetty.

When it comes to Port Bonython and the port at Whyalla, these changes do not capture those ports. They have been in place for a long period of time. In the case of the port at Whyalla, they are captured by the indenture. Obviously, over recent months there have been some issues surrounding the port at Whyalla. That has now all been resolved in a way that serves the public interest, the interests of this state. So Whyalla and Port Bonython are not captured.

It might be interesting to see what happens in Port Augusta possibly in the not too distant future and make some assumptions about whether they do export the iron ore from the north of the state by barge down to Whyalla. I have some particular views about that, when it comes to creating critical mass and economies of scale in this state, but I will not go into those particular views today. In my electorate, the ports have been incredibly important for the economic wellbeing of the region and they make a very significant contribution to the state's economic wellbeing.

There are several purposes of the bill, including providing the minister with the powers to publish harbour rules to assist in the smooth operation of harbours around South Australia. As is indicated, or implied, whatever happens will be publicly available. It is going to be on the web, so there is a lot of transparency about what is to be done. The bill will provide the minister with powers to publish a safety direction to be used in situations with heightened safety risks that do not rise to the level of an emergency. At the moment, those powers do not exist. When it comes to full-on emergencies, the minister does have power, the state does have power, but it may be a whole raft of lesser issues that will need to be addressed, and these changes will allow that to happen.

The bill will clarify the minister's powers regarding dealings with Rex, and there are some additional powers that are going to be conferred. At times, Rex can cause hazards and other issues when it comes to the marine environment. This amendment bill will give the minister the power to intervene, to do what is necessary in relation to Rex and to recover the costs. There will be a whole process around that, so it is not just a case of doing something, imposing costs; there will be a process.

The bill will clarify issues regarding the vesting of maritime property in the minister. There is a range of ports and harbours in South Australia that are privately owned. This is not looking to diminish the rights that come with that. There is also the capacity to ensure safety and the smooth operation of the harbours and ports in South Australia.

Miscellaneous changes include updating superseded legislation references and deleting expiation fees, which are to be moved to regulations. Sometimes, we have hangover from the distant past, and one thing does come to mind. I have raised this with the minister's office, and they were very helpful. The port of Port Augusta is still a gazetted channel. There have not been any ships or

any larger vessels traversing up to Port Augusta for many years. When I spoke to some waterside workers their recall was that the last vessel of any bulk that went up to Port Augusta was back in 1972.

Port Augusta, a long time before Whyalla and other places, used to be a very vibrant port. If people get an opportunity, when you are up in Port Augusta, have a look at some of the old photos, and the number of sailing ships that traversed the gulf to reach Port Augusta to import stuff and export predominantly grain from that area. It was a very prolific port. It had multiple jetties and serious wharves. The wharf in Port Augusta has now been closed for many years and I think one of the good things that happened this year was an announcement on the part of the federal government and the state government to fund the refurbishment of the wharf and re-open it to the public. That is a real plus.

Of the multiple jetties that used to be in Port Augusta, only one is left, and that is on the western side which currently does not have community access, and the community in Port Augusta is very keen to see that jetty reinstated on the western side. This bill is just tidying up a number of things that needed to be tidied up, to lead to the smoother operation of ports and harbours in South Australia.

A reasonable amount of it will have to do with perhaps the member for Hammond's electorate rather than mine, given the nature of the existing ports in my electorate. It might be to do with ferries, and there might be issues when it comes to councils and the state and the private operators when it comes to the operation of ferries in our state, so there will be some assistance in that area to make things somewhat smoother.

There is a recognition in the bill that not all ports and harbours are the same, so there is that need for a tailored response. That is something that has been flagged in this legislation. They are things to do with a minimum size for vessels, and reporting of incidents and hazards. The priority and safety of movement of vessels within the harbour are all, in way or the other, captured by this particular bill. One of the other things that the bill introduces is maximum penalties when there have been breaches. The maximum penalty will now be \$10,000, so that has been a change as well.

As I said, this bill is pretty straightforward. I do not think there is going to be anything deeply controversial about it. I look forward to what the member for Hammond has to say, and I commend the bill to the house.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (17:12): I note that I am the lead speaker on this legislation but I do not think I will need to bend the dial on the clock too far. I am here to speak to the Harbours and Navigation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2025. The bill was introduced in this place on 18 June 2025 by the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, and it provides amendments to the Harbours and Navigation Act 1993.

Key changes under the bill include harbour rules such as empowering the minister to issue harbour-specific rules via *Gazette* and publish online and covering permitted activities—for example, vessel size limits, incident reporting, and priority zones, with noncompliance carrying penalties of up to \$10,000, as we have already heard. These rules override local council bylaws but require prior consultation with adjacent councils, likely initially used at ferry hubs, like the new hubs that are being completed at Penneshaw and Cape Jervis.

One of the other key changes under this legislation is safety directions, which enables the minister to impose temporary, gazetted safety directions such as speed limits, swimming restrictions or access closures where there is elevated but non-emergency risk—e.g. whether there are some events on or there is marine remediation happening on site. Noncompliance again is penalised similarly at \$10,000 and also overrides council bylaws.

At (3), we have the inclusion of privately owned land or waters within the harbour or port declarations. What this does is clarifies the legal basis for declaring a harbour or port that includes private land or waters, provided the private owner agrees, separate from land tenure concerns.

Issue (4) is enhanced powers on wreck clearance. This confirms the minister or port operator may remove, destroy, or sink wrecks that are hazards if the owner does not comply with removal notices and recover costs from that owner as a debt. It extends the minister's ability to act unilaterally if the owner is untraceable. The wreck may be historically significant, so consultation with the minister

under the Historic Shipwrecks Act is required first. Penalties under this part of the legislation for noncompliance doubled from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

At (5), there are some exclusions from vesting of maritime property. It clarifies that privately owned wharves, jetties, docks or related structures built after 24 October 1994 do not automatically vest in the minister.

At (6), there are administrative and technical updates involved in the legislation. It adjusts annual report timelines 12 days from six. It updates delegation powers, removes outdated references and moves expiation fees into regulations for flexibility. It also amends offence section concerning unsafe vessels.

There is a little bit further discussion around the legislation. Safety directions can only currently be imposed under an emergency declaration. This will allow the minister to impose temporary safety directions at any time by publishing in the *Gazette*. Other amendments are tidying up the legislation. Certainly, we will be asking some questions in committee just for some clarification. We consulted with SeaLink and the Local Government Association and I would like to thank the minister's staff and the department staff for giving me a briefing as well. We will just be seeking a little bit of clarification.

Obviously, with a state that is surrounded by water we export a lot of products, we import a lot of products, notwithstanding the amount of grain, the millions of tonnes of grain that get exported, especially when we do not have a drought year like last year and hopefully this year it will step up with a bit more rain—we need quite a bit more rain—and they are vital to the stability of the state, the growth of the state, whether we are exporting product or importing product.

With that short contribution, we will be supporting the bill but we will seek some clarification during the committee stage.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (17:18): I would like to make a contribution to the Harbors and Navigation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill. As the member for Hammond has just said he is looking for some clarification. He has had a briefing from the minister's office, which is good. I perhaps should have been onto it a little bit earlier and perhaps tagged along just to have a better understanding, but I will make my contribution now and potentially if there are any answers to my questions that would be greatly appreciated.

As far as the navigation side of it goes, I have had some concerns for quite some time now, particularly in relation to the River Murray. There have been a few issues along the way and they have been growing over a long period of time and it has been exacerbated by the most recent floods, the 2022-23 flood event. That was probably the most significant flood since 1956.

Of course, it did supersede the 1930s flood. What we saw back then really did give locals a much better understanding of the vulnerabilities of the river system, what it means when floodwaters come down, how the river behaves, how it changes shape and how it changes its course in some instances.

Several concerned boat captains have come to me with concerns around Settlers Bend, which is between Berri and Renmark. It has been a shallow passage of water for quite some time, but it has now got to the point where it is almost unnavigable and boats are not able to get through. One example is that bigger riverboats that are heading downstream from Renmark to Berri to be serviced, to hit the slip, are going right over to one side of the river and are not able to get through. I have been down there to witness the chainsaws out. They are cutting trees to be able to get close enough to the bank to be able to make their way through.

We are now seeing new cuttings being formed, almost like a relief valve, and those cuttings are a bypass of the main channel. Where we have seen a dogleg in the river there is now a passage straight through, so the river's navigable channel is changing shape. I can see it from where I live and I have seen many, many people walk up over the flood plain to my home looking for assistance because they are stranded high and dry. We are seeing a number of areas of the river starting to silt up.

Right below where I live, we now have huge sandbars and they are magnificent. They are really, really pretty—white sand on the corner of a riverbend—and that is something that was never there before. It was once upon a time river red gums and grey clay, and what we are seeing now are

large deposits of white river sand. That just typifies where the river comes and goes when it comes in its wave. It is flexing its muscle, you might say, and all of a sudden it will drop a lot of silt and a lot of river sand.

As I said, most of the river is less than a metre deep at Settlers Bend, just to give you an understanding. Where the cuttings are being formed, constituents have been there with their fishing boats. They go through and they are using their sounders, and they say it is up to five metres deep. So I think that gives a pretty clear indication of how vague the river channel is, particularly after a natural event.

As I said, the operators of the *P.S. Industry* have contacted me, and it is a great piece of Riverland history. It is a boat that was commissioned in 1911 and it has been kept alive to this day by volunteers. But, as I said, they are also quite concerned that the navigable passage is becoming almost unachievable. What I really worry about is that if that continues to happen it will put one of the shining lights in the local economy at risk, and that would be tourism.

The houseboat tourism sector is very, very reliant on a clear river passage so that when people come up from the city, when people come from interstate or overseas, they can have a safe journey and not have to worry or have to call out when they get stuck on sandbars and when they get stuck on the bottom.

It can also cause a lot of damage to what now are very expensive houseboats. Operators are going out there and they are investing \$1 million, \$2 million, \$3 million to \$5 million in a houseboat. They hand it over to the people hiring it and they hope in good faith that it comes back in one piece. It is very dangerous whenever there is a bit of flow in the river—houseboats will come back with windows missing and all sorts of events have happened.

What I would really like to understand and learn a little bit more about is: who is actually responsible for the navigable channel in the river? I have written to the minister's office and I have written to the Department for Environment and Water. There always seems to be a little bit of AFL, a bit of handballing: 'No, it's not our responsibility'. It goes backwards and forwards. It is a concern what that would mean.

It might be that we would resort to some of the old-day techniques where we put a groyne in to scour a section of the river so that it naturally scours and does not have to be dredged. I cannot imagine that a government would put a dredge up the river at great expense when we could get in early and look at the opportunities of whether a groyne would work or whether we need to have safety buoys and keep people out of harm's way, particularly in the navigable channel.

It is about safety and giving those businesses the opportunity to make their way safely downriver to Berri, where we have the government slipway. If that is to be deemed unnavigable, or vessels are not able to pass through Settlers Bend, that might open up an opportunity for another private investor to put a slip further upriver. But what I do see is that we have great opportunity on the river. Our natural environment offers a great holiday experience and it all needs to be buoyed by a service sector, and that service sector would have to have a navigable passage.

One other area is the 421-mile mark at Warrakoo. Reportedly, the water is only 300 millimetres deep at the channel, so if emergency work had to be carried out on Lock 6, Lock 8 or Lock 9 the repair vessels would not be able to reach them—they just could not get through. It is a red flag at the moment.

People are leaving their movement through the river. At the moment, the way that the river is managed is by pulsing water down the river. People have to wait until there is a pulse of water coming down the river and they will ride that wave. The pulse might only be 150 millimetres to 200 millimetres of water, but it does give the opportunity for some of those maintenance vessels to make their way down—as it would the *MV Maratula*. This is a government-owned river vessel that would also be stranded if it had to pass. I just put that on the record.

I have to say that these channels are used daily by many vessels, particularly the houseboats and some maintenance boats. We are starting to see a number of river cruises heading down, and a lot of them are high-end tourism experiences where they make their way down from Mildura or further afield and come down the river. At the moment, they really have to stay at Renmark because they cannot get past Settlers Bend.

If there is an opportunity to go past Settlers Bend, I do not see any other issues until you get down to Lock 1 at Blanchetown, where the *Murray Princess* docks pretty regularly. I think it is one of the most magnificent riverboats anywhere in the country. The opportunity for tourists to hop on that beautiful boat and experience those river cruises will be put at risk if we do not see some maintenance and make sure that the vital trade within tourism in the Riverland and the Lower Murray is maintained and looked after.

The separation of towns would also be a disconnect and would potentially hurt local businesses and hurt the local economy, and I want to make sure that we have not only a clear understanding that marine safety is absolutely paramount but that also we understand who is responsible for that navigable passage. I have not had anyone who has actually come back to me and said, 'Yes, I am responsible.' At the moment everyone is telling me, 'No, I'm not.' Until I can hear someone who will take responsibility, this will be an issue that will continue to get handballed around.

I will not bleat on about our volunteer base; it is getting older. Trying to get big boats, big riverboats, houseboats, holiday-makers off a lot of these sandbars, out of these impassable channels, seems to be becoming more regular, and I am sure that if we are going to rely on cuttings and water flows through some of the floodplain that is going to complicate the way that the river is managed and operated.

To all who are part of this conversation here today, part of this bill—and I am very happy to see that the minister is here because I have genuine concerns, and I am sure he would too, that we need to make sure that the maintenance is upheld and we do have a navigable channel.

So, I think I would like to sit in and listen to the member for Hammond ask the questions in committee, but what I must say is that I think we need to celebrate some of the beautiful waterways, whether it be marine or whether it be our freshwater environment we have here in South Australia and to make sure that all of these waterways are maintained and kept navigable with safety held as a paramount concern. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Minister for Energy and Mining) (17:32): I want to thank the members and my staff for their contributions on the bill to date. These are important reforms. I note the questions and the concerns the member for Chaffey has, and the concerns and questions that the member for Hammond has, and I look forward to the committee stage where, hopefully, I can answer their questions. I commend the bill to the house.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

Mr PEDERICK: Notwithstanding the discussion around the River Murray, what effect does this legislation have on facilities on the River Murray, including ferries and boating, because obviously that is covered by the current Harbours and Navigation Act?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The harbour rules apply to harbours, but the safety declarations will apply to the operations of the Murray. I think it is a good modern reform that will allow us to make instructions on the world's best practice for safety. I am not quite sure where the member is going with this, but I am happy to flesh it out and he can ask me a more direct question about what he thinks the implications are. Are you are talking about houseboats? Are you talking about tourism? Are you talking about whether harbour rules will apply to navigation on the river? I am not quite sure what you meant.

Mr PEDERICK: For clarification, it could be all of the above, minister. When I had the briefing, it appeared to me that it would not have a huge effect, obviously, in regard to the River Murray because it is basically harbour legislation. I guess the issue is, as the member for Chaffey raised, does it have any effect on the navigable path of the River Murray? Does it affect ferry operations? As you said, with the safety aspect, that will affect events, whether it is rowing events or other events with other classes of boats.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If I can take a step back, it is a freshen up of the regulatory framework that governs harbours and navigation, right? So it allows me to insert into the act the ability to create safety directions, which I would have thought most people would think makes a bit of sense. It creates capacity for the minister to publish safety directions in the *Government Gazette*, to either set a temporary restriction concerning specific areas within a jurisdiction.

It could be to manage a heightened safety risk, limit vessels and people's access to certain areas when remedial work is being undertaken or restricting access to a waterway area immediately adjacent to a bridge that is undergoing repair. It gives you clarifications to provisions concerning the divesting of property and the minister setting out that harbours and ports may be declared in areas that are wholly or partly in private ownership. It is just for the good order of maintenance and running of the river.

I suppose, on the question you asked about a rowing contest, I could give a safety direction if there is an approved event that a certain vessel not flow through that area while that event is on, I am guessing. It gives us the ability to set rules to govern the way navigation occurs for certain events and types that we did not have previously.

Mr PEDERICK: As further clarification, does that mean that you may, for instance, put in a temporary four-knot zone, whether it is for repairs to ferries or some other land-based infrastructure or an event?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes.

Mr PEDERICK: Because there are indentures involved with Port Bonython and Whyalla, does this have effect obviously with the multiple grain ports around the state?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No. The advice I have is that those ports that are indentured are governed by their indenture process. Whyalla is excluded—they are governed by their indenture acts—as is Port Bonython. They are the two that I think are governed by indenture acts. Indentures also refer to legislation, but the advice I have is that these are governed by their indentures so it has no impact on them.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 to 5 passed.

Clause 6.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to clause 6—Care, control and management of property. As I said in my contribution, what department is responsible for the navigable pathway or the passage of the main channel?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Department for Environment and Water.

Mr WHETSTONE: Also, vessels that are abandoned, whether it be marine or a river corridor, are you able to give me an understanding? As an example, an abandoned houseboat that has been pushed up on the bank, tied up to a tree, and gone—that is happening more and more regularly now, particularly with the cost of mooring fees, particularly with the cost of maintenance. We are seeing now, particularly upriver between Lock 5 and Lock 6, 30 or 40 houseboats that have been abandoned. No-one seems to take responsibility for them. I am just wondering whether you can give me an understanding of what the process might be and who would be the go-to to have those abandoned vessels addressed?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Under section 25 of the act, I already have the power to require the owner of any wreck within the jurisdiction to remove that wreck. A port operator may also require the owner of a wreck within a port to remove the wreck. Either the minister or the port operator may already remove a wreck if a person fails to comply with a notice to remove the wreck and may seek to recover the costs of doing so from the person as a debt.

The term 'wreck' in legislation is defined as including an abandoned vessel. Wrecks are ordinarily considered to be a vessel or part of a vessel that is derelict, stranded, sunk or abandoned or that has foundered, including any part of a vessel that has become abandoned, sunk or adrift at sea. The amendment makes it clear that these powers of removal extend to sinking, destroying or disposing of a wreck. Given that the wreck in these circumstances is likely to be in extremely poor condition, the efforts on behalf of the minister to remove it may result in it being destroyed or sunk.

The changes also enable a port operator to take these steps with the approval of the minister. Without the powers, the government would be hampered in acting and the wrecks' presence may be creating a safety hazard. The bill amendments insert 25(6) into the section that covers the circumstances where a wreck within a jurisdiction has no owner or an owner cannot be found, despite taking reasonable steps to identify them or locate them to ensure that the minister is still able to act.

The amendments also make clear that the minister must consult with the minister responsible for the administration of historic shipwrecks—I doubt there would be any of those in the River Murray but there might be—with the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water prior to acting and where the minister is of the opinion that a particular wreck is of historic significance.

We are increasing the penalties from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for failing to comply with a notice under section 25 of the act to reflect the passage of time on the seriousness of the offence. The amendments also clarify that the minister is not liable to pay any damages or compensation for taking steps under the section. It is consistent with other provisions of the act, such as 89, that there be no liability regarding the operation of navigational aids.

What I do not want to have happen is for people to think they could create some shell, buy a houseboat, run it, when it gets to the end of life not repair it and abandon it, therefore it is the taxpayers' responsibility to clean it up. So what we are attempting to do is try to unlock that, to be able to fine ownership and say, 'This is your responsibility. By the way, here is a \$10,000 fine for leaving it there and you are liable for its removal.' So we are trying to give ourselves the powers to go away and do exactly what I think is concerning you. The question for us is making sure we can find real people who are attached to the boats.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, on that issue again, another example might be that a vessel has been abandoned, not registered and is also being squatted on. We have a number of vessels where people who are homeless, if you like, have found a houseboat abandoned, squat on it, use the toilets and bathrooms, but it never moves and so that greywater or blackwater system is venting directly into the river. Is that a responsibility of your department or does that get handed over to the EPA?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That sounds more like a civil police matter than a departmental matter. There are laws governing squatting. I would imagine that if someone is illegally occupying a premises, that is a matter for South Australia Police, so they should be dealing with that. If they are illegally allowing pollutants into the water, there are penalties against that.

We are not trying to grab every problem and bring it into the Harbors and Navigation Act and say, 'Alright, we'll deal with all of it.' We do not have the resources for that. Police do their job; we will do ours. There is never going to be one agency to govern all of this. It is going to require a multi-agency response if you have things like the hypothetical scenario or real scenario that you are talking about. I hope that gives you a framework on how we want to operate this, but no, it would not be DIT's job to go and remove squatters and then deal with that. That would be a police or a civil matter.

Mr WHETSTONE: It is a little bit more commentary. Police have been called to situations like this and they are claiming there is nothing they can do. Again, it is a little bit of not having an understanding, whether it is through local government or people coming to my office. No-one wants to really grab the bull by the horns and say, 'Okay, we'll do this.' The police have said, 'We can't do anything about it.' DEW have said, 'We can't legally enforce removal of a boat, even though it's not registered.' So it really does leave a sandwich on the riverbank that no-one really wants to claim responsibility for.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is a wicked problem, but I suspect what we can do now with the changes in the act, if the parliament agrees to them, is declare a vessel a wreck or a hazard and then begin processes to remove it. If there are obstacles in the way that need other agency involvement, we can trigger that.

Clause passed.

Clauses 7 and 8 passed.

Clause 9.

Mr WHETSTONE: I have had a number of instances where I have had to call on your department—and, again, it is a grey area. Say, for instance, we have a fallen tree in the river and it creates a safety hazard for speedboats, jetskis and people using maritime equipment in the river, who is responsible for submerged trees, or a vessel that has floated out and sunk and is not visible but is creating a safety hazard?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Ultimately, we would take action if a tree blocked the river: we would put safety buoys in, we would call council to remove the tree, we would coordinate a multi-agency response. I suppose in today's world we all want one person who can be responsible for all this. The truth is—as you would know as a former minister—that it is never one person who is solely responsible. It is a multi-agency response. If there is a fire at corrections, corrections are not responsible for putting out the fire, the MFS are.

There is always going to be a multi-agency response to these types of things, so we try to coordinate it. We might be called in by the council to put in safety buoys and declare a hazard, or it might be us coming in and calling the council to remove a tree, but it is never left to one agency's sole discretion about what occurs. It should be a multi-agency response and that is the best framework, I think, going forward.

I think what we are getting to is the point that you were talking about in your remarks: who is responsible for an unnavigable channel on the river? That is a complicated question; it is not as simple as it sounds. It is multi-agency. Ultimately, it is the South Australian government, but your question is: which agency in the South Australian government is responsible for that? It is not that simple. There are multi-agency responses that are responsible for that, and for good reason.

Clause passed.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

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

No. 1. New clause, page 4, after line 14—Insert:

5A—Amendment of section 5A—State Emergency Management Plan

Section 5A—after subsection (3) insert:

- (4) The SEMP must include strategies of a kind referred to in subsection (1) relating to emergencies that cause, or threaten to cause, damage to marine environments, including marine flora and fauna.

SPICER COTTAGES TRUST (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

At 17:52 the house adjourned until Thursday 21 August 2025 at 11:00.