

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 14 October 2025

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

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

The SPEAKER read prayers.

Bills

FAIR WORK (WORKER ENTITLEMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (11:01): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I will introduce the Fair Work (Worker Entitlements) Amendment Bill 2025. This is an important bill designed to strengthen the enforceability of worker entitlements and to emphasise that workers have the right to expect that they will be paid in full and on time for the work that they perform.

At the last state election the state government committed to introducing wage theft laws to create criminal penalties for the deliberate underpayment of worker entitlements. Since then, the federal government has taken the lead by introducing national wage theft laws that apply to private sector employees covered by the commonwealth Fair Work Act. However, due to the division of industrial relations powers between the commonwealth and the states, those laws do not apply to public sector and local government workers covered by the state Fair Work Act.

Thankfully, in the state industrial relations system we have not historically observed the same kind of deliberate wage theft behaviour that has been too often witnessed in some parts of the private sector. Nonetheless, it is still essential that public sector and local government workers have confidence in their wages and entitlements and that there are serious consequences for deliberate and systematic underpayments.

The Fair Work Act 1994 already contains criminal penalties for noncompliance with awards and enterprise agreements. The bill increases those penalties by 10 times, to a maximum of \$25,000 per contravention. Further, the bill goes above and beyond our election commitment by empowering the South Australian Employment Court to impose civil penalty orders for the non-payment of worker entitlements.

The introduction of a civil penalty power is consistent with the practice in both the national industrial relations system and other state and territory industrial relations systems across Australia. The power to impose a civil penalty supplements the court's existing powers to order payment of underpaid worker entitlements and interests. This means that there is a meaningful deterrent against serious unlawful behaviour beyond an employer simply being ordered to pay wages and entitlements. They should have paid correctly in the first place.

The bill inserts a new section 104(1) which provides for a maximum civil penalty of \$25,000 per contravention if an employer contravenes a requirement to pay an amount to, or on behalf of, an employee in relation to the performance of work. This does not create any new payment obligation for employers, but instead picks up existing payment obligations under the act, awards, enterprise agreements and other workplace laws.

A 'workplace law' is here intended to capture any law conferring an enforceable right to payment arising out of an employment relationship and includes, for example, superannuation and long service leave laws. The bill inserts section 104(2) which provides that those amounts must be paid in full, by money, and at least monthly. This reflects the method and frequency of payment obligations that apply to private sector employers under the commonwealth act.

Under the bill, a civil penalty can only be imposed on an employer for a contravention of these obligations if the employer's conduct constituting the contravention was deliberate and systematic. This reflects that the government's election commitment was always focused on the deliberate underpayment of worker entitlements, not on genuine mistakes or inadvertent conduct.

For conduct to be deliberate, it must be conduct that is engaged in intentionally or consciously. It does not extend to accidental or involuntary conduct and is not intended to apply to genuine mistakes. While it is necessary to show the acts or omissions constituting a contravention were deliberate, there is no need to prove that an employer subjectively knew or intended that their conduct would result in a breach of the law or would have a significant risk of doing so. It is also not necessary to prove that an employer knew the specific provision of a workplace law or industrial instrument being contravened, or the exact amount of any underpaid entitlements.

Deliberate conduct by the Crown or a body corporate may be proved either through the conduct and state of mind of an officer, employee or agent, as provided under sections 236 or 236B, or by showing that the employer expressly, tacitly or impliedly authorised the conduct, as provided under section 104(4). That authorisation must be given by an individual within the employer's organisation or via a policy, rule, course of conduct or practice within the organisation. This recognises that an employer manifests its intention through its organisational culture, policies, procedures and practices.

There may be instances where the misconduct of a rogue employee does not represent an employer's true position. In these cases, for the purpose of section 104(4), the actions of the employer as a whole may be taken into account and there is no liability if the employer proves it exercised due diligence to prevent the rogue conduct or authorisation.

The concept of a systematic pattern of conduct was previously found in section 557A of the commonwealth act, following the Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Vulnerable Workers) Act 2017. A systematic pattern of conduct is a recurring pattern of methodical conduct or a series of coordinated acts over time. It does not encompass ad hoc or inadvertent conduct. Section 104(5) provides an indicative list of factors that may be considered by a court in determining whether the employer's conduct was systematic. A contravention is more likely to be systematic if:

- there are concurrent contraventions occurring at the same time;
- the contraventions have occurred over a prolonged period;
- multiple employees are affected;
- the employer failed to respond, or failed to respond appropriately, to complaints made about the contraventions; and
- accurate employee records have not been kept, or payslips have not been issued, making the alleged underpayment harder to establish.

The bill inserts sections 104A to 104C which provide the machinery enabling the court to impose a civil penalty order. Subsection 104A(4) provides that where the same person commits two or more contraventions of a civil penalty provision arising out of a course of conduct, these are taken to constitute a single contravention.

The same principle is reflected in section 557 of the commonwealth act, and it is intended that this will be interpreted consistent with that provision, including in authorities such as *Rocky Holdings Pty Ltd v Fair Work Ombudsman* in the Federal Court.

For example, if through the course of conduct an employer contravenes a single term of an enterprise agreement in respect of 10 employees, these 10 contraventions are taken to be a single contravention for the purposes of penalty. If an employer contravenes five separate terms of an

enterprise agreement in respect of 10 employees, these 50 contraventions are taken to be five contraventions for the purpose of penalty.

Subsection 104A(7) provides that the court has the discretion to order that a civil penalty or part of the penalty be payable to the state, a particular organisation or a particular person. The same power is found in section 546(3) of the commonwealth act. This enables the court, in appropriate circumstances, to order that the penalty be paid to a worker affected by an underpayment or to a union that has brought enforcement proceedings on their behalf. This also avoids circumstances where the imposition of a penalty on a public sector agency may be seen to result in the Crown effectively paying a penalty to itself for its own contravention.

Section 104B provides that a civil penalty contravention is not an offence and that the court must apply civil procedure rather than criminal procedure when dealing with a penalty application. Section 104C provides that, whilst the SAET is generally a 'no costs' jurisdiction, the court will have the discretion to make an order for legal costs if a party has behaved unreasonably or vexatiously. That is consistent with the costs rules that apply to monetary claims and penalty procedures under section 570 of the commonwealth act. Courts have frequently recognised that this is a high threshold. Costs will rarely be awarded and exceptional circumstances are usually required to justify making an order. In particular, it is well established that a party should not be exposed to costs simply because reasonable argument ultimately proves unsuccessful.

This bill makes a range of related amendments to strengthen protections for worker entitlements. The bill makes explicit that the Crown is bound by the act and can be penalised for noncompliance with its industrial obligations, just like any other employer. The bill strengthens SAET's power to award interest on underpayments to include a broader range of claims, including an application to remedy or restrain a contravention of industrial laws. The bill narrows SAET's power to make an adverse costs order on an appeal of a state system monetary claim, so that costs are only available where a party has behaved unreasonably or vexatiously. The bill expands SAET's monetary jurisdiction to include claims for amounts owed under other workplace laws. This ensures, to the extent that jurisdiction is not already conferred on SAET, that the tribunal has jurisdiction to deal with any disputes about monetary entitlements.

The bill also includes several amendments to clarify the interaction between the state and national industrial relations systems. These amendments are not intended to disturb the status quo of SAET's powers and functions, but instead to reflect the true position at law. First, the bill confirms the state's Fair Work Act 1994 does not apply to national system employers covered by the commonwealth act. Second, the bill amends section 9 to remove references to the commonwealth act as a source of SAET's monetary claim jurisdiction. The Full Court of the Federal Court in *Kronen v Commercial Motor Industries* found that, while section 9 purports to confer jurisdiction over commonwealth claims, this is legally ineffective as a state law cannot confer federal jurisdiction on a state court. While the SAET undoubtedly does have the power to hear claims under the commonwealth act, that is because that jurisdiction is conferred on SAET by the commonwealth act itself, not the state act.

A consequential amendment is made to section 6 of the South Australian Employment Tribunal Act 2014 to ensure a note confirming the SAET will exercise jurisdiction conferred by commonwealth law. While this is legally unnecessary, it is important to emphasise the parliament's intention that the SAET operates as a one-stop shop capable of dealing with employment disputes arising under both state law and commonwealth law in South Australia.

A further amendment is made to section 51 of that act to confirm that in a proceeding under the commonwealth act a party is entitled to be represented by an officer or employee of a registered association or by a registered agent. That is necessary because the commonwealth act does not deal with representation rights in state and territory courts.

The bill provides for a statutory review of these amendments to be undertaken three years after they commence. The government's clear policy intention in this bill is to strengthen the enforcement of workers' entitlements and to provide a meaningful deterrent against the deliberate noncompliance with industrial laws. The review will provide an appropriate opportunity to consider the effectiveness of these amendments in achieving that objective.

I close by thanking all of those who have contributed to the development of this bill, and particularly those in the South Australian trade union movement who have staunchly advocated for the interests of their members in the state industrial relations system. I commend the bill to the chamber and seek leave to have the explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Explanation of Clauses

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Fair Work Act 1994*

3—Amendment of section 4—Interpretation

This clause makes consequential amendments to the definitions in the Act.

4—Amendment of section 6—Application of Act to employment

This clause amends section 6 to specify that, other than in relation to section 10, the Act does not apply to employment with a national system employer (within the meaning of the Commonwealth Act).

5—Insertion of section 4AA

This clause inserts a new provision specifying that the Act binds the Crown and imposes criminal liability on the Crown as well as liability to a civil penalty. The current contents of section 13A are now also included in this section.

6—Amendment of section 9—Jurisdiction to decide monetary claims under industrial laws or instruments

This clause removes provisions purporting to confer jurisdiction on the Tribunal that is actually conferred under Commonwealth law and clarifies that a claim cannot be made under the section in respect of a sum due under a workplace law if that workplace law confers jurisdiction on a court in respect of the claim.

7—Repeal of section 13A

This is consequential to clause 5.

8—Amendment of section 25—Representation

This clause corrects a minor error.

9—Amendment of heading to Chapter 2 Part 5

This clause makes a consequential amendment.

10—Amendment of section 34—Award to include interest

This clause broadens the application of section 34 to any claim under Part 1 for payment of a sum due or other monetary amount.

11—Amendment of section 35—Monetary judgment

This clause makes it clear that section 34 applies to any claim under Part 1 for payment of a sum due or other monetary amount.

12—Amendment of section 36—Costs

This clause replaces the costs provision.

13—Insertion of Chapter 3 Part 5 Division 2

This clause inserts a new Division as follows:

Division 2—Civil penalty provisions

104—Obligation to pay entitlements

This clause creates civil penalty provision for an employer who contravenes a provision of the Act, a workplace law, or an industrial instrument, which requires the employer to pay an amount to, or on behalf of, an employee in relation to the performance of work.

104A—Proceedings for contravention of civil penalty provision

This clause provides for proceedings for a civil penalty to be heard and determined by the South Australian Employment Court.

104B—Civil rules and procedure

Contravention of a civil penalty provision is not an offence and the Court must apply the rules of evidence and procedure for civil proceedings.

104C—Costs

A party to proceedings for a civil penalty order may be ordered to pay costs if they have instituted the proceedings vexatiously or without reasonable cause or if their unreasonable act or omission caused the other party to incur the costs.

14—Amendment of section 224—Non-compliance with awards and enterprise agreements

This increases the maximum penalty in section 224 from \$2,500 to \$25,000 and specifies circumstances in which contraventions are taken to constitute a single contravention.

15—Insertion of sections 236B and 236C

This clause inserts new sections as follows:

236B—Conduct etc by officers etc of the Crown

If the Crown is guilty of an offence against this act, or contravenes a civil penalty provision, the penalty to be imposed on the Crown is the penalty applicable to a body corporate. This section also sets out when a state of mind, or conduct, of an officer, employee or agent of the Crown will be taken to count as a state of mind, or conduct, of the Crown.

236C—Responsible agency of the Crown

This section specifies the manner in which proceedings for an offence or other contravention of the Act can be brought against the Crown.

Schedule 1—Related amendments, review and transitional provisions

Part 1—Related amendment of *South Australian Employment Tribunal Act 2014*

1—Amendment of section 6—Jurisdiction of Tribunal

This clause inserts a note pointing out that jurisdiction may also be conferred under a Commonwealth law.

2—Amendment of section 51—Representation

This clause amends section 51 to allow for representation in matters dealt with by the Tribunal under Commonwealth law (subject to any Commonwealth law).

Part 2—Review and transitional provisions

3—Review

This clause provides for a review after 3 years.

4—Transitional provision

The amendments made by the measure will only apply in relation to conduct occurring after the commencement of the measure.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (11:16): I rise today to speak in support of the Fair Work (Worker Entitlements) Amendment Bill 2025, a bill that delivers on the government's election commitment to tackle wage theft in the public sector and local government. As someone who has spent my career advocating for workers, I know firsthand the importance of ensuring employees are paid what they are owed on time and in full.

Before entering this place, I worked as an industrial advocate, helping to recoup millions of dollars in unpaid entitlements for employers. Some of these issues arose because staff were incorrectly placed on individual flexibility agreements (IFAs). While IFAs were meant to ensure employees were better off overall, in practice that often was not the case. I remember one such employee who I met when she provided all of her payslips and contracts and it was clear that she was failing the BOOT—the 'better off overall test'. It took a lot of work in trying to engage with her boss, with HR, to show them that they were in fact not doing the right thing by their staff member, that she was not in a better off overall position, and she was not alone.

Those on old IFAs were all facing a similar situation. On top of that, part-time staff were regularly not paid superannuation on their additional hours, meaning they were losing out on benefits they were legally entitled to. They were contracted for a certain number of hours—usually two to three days—and yet due to staffing issues were often called on to do additional hours, and it was these hours that were not deemed by the bank to be ordinary hours.

I had one employee on a one-day-a-week contract who was working five days a week and she was not getting paid superannuation on the extra four days. I was very pleased to learn not long after I left the FSU that some of these employers admitted to what they were doing and that what they were doing was wrong and owed their staff millions of dollars. I was proud then and continue to be proud to see the Finance Sector Union punching above its weight to hold employers accountable.

Whilst that was in the private sector, wage theft across the board is unacceptable, and it is those experiences which drive my support for this bill today. This legislation strengthens the enforceability of worker entitlements in the public sector and local government. Among its key measures, it increases the existing criminal penalty for breaching an award or enterprise agreement to \$25,000.

The Fair Work Act 1994 already contains criminal penalties, but this bill increases them tenfold, sending a clear message that deliberate underpayment will not be tolerated. It gives the South Australian Employment Tribunal the power to impose a civil penalty on employers who deliberately and systematically underpay their workers. Importantly, this power applies only where underpayments are intentional and repeated. Genuine mistakes and accidental errors are not targeted, ensuring the focus is on deliberate exploitation.

This bill is about fairness, accountability and deterrence. Workers in the public and local government sectors deserve to know that the law protects their right to be paid fully for the work they perform. Deliberate underpayment must have real consequences and this legislation delivers that. It is often the case that lower paid workers are impacted by underpayments and sometimes warned not to say anything or fear that if they do there will be consequences.

The importance of unions cannot be overstated when a worker's pay is involved. Long before I knew about unions, I was a chef working in hot, sweaty conditions and doing an extraordinary amount of overtime. I was full-time, working 6½ days a week as normal hours on a contract wage that was less than my predecessor's. When I begged for a day off, I was told that head chefs do not get days off. I was working from nine in the morning till 11.30 at night with no penalty rates for weekends or late nights. I did not know my rights. I did not know who to turn to.

It was not until I started working in banking and came across the Finance Sector Union that I realised that I do have rights and I should know about them. I should not have been working 6½ days a week, and I should have been paid for excessive overtime. Without unions, workers may not know where to go for help, where to look to better understand what they are entitled to, and they may feel intimidated for raising issues. Unions are there to help with these issues, to help with underpayment of wages.

I am proud to stand in support of this bill. It builds on the work we have seen nationally and in other states to strengthen industrial protections. It makes sure that workers know their rights. It makes sure workers have the opportunity to be paid properly, because, if you work incredibly hard, you deserve that. You do not deserve to be having an employer who tries to find ways to underpay you.

My son has recently started his working career. I am always there to help him along the way with some advice. It is interesting to be able to explain to your child the way that employers can take advantage of employees. Fortunately for him, he has an employer who takes the time to get things right, but other people are not so lucky, so having unions there to be able to call on to ask questions is incredibly important.

This bill reflects a commitment that employees, whether in the public or private sector or local government, cannot be underpaid without accountability. It makes sure that these workers are protected and that for the work they do they will be paid properly. I commend the bill to the house.

S.E. ANDREWS (Gibson) (11:21): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Fair Work (Worker Entitlements) Amendment Bill 2025, a bill that delivers on Labor's 2022 election commitment to strengthen workplace protections, defend workers' rights and ensure that fairness remains at the heart of the South Australian economy.

This bill is about more than policy: it is about people. It is about the cleaners, the carers, the tradies, the teachers, the scientists—hardworking South Australians who show up every day, do their job with pride and deserve the security of knowing their entitlements are safe. For too long, some workers have faced uncertainty when their employees go under or when their rights are ignored. This bill fixes that. It enhances protections for accrued entitlements, ensuring that workers get their full leave, superannuation and redundancy payments, even when businesses fail, because no worker should lose what they have earned through no fault of their own.

This legislation also clarifies and simplifies entitlements, making it easier for workers to understand their rights and for employers to meet their responsibilities. Fewer disputes, less confusion and more confidence for everyone in the workplace—that is a real, practical reform. Crucially, the bill strengthens enforcement and penalties, because fairness only works when it is backed up by accountability. Employers who exploit workers, who withhold pay or who fail to meet their obligations will face serious consequences. Workers should not have to fight just to receive what they have rightfully earned.

Importantly, this bill protects casual and gig economy workers, ensuring that even those in non-traditional or precarious work have a safety net. South Australia's workforce is changing, and our laws must change with it. Every worker deserves respect, dignity and certainty. We said in 2022 that we would stand up for working people, and we are doing exactly that.

I have spent 20 years working in the union movement, from organiser to state director, standing shoulder to shoulder with workers in bargaining rooms, during industrial action and in tribunals. I have seen firsthand what happens when the system fails people. I have seen the stress on a member's face when they do not know if the redundancy will be paid or when they have worked years of overtime and been denied what they have earned.

That is why I am proud to be part of a Labor government that values union membership and respects the vital role unions play in protecting working people. Being a union member means having someone in your corner, someone who knows your rights, who will fight for fairness and will not back down when the odds are stacked against you. Union members together built the conditions that so many of us now take for granted: paid leave, safe workplaces, fair pay, superannuation and job security.

Every improvement in this bill builds on that legacy. So, yes, this bill is about entitlements, but it is also about values: solidarity, respect and dignity at work. It is about keeping our promise to the people who keep South Australia running. I commend the minister for bringing forward this important legislation, because when workers are protected, when entitlements are guaranteed and when unions are strong, South Australia is stronger too.

Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11:25): I rise to indicate I am the lead speaker for the opposition and the opposition supports the bill. There is a government amendment and there are a couple of opposition amendments that have already been aired in the other place. I will address the bill briefly.

I am not sure what bill the previous speaker was addressing, but clearly it was not this one, in terms of remarks addressed to events in the private sector and so on. This is a bill that is described by the government as meeting an election commitment. I think the member for Gibson might have had more to offer had the contribution of the member for Gibson actually been addressed to the subject matter of the bill, because it is very specifically about addressing the capacity of SAET under the state act to apply penalties to public sector employers. It has got nothing whatever to do with the private sector.

Indeed, even more strikingly in the present circumstances, the government has chosen to progress this legislation at this time not so terribly long after we have seen the trials and tribulations—literally the trial—of the Attorney-General's Department in relation to the battle that the United

Firefighters Union of South Australia Incorporated was put to bringing to the SAET in recent months. Clearly, it is a current issue, the capacity of public sector employers to fail in their duty to make good on their obligations to their employees. So far so good. However, what the member for Gibson has in mind talking about the private sector and the role of unions in that respect is somewhat mystifying.

It might also be observed that part of the contest in this whole space—we have seen it writ large in the commonwealth space with the recent imposition of a \$50 million penalty against Qantas; it is entirely different circumstances but in the broader universe—the really rather controversial point is about where does the penalty get paid? Where is that directed to?

On this side of the house, we made it clear in the other place and we make it clear again here that we actually do not think that the occasion for the implementation of a penalty is a time when the union needs, inevitably, to get a great big payday, which is the result of the union being the party to the proceedings. That is very much front and centre in the amendment that my colleague, our shadow minister for industrial relations, first brought to the parliament in the other place not so very long ago.

If the government and the member for Gibson, who has greater experience than I do in the world of unions and how they go about endeavouring to represent their members, have a clear-sighted view of this then it will be to think about what are the appropriate arrangements in terms of the application of those penalty amounts to the members of the unions—to the employees who are wronged by employer conduct, particularly in contravention of what will be the new section 104(1).

We say employees should very much be the focus of those penalties that are applied to wrong-doing employers in the circumstances—in this case, public sector employers. We do not have to look too far into the hypotheticals or the theorising—just to go back a short while and look at what the Attorney-General's Department was required to make good on vis-a-vis the firefighters—to see that the public sector in this state is much more than theoretically involved in the contraventions of workers' rights that have been found by the SAET, as I say, just in recent months.

I refer to the contribution—and it is the usual thoroughgoing and thoughtful contribution—of the Law Society in this respect and in particular two points, the first being that there is some curiosity about the maximum amount—the \$25,000 that is provided for as the maximum amount—not being at parity with the equivalent commonwealth amount. That remains somewhat of a mystery. I invite the minister at the committee stage or in the course of the second reading to put on the record anything that might be appropriately put on the record in that regard.

The second one is the reference by the Law Society to this I say somewhat curious amping up of the costs provision. We are dealing with a jurisdiction, regardless of what I think the Attorney might have observed in the other place, where costs are not routinely ordered, and this provision is then going further down the line to make it really clear that you are not going to get costs ordered unless the court is satisfied that there is a frivolous or vexatious action that has been brought or, particularly in the case of an employer, one might expect, there has been an unreasonableness.

If you put it this way, not too often costs are being ordered, and there is this sort of open door for the payment of the new \$25,000 payment to be made directly to the union. Now, it might be put as virtuous that that payment can somehow substitute for the efforts that the union has made in bringing the action, but if that were the case—if that were the rationale—then why not deal with it directly on the costs side? That does not appear to be the intent of the government.

So it seems to make really clear that to the extent that there is a contravention of what the new section 104(1) provides that is clearly affecting the rights of employees, why should that amount—and it is relatively modest in the scheme of things, indeed significantly more modest than the commonwealth equivalent—not be paid to the affected employee rather than to the union?

Before I get accused of going after the unions or unfairly getting stuck into them, that is not the intent—far from it. If unions are there doing their appropriate work—and I think unions would rock up and say, 'That's our function. We'll come and bring actions on behalf of affected employees,' sometimes a whole bunch of them, as the United Firefighters Union, led by Max Adlam, did so ably just recently—of course that is what the unions will do. It is a service that they will provide for their

members, but if not via a costs order for the action that is specifically taken, why should the results, as in any ordinary civil proceeding of that action, not flow to the wronged employees, just like they would where a representative makes an effective argument in a civil action, the results of which there is an award made in the interests of the party.

That, I grant, is something that is still available to the tribunal. There is no reason not to make it expressly clear, particularly in circumstances where this debate is characterised by highlighting the virtue of unions and the work they do standing up for the interests of their member employees.

There is a bit of work for the committee to do in a moment. I will take the chance in the committee to just ask the minister to explain the government's amendment, in that that remains unaddressed. I just refer to it in the second reading for the moment for that reason and I also refer to those couple of filed amendments that will be traversed in the course of the committee on our side.

The Hon. N.F. COOK (Hurtle Vale—Minister for Human Services, Minister for Seniors and Ageing Well) (11:37): I am really proud to speak on this important legislation. It delivers on our government's wage theft election commitment. I want to start by acknowledging all the people who have worked so hard to bring it to this point and all the union friends, colleagues and comrades in the past who have helped to build a case for fairness in the workplace. Included in that I would like to acknowledge the Assistant Secretary of the ASU SA and NT, Ella Waters, who is here to watch the debate on this. She is taking great interest in commentary about unions and how wonderful they are.

I will continue with some of the points I would like to make. The Fair Work (Worker Entitlements) Amendment Bill 2025 does actually close the final gap in addressing wage theft for South Australian workers by ensuring public sector and local government workers are covered by legislative provisions. For far too long these workers, many of whom dedicate their lives to serving our communities, have not had protection against this scourge.

Private sector workers are now covered by federal wage theft laws, and it is important that we ensure all workers are covered by similar legislation. No matter where someone works, whether it is in a local council office, a public hospital or a small business, every worker deserves the security of knowing that their wages, superannuation and entitlements will be paid in full and on time.

Wage theft is more than just an accounting error; it is a deliberate underpayment of wages, superannuation, or other entitlements a worker is legally owed. It is, in plain terms, stealing from workers. It robs people not only of money but of dignity, security and trust. Wage theft occurs in many ways. Sometimes it is through unpaid overtime, incorrect classifications, withholding of superannuation, or deliberate misrepresentation of work hours. It happens when penalty rates are ignored or when workers are paid cash under the table at less than the minimum rate.

While we often hear about wage theft in hospitality or retail, it is not confined to those industries—it happens across professions, even in the public sector and even in health care. Nurses, support workers and allied health workers—people who give so much of themselves to care for others—have at times found themselves victims of underpayment.

As someone who worked as a nurse for many years, I know firsthand how hard nurses work and how passionately they serve their patients and their communities. Nursing is not a nine to five job—it is shift work. It is weekends, it is nights, it is holidays spent away from families. Nurses do not go into the profession for wealth—they do it because they care. When nurses or other health professionals are underpaid, whether through neglect or design, it strikes at something very deep. It says that the system values their compassion but not their contribution. That is something I have never been prepared to accept. That is why this bill matters so much.

We recognise that, in the context of state industrial relations, it is appropriate to introduce civil penalty orders. These have been a feature of other industrial systems, particularly at the federal level. This marks the first time civil penalties will be available for underpayments affecting public sector and local government workers, a significant development shaped by extensive consultation, especially with workers' representatives. This is about fairness, accountability and respect for work. It is about sending a clear message that, if you deliberately underpay workers, there will be consequences.

While the Fair Work Act does already contain a criminal penalty for wage theft of noncompliance with awards and agreements, this bill increases that penalty 10 times to \$25,000 per offence. We are holding ourselves to the highest possible standards; we cannot call for integrity in others unless we demonstrate it in our own backyard.

The deliberate and systematic threshold included in this bill reflects the government's election commitment. That commitment has always been about addressing intentional underpayment of entitlements, not penalising employers for administrative errors or unintentional mistakes, which can occur in any large organisation. Employers who act in good faith, who identify and rectify errors, have nothing to fear from this legislation, but those who knowingly withhold wages, who build their business models or budgets on the exploitation of workers, must be held accountable.

I have stood with my union comrades at many a rally to address wage theft in the private sector. I am very proud today to speak on this important issue here in parliament, because today we are not just talking about workers' rights—we are enshrining fairness in law. Every dollar stolen through wage theft is a dollar taken from workers' rent, food or superannuation. It is a dollar that should be circulating in our communities, supporting local businesses and families. When we ensure workers are paid fairly, we strengthen not just individual livelihoods but our economy.

This bill says to every South Australian worker: your government has your back, whether you serve our community in a council office, care for patients in a hospital or teach our children in a public school, your work matters, and you deserve to be paid what you are owed. And, to the workers who have spoken up, who have blown the whistle on wage theft, even when it came at personal risk, I thank you. Your courage has driven reform and helped us to reach this point. This legislation reflects who we are as a government and as a community. We believe in fairness, we believe in respect and we believe that every South Australian, no matter where they work, deserves justice in their workplace. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms SAVVAS (Newland) (11:44): I am really proud to be speaking today in the house, as I often am, about protecting working people. As many would know, I am a proud union member and I will always be a proud union member, and it is very much the protections that have been afforded to me by the union movement and the Labor movement more broadly that are the reasons that I joined the ALP in the first place.

I would like to acknowledge Ella, in the gallery today, from the ASU, one of the many unions I have had the pleasure of being a member of and advocating alongside in my time as a union member and, of course, I would like to acknowledge the unions that protect working people across our state and continue to advocate for outcomes like this one.

This is really important to me and it delivers on our government's wage theft election commitment. Although it only applies to public sector and local government workers, I thought I would take the opportunity to talk to you about my experiences with wage theft as a teenager. It is incredibly important to acknowledge vulnerable workers when we talk about wage theft: young people, migrant workers and women.

I was 14 years old when I started working, and I think I started applying for jobs the second my mum let me do so. I was incredibly proud to be working. We did not have a lot of money growing up and there was a huge sense of dignity for me in the ability to earn money and spend money, which I have been doing like it is out of fashion ever since. In fact, it was my very first pay cheque that I took over to Tea Tree Plaza and spent entirely on clothes. That was not the last time I have done that but it was really exciting for me to go there by myself, pick out an outfit and drain my bank account with the money that I had worked very hard to earn at Pizza Hut.

I worked at Pizza Hut for some months. I served customers, which I loved, I cleaned out back fridges, which I hated, and I made pizzas, which I also was not hugely keen on. I was working quite a few days a week during the week and I needed my parents to drive me there and drive me back. It did get a little much in year 10, and my parents and I decided at some stage that I needed to stop work and focus on my studies.

So I went to try to quit my job. The manager at the time asked me if I could stay on just on Mondays because they did not have enough staff to cover the Monday shift. I agreed, as a

14 year old, not really knowing how to broach that conversation or say no, and I showed up on a Monday and was asked to log in with the manager's code on the computer, which I did for the next five or six Mondays until they told me there was no more work for me. Of course, unsurprisingly, they never paid me for those Mondays as there was no record I had ever been there.

It was this situation that led me to the union that I am still proud to be part of, the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association. My brother worked at Woolworths and he encouraged me to join the SDA in my first week, and I am incredibly glad that I did. It was that experience and the union's response that really informed my views about working people and affirmed in me what was likely already dormant, as I was raised in quite a progressive household and there were a number of unionists in my family. My aunty had grown up working in the CPSU and running a radio show during the Your Rights at Work campaign. It really gave me a strong drive to deliver for those people, to ensure that there was dignity and integrity in their work, and to ensure that they had a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

I also had a similar situation some years later when I was working in hospitality. I was being underpaid and a friend and I went and sought advice about that. When we were eventually offered our back pay, and the rest of our site was too, we were also asked to sign a document saying we would not request back pay again in the future. We also were not being paid super. When we think of the gender pay gap, of course, we know who has gaps in their super already, and that is women. Women are more likely to be in the category of vulnerable workers from time to time, particularly in transient workforces. In a situation like this one, it was women who were losing out. This hospitality job had 99 per cent women. We were young workers, there were migrant workers and we deserved to be paid fairly for the work that we had done.

This bill is important. It is designed to strengthen the enforceability of worker entitlements and to emphasise that workers have the right to expect that they will be paid in full and on time for the work that they perform. 'On time' is something that I think is also really relevant here. Plenty of people live week to week and it is incredibly important that 'on time' is a priority so that individuals can pay their bills as they arise.

It also increases the existing criminal penalty for breaching an award or enterprise agreement to \$25,000, which is incredibly important. It gives SAET the power to impose a civil penalty on an employer for the deliberate and systematic underpayment of worker entitlements. Of course, we do know that there are some employers who are making a mistake, but we also know that there are some people who know what they are doing, who make a deliberate decision to undercut people from what they deserve.

The stories are countless, particularly with migrant workers and, again, I do want to acknowledge the incredibly hard work of the union movement in this space, particularly for those completing the farm work component of their visas. This has been an industry that has been rife with wage theft over many, many years. This civil penalty will only be imposed where it is deliberate and systematic, and I think that is incredibly important, sending a message to employers that we value people's work and we want to ensure that they are paid appropriately and on time for the work that they do.

I am really proud of this work, as I often am. For me, as I have said before many times in this place, it is really important that as a government we prioritise working people. It is the right thing to do by those working people and, on this side of the house, I am always proud that we continue to do that and show that in the work that we do. I commend its passage to the house.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (11:50): I thank and commend the contributions of members in this place. I understand from the deputy opposition leader's second reading speech that the will of the opposition is to move into committee. I commend the bill to the house and into committee.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4.

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

Amendment No 1 [TradeInvest-1]—

Page 3, lines 21 and 22 [clause 4, inserted paragraph (aa)]—Delete inserted paragraph (aa) and substitute:

- (aa) employment with a national system employer (within the meaning of the Commonwealth Act), other than in relation to an excluded subject matter (within the meaning of the *Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009*); or

Mr TEAGUE: Perhaps given that we did not hear about that in the second reading, and it has been filed only in the last day or so—in other words, it has not otherwise been aired; the government has not had the opportunity to air it more prior to that—I just wonder whether there is anything the minister might have to inform the committee and the public record about what it is doing and the necessity for it?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I thank the member for his question and the ability to explain and put on the record the government's amendment with respect to clause 4. This is a technical amendment which substitutes the wording of clause 4 of the bill, which deals with the interaction between this legislation and the commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009. The amended wording more accurately reflects the legal and constitutional division of industrial relations powers between the state and the commonwealth. The amended wording is intended to have the same substantive effect as the original wording, while avoiding the risk of an interpretation that is inconsistent with that division of powers. I can further advise the member that I am advised that this does not seek to, or will not, amend the status quo. It is an update of the technical legal wording.

Mr TEAGUE: I might just ask for a little bit more in terms of the time and nature of the perceived necessity to make the change. For the record, the bill provides for a carve-out by reference to section 10, which is SAET's jurisdiction in relation to contracts of employment. While I appreciate the government has indicated that this drafting by reference to exclude its subject matter probably does that comprehensively and more elegantly, I ask the minister the rationale, if any, specifically for the reference to section 10 in the first place, and when and how the perception of the need to make the amendment might have arisen?

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I can advise the member that section 10, being the common law employment contract, is included, and the updated amendment that I have moved in my name still intends to include that. On the second part of the member's question around when or how this arose, I am advised that this was a matter that arose in between the houses on a technical internal matter that was raised with the Attorney on advice, and we have sought to correct that through this process now.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 5 to 12 passed.

Clause 13.

Mr TEAGUE: I move:

Amendment No 1 [Teague-1]—

Page 7, lines 26 to 30 [clause 13, inserted section 104A(7)]—Delete subsection (7) and substitute:

- (7) The South Australian Employment Court—
 - (a) in the case of a civil penalty imposed for a contravention of section 104(1)—must order that the civil penalty be paid to the employee affected by the contravention; or
 - (b) in any other case—may order that the civil penalty, or a part of the penalty, be paid to—
 - (i) the State; or
 - (ii) a particular organisation; or

- (iii) a particular person.

Amendment No 2 [Teague–1]—

Page 8, after line 19 [clause 13, after inserted section 104C]—Insert:

104D—Report on certain civil penalties

If a civil penalty is imposed for a contravention of section 104(1) by an employer of public employees, the Minister must, within 6 sitting days of the imposition of the civil penalty, cause a report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament setting out the circumstances of the contravention (including the citation of the matter before the South Australian Employment Court, the name of the agency or instrumentality of the Crown in which the public employee was engaged to perform duties, the details of the civil penalty (and any other penalty) imposed by the Court and a statement of the costs incurred by or on behalf of the Crown in relation to the matter).

With reference to my amendments, there are two of them, so it might be convenient for the committee to deal with them together; otherwise I will separate them out. They are both in relation to clause 13. The first, as I foreshadowed in my second reading contribution, is stipulating that in relation to the civil penalty that is the subject of section 104(1) then the penalty is providing for the penalty to be paid to the affected employee and otherwise as per the clause.

The rationale that I have articulated is including drawing analogy to ordinary civil proceedings. Unions are going to represent their members' core business. From my point of view, I might just say that in doing so there might be reasonable arguments for cost orders to be made in the usual way for that work, but we are here talking about a penalty provision that is a penalty that is made in circumstances where an employee or employees are wronged, and so the amendment will achieve the outcome that that money is paid to those affected employees.

In relation to the second amendment, this is a straightforward matter of public accountability in circumstances where the penalty amount is relatively modest and public accountability for public employers, local government, is going to play, I would put it, as significant a role as the monetary amount. We can see analogies elsewhere where there is a relatively nominal monetary amount that is being paid; not, I might say, an amount that would be insignificant to an individual employee or group of employees, but in relation to a public sector employer or local government a relatively modest amount.

I hope the government might be persuaded of the merits of the second amendment for these reasons. The effective public reporting on acting as a deterrent for this bad conduct may speak more loudly and effectively than even the pecuniary penalty. The best answer that has been given by the government so far is: well, SAET conducts its proceedings in public and sometimes, not always, it is publishing its reasons and judgement and so on, so you are there for full scrutiny.

The scrutiny that is available that way is certainly a means by which there is public accountability. The amendment is providing for that to be reported so that it is on the record and before the parliament. That has all been the subject of debate in another place, none of which takes the government by surprise, but I invite the government to consider the amendments and, indeed, to support them and for the minister to enlighten the committee to the extent that the government might retain any particular reservation in relation to their merits.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS: I thank the member for his contribution. The government opposes these two amendments moved by the opposition and is not persuaded by the matters put before the house by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

If I can perhaps go through them separately: the first of which is the member's amendment that seeks to remove the court's discretion in respect of the awarding of a civil penalty. It is the government's position that it is both right and proper to ensure that the court exercises and may exercise that discretion in respect of contravention of section 104(1). The bill does not, as drafted, require the court to order a penalty payable to any particular person or organisation. It leaves it to the discretion of the court. We consider that appropriate and the drafting remains as such.

I thank the member in his second reading contribution for seeking to give the house some confidence and reassurance that this amendment was not sought to be taken as anti-union. I can only take the member at his word, but I also note that a leopard does not change its spots. The

Liberal Party, by its definition, hates what unions do and hates what working people do by joining together and exercising their collective voices. I am reassured by the member's contribution, but I am not persuaded.

I also note that in the member for Unley's absence, somebody must carry the vociferous anti-union torch, which the member for Unley usually would. So I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for filling the unenviable position and unenviable role of the member for Unley as being the rabid anti-union spear carrier, which the Liberal Party is known for.

With respect to the second amendment moved by the deputy leader, we also oppose this amendment. In the member moving this amendment, I note that he notes that these matters are publicly and diligently reported by the various jurisdictions, in this case the Industrial Court. I would also note that, by way of existing deterrents, or the deterrent factor by which these matters should appropriately be considered, there are a suite of matters which this house can consider within the existing way that courts and the media report these matters. I would note particularly that the matter in which a suite and bevy of former Liberal members have had their criminal convictions reported publicly would act as a way to dissuade some future behaviour in the way of corruption or serious drug offences.

So the government is persuaded that the current mechanisms in the current public reporting would act in the public interest, and also that these additional penalties which the bill contains do act as a particular deterrent factor for this type of unscrupulous behaviour by employers.

Mr TEAGUE: In response, I have just two or three admonishments for the minister. First of all, I remind the minister that it is unparliamentary and contrary to the standing orders to reflect on the presence, or not, of any particular member in the chamber from time to time. In relation to the leopard-and-spots point that the minister raised, I would just remind the minister of my remarks on the public record, specifically in relation to unions.

I have been moved to refer, on at least one occasion that comes to mind, to the towering contribution of Sir John Carrick in the history of the Liberal Party nationally. He is a hero of mine who, including right up to his obituary, was at pains to highlight the central, important role of trade unions in this country in a whole lot of ways. I think where the distinction is appropriately drawn I would certainly take the Carrick distinction, and that is: when unions become political players there is clearly room to highlight the inappropriateness of union conduct from time to time. But I am pretty glad about where my spots are, and, while I am not for changing them, I think it is important to highlight that I am certainly on the record in speaking up for the proper role of unions in this state and in this country—and this is legislation with which unions are centrally concerned.

Indeed, I have made the point that the government has chosen in this bill to legislate in relation to costs of actions before the SAET and to make it clear that costs are only to be awarded in the most unusual of circumstances. I would highlight again, in response to the minister, that if it were actually a bill that was about promoting the role of unions as formal advocates for members, including in processes such as those that are the subject of this bill, then it might have done so by way of the provisions in relation to the awarding of costs, for example. So that has been aired, and I flag that that is something I would be very open to contemplating should the government be serious in its endeavours to stand up for unions and their appropriate role.

There is the third one—I think I mentioned two or three admonishments. The third one is, I think, a rather gratuitous and partisan reference the minister has just made in relation to criminal convictions. I just caution the minister in relation to pots calling kettles. The incidents of criminal convictions of members of parliament in this place over the years are certainly not exclusive to any particular side. I will not now amp up some sort of tit for tat in that regard, but cheap shots are not appropriate, nor is it accurate to deploy partisanship in relation to references to criminal convictions.

In relation to the substantive relevant point in regard to the SAET's public reporting of its proceedings, reasons for judgement and so on, it is a fair point to be made that the recent decision in relation to the United Firefighters Union is the subject of published reasons. If those interested are looking to interrogate what has happened, that is true, that is available. A system of open justice applies to that extent, and I have heard the government's response to the proposal that there be a positive reporting obligation.

To emphasise the positive reporting obligation, the bringing to parliament's attention in a systematic way of these incidents will serve that superadded purpose of making it very clear that a relatively notional civil penalty will do a certain amount of work and a superadded requirement to be publicly accountable, indeed in this place, will do some other work. I hear the government and, for the purpose of the record and assistance of the committee, I just make those further contributions.

Amendments negatived; clause passed.

Remaining clauses (14 to 15), schedule and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (12:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

I thank members for their contribution. I sincerely thank the member for Heysen for his on the record and genuine noting of both the important and appropriate role that trade unions play in the enforcement of basic workplace entitlements. This is a really important piece of the delivery of an election commitment on behalf of this government but also something that has been many years in the making. Whilst the commonwealth has acted appropriately, under a Labor government, to ensure that all workers in the country and the private sector are covered by wage theft laws and protected against wage theft, this was an important piece for us to be able to deliver on behalf of both local government workers in this state as well as state public sector workers.

Can I perhaps say, in a brief way in closing, on a personal note as former secretary of SA Unions, it was in February 2018 that I was standing next to the then Premier, the Hon. Jay Weatherill, who just happens to be the first member for Cheltenham and my predecessor to announce that, should a Labor government have been returned in 2018, that wage theft laws would be implemented in this state. Some seven years later, with great pride, we have now been able to deliver that for state system workers.

What it demonstrates is that to working people, good government matters, and for working people and those of us on this side of the chamber, we fundamentally believe that good Labor government matters to working people. We proudly stand with working people and with the unions that have fought for these laws to be implemented in this state, and we will ensure that unions have a key role to play both through this and other mechanisms under workplace law to do what they do best, and that is to ensure that their members are protected and that they exercise their collective rights and their collective power to seek and attain safer, fairer and better workplaces.

Bill read a third time and passed.

TAFE SA BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 3 September 2025.)

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (12:16): I indicate I am the lead speaker on behalf of the opposition—perhaps for the last time—on this bill today, as the Hon. Dennis Hood is our shadow minister for training in the other house. I am very grateful to Dennis for the work he has done to understand this bill, its intentions and its motivations, to consult with stakeholders on behalf of the Liberal Party, and to consider the implications of these measures and what they will mean for our industries, our training sector and the TAFE organisation, and come forward with our position, which I am happy to set out on his behalf in this chamber.

I say therefore at the outset that the Liberal Party is inclined to support this bill, although the shadow minister for training—as I said, the Hon. Dennis Hood MLC—will be putting forward some amendments on behalf of the Liberal Party in the upper house that will, if accepted, improve the

legislation. I will explain those amendments for the benefit of the minister, advisers and those on the government side who might have the opportunity to consider them, and therefore between the houses we will share those with the government and table them in the Legislative Council and I hope that the government will consider them with an open mind.

We are inclined to support this bill, not potentially because it is perfect legislation—after all, what is?—but because we have formed a view that it is a clear improvement on the status quo. That is our party's view; as a former minister with responsibility at the time for the TAFE SA organisation, that is also my view. The reforms in this bill are not the only options available to the parliament that would improve the act, but the approach the government has taken is as a result of the review that they commissioned upon coming to government.

It is my view that it would be folly when dealing with an act of this nature, the foundational legislation for our state's public training provider, to attempt to implement ideas from the opposition benches without the resources of government. So we work with the government. We seek to be a constructive opposition. We judge the bill on its merits as being better than the status quo and we will offer improvements as appropriate.

I will spend a little time considering why we view the bill as useful in the context. Sir, as you would recall—we were both here—the current TAFE SA Act was designed at a time when it was assumed that there would be a fully contestable training market within which TAFE SA would operate as the government business to ensure that gaps within the training market were being filled. That was the plan. To be clear, this was not some sort of libertarian bureaucracy-bashing endeavour of the Liberal Party; this was the considered policy opinion of the Labor government at the time and the federal Labor government at the time, led by Julia Gillard, that was pushing the state Labor government at the time in this direction.

I remind members of the stream of Labor ministers for training during that 16-year stretch: Jane Lomax-Smith, Steph Key, Paul Caica, Michael O'Brien, Jack Snelling, Tom Kenyon, Grace Portolesi, Gail Gago and the now member for Port Adelaide at the end. The member for Wright can probably take some pride in the fact that I believe he is now set, if he holds on for another five months, to be the first Labor training minister or minister responsible for TAFE to have held onto that for a full term since Lynn Arnold 40 years ago, a point, no doubt, that his office can take with some level of pride, and I hope they put something on their wall.

At any rate, the minister at the time, Tom Kenyon, in introducing the bill in April 2012, highlighted also the strong push towards this model as a result of national ministerial discussions championed and pushed under the prime ministership of Julia Gillard. In introducing that bill in April 2012, Minister Kenyon, as the then Labor minister, highlighted three particular outcomes achieved by introducing a statutory corporation model for TAFE SA, and I will take a moment to quote them. I note that Associate Professor Rea also quoted some of these in her report. In retrospect, I wish I had reread her report prior to rereading this *Hansard*; it might have saved me the trouble of finding it, but nevertheless, he said in 2012:

Firstly, by establishing TAFE SA as a statutory corporation, TAFE SA will be provided with greater commercial autonomy and accountability through a board of directors, and flexibility and independence from government processes. This will enable TAFE SA to be even more responsive to market needs.

I identify in commentary that I am not sure that anyone would suggest it has fulfilled that ambition. Secondly, Minister Kenyon said:

...by establishing TAFE SA as a statutory corporation, greater separation of the roles of TAFE SA and the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) will be achieved. This is important in the development of the demand-driven and market-based model introduced by Skills for All, to ensure that the relationship between the funder and the provider of the training is transparent for all participants of the training system.

Two to three years later, that ambition was rendered completely unfulfilled, as indeed the opposite took place as TAFE's needs subsumed 90 per cent of the training budget after the Skills for All debacle was concluded. Indeed, the intention there was only rectified in 2018, when TAFE SA was removed entirely from the skills department and had different ministers in different departments responsible for supporting the training sector and TAFE SA as a participant within that sector.

I was responsible for TAFE SA as Minister for Education. Minister Pisoni, the member for Unley, was responsible for the training sector. During that time, we were able to fulfil the ambitions of the training sector and the government's ambitions for the training sector by having a minister dedicated to that and, separately, TAFE SA organised by a minister who was focused on fixing its quality issues and supporting the organisation to recover from the situation it was in and then be a participant able to operate effectively within the training sector.

I highlight that briefly as a diversion. It is certainly not considered a problem by me or the Liberal Party that TAFE is now back within the training portfolio necessarily. From a structural point of view, there are significant obvious complementarities, but there were a lot of things that had to be done between 2018 and 2022 to enable that to operate without the risk of returning to a system where TAFE subsumed the training budget to the detriment of the rest of the sector. TAFE's budget having been fixed prior to 2022, we are now in a situation where it has been able to be more closely integrated. The third thing that Minister Kenyon said, as was then highlighted as an opportunity created by the bill at the time, was:

Thirdly, by establishing TAFE SA as a statutory corporation, the State will meet an important requirement of the Commonwealth government's reform of the VET system. The proposed governance changes for TAFE SA satisfy the Commonwealth's National Skills Reform agenda. The direct implication is that VET FEE-HELP (income contingent loans) will be available to VET students from South Australia who study at least diploma level where study is publically subsidised through approved training providers.

Of course, we have been through about three—or possibly six or seven, depending on how you count—different federal funding models since then, so that third ambition is no longer relevant. In short, it did not work out, and the Skills for All framework, upon which the whole body of reform depended, collapsed upon itself spectacularly. Five years' worth of funding was used up in about two years and, all of a sudden, the market that had grown so quickly was left without any oxygen, without any money.

TAFE SA has never been able to support itself as a market player in a level playing field with other non-government providers. There has never really been such a playing field; unlike those other providers, never having had their status as public servants amended the TAFE SA staff benefited from entitlements and job protections—not incorrectly, because that was the job that they had signed up to but, to say the least, they were a lot more generous than any in the non-government sector.

In many cases it was impossible for non-government providers to retain staff when TAFE SA was advertising the same job with potentially 30 per cent more pay, with 29 non-contact days on top of leave and one year's guaranteed opportunity to look for a new job if they were found to be redundant, with a significant loading of about 30 or 40 per cent if they were HPIs. There were a series of benefits that made it appealing for staff to try to work for TAFE SA rather than the non-government sector.

On top of that, at the time—I think this was about 2014-15—the direction of funding to TAFE SA and the exclusion of the non-government sector led to 90 per cent of the training budget going specifically to TAFE SA. Because TAFE SA was underwritten by government, the government of the day—under then minister Gago—responded to the industrial obligations to those staff by, as I said, channelling 90 per cent of the training budget into the TAFE SA organisation specifically, enabling it to pay its bills. However, it left the private and not-for-profit sector utterly suffocated.

Many, many RTOs—not-for-profit and private providers alike, providers of significant reputation and quality including household names like the Master Builders Association who, I think, every member of this house respects for the work they do—were forced to close their doors for good. Trainers moved elsewhere and got other jobs, the depth in the market diminished, and the credibility of the sector plummeted, as did in-training numbers, especially apprenticeships and traineeships.

The distortions in the VET for schools situation was highlighted by the fact that large numbers of people were doing VET programs in high school and counting towards the numbers—a significant proportion of numbers at that point—but not actually completing them to the point of being able to get a parchment, just fulfilling the requirements of the Year 12 program. Thus they used up their entitlement to a training subsidy, which meant that if those students, having completed year 12, then wanted a subsidised program they had already used up their entitlement—an extraordinary waste

within this system to the detriment of the sector and to the detriment of the students who were to benefit from it.

Many people still hoped, during this time, that at some stage it might be possible to return to a contestable training market—including then Labor ministers—right up until about 2017, when the government of the day decided that this was to be an election point of difference they hoped might save them some votes ahead of the 2018 election. I will be frank—and this became increasingly apparent to me during my time as minister—that the distortions and disruptions in the market and the impacts of some of those debacles—in 2015 Skills for All, in 2017 the quality crisis and others—really made this ambition pretty much impossible.

TAFE's unique industrial obligations, along with its obligations to serve the state's needs by offering services non-government providers could not sustain themselves, and along with still significant historical cost challenges, meant that it has pretty much always had to be supported with preferential funding compared to non-government providers: a ratio as high as \$4 to \$1 per training hour has been described to me but I think \$3 to \$1 is more common. I am not sure exactly what it is now, but the same training is much more expensive at TAFE, from a government subsidy point of view, than it is at a non-government provider.

The question for me has always been whether the quality is there. How can we ensure that the most number of students possible, the most number of businesses that need their skills met as possible, are able to get the best quality service provision for their training needs as we can get for the government dollar?

At any rate, I do not want to get into a political argument about why this is the case or what can or should be done about it. I just make the point that as we consider this bill we are well and truly past the point where anyone can pretend that the contestable policy ambitions of state and federal Labor governments in 2012, which led to our current legislative framework, have any foundation in reality.

The current act was designed to serve in an environment for training operators that was subsequently destroyed over the next five years. To be clear, this is actually pretty common ground between us all. I might express it slightly differently, but I have restated things that have been admitted by current ministers.

The Minister for Education would probably have different emphases. He would probably view more kindly the tenures of at least some—maybe not all—of his Labor and formerly Labor predecessors. But in 2023, the minister announced in one of *The Advertiser's* splash and spreads with Andrew Hough, on 6 August 2023, that Labor had got it wrong and reforms would be introduced to turn TAFE into a statutory authority from a corporation chasing profits. I quote from the article:

In a rare public admission of Labor failures, Training and Skills Minister Blair Boyer will on Monday admit the state government wrongly 'corporatised' the embattled agency in 2012 to chase profits.

I made the point at the time to the esteemed journalist, my constituent Andrew Hough, that in 11 years of corporatisation TAFE SA had never actually turned a profit, no matter how it was chasing them, but nevertheless in relation to serving the state's needs the annual charter provided to TAFE SA by the minister and Treasurer set out their requirements for the organisation as the government's public provider of VET and its role in assisting the government and meeting its strategic objectives for technical and further education.

The charter sets out the nature and scope of commercial and non-commercial services. Meanwhile, it has a performance statement as well, which sets out targets for the corporation to pursue, including training activity, load pass rate, qualification/completion ratio, employment outcomes and student satisfaction.

However, I think this gets to the minister's point in moving this bill. Absent specific instruction in the charter or the performance statement or other appropriate direction from government or the minister or the Treasurer or, in the case of when the department is split with the training sector being under a separate authority, the purchasing minister's requirement of the TAFE SA organisation as a provider, the strategic considerations of the board are legally required to act in accordance with the

corporations act and therefore in the best interests of TAFE SA as an organisation. That can, of course, from time to time, be defined differently to the state's best interests.

I think the basis of the minister's intention today is really to remove those obligations of the corporations act from the board's consideration so it can focus instead on the objectives set out by the government and minister of the day and the functions ascribed within the act. We will support the bill.

That said, as the current minister has done over the last three years, and certainly when I was the minister we worked within the framework that exists, supported by some outstanding public servants and an extremely motivated and high-functioning board to deliver necessary reforms to set TAFE's budget on a sustainable footing and to ensure that quality was front and centre. I will come to the critical importance of that work, but suffice to say it is possible to work within the framework of the current act.

While the act has had its issues and we are supporting the reforms—I think I have said that a few times, so leave anyone in no doubt—the truth is that there were several issues that had a much, much bigger impact and created much larger problems for TAFE than the responsibilities imposed on the board by their reflections of the corporations act.

The findings of the Nous review into quality at TAFE, tabled in this parliament in 2018, along with the Moran-Bannikoff review into the state's strategic capabilities tabled at the same time, were truly damning when it came to the governance of the organisation during this period—this period being, in particular, the years leading up to 2017 and the failings under the ASQA audit.

Those reports were commissioned by the member for Port Adelaide (and she was the minister), published during my time as the minister—tabled in this house and then published, to be clear. I will come to them later, but I highlight that many of my reflections to come are not necessarily just those of a shadow minister, as I was from 2016 to 2018, looking for chinks in the armour of the government or complaints to make about the Labor Party at the time, they were in fact based on the reflections of the Moran-Bannikoff review, the Nous review and also the advice of senior officers of the Public Service of South Australia, including within TAFE, all of whom were appointed under the term of the Weatherill Labor government.

Just as big a factor as the issues with the act, when the Marshall Liberal government was elected in 2018 and I received my briefings as an incoming minister, was the discovery of the cynical manner in which successive Labor government treasurers had treated the TAFE board as an uncomplaining source of budget fixes for those Treasury problems. Blunt cuts and efficiencies and fanciful revenue projections that could never have hoped to have been achieved were baked into the budget papers year upon year to the benefit of the treasurers' forward projections but to the detriment to the TAFE SA organisation, the training sector in South Australia, the businesses and industries that needed a skilled workforce, and the students, young people and mature workers who wanted to be upskilled, who should have been able to benefit from a more effective, more streamlined, high-quality training sector and TAFE organisation.

When I was appointed minister, I was frankly absolutely stunned to learn of the scale of the former government's budget decisions that were never communicated to the public prior to the 2018 election. They were imposed on TAFE SA's budget by Treasury and never highlighted or identified to the public by the TAFE board, the minister or, indeed, the government. Successive sets of efficiency dividends and cuts, including three years worth of savings that were not achieved from previous years but were then rephased into the 2018 to 2021 period by the member for West Torrens's 2017 Mid-Year Budget Review and his own new efficiency dividend imposed at the same time, added to a total of \$97 million in budget cuts to the TAFE SA organisation across the forward estimates. As I say, to my knowledge they had not once been articulated to the public prior to the 2018 election.

That included \$6 million for the 2017-18 year, which had been blown out of the water by industrial rulings. When the skills crisis took place in September to December 2017, the AEU took TAFE to the SAET to seek a cancellation or a postponement of a structural reform TAFE was trying to do at the time to reduce the amount of work they were doing in low-activity and low-public-value course offerings. The industrial rulings by the SAET were in the AEU's favour, and therefore the

\$6 million that the Labor government had been trying save at the time through cancelling those courses was not able to be achieved as a result of the SAET's rulings, so those \$6 million of savings remained in the budget.

The savings and cuts baked into the budget which TAFE expected to be delivered were not \$6 million a year, however. That was the low year in 2017-18. They were to grow every year until, in the 2020-21 year, under the settings left by successive treasurers—if they had had their way—from the former Weatherill Labor government, the savings and cuts would have grown as high as \$30.5 million per year. Even the best board in the world would have been up against it to deliver in those circumstances.

I am not going to dwell on the question of how well that board was performing—more than enough has been said over the years, I feel—other than to highlight the historical fact that the member for Port Adelaide publicly withdrew her confidence and, on cabinet's recommendation, the Governor fired the chair of the board late in 2017, the chief executive already having resigned. I stand to be corrected, but I cannot recall that happening in any other circumstance that comes to mind, certainly not in an organisation of this significance to the state.

I do not want to diminish in any way the value of the bill that we are considering today, which we are supporting and I think does have some value. I think it will improve the organisation. The point I make is that in 2017 and 2018, as did the dedicated and passionate staff at TAFE, their leaders, the board members—the one ongoing one and the new ones who came in—the public servants and other agencies who were supporting them, the incoming government from March 2018 onwards worked very hard to give TAFE SA a fresh start and to give our training sector a sustainable future in which it would thrive and provide the services to businesses, industries and students that we all need it to.

The imperfections of the TAFE SA Act would not have made it into the top 10 considerations that were keeping people up at night. I am not saying that the imperfections were not felt, and I am not saying that this is not worthy work. I am just highlighting that there are number of other pieces of work that had to be done first. It was an enormous body of work just to identify the true cost of any individual service delivery within the TAFE organisation and the basis on which it was actually operating.

It was an enormous body of work to work out how to remediate the challenges that were created and to build up the quality and the reputation at TAFE. There are many excellent public servants, TAFE staff and board members who worked countless hours that I doubt will ever be fully appreciated or understood by people in this state, other than those staff members and their long-suffering families. I am very grateful to them all and I want to put on the record my thanks to them all. I will name a few, but there are countless others who I should name. This speech has already gone on for coming up on half an hour, so I do not have time for them all, but I will identify a few.

First is the board chairs during that time, and Rick Persse was there for the first six months. I suspect, of his many achievements within the Public Service, being requested to be the interim chair of the TAFE board for a period of time had not been on his bucket list, but I am sure he is now grateful to have had that experience. Next was Jacqui McGill and then Jo Denley. I highlight that Jo Denley had in fact been installed by the member for Port Adelaide as the chair of the TAFE board after the firing of the previous chair by the Governor. Jo Denley was the acting chair coming in. She served on the interim TAFE board under Rick Persse, along with some senior public servants of great merit, who I am grateful to.

Jo Denley continued on the TAFE board under the appointment of Jacqui McGill, and when Jacqui McGill, having served two years, indicated that she wished to focus her energy on other things, Jo Denley stepped up again. Jo Denley was last year recognised at the South Australian Training Awards for her lifetime of service to the sector. I probably mentioned it then—I hope I sent her an SMS—but I mark for the record now my significant gratitude, as I know the minister and the former minister equally have incredibly high regard for the work she did.

Interim TAFE Chief Executive, Alex Reid, was thrust into the situation at an extraordinarily difficult time. I really valued her extraordinary professionalism as the incoming chief executive as I was the incoming minister. There was a lot of important work that happened during her term. Also,

the Acting TAFE Chief Executive, Julieann Riedstra, was former deputy chief executive of the education department and is about to retire as Chair of Zoos SA. Her service to South Australia was extended through this body of work as well. In particular, David Coltman's service as the Chief Executive of TAFE has only just recently concluded. As the current minister has already done, we thank him for his service and for his significant body of work in this area.

As I said, there are dozens of others who I could and probably should name, but I will only single out one more, being Chris Bernardi. His body of work supporting TAFE CFOs in particular, in addition to his day job at the education department, which was not insignificant, was instrumental in developing the case that convinced cabinet, including Treasurer Rob Lucas, of the need to correct the fantasy budget figures that had had such a negative impact on the TAFE organisation and our training sector for so long.

Ultimately, over four years, without cannibalising the rest of the training budget—indeed, while investing hundreds of millions of dollars of new money into expanded programs for apprenticeships, traineeships, vocational education in schools and non-government providers, both not-for-profits and private providers of quality—the former Liberal government injected more than \$350 million over the course of its four budgets into the TAFE SA organisation.

That was a combination of new money, reductions in the previous Labor government's identified cuts and more favourable—actually, not more favourable, just realistic assumptions related to revenue: the abolition of the previous Weatherill Labor government's fantasy land revenue projections, which made the TAFE board and the TAFE organisation's job pretty much impossible.

I am really not given to hyperbole, but the rescue of the TAFE SA organisation from the brink of disaster that it was on from 2018 to 2022 will stand as one of the significant achievements of the Marshall Liberal government. It was left in a sustainable position by the time of the 2022 election, with realistic budget figures. The fact that the TAFE SA organisation's budget overspends since the 2022 election have been rounding errors, effectively, compared to regularly being tens of millions of dollars every single year prior, is testament to the budget fixes that were put in place prior to that 2022 election.

There has been new money as well, but that new money has paid for different things. The underlying assumptions that TAFE SA's budget is now based on are now realistic. We have actually copped some criticism since the election for having a disproportionate amount of new money during the term of the Marshall Liberal government go into the TAFE SA organisation rather than non-government and private providers, which is ironic because we have also had criticism from the AEU at the same time that we were providing too much money to the non-government providers.

The truth is that the Marshall Liberal government significantly increased funding to both. In terms of the market, we provided a curated market where higher levels of opportunity were there for areas to be supported by private providers where there was quality and depth in the market. We also provided massive injections of funding to enable TAFE SA to be the quality organisation that all South Australians deserve and all of its staff aspire to be.

It is really important to note: when we look at the Nous review into quality and the Moran-Bannikoff review into TAFE strategic capabilities and all of the other advice I got, none of those documents criticised the vast majority of TAFE staff, who work their guts out to support training in their sectors. There are problems about the structure of the training sector—the extraordinary difficulties that structure provides for non-government providers. There are criticisms of governance, of oversight, of Treasury decisions and of strategic intent—and we will go through some of them a bit later—but the TAFE staff, many of whom have worked very hard for a very long time, are to be commended and particularly those who worked so hard to set TAFE on their trajectory towards being able to thrive in the years ahead from what were very difficult times in 2017 for many of them.

Anyway, we left TAFE in a sustainable position. The new government was elected in 2022. They came in with their own policy agenda, including some new programs they prefer to some of those that were in place. They have adjustments in the settings to prioritise investment in TAFE SA specifically rather than allowing non-government market providers to offer certain courses in some circumstances. That is their prerogative; they have been elected by the people of South Australia.

They get the opportunity to implement their agenda. The minister gets the opportunity to put in place his programs.

But while the minister might potentially not go so far as to admit that he is grateful to have come into the stewardship of TAFE SA after four Rob Lucas budgets rather than four previous Labor Treasurer budgets, I will nevertheless say on behalf of Rob Lucas to the minister, 'You are welcome.'

Back to the act: we worked within its imperfections, and we were able to make significant strides supporting TAFE SA alongside a recovering and then increasingly strongly growing non-government sector to serve the interests of South Australians students, jobseekers, people who wanted to upskill and the businesses and industries who so needed those skills in their workforces.

But we were not and we are not operating it in a contestable market. It was never set to be one, when TAFE often gets three times the funding that a non-government provider offering the same course gets. All the good intentions, all the best endeavours and all the clear instructions to work collaboratively with the non-government sector in the world are still going to run into difficulties from time to time, and absent specific instructions from the minister the board's legal duties are, of course, to the organisation under the Corporations Act, ahead of what might be more broadly understood to be the state's interest.

So reform is a worthy objective. I commend the minister for undertaking the reform, as do the Liberal Party, and now is as good a time as any to implement legislation such as this. Let's consider for a moment what form those reforms might take. Different suggestions get put forward from time to time. Some have been pretty significant. Suggestions put to me over the years have included splitting TAFE into a number of separate regional providers. I think the—how do we refer to him—recently relieved member for Mount Gambier had a motion to the house of this sort of nature not so long ago, and that attracted some support from the Labor Party at the time, as I recall.

That was one suggestion. There was a suggestion highlighted I think by a bill that was proposed by the Greens before the last election to regularise TAFE SA back within the Public Service, which would in fact achieve a number of the goals of the proposal being put forward today. It would regularise forever the fact that the staff are public servants and not employed by a separate entity, but of course that has happened anyway, so it would not have made much difference there. That had certain attractions and may one day in the future be considered again if this model does not work out, although we all hope it will.

It has also been suggested from time to time that TAFE SA's training provision should be separated from its assessment provision, or separated from its infrastructure provision. Various iterations of those have all been suggested and they reflect different models of reform that have been tried around the country and around the world.

Compared with some of those ideas the actual reform in front of us today, to transfer it from a statutory corporation or a government business to a statutory authority, is fairly modest. In fact, I note that the Rea report never actually refers to TAFE as a statutory corporation. I did a word search to see exactly where the reference to this bill was highlighting that it should be changed from a public corporation to a statutory authority, and the only two times the words 'statutory authority' are mentioned in the Rea report are when Associate Professor Rea refers to TAFE as a statutory authority. It was potentially the view of the authors of the report that TAFE SA already is a statutory authority, although they then clarify in the next chapter that it is a government corporation and they quote from Tom Kenyon's speech, in similar quotes to those that I highlighted earlier.

The point I make is, the difference between a statutory corporation and statutory authority is not massive, but it is real and it is beneficial. The proposal in front of us today may be relatively modest in the scheme of things, but it is entirely logical. It is a good proposal and we take the view that it is a clear and unambiguous improvement on the current act.

So how did the government come to this proposal? The minister's announcement in 2023 was contemporary with the release of the long-awaited report from Associate Professor Jeannie Rea with her committee, which included some people from TAFE and from unions. There were some industry representatives there. Peter Nolan, of great experience in running non-government training

organisations—PEER, amongst others—was on the committee from memory. There were some very good people on that committee and they no doubt worked very hard.

The minister's second reading speech identified the bill's response to the recommendation of Associate Professor Rea that the act be reformed. I think in the second reading speech the language that he uses makes it clear that he has tried to identify what he considers, and the government potentially considers, and what I probably would agree are some of the best aspects of that report. He may have used that to inspire the legislation and that is fine and we consider it on its merits. There are some things in the report that were not included in the bill and that is fine too.

Prior to preparing these comments and discussing this bill, it had been a couple of years since I had read it, so I refreshed my memory. It begins with the section called 'The Context,' and Rea, or the authors of the report, write:

TAFE SA in 2023 carries a legacy in terms of aspirations and ambitions, not just in public assets and community support. Considering aspects of the history of TAFE helps explain some of the contemporary ambiguities, which inform this Roadmap.

The subsequent pages set out a history, from the 1830s to the present, of vocational training. In rereading the report I had hoped it would present some useful reflection and consideration of the proposals in this bill. I hoped it might reflect on some of the story that I have described, the journey from 2012 through to 2018 and then on to 2023.

I was interested in how it would consider the Skills for All debacle, the defunding of the non-government sector, the massive TAFE budget cuts of 2017 in Labor's last year, their last Mid-Year Budget Review and the reputational crisis caused by the ASQA quality accreditation scandal of the same year.

I hoped to glean some insight from Professor Rea's historical account of this tumultuous decade since corporatisation and I hoped that would provide the logical analysis that would lead to the bill we are at today. Unfortunately, with all respect, I was surprised that very little of this narrative, or very little reflection even on this period in time, made it into the text.

We were able to read about the early 19th century mechanics institutes operating in England prior to South Australia's proclamation. There is a very interesting paragraph on the evolution of the South Australia Institute to the South Australian Institute of Technology between 1856 and 1892. The development of the TAFE systems and national approaches to training over the second half of the 20th century are narrated over the course of about four pages. There is positive commentary on Whitlam. There is negative commentary on Fraser. There is positive commentary on Albanese. There is negative commentary about John Howard.

I have to say, after reading it I was starting to feel like it was a bit more of a political document than a dispassionate analysis of the context in which the TAFE SA organisation found itself. But thinking back to my time as shadow minister in 2018, I was getting towards the end and I was thinking about how this report would treat the budget cuts of the Weatherill years and the 2017 quality crisis which disrupted the lives of thousands of students and staff alike, which was not fully resolved until December 2018, let alone the ongoing impacts of the organisation that lasted a few years thereafter. At least I thought that is what happened.

The report instead only has a brief reference inside a paragraph about decommissioned shonky providers. It offers two brief sentences in brackets:

(TAFE SA itself faced reputational damage when ASQA withheld re-licensing in 2016—

I note that it was 2017, not 2016—

due to several instances of assessment quality issues—

I note for the record it was 16 instances of failed audits, two of which were remedied, four of which were not attempted to be continued by TAFE, and 10 of which failed a subsequent audit. Professor Rea goes on to write—

which TAFE SA corrected within a few months and passed the audit. Since then TAFE SA has had its license rolled over without issue.)

I highlight for the record a different timeline that the primary sources that I will go through in a minute bear out differently. In short, it was December 2018 until all of the students had had their subjects remediated and TAFE SA was able to confirm it and continue offering those courses. It was 2019 before TAFE SA was able to gain reaccreditation again. We were able to do so for a seven-year reaccreditation, which had never been achieved before—it is the maximum allowed by ASQA.

So the fact that TAFE SA since 2019 has managed to make it to the next year before it needs to be reaccredited again is a credit to an enormous body of work by all of those public servants, as I said before, including about half of the 2,000 staff at TAFE SA who had a direct involvement in correcting course materials, correcting assessments, remediating students or supporting students.

There were hundreds of students who were studying at TAFE who had to redo aspects of their course. There were hundreds of students who had completed their studies but who were unable to get their parchments until they were able to resit assessments or have coursework redone to correct the errors in the previous training package. This is hard to believe, but there were hundreds of students who had received their parchments, only to find that those parchments were retrospectively not recognised as a result of the quality audit, and then had to come back and do more assessments. I read again from the report:

...several instances of assessment quality issues, which TAFE SA corrected within a few months and passed the audit. Since then, TAFE SA has had its license rolled over without issue.)

I hope that in 10 or 15 years' time the parliament does not need to be looking back at TAFE SA legislation with disappointment, as we all are now, the dreams of the hoped-for improvements that we had in 2012 having been dashed. We are disappointed. I hope that in 10 or 15 years' time members of parliament and people interested in the training sector do not have reason to come back and look at these debates and wonder what happened that led to these circumstances. I have some confidence that they will not. I have some confidence and hopes that this bill will see us through and we will not need those further reforms.

However, if people do have cause to look back at these 2025 debates and wonder what was the cause of all those problems, what was the situation prior to the need for this bill to come into place, what happened in 2017, I hope that they will look further than the Rea report when it comes to identifying that historical analysis. I offer instead an alternative timeline, which is checked against primary sources readily available to anybody who cares to so much as google them or look in the parliamentary library.

Coincidentally, given that I will be leaving this place soon, I hope this reflection that will follow potentially this afternoon will also provide some sufficient context for the support given to TAFE SA during the term of the previous government when I had ministerial responsibility for the organisation. It was a privilege then, and I seek leave, potentially, to continue my remarks after the lunchbreak.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You still have another minute.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Another minute, okay, excellent. In that case, rather than commencing on the dot point analysis, I will foreshadow that dot point analysis, starting with the Skills for All debacle, taking us through the CASA report that saw TAFE's qualifications to deliver air safety programs and mechanical airline engineering programs disqualified, that Parafield Airport was effectively shut by CASA, not by any decision of government. We had the ASQA quality scandal, the \$97 million worth of cuts imposed by Weatherill Labor treasurers imposed on the organisation, and the \$350 million of restored sustainable funding provided by the former Liberal government to enable this organisation to be on its feet.

Now we are in a position to support the reforms to the bill that will set up TAFE SA to be more in line with government priorities in the years ahead and, hopefully, will also enable it to be better in line with the needs of the training sector as a whole, rather than just the industrial needs of the organisation I seek leave to continue those remarks after lunch.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

**SUMMARY OFFENCES (PROHIBITION OF PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN MATERIAL)
AMENDMENT BILL***Assent*

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy assented to the bill.

*Parliamentary Procedure***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I would like to acknowledge some visitors to parliament today. First of all, we have delegates from the SDA, who are guests of the member for Newland. Welcome to parliament. We also have some special guests from the Beach Volleyball World Championships which are going to be held in Adelaide next month, and we are all looking forward to that. We have the CEO of the championships, Jenny Mann, and we have another Nat Cook—not the minister but the gold medallist and bronze medallist, Nat Cook, who, of course, won gold and bronze for Australia. She is a great supporter of the game and was the first Australian woman to go to five Olympic Games. It is great to have you here, Nat.

We also have Mark Arbib here, the CEO of the Australian Olympic Committee. The entire Olympic family is going to be here in Adelaide next month, so it is a very exciting time. We do not get to have the Olympic rings in our city very often, so we are very much looking forward to that. Of course, Mark also served as the Minister for Employment Participation, Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development, and Minister for Sport. It is great to have you here, Mark, Nat and Jenny.

Martin Hamilton-Smith, the former member for Waite, former leader of the Liberal Party and former cabinet member in the Weatherill ministry is here today as well. It is really good to have you here, Martin.

We also have members of Sir Eric Neal's family with us today. We welcome you on behalf of everyone at parliament. We have Peter and Kim Neal, James Neal, Emma Marr and Evelyn Marr. Thank you very much for coming in today. I think that probably segues nicely into the Premier of South Australia.

*Condolence***SIR ERIC JAMES NEAL AC CVO**

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (14:04): By leave, I move:

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of the Hon. Sir Eric James Neal AC CVO, former Governor of this state, and places on record its appreciation of his distinguished service to the state and that, as a mark of respect to his memory, the sitting of the house be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

I stand with the sad duty of acknowledging in the house the passing of the former Governor of South Australia, Sir Eric Neal AC CVO, who passed away on Tuesday 2 September. Sir Eric celebrated his 101st birthday in June, and it speaks volumes about the way that he spent his time on this earth that this extraordinary milestone with and of itself was possibly the least significant of his achievements.

Eric Neal was born in 1924, the first of four children to James and May Neal. In 1927, his working-class family emigrated from London, first settling in Brompton—great choice—and then Largs Bay, as his father pursued fresh opportunities in the nation's South Australian gas industry.

Education at the local public school and the South Australian School of Mines followed before Sir Eric followed his father's example and took an engineering role at the Broken Hill Gas Company. From here, his career in our resource sector was one of success followed by ever-greater success, ascending through evermore senior management roles to eventually serve for 14 years as the CEO of Boral. It was in this role that he cemented his reputation as a tough but courteous businessman who demanded the best of himself and from those around him, attracting board and directorial roles with such heavy-hitters as BHP, Coca Cola Amatil, John Fairfax Holdings (which became Fairfax Media) and Westpac.

Having become a towering figure in Australian business, Sir Eric turned his prestigious talents and unquenchable curiosity to new spheres of public-spirited endeavour. Of all his public achievements, the greatest was his 1996 appointment as the 32nd Governor of the State of South Australia. During his five active years in the role, South Australia benefited greatly from Sir Eric's international reputation and impeccable contacts in every sphere of global commerce. He took part in successful trade missions to Malaysia, Sweden, the US and the Shandong province of China, establishing and maintaining vital connections and creating new trade opportunities for our state.

His governorship concluded in 2001, but Sir Eric was not about to kick back and enjoy the quiet life just because of other 70 year olds doing the same thing. His energetic service to our state continued, including time as Chair of the South Australian Veterans' Advisory Council. Both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial and the ANZAC War Memorial on Kintore Avenue were established under his leadership.

It is impossible to do his achievements and appointments justice without it rambling like a poorly edited Wikipedia page—the list just seems to go on and on. The simple fact that listing off appointments, like Companion of the Order of Australia, recipient of the US Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, a Knight of the Order of St John and the inaugural Patron Emeritus of the Virtual War Memorial Australia, still barely scratch the surface of the full gamut of honours bestowed upon Sir Eric—rightfully—during the course of his lifetime of service. Sir Eric was a polymath, forever driven by his boundless curiosity about the world around him and the people it contains.

The legend goes that upon his 2002 appointment as Chancellor of Flinders University, Sir Eric chose to catch the bus from his North Adelaide home to the campus at Bedford Park, which was an hour-long journey daily each way. When asked if he would not prefer a driver to take him, he simply explained to curious staff and family that the journey made it possible to speak candidly with students in an informal setting, one conducive to the free exchange of information, concerns and ideas which uphold the best practices of higher education in our nation. I think that story captures something of the measure of the man and his style of leadership.

Both Flinders University and Adelaide University have honoured his contribution to South Australia's tertiary sector, the former with the Sir Eric Neal Engineering Building and the latter with the Sir Eric Neal Library at the current University of South Australia campus at Mawson Lakes. Outside of his professional duties, Sir Eric was a keen soccer player with the University of Adelaide, while also being a dedicated fan of AFL, particularly for his home team of Port Adelaide, for whom he was patron in yet another demonstration of his impeccable wisdom.

Sir Eric consistently attributed his success to the foundation of joy and support provided by his long and happy marriage to Lady Thelma Joan Neal, a 72-year partnership that began with a chance meeting at the Adelaide Royal Show and ended with her passing in 2023 at the age of 91. We also remember and honour her today.

Sir Eric was a truly great South Australian. His service to our state will not be forgotten. I offer my condolences to his family—his sons, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren—and to all whose lives were touched by Sir Eric's wisdom, friendship and generosity. One of the more beautiful occasions I have had the privilege of being present at in recent years was the 100th birthday celebration at Government House, which was a state dinner in Sir Eric's name. Watching Sir Eric so comfortably sit at that table and regale some pretty incredible stories, I might say, with confidence but great humility was a real privilege to witness.

Anybody who had the chance to speak candidly with Sir Eric in different contexts could not help but get a sense that the man was a great statesman: thoughtful, eloquent and articulate, but exceptionally humble in the way he went about approaching what was otherwise an extraordinary record of success. In today's day and age, I think Sir Eric's style of leadership represents some of the best traditions of what true leaders look like.

We could all take something from Sir Eric's contribution to our state, but also the way he went about achieving it. To that end, I do want to acknowledge his family being here again today and thank them for their way of celebrating Sir Eric's service to our state in recent weeks. We very much look forward to acknowledging Sir Eric's contribution in other forms for many, many years to come.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (14:12): I also rise to support the condolence motion for Sir Eric James Neal AC CVO. I rise to support the motion and place on record the opposition's deep regret at the passing of Sir Eric James Neal AC CVO, former Governor of South Australia, and our appreciation of a life given to service to industry and to this state.

I was honoured to attend the funeral of the late Sir Eric, along with my parliamentary colleagues, and I have never seen such a fitting send-off. There were bagpipes playing, I think, *Highland Cathedral*. It was wall-to-wall champions of industry, community, politics, and sport of South Australia and well beyond. It was a fitting tribute for such a giant of South Australia.

Sir Eric's story is the Australian promise, lived out with discipline but also humility. Born in Rotherhithe, London, at just two years of age he moved from the UK to Australia with his family. He was educated at Largs Bay and Hindmarsh public schools before attending Thebarton Technical School. He left school at 16 to work, trained as an engineer at the South Australian School of Mines, completed an apprenticeship at the South Australian Gas Company, and from there built a career that literally took him from factory floors to board tables and, ultimately, all around the world, and also to Government House.

A successful engineering career equipped Sir Eric with the skills and the experience to serve as CEO of Boral for 14 years. Later he would build on that leadership and that experience, and apply it to the board of some of our most significant companies, including BHP, Atlas Copco, Westpac and John Fairfax Limited. Sir Eric was appointed National Chair of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia from 1984 to 1992 and an international trustee of the award from 1987 to 1997, which overlapped with his term as Chief Commissioner of the City of Sydney.

He was continually investing in the next generation: think of all the thousands and thousands of award winners who have taken part in the Duke of Edinburgh's award—I did my bronze. It provides so much leadership to future generations. This blend of public and private leadership positioned him well to become South Australia's 32nd governor from 1996 to 2001. He was the first governor from a business background. He was the first to serve in the role from a business background, which is a testament to the calibre of his leadership quality but also his spirit of service. He never confused status with purpose. He simply got on with the work.

He believed leadership should be steady and useful but always close to the people and that was clear from listening to some of the stories at his funeral. This was a man who was revered and loved. On his swearing in, he quoted *The Advertiser* challenge that a governor 'might do good things in a quiet way'. He certainly lived that line.

He brought a business mind to the vice-regal office. He promoted South Australian business and industry. He also helped establish civic institutions that still serve us, and the Governor's Leadership Foundation remains a living part of that legacy, shaping new leaders a quarter of a century on. Former Premier Dean Brown was also at the funeral and, as he recalled, that spirit of leadership was also seen in the small courtesies, the one percenters. After formal dinners, Sir Eric was known to invite the chef into the dining room to thank him before the guests. That was his way of showing that titles meant nothing compared to the respect for people.

After completing his term as Governor, Sir Eric brought the best leadership to his role as Chancellor of Flinders University from 2002 to 2010. Beneath these titles, there was clearly a man who never lost the perspective of where he came from and where he started. For him, a defining memory was walking from the Melbourne Club to his first BHP board meeting, and thinking, 'Here's a boy from Largs Bay school now joining the board.' That quiet pride was matched with humour.

After receiving his knighthood, he was told that there were two implications: his wife might pay a little bit more at the butcher and he would get seats quicker in a restaurant. That story says a lot about how he wore honours lightly. At 100, he summed up a century with typical bluntness, 'I woke up this morning and thought: I've made it'. That is what he said. He also said South Australia was hardly recognisable compared with 70 or 80 years ago because he had seen the change: he had helped drive it. He still thought first of this state.

Service for Sir Eric was not a slogan, it was a practice. As Governor, he supported cultural, charitable, educational organisations right across South Australia. In later years, he gave his time to

leadership programs and to the wider community through countless patronages, whether it was the Port Adelaide Football Club, freemasonry, you name it. He was recognised with some of the highest honours including Companion of the Order of Australia, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, and Knight Bachelor. He wore them with restraint. He measured success not by ceremony but by the good that was done. One example endures: in 1999, at Dean Brown's request, South Australian business leaders gathered at Government House to discuss food relief. Out of that dinner came Foodbank SA, I am told, which today feeds thousands and thousands of people right across our state. That is leadership, leaving a legacy long after the office was vacated.

We remember too the constancy of Lady Neal, his partner in life and in public duty and in the family he cherished. It was great to hear about their nightly ritual of a glass of wine at the end of the night. He once said the secret to longevity was being married for 75 years to a woman devoted to family and lifting stress from his shoulders while he worked. That is love in practice.

Our sincere sympathy goes to his family, sons, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all who mourn him today. Sir Eric James Neal gave South Australia a clear example of leadership without theatre. He proved that integrity, competence and quiet action can move a state and a country forward. On behalf of the opposition, I thank him for the decades of service he gave our community, our economy and our institutions. May this house record our gratitude for a life of duty that was well fulfilled, and may he rest in peace.

The Hon. J.K. SZAKACS (Cheltenham—Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans' Affairs) (14:19): Today I rise specifically in my capacity as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs to make a few remarks on the enormous contribution that Sir Eric Neal AC has made to the veterans' community.

In 1981, Sir Eric was appointed to a committee to review Australia's higher defence organisation. In 1992, he was awarded a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order. In that same year, he was a recipient of the US Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service in recognition of his contribution to the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea as Chair of that council that organised commemorative events across Australia.

For his commitment to the defence and veterans' communities in South Australia, Sir Eric was awarded honorary life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia. He was formerly an honorary Air Commodore of the City of Adelaide Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force and honorary Colonel of the Royal South Australian Regiment. In April 2008, Sir Eric was appointed as the inaugural Chair of the Veterans' Advisory Council, where he served until 2016.

The VAC was established to promote the wellbeing of South Australian veterans and provide advice to the South Australian government, and Sir Eric passionately advocated throughout his term for increased recognition of military service and, importantly, for improved medical care for veterans and their families.

In preparation for today's motion, I sought some reflections from a former Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Martin Hamilton-Smith, who I am so pleased joins us today, given that he worked so closely with Sir Eric during his tenure as the VAC Chair. The Hon. Mr Hamilton-Smith described Sir Eric as 'an absolute old school gentleman who attracted people with his strong values, dignity and decency'. He also noted how vital Sir Eric's guidance had been through a difficult period that included grappling with the local impacts of conflict in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Sir Eric was deeply involved in the planning and influential in securing funding for South Australia's ANZAC Centenary Memorial Walk, which commemorates both personnel and those on the home front who served in all Australian conflicts since Federation. The Hon. Mr Hamilton-Smith was also there at the time of the Centenary Memorial Walk being conceived and delivered, and he said that Sir Eric's influence and ability to bring people together was vital in realising that project. It was a complicated one, involving many stakeholders who needed to be aligned to achieve both funding and construction.

I am advised that Sir Eric was an indispensable asset, able to find consensus and win agreement to ensure the project's success. The unveiling of the Memorial Walk on 23 April 2016 saw

Sir Eric Neal's term as Chair of the Veterans' Advisory Council conclude after eight years. In retirement, Sir Eric remained a highly respected member and supporter of the vets community. He also took a leading role in the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial and was Patron Emeritus of the Virtual War Memorial Australia.

Along with the hardworking team at Veterans SA and the entire veterans community of South Australia, I extend my heartfelt condolences to Sir Eric's family, including Peter, James, his five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His dedication, his advocacy and distinguished leadership have left an indelible mark on the South Australian veteran community.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (14:23): I rise to make a contribution to the life of the Hon. Sir Eric Neal AC CVO. He was born in Rotherhithe, London, on 3 June 1924, the oldest of four children with three younger sisters. He left school at the age of 16 to enter the workforce, but further advanced his education by studying engineering at the South Australian School of Mines. He pursued an apprenticeship at the South Australian Gas Company, where he became skilled in plumbing and gasfitting. His successful career as an engineer led to him becoming an impressive businessman, which included positions such as Director of BHP, John Fairfax Holdings and AMP, Chairperson of Westpac and Atlas Copco, and a 14-year stint as Chief Executive Officer of Boral.

In 1981, Sir Eric was appointed to a committee to review Australia's Higher Defence Organisation. The following year, he was appointed a Knight Bachelor for his services to Australian industry. In 1988, he was made a Companion of the Order of Australia for services to commerce and to the community, and in 1992 he was awarded a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

Sir Eric was heavily involved with the veteran community during his life. In 1992, he received the United States Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service in recognition of his contribution to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, as Chair of the council that organised commemorative events in Australia. He was awarded honorary life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia for his commitment to the defence and veteran communities in South Australia. Sir Eric was also an Honorary Air Commodore of the City of Adelaide Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force, and Honorary Colonel of the Royal South Australia Regiment while he served as Governor of South Australia from 1996 to 2001.

In April 2008, Sir Eric was appointed as the inaugural Chair of the Veterans' Advisory Council, which was established to promote the wellbeing of South Australian veterans and provide advice to the state government. During his time as Chair of the VAC, Sir Eric passionately advocated for increased recognition of military service and improved medical care for veterans and their families. He was deeply involved in the planning of, and was pivotal in securing funding for, South Australia's ANZAC Centenary Memorial Walk. He also took a leading role in the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial, and was Patron Emeritus of the Virtual War Memorial Australia.

Sir Eric's term as Chair of the Veterans' Advisory Council concluded after eight years, on 23 April 2015. Fittingly, it coincided with the unveiling of the Memorial Walk, which he was so heavily involved with. Sir Eric remained a highly respected member of the veteran community in his final years, with his involvement leaving an enduring mark. To his family, I say thank you. Vale to the Hon. Sir Eric James Neal AC CVO.

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (14:27): I also rise briefly to speak on this condolence motion brought by the Premier. Many people in this chamber have spoken very eloquently about Sir Eric, but I want to talk about the Sir Eric with whom I came into contact personally on a couple of occasions. It was as a councillor on the Port Pirie Regional Council that I first had the opportunity when, in 2001, he came up for the unveiling and dedication of the memorial to the Italian Molfetta fishermen and paid tribute there.

As a councillor, I was not aware of all the high-ranking officials and the high degree of protocol for the Governor of South Australia. However, on that occasion Sir Eric was absolutely fantastic. He came up in the regal car and did the ceremony, but then I looked around and he was mingling with the general public. He was mingling with the children. He was mingling with everybody. I did not see that as the position or the duty of the Governor of our state, but he was a man who was

absolutely down to earth. He came and did the official opening, the dedication, the ceremony and the unveiling of the plaque, but he wanted to talk to the general public.

From another perspective, at the last election when I became Minister for Veterans' Affairs one of the things I wanted to do was to actually understand more about veterans' affairs, as is the duty of a minister. I was listening to all the advice that was given to me as an Independent coming in, not having the privilege of all the understanding and people telling me what should be done, and I was trying to understand how the Minister for Veterans' Affairs got advice from the relevant people, other than Veterans SA and the advisers.

Rob Manton, who was a member of Veterans SA, said to me, 'Why don't we go and have a talk to the inaugural Chair of Veterans' Advisory Council.' With all due respect, being a bit ignorant, I said, 'Who is that?' Robert said, 'Sir Eric Neal.' I said, 'Excuse me, we just can't go and speak to Sir Eric Neal about some advice.' He said, 'Look, I will make the arrangements,' so the arrangements were made and we went to the premises, the units. We took little gift for Lady Joan. Basically, we came in, and as we opened the door the first greeting from Sir Eric was, 'Good evening, minister.' I said, 'My name's Geoff.' He said, 'My name's Eric', so it started off very relaxing. We sat down, and Lady Joan was very supportive and very hospitable.

Before going there—I am a very proud Crows supporter since the inception of the Crows—I was advised very strongly that when I was having a discussion with Sir Eric I was to keep two words out of the conversation. Those two words were 'the showdown'. Previous to that, Port Power and the Crows played, and from memory on the last kick of the day the Crows won. I was not aware at that stage that David Koch, the Chairman of Port Adelaide, is the nephew of Sir Eric, so I kept it very quiet, very professional. On leaving, we were going past, and we had the formalities. I thanked Sir Eric very much regarding his hospitality. I thanked Lady Joan for her hospitality. Lady Joan said to me, 'Minister, you have done well tonight.' I said, 'And why is that?' 'You did not mentioned those two words: the showdown.'

However, I had the opportunity to understand and get to know Sir Eric on different occasions. We were at different events and he would acknowledge me. When he was in his later years, I would sit with him at events and just talk as general people.

As the Leader of the Opposition has indicated, I had the great privilege, as did other members in the chamber here, to attend Sir Eric's funeral. It was a funeral of love and respect that could not have been a better acknowledgement of not only Sir Eric's life but also Lady Joan's. At the close, Scottish pipers went through. My late wife being Scottish, it was very emotional for me and brought memories back, but that was a very fitting finale for the funeral. I stand to be corrected, but I think it might have been a great grandson there. His comments were, 'Hello, grandpa.' As the procession was going past he said, 'I will see you later, grandpa.' To me, that was the respect and the admiration that Sir Eric had for all of his family and the admiration from all of the family to Sir Eric and Lady Joan.

My condolences go to the whole family. I will remember very, very fondly for all of my days my association with not only Lady Joan but Sir Eric for the advice that he gave me, and I will treasure that forever. Rest in peace, Sir Eric.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (14:33): I offer a few reflections of my own but also those of my wife, Trudi-Ann Mercurio, who very much appreciated the modest engagements that she, too, had with Sir Eric, and former premiers Marshall and Brown, so I will move through my own reflections as quickly as I can.

Sir Eric Neal, as the Chancellor of Flinders University, presented my wife with both of her undergraduate bachelor's degrees, her Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. I was reflecting on the Premier's comments earlier and the fact that all the students at Flinders University during his time knew who their chancellor was. I reflect on my own time. I might have known who the chancellor of my university was—I was involved in student politics—but I very much doubt that many did. But Sir Eric was a live and central presence in the student life at Flinders University as well as making a significant contribution to the organisation of Flinders and the achievements that it has now.

The decision to invest in their engineering faculty, for example, was at the direct inspiration of Sir Eric and the extraordinary steps forward that have been taken over the last two and a half decades by Flinders University in areas such as engineering, science research, cancer research and some of these other areas.

I know he was proud of them, because up until last year and the year before I had the extraordinary privilege of being able to sit with him at those Flinders University events and the reflection that he still had on them was very dear to his heart. The fact that he was still attending these events at the age of 98 and 99 I think is testimony to his lifelong service and commitment to the things he was so passionate about.

Trudi was also very, very fond of Sir Eric for the other impact he had in her life as patron of Scouts SA. I think when he was the Governor, he also presented her with her Queen's Scout Award. These three presentations made a mark in her life and she very much enjoyed when we then met Sir Eric. I had seen him before, but I had not met him before. We went to a History Trust event and Trudi had the opportunity to share her reflections. I am grateful to him, as we are, for the real interest he took in how Flinders University and the scouting movement had impacted her life.

That event, organised by the History Trust, which was under my portfolio responsibilities at the time, was a special event organised by Julian Stefani, along with Elizabeth Ho and Greg Mackie, to commemorate the establishment of Settlement Square. Many people may have walked on it or been to events there. It is next to the Migration Museum, where many South Australians have celebrated their migrant heritage by purchasing a brick, fundraising for the History Trust and marking on those bricks the names of people who have migrated to South Australia, along with the dates of their journey.

It is an extraordinary market. It was established with the support of former Governor Hieu Van Le and Lan Le and former Governor Sir Eric Neal and Lady Joan. My recollection is that the four of them were the first four bricks purchased and they are proud in the centre of Settlement Square. Trudi and I were very proud to purchase four bricks to conclude that journey among the last 10 for our parents who had a similar migrant journey. The fact that well into his late 90s Sir Eric still had a real interest in that project and pride in the work of the Migration Museum and his migrant story I think is another example of how he represents the best of South Australia. Commemorating those journeys is embodying the best of our state.

The last time I met with and had the opportunity to talk to Sir Eric was at another organisation which was dear to his heart and which he invested his own money and time in. At the age of 99, just weeks prior to his 100th birthday, he was at the presentation of the Playford Trust award scholarships, including the one that he had sponsored and was there in his name.

My recollection is that he really wanted to meet the young person that had won this scholarship and get a sense of the project that he would be undertaking with his studies and how that would help South Australia in the future, which of course is at the heart of what the Playford Trust does, ensuring that the best and brightest of our young people can find projects and studies that will be in the state's interests and pursue them. Sir Eric, at nearly 100 years old, was still investing his time and I suspect that the financial support was welcome. I imagine the Playford Trust might have potentially received a grant from the government and may yet ask for a grant from the government in the years ahead to do that in Sir Eric's name. The fact that he was willing to give his time and talk to this young person made perhaps even a greater contribution.

Steven Marshall, on hearing of Sir Eric's passing and understanding that this parliament would be offering a motion, asked me to pass on his condolences as well. He wrote:

Sir Eric Neal will be remembered as one of South Australia's most distinguished citizens—a man who combined an extraordinary career in business with a deep sense of public duty and service. As Governor of South Australia, he brought wisdom, integrity and dignity to the role, earning the admiration of all who had the privilege to work with him. Beyond his official duties, Sir Eric was recognised as a thoroughly decent, highly respected Australian whose contribution to our state and nation was profound and enduring.

It was a great privilege to join in the celebration of Sir Eric's 100th birthday last year, an occasion that reflected the immense respect and affection he inspired. As a former Minister for Veterans Affairs, I particularly valued his steadfast support for our veterans.

Sir Eric understood and acknowledged the service and sacrifice of those who wore our nation's uniform, and he worked tirelessly to ensure they were honoured and supported in South Australia. His legacy will endure in the countless lives he touched, and we mourn his passing with gratitude for all that he gave to our state and country.

Dean Brown, I knew, was very close to Sir Eric. Indeed, his time as Premier had significant overlap, and his time as minister had overlap, with Sir Eric's time as Governor. Dean offered me a very short reflection, and he also shared a slightly longer speech. I was paying attention as the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other members spoke, and it is an extraordinary thing: I did not want to overly repeat things that other people have said, but this two-page speech that Dean gave me has very little that overlaps with the other things that have been said.

In 101 years you have a lot of time, but the idea that somebody would contribute so much through their life to so many very different areas is significant, so I hope that you will bear with me for three minutes more while I read Dean Brown's words. This is from a speech he gave at the AICD, where Sir Eric and Lady Neal were honoured for their contributions to that organisation:

Few people have transcended both the corporate and community spheres to the extent that Sir Eric Neal has. Following Sir Eric's corporate achievements...he commenced an outstanding contribution to the South Australian community.

On 22 July 1996 he was invested Governor of South Australia, and Sir Eric and Lady Joan embraced South Australians with youthful enthusiasm. It was a unique appointment as he was the first businessman appointed Governor of any Australian State. This meant an immediate introduction of national and international business leaders to South Australia.

I think the Premier may have mentioned this:

The new managing director of BHP stayed at Government House when he visited. The President of the World Bank visited Adelaide on several occasions to stay with Sir Eric.

As the State's economy expanded with new investment and export opportunities Government House became a familiar venue for business leaders from around the world. They could discuss matters with a common understanding.

Supported with charm and an open friendly welcome from Lady Joan, the Governor greeted thousands of South Australians at Government House and at hundreds of events and visits across the State. They had the ability to care for people and to make people feel that they mattered. After both formal and informal dinners at Government House, the Chef—

as the Leader of the Opposition, I think, said—

would be invited by Sir Eric into the dining room and formally thanked in front of the guests. He dealt with all people in the same courteous manner.

In our weekly Executive Council meetings when the Governor would meet formally with the Premier and Ministers, he strove to learn about the activities of Government and the State, while maintaining the independence of his role as Governor.

Sir Eric had an unprecedented desire to achieve things. Let me give you just three examples.

In late 1996 the State Government supported a joint venture with Business SA to establish Business Vision 2010. A think tank of industrial leaders, academics, and key community groups examined how to make South Australia a better place in which to:

live

visit

do business, and

invest

Sir Eric attended many of the Taskforce meetings. One of the key initiatives arising from the Taskforce was the Governor's Leadership Program, which Sir Eric lead. It continues today and has equipped hundreds of future business, academic and community people with leadership skills. Even today—

at this stage, two or three years ago—

Sir Eric [continued as] Deputy Patron.

In 1999...Sir Eric [hosted] a dinner of businesses associated with the food industry...Out of that dinner support was enlisted to get [Foodbank SA] successfully established.

We know what its contribution still is today.

In 1998, the Health Ministers across Australia decided to form the first national taskforce to promote organ donations. As Governor, Sir Eric agreed to chair and host that national taskforce. Today we are seeing the benefits as organ donation rates continue to increase.

Numerous similar stories could be—

indeed, have been—

repeated. He travelled overseas to successfully lobby for SA to host the World Police and Fireman Games.

Shortly after stepping down as Governor in 2001, Sir Eric Neal became Chancellor of Flinders University for 8 years. In that role he brought a strong appreciation of the importance of international relations as he travelled through Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and China. He personally conferred degrees on about 20,000 students at graduation ceremonies.

His clear analytical thinking has been applied to numerous tasks, such as chairing the Road Safety Advisory Council and the Veterans Advisory Council. Many community organisations have benefited from Sir Eric and Lady Joan being their Patrons...

But most importantly he is a down to earth, caring friend to many South Australians...

Throughout all of this Lady Joan stood alongside Sir Eric and provided him moral support and a larger than life partner. She had her passions such as Port Power, boating, and outbidding others at charitable auctions. [We recognise her too] for that enormous vitality and energy.

[Now we] celebrate the extraordinary contribution of Sir Eric Neal.

I often think that one of the sad things about funerals is that the person we are mourning does not get the opportunity to hear the nice things that people have to say about them. I am very pleased that Sir Eric was present to hear what Dean Brown had to say about him on that day. I am very privileged to have met him on perhaps half a dozen occasions. The extraordinary impact he had on South Australia and many, many tens of thousands of South Australians will not be forgotten. To his family from my family, we wish you well and we express our sincere condolences.

The SPEAKER: Could members, and guests in the galleries, please rise so that the motion can be carried in the customary manner.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

Sitting suspended from 14:45 to 14:56.

Petitions

NORTH ADELAIDE PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop): Presented a petition signed by 57 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to respect the traditional owners of Kaurna country on which the North Adelaide Golf Course is located; stop destructive practices on this part of the Adelaide Parklands; repeal the North Adelaide Public Golf Course Act 2025, and relocate the LIV Golf event; conduct traffic impact assessments around the North Adelaide Golf Course; and commit to pay volunteers for the LIV Golf tournaments.

Parliamentary Procedure

ANSWERS TABLED

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

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker—

Auditor-General—Annual Report 2024-25

Part A: Executive Summary Report 8 of 2025

Part B: Controls Opinion Report 8 of 2025

Part C: Agency Audits—October 2025 Report 8 of 2025 [Ordered to be published]

Independent Commission Against Corruption—
Annual Report 2024-25
Integrity State Vol. 4 Report 2024-25
Inspector, Office of the—Annual Report 2024-25
Ombudsman SA—Annual Report 2024-25 [Ordered to be published]
Public Integrity, Office for—Annual Report 2024-25

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

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition (South Australia) Act 1991—Tobacco and Other
Products Notice 2025

By the Treasurer (Hon. A. Koutsantonis)—

Regulations made under the following Act—
Rail Safety National Law (South Australia)—Safety Management System

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

Regulations made under the following Act—
National Electricity (South Australia)—Firm Energy Reliability and Orderly Exit
Management

By the Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. J.K. Szakacs)—

Rules made under the following Acts—
Legal Practitioners—Legal Profession Education and Admission Council—No. 2
Supreme Court Act 1935, District Court Act 1991, Magistrates Court Act 1991,
Youth Court Act 1993, Environment, Resources and Development Court
Act 1993, Local Government (Elections) Act 1999, First Nations
Voice—Uniform Civil—No. 15

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

Regulations made under the following Acts—
Planning, Development and Infrastructure—General—Co-located Housing and
Schedule 6

By the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water (Hon. L.P. Hood)—

Industry Board of South Australia—Phylloxera and Grape (Trading as Vinehealth Australia)
Annual Report 2024-25

Question Time

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:01): My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier stand by his comments that the harmful algal bloom is not toxic? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: During an ABC radio interview yesterday, the Premier said:

A lot of people refer to the algal bloom as the 'toxic algal bloom'—it's not toxic.

This is in stark contrast to respected environmental scientist Faith Coleman, who was quoted on ABC News last night as saying:

We're getting a lot of mixed messages throughout this bloom—and we know that it is toxic to fish because they're dying.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:02): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I will take the opportunity to again repeat the fact that the advice that the government has been given consistently throughout this exercise is that the scientifically and universally applied scientific description of the algal bloom is the 'harmful algal bloom', not the characterisation as a toxic algal bloom. In terms of the supposed toxic nature of the algal bloom, we make the point that it is not toxic to humans. That has been the consistent public health advice.

On our side of the house, we have a determined principled position to ensure that the information we put out in the public realm is consistent with the public health and scientific advice that we receive as a government. As I have said previously in this place, we think that is really important. The South Australian public relies on institutions, including government, to pass on accurately information that we receive.

We have no interest in misrepresenting the advice that we receive. Why would we do that? That would make no sense, either in a policy sense or a political one. It would be self-defeating. We are simply relaying the position that we consistently hear through our appropriate sources of information. We, of course, want to make sure there is rigour around that process. We test, we ask, we validate, we inquire, and of course that approach stands in stark contrast—stark contrast—to the approach applied by those opposite.

We know that there is a rush to do the exact opposite on the opposite side of the house. We know that the Liberal Party are very comfortable in having members—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We know the Liberal Party are very comfortable in suggesting that they know the science better than senior scientists within government. We know they feel very comfortable saying, 'Well, we've got the information, we will table the information, we will give you the sources.' Then they do the sources, then they provide the sources and they turn out to be completely inaccurate, not reflecting real sources. I don't know if they are fabrications. Either way, what we know is no-one checked it, no-one validated it. People just ran in and decided to submit them into the parliament. It is mind-blowing. That is the standard they set.

The reprimand from the Leader of the Opposition to Mr Pangallo when he acknowledged that he had done these actions was 'nothing to see here', just the show moves on, Mr Pangallo continues to roll up to the Budget and Finance Committee and does his thing. So that's their standard. That's your standard.

Heaven forbid, if you get the opportunity to serve on the Treasury benches what actions you would take. Would you start dismissing SARDI? Would you relegate PIRSA? Would you ignore the advice? What happens when the next drought comes along and SA Water is saying time to turn on the desal. The opposition leader is going to be out there saying, 'I don't know; Frank, what do you think?' Let's turn off South Australia's drinking water because Frank's got another idea. This isn't a joke. In government, you have to make serious decisions based on science and evidence and that is what we will continue to do.

SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:06): My question is to the Premier. What does the Premier say to tackle store owners like Brian Wheadon? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order: there is a long-established principle that you can't ask a question that is not understandable without an explanation. That question, without an explanation, seeking the leave of the house, is not understandable and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to rephrase it.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: If it helps the Speaker, I am happy to provide the material that I am referring to. I am happy to text it to you, send it to you so that you can see it.

The SPEAKER: I think if you just tweak the question you will probably be alright.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: What does the Premier say to tackle store owners after his announcement today? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The opposition has obtained a social media post by Brian Wheadon, who is a tackle store owner, who said:

...vouchers what a joke how about \$50.00 fishing tackle vouchers to help the industry at the forefront of the Algae bloom...

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:07): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I note the source of the opposition leader's question. I will give you marks for consistency because we see the opposition leader now rushing to social media in order to source information. We know what has happened in the past when you have applied that approach.

But allow me to say this: to shop owners, whether they be selling fishing tackle or other marine-oriented equipment, if they are experiencing a downturn in trade they remain eligible, and will continue to remain eligible, for the small business downturn grant. They are grants of up to \$10,000 if they experience a downturn in trade. There are fishing tackle shop owners who are applying for that process. We acknowledge that this is a real issue and we are seeking to address it, and we are working closely with the industry association who represent this particular industry to work with them collaboratively and come up with thoughtful solutions.

ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA (Hartley—Leader of the Opposition) (15:08): My question is to the Minister for Environment. What criteria was used to select the eight beaches regarding the seven-day-a-week coverage of surf lifesaving patrols, and does the government have any plans to extend those patrols to other beaches?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:09): I thank the leader for his question. As we have announced as part of our summer plan on the weekend, seven-day patrols will be at eight popular beaches: Semaphore, Henley Beach, Glenelg, Brighton, Port Noarlunga, Moana, Aldinga Bay and Goolwa. They will start from 1 December, as we announced on the weekend down at Glenelg, in this incredible partnership with Surf Life Saving South Australia.

For 100 years they have been protecting South Australians at the beach. I think whenever their flags, the red and yellow flags, go up, that is a sign of safety and confidence that South Australians can go down and enjoy our beaches. Let's be honest: they have, for that century, actually been dealing with life-threatening events when it comes to our oceans, whether that is our marine life, sharks, waves, etc.

We have acknowledged that these are eight popular beaches where we will be instigating the seven-day-a-week patrols. In addition to that, we have also announced our Beachsafe app. That is an upgrade of the current app that Surf Life Saving uses to provide information for families. What this upgrade will do is have those three clear pieces of information that families and South Australians will be able to use to determine where they head to for a day at the beach.

I know that for many of us on this side of the house, it's a fantastic source of information for families and South Australians to have. We all know what it's like bundling kids in the car with the towels and the beach toys and the sunscreen and the goggles, and this information will provide families with a key source of the factors that they might consider when deciding to head to one of the more popular beaches. We know that those daily patrols will occur through our clean-up on the beaches, so those three pieces of information will then be able to show whether or not there is abnormal foam or discoloured water and also when the beach was cleaned.

We have those for 23 locations and we are looking at progressing that to more regional locations. We have announced the summer plan, a \$102.5 million fifty-fifty partnership with the federal government so that we can protect that way of life and ensure that South Australians can

have that iconic summer at the beach, and we very much look forward to South Australians having some great times with their families down on the coast this summer.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:12): My question is to the Minister for Environment. Did any locations have an increase in *Karenia* species algal bloom count at the latest update and, if so, how many and which locations?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:12): I thank the honourable member for his question. We have, I am advised, around 95 testing sites, and I am happy to get you the exact number of where they increased. We did have a number of the sites decrease as well, and then a majority remained steady. As we have seen each week as part of the task force, we do see that update in regard to the various testing sites and that allows us to determine the dynamic nature of the bloom. We know that on one morning a beach could have foam, discoloured water, etc., but by the afternoon it could be fine.

In fact, I had the pleasure of being in the member's electorate on the long weekend; I joined him at an event on the Sunday. The day before, I was able to enjoy a day at the beach on Horseshoe Bay in the member's electorate, and it was wonderful to see the beach full of families enjoying the long weekend. As we know, in the Fleurieu area, where we do understand and advise that the bloom had originated, we now see that it is clear in many respects in that area. That really does speak to the dynamic nature of the bloom and that is why we have our algal bloom taskforce that looks at these various testing sites.

As we can see, it did start in one of those areas around the Fleurieu, and by the time of the long weekend you could see thousands of families enjoying our wonderful beaches. So we will continue our work with the task force ensuring that we receive those updates and then we will provide those updates to the media directly after the task force.

NARACOORTE OUT-OF-SCHOOL-HOURS CARE

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (15:14): My question is to the education minister. When will Naracoorte get a new provider for out-of-school-hours care? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: Happy Haven, which has been providing an OSHC service in Naracoorte, closed its operations in the last week of term 3. This left many families with no vacation care, and now with a new term starting there is no after-school care available, leaving working families in limbo.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills, Minister for Police) (15:14): I thank the member for MacKillop for this very important question. I am aware of the issue, as you would expect me to be as the Minister for Education. Could I just say from the outset that I understand how difficult this is for parents. I say that not just as the Minister for Education but as someone who relies very heavily on out-of-school-hours care myself. My wife and I use it for our daughters about three times a week. I am sure it is the case for a lot of people in this chamber as well.

We are aware, as I said, what has happened there. Happy Haven have made a decision, due to workplace shortages, to pull out of offering the OSHC service in Naracoorte. We approached the school there to see if they might be interested in stepping in, which would have been the perfect result. Unfortunately, because of the same reasons that Happy Haven pulled out, which was just not being able to find staff, the school declined on that invitation as well.

But we haven't stopped there, and we are looking at all opportunities. I can tell the chamber and the member that we have a promising lead now. It is by no means a sure thing, but we have a provider that we think is interested in doing it. I am very happy to provide ongoing updates to the member for MacKillop about how that goes, because I know that he would like to provide updates to his community and those families who were using the Happy Haven service at Naracoorte that we are working on trying to find an alternative.

Of course I can say as well, as the minister for training and skills, I know there is obviously an impact here on the workforce for the local area as well, because those parents who are using out-of-school-hours care so that they can continue working or increase their hours of work are probably in these cases now having to step back from that in order to pick up the kids and look after them after school, so I fully understand the impact.

I appreciate the advocacy of the member for MacKillop on this important issue. I can safely say that we are throwing everything we've got at trying to find this, because it is a problem that I suspect we will face elsewhere as well. Workforce shortages in regional parts of Australia and particularly South Australia are something that are not going to go away in the short term, but I think we have shown a genuine willingness to be innovative and do some things that we haven't actually done before as a government to try to fix these kinds of problems, including in Kingston in the member's seat. I am confident we can find a solution here, and I am very happy to keep him and this place up to date as we do that.

SHELLFISH REEF RESTORATION

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:17): My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. How will the state government's summer plan increase the resilience and long-term health of the South Australian marine environment?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:17): I would like to thank the member for Davenport for her question. I know how incredibly passionate she is about the environment. I had the pleasure of joining her last week in her electorate, alongside the member for Black, for an environment forum. It was wonderful to hear from her local community and the passion that they have for the environment.

As I was saying earlier, it was a privilege to stand alongside our federal colleagues today to announce our summer plan: \$102.5 million, fifty-fifty between the state and federal governments. This really has three core objectives so that South Australians can enjoy that iconic summer at the beach—backing our coastal businesses and communities and, importantly, backing research and environmental resilience and recovery.

On that point, it was a real privilege to be able to announce more than \$20 million towards environmental resilience and recovery initiatives. We are using nature's recovery tools to build more biodiversity in our marine environments, along with improving water quality and supporting vulnerable and threatened species.

One way we are doing that is around the idea of shellfish reef restoration. That is going to build on our reputation as a leader in large-scale shellfish restoration as well as community shellfish reefs. We will be constructing new limestone native shellfish reefs in our coast and supporting additional community shellfish reefs.

On the latter, that is a great way of being able to allow the community to contribute and give back. We have been hearing from people in our algal bloom community forums. I have had the privilege of hosting a number of them, including last night in your electorate, Mr Speaker, at the Aldinga Football Club. We have had more than 1,800 people attend our community algal bloom forums.

This has been an incredible way in which we can hear from the community about the information that they want and the funding that they want to see invested. We know that many South Australians are incredibly passionate about our environment and so we are backing that passion with action. One of those ways is around the establishment of community reefs and limestone shellfish reefs. Importantly, these new reefs will help return a vital part of South Australia's marine environment that has been absent since the mid-1900s.

At the time of colonisation, native shellfish reefs covered up to 1,500 kilometres of South Australia's coastline from Ceduna on Eyre Peninsula along the coastlines of the Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent to O'Sullivan Beach on the metro coast. When European settlers arrived, they had a vast appetite for these oysters and oyster saloons sold oysters for about \$3 to \$4 per dozen and it was a really cheap and accessible food source. These oyster fishers came to take those oysters and used heavy rakes and chains to scrape the layer of oysters off the top of the reefs and, once they

were removed, they would move on to another location leaving a reef devoid of life. Thick calcium carbonate reefs had formed underneath those layers of old condensed shell and were identified as a rich source of lime. It was removed from the sea floor and commonly used to make cement and mortar for building.

Now the fightback is on to return those native oyster reefs to our oceans and for the last 10 years, the state government, led by the Department for Environment and Water, has been working with various groups to build these large-scale oyster reefs.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:21): My question is to the Minister for Environment. What critical thresholds are there for marine life and human health for the harmful algal bloom *Karenia* species, and what locations were over those thresholds at the most recent algal bloom update?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:22): I thank the honourable member for his question. All of this information can be easily accessed from the government's algalbloom.sa.gov.au website. It provides cell counts for various areas, so I would very much encourage the honourable member to avail himself of that information. As we said, we have numerous sources of information for the community and for the local MPs to access. You can go on the website, and I might even encourage the Hon. Frank Pangallo in the other place to go on the website—he might learn a few things.

We also have our hotline that we have launched as a one-stop shop for South Australians to access the range of information that they might need. That hotline is running seven days a week, including public holidays. Importantly, it is also for those wanting to report dead marine life or sick or injured wildlife, and for people who might have mental health concerns: it is important that they can be answered 24/7.

As we have been saying, we have our weekly algal bloom taskforce which provides an update, followed by a press conference, to inform the media. We have our algal bloom website and we also have our hotline. I very much encourage the local member to avail himself of those information sources.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:23): A supplementary question: can the minister identify where we can find those thresholds on the website?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:24): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Members on my right! Member for Elder! Members on my right and the leader! You have been doing that little annoying noise thing that you do, all day. Can we have quiet on both sides? It is an important issue and I would like to hear the minister's answer. Thanks so much.

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: Again, like I said, the honourable member is welcome to avail himself of the numerous information sources that there are, including our algalbloom.sa.gov.au website, and he is welcome to see that information for himself.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:24): My question is to the Minister for Environment. Is the government currently advertising for emergency response field officers to help with the algal bloom clean-up and, if so, when do those applications close?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:24): I am happy to take the honourable member's question on notice and provide information back to the house.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:25): My question again is to the Minister for Environment. Has the government employed any emergency response field officers to help with the algal bloom clean-up and, if so, how many?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:25): In terms of our beach clean-ups they are occurring at around 23 sites, I am advised, across South Australia. We have the disaster relief teams that are working to undertake those clean-ups and obviously we have been doing that in partnership with councils. We thank them for that important work.

We understand that it is quite distressing for South Australians to see the impact that the harmful algal bloom has had on our marine life. We know that our beaches are a place to which people go for reflection and timeout from the hustle and bustle, in particular, for their mental health. So, to see our marine life in distress, or our oceans struggling, can be difficult and that is why we have invested in information sources for people to be able to get advice around their mental health.

The beach clean-ups are an important tool in managing our harmful algal bloom and what we have been able to do is utilise those resources for the rollout of the Beachsafe app upgrade, so using those important people heading out to our beaches every morning to undertake that clean-up and to do that observation of our coastline so we can feed that information into the Beachsafe app.

As I was earlier indicating, there are those three key pieces of information around whether abnormal foam is present, whether or not there is discoloured water, and when the beach was cleaned. At the same time a photo is then taken of the beach. I am advised that we will look to update that around twice a day before we do head towards more regular updates. I want to thank all of the groups that have been part of those daily clean-ups of our beaches and I know it is an incredible task to undertake. I am more than happy to provide any further information for the member.

TINTINARA REGIONAL ROAD USAGE

Mr McBRIDE (MacKillop) (15:27): My question is to the Minister for Local Government. Could the minister explain to the house what is involved by him or the government to move a regional local council road into a state road or federal road? With your leave, Mr Speaker, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr McBRIDE: In my local area I have a council called the Coorong council. They have a township called Tintinara and at Tintinara they have a very large feedlot that is having a massive expansion in capacity. The local road, Carcuma Road, cannot cope with the freight in or out of this feedlot and the council is looking for any help where it can be found.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:28): On behalf of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, who is in another place, can I say that it is my understanding that the Commissioner of Highways decides that, through a regulatory statutory process in coordination with local councils. Local councils give access to this freight, as they should, and we encourage councils to give access to their local roads for as much freight as possible. It is good for our economy, it is good for last-mile outcomes and it is good for the local region. But ultimately a lot of councils are very concerned about the impacts on their infrastructure and their ability to maintain those roads.

When it reaches a critical point where we need to intervene, the Commissioner of Highways can have an application from a council for a potential road swap where we might take some state roads that are having less use on our roads and hand them back to councils and take those roads from councils that are now changing in use to a much more frequent freight route into the state government road network.

If the local member has a concern, I encourage him to contact the Hon. Emily Bourke MLC, who is the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, to coordinate with Jon Whelan to see whether or not that is required. Most importantly, the council should know this, and the council should of course be going about this themselves. So if there are concerns from his constituents or concerns

from local residents, they can pass them on to the department, and the department will do an assessment to see whether or not it is warranted.

Of course, that does not guarantee anything. If the council has made a decision itself to allow more freight onto the road and freight follow where the permits are—well, good on that council. I congratulate them for allowing more access. That does not necessarily mean that burden should fall on the rest of the taxpayers.

COASTAL SPORT

Ms THOMPSON (Davenport) (15:30): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister advise the house of any plans to support coastal sport and recreation activities over summer?

The Hon. R.K. PEARCE (King—Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:30): Thank you to the member for Davenport for her question. As the Minister for Environment has already highlighted, this member is particularly passionate about the environment and equally passionate about healthy, connected and active communities.

I am really proud to share with the house that, since becoming minister, I have actively engaged with organisations to ensure that they feel empowered and supported to host their events throughout the summer season. I have even taken up Surf Life Saving SA's offer to join the little nippers over at Semaphore South with the Minister for Education. It is safe to say that we are both terrible, terrible surfers, but it was a lot of fun and it was an amazing opportunity to get out there and engage with young people and their families about what the summer season looks like and how much little nippers means to them as well.

The government has been actively engaging with aquatic sport and recreation organisations on this matter, and I really would like to thank the previous minister, Minister Bourke, for all of her work that she has done in this space as well. Just yesterday, I hosted the most recent roundtable meeting for aquatic sport and recreation organisations. There were 17 organisations represented. Attendees included everything from water-based sports, such as Masters swimming and sailing, to coastal-adjacent activities, like Walking SA and also Reclink, who do amazing work in terms of activating people in the community through the power of sport.

We have heard loud and clear from these organisations that they want to continue to hold events over the summer at the beach, and they are listening to the health advice that the beach is safe. We are here to assist them in any way that we can. In fact, we have already provided support to Australian Sailing so that they could launch their Australian Sailing 2025 Youth Sail Championships, which was hosted on 27 to 30 September. We helped provide asthma kits and water-down facilities, and we also helped coordinate, with DEW, a clean-up of the beach prior to the event.

I have seen Kylie a couple of times since this event, and it was really pleasing to hear her feedback about that. It went off without a hitch. There were low winds, unfortunately, but that did not stop the kids from having a good time. In fact, it gave them an excuse to jump into the water and have a bit of a swim as well. It is what we want to hear, and it is nice knowing that empowering them through these supports made them feel all the more confident to host their Women's Keelboat Regatta over the long weekend as well.

This is what we want to support, which is why under the summer plan we launched today we have announced a specific round of active club grants for aquatic-based organisations to be able to assist them in hosting events and encouraging South Australians to continue to enjoy the beach. It is not the only way that we are assisting: we have also established a dedicated algal bloom email address for sport and active recreation stakeholders to be able to contact ORSR directly and efficiently so that we can manage as quickly as possible any concerns or inquiries that we may have.

We have collaborated with Surf Life Saving SA to provide collateral and information so that they can engage with their members and feel equipped to host events. We are helping to coordinate beach clean-ups. We are installing cameras at beaches to monitor conditions, which is also really helpful in terms of other water safety incidents that surf lifesavers look into to ensure that we are safe

at the beach. We are also supporting measures such as assessment of water quality and identification of contaminants in the water through the Surf Life Saving Australia operations app, which they are equipping other aquatic sports with. They are providing training to those organisations tomorrow and also next Monday so they feel safe and equipped to make informed decisions.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:34): My question is to the Minister for Environment. When was the last test for brevetoxin in water or foam taken and at which beach or beaches?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:34): I thank the member for his question. I am happy to follow up that information and provide it to the house. As we indicated, we have been doing cell counts, which are updated as part of our algal bloom taskforce, and then they are provided on the website. I am happy to seek that information and bring it back to the house.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:35): Again, my question is to the Minister for Environment. Is brevetoxin toxic to animals or humans?

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:35): When we have been talking about the harmful algal bloom we know that it is impacting animals that have gills. When it comes to our marine life in the oceans we have been seeing a lot of impact on our fish stocks in regard to the harmful algal bloom. We know that it is only an irritant to people and so the health advice has been quite consistent in regard to the fact that it can create irritants to South Australians. The health advice has been that they should move away from the area if they feel those irritants, whether or not they're in the water, and they are being encouraged to rinse off in fresh water.

We undertook some testing of foam which indicated that some of those toxins which we believe—and that is when we updated the health advice when it came to people who might suffer from asthma. The advice in that regard has been to make sure that you're updating your asthma plan and that you are carrying your medication when you are attending a beach environment that might have the foam present.

We have been very consistent, though, with our health advice, and that is that if you attend a beach that might have discoloured water or foam avoid that area or, if you choose to swim or if you are perhaps walking your dog along the beach and it comes into contact with that water or foam it is important that you rinse off in fresh water. To be consistent, in terms of the advice for people who have asthma, make sure that you are carrying your preventative medication, that you are having your preventative medication, that you have your Ventolin with you, and that you are updating your asthma plan.

As we have been saying, we have put an extensive amount of funding into our summer plan, and that is to make sure that the community has all the information that they need in order to plan their day at the beach, to support our coastal communities and, importantly, our small businesses, and also build resilience in our environment towards environmental recovery.

We very much want this to be a team South Australia effort. It's really important that when we see misinformation in the community that we call it out. I don't think that we have seen that on the other side of the house, particularly with members in the other place. This really needs to be based on the evidence, based on the science and the facts. Whilst members on the other side, particularly those in the other place, choose to spread misinformation when it comes to the harmful algal bloom, all they are hurting are the small businesses and the local communities that rely on our coastline.

I would very much encourage the other side to get behind the summer plan. There is \$102.5 million dedicated to the plan to support our local coastal communities, supporting our small businesses, and making sure that people can have that great South Australian summer on our beaches.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:39): My question again is to the Minister for Environment. Where is brevetoxin testing conducted, and how long does it take before the results are known?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier, Minister for Defence and Space Industries) (15:39): We have addressed the issue of brevetoxin on a number of occasions, and I am happy to repeat some of the detail. Brevetoxin testing has an important purpose in regard to our shellfish, particularly in respect of oysters but also pipis and mussels. The brevetoxin testing capability in this country hasn't existed and that is why the government, through our partnership with the federal government, has sought to stand up an Australian-first brevetoxin testing regime, and that is now very much in train.

Obviously, the company has been selected at Agilex, in Thebarton. They have now started testing and they are going through the appropriate accreditation process which has to meet requisite and global standards, and we are in the process of standing it up. What we are very proud of as a government is we are seeing us standing up this testing capability as being an Australian first, and it's happening here in South Australia. We have seen the South Australian science industry and research industry respond with extraordinary speed.

Standing up this testing capability is something that we haven't seen ever before, and they are doing it in a way that is a great representation of our capability in this state and we will be the envy of the rest of the nation. Why do we test for brevetoxin? Well, we test for brevetoxin to make sure that our shellfish in particular don't have it. They are the ones that have the capability to accumulate it.

In respect of brevetoxin testing of the water, our chief marine scientist in this state, Mr Mike Steer, has made the position clear that where we see the algae in the water, particularly with respect to the foam, then it should be assumed that a brevetoxin is present. There is no particular need to test it. It should be assumed that, where there is the algae, there is the brevetoxin.

We test for the brevetoxin in food, because we don't want people to ingest it in a way that you are not going to at the beach. People don't go around drinking seawater and, if they do drink seawater where there is algae they should be advised there is every possibility or every likelihood that brevetoxin is present. So there is no particular need to test for it—we test it where we need to test for it, and that is in our accumulated species, which represents shellfish, and that is where we are standing up the capability.

We anticipate that, within the next four to six weeks, maybe sooner, Agilex will be fully accredited, which will again represent an exceptionally expeditious effort. There are people working around the clock on this, and that will mean a better outcome for our seafood industry that requires this testing. We particularly think of organisations like oyster growers in American River or in Stansbury, where they remain closed. We think of Goolwa Pipi. We have seen some of those places experience downturns. Tragically, in American River we saw the downturn; it was able to be opened up again but only to be subsequently closed.

Speedier turnaround time in terms of testing will provide us with a capability we haven't had before and will do a lot to enable a degree of confidence to exist amongst operators in those sectors to make decisions and know where they are at without having to wait for the lag time to get to and from New Zealand. So this is a good capability, it will be proudly South Australian, an Australian first and, again, a real example of what we are capable of as a state when we work collaboratively with industry.

MAJORS ROAD INTERCHANGE

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (15:43): My question is to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the house on the final budget impacts of the Majors Road project and any alternative views on the project?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining) (15:44): Delivered early and on budget—\$120 million, delivering shorter and safer journeys

through Adelaide's southern suburbs, which will connect people to the nonstop north-south corridor. This is a very important piece of infrastructure.

About 13,200 vehicles travel daily on Majors Road. They will now have access to the Southern Expressway, access now to the nonstop north-south corridor, a game changer for people in those suburbs. I make absolutely no apology for this. The members for Davenport, Black, Hurtle Vale and Gibson—the current members in those seats; not the previous, but the current members—were tireless champions of this piece of infrastructure, as was the Premier.

The good thing about this project is that it was a contest of ideas, because as popular as it was, having volunteers from Glenthorne Farm there with us, having local residents there with us, local MPs, the local community, a celebration of this intersection, it wasn't always so harmonious. There were some, believe it or not, who thought this was a bad idea. In fact, someone said:

No one wants the Majors Road on/off ramps and this is yet another example of Peter Malinauskas and Labor's city-centric attitude.

But wait—there's more. Someone said:

A leaked feasibility study from 2020 shows this project simply doesn't stack up so unless the Malinauskas Labor Government has some new advice then this is simply a waste of \$120 million.

This person goes on to say:

Significant question marks remain around the future of the North-South Corridor and despite a feasibility study showing the Majors Road project is a waste of money—

Apparently, there is a feasibility study showing it is a waste of money—

Labor are arrogantly pushing on with it.

Because we are arrogantly wanting the southern suburbs to have access to infrastructure. This person goes on to say:

Wasting at least \$120 million for this project simply doesn't make sense when that money could be spent on safety measures that could save lives such as a third arrester bed on the South Eastern Freeway.

So they wanted to cancel this project and move the money somewhere else. Who said these things? The Leader of the Opposition—the Leader of the Opposition.

I can only imagine the horror when those local residents read in their letterboxes, or see on their Facebook pages or see in their local social media, that the Liberal Party (1) thought this project was a waste of money, and (2) after having promised to build it in 2018 came up with a feasibility study that says it wasn't possible to be built, despite it being opened last Sunday on time and on budget. They produced a report that said it couldn't be built. Who could possibly have done that?

An honourable member: Who?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Rob Lucas—Rob Lucas. So they did a study that said this can't be done. They made the promise to win the seat, made the promise to try to get votes, got in, and then abandoned it on the basis of a feasibility study. Nothing proves a feasibility study wrong more than the actual project being built early and on budget. That is an example of how they govern South Australia. They promise you the world and deliver nothing. They promise you the world and don't deliver. They don't build infrastructure. They don't care about local communities. They criticise infrastructure, and if they had their chance they would have cancelled it. You can't trust anything—anything—they say.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:48): My question is to the Minister for Environment. When was the last significant reading for the harmful algal bloom taken on the South Coast? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BASHAM: In an interview on ABC radio yesterday, the Premier said:

If you are down at Victor Harbor, Goolwa, Middleton, Waitpinga, you know the waters are crystal clear and have been for some time. Similarly with KI.

That information is in stark contrast to the Beachsafe app that I checked yesterday and again today, reporting foam and discoloured water at Goolwa and Middleton beaches and discoloured water at Port Elliot. This information has been used by a local school on the South Coast to cancel an activity with a local surf school, even though the business owner, with his local knowledge and experience, believed the water to be safe to use.

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:49):

Yes, that's right. There is a wealth of information that the member can avail himself of on the algalbloom.sa.gov.au website. He is welcome to go and look at the various cell counts for the areas that have been tested. As we have been talking about in terms of the Beachsafe app, it does have those three pieces of information around whether abnormal foam is present, whether there is discoloured water and when the beach was cleaned, so that people can make their own decisions around whether or not to go to that beach.

It is important to note that there was foam at beaches prior to the harmful algal bloom. There was discoloured water prior to the harmful algal bloom. It is our ocean, it is dynamic and it is always changing. These are just three key pieces of information that families can use when they decide to go to a beach during the summer or if they would like to host an event. This is about providing the public with all that information so that they can make informed decisions. But this is our ocean; as everyone knows, after a storm, for example, there is discoloration in the water and sometimes there is foam in the water, so I would encourage the member to go on the algalbloom.sa.gov.au website and find the information.

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (15:50): My question again is to the Minister for Environment. How is the data collected, and by whom, for the daily algal bloom condition updates along the South Australian beaches? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Mr BASHAM: The government has promised daily updates for 23 beaches from North Haven to Goolwa via the Surf Life Saving SA's Beachsafe app. In a recent interview, the minister said:

Beachgoers told us they want clear updates on water quality and conditions. Our teams will be out every morning inspecting and cleaning beaches to make sure the information people see is accurate and up to date.

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:51):

That's right. I thank the member for his question. That is why, as one of our key initiatives of the summer plan, we announced on the weekend that we would have the Beachsafe app, an upgraded app by Surf Life Saving Australia (it was an existing app), and we are using that app to provide these pieces of information for families and South Australians wanting to go to the beach.

We have those 23 locations on the app where there will be those two updates per day. As I have said, it has those three pieces of information: whether abnormal foam is present, where there is discoloration in the water and when the beach was cleaned. It will also include a photo from when that assessment has occurred. That will allow South Australians and families to go onto the app, check out the beach that they may want to attend on the day, look at the photo, look at the information and make a judgement around whether or not they will attend that particular beach.

It's also important to note that not everybody necessarily goes to a beach to swim. I know personally my family love going to Henley Square, but it's not necessarily always to get in the water. The fact is that at Henley Square we have amazing small businesses to visit, they often have various local events, whether that is markets, etc. This is just a tool that families can use to determine which beach they may like to go to on that day. It does not necessarily mean they would have to get into the water. There is that element of personal responsibility. I understand that is something that the other side considers one of their values, but this is about having that information and making sure that they can make a personal judgement about whether or not they would like to go to the beach that day.

We have heard from our various community forums. We have had 1,800 people attend those forums right across the state. I have had the pleasure of attending and hosting a number of those, the first of which was in the area where I grew up in Kingston South-East, obviously in your own community, Mr Speaker, the member for Gibson's community and the member for Black's community. What we were hearing at those forums is that people just wanted that advice, easily understood, easily digestible, easily accessible, and that is why we have been able to form this important partnership with Surf Life Saving Australia.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: I note the Leader of the Opposition's comments questioning the ability of surf lifesaving to undertake an assessment around where they place their flags when they go to patrol a beach. I emphasise that for 100 years the surf lifesaving volunteers have been patrolling our beaches and keeping South Australians safe.

I think it's very important that we continue to have faith and pride in our surf lifesavers. Each and every weekend, they go out and they volunteer, taking up their personal time to keep South Australians safe. It is never more important to make sure that people are engaging in those water safety programs. As a former lifeguard and VACSWIM instructor myself, it is absolutely critical that we have our young people undertaking the Nippers programs or the Surf Babies programs. It's very important that we make sure we are providing that information and the surf lifesavers are undertaking that assessment along with our beach clean-up crews each morning.

The SPEAKER: Just a quick warning to the member for Colton: you are starting to sound like an owl with the 'hoot, hoot'. Can we have a little less of that?

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL BIRD SANCTUARY

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:55): My question is to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. What initiatives have now been progressed by the Department for Environment and Water to support five million migratory birds that feed in my electorate? With your leave, sir, and that of the house, I will explain.

Leave granted.

Ms PRATT: In a letter to me dated two months ago, the former minister stated that:

Potential impacts of the algal bloom on migratory birds and the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary have been identified as a key issue from the government's preliminary species assessment.

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:56): I thank the member for the question. I understand that is correspondence that was provided to the former Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, and I am more than happy to follow up that correspondence with my office and bring an update back to the house. But you are right: it is incredibly important that we are looking after our migratory bird populations.

Just on the weekend, I had the pleasure of going down to Lake Hawdon North in Robe, where we have undertaken a significant project around restoring wetland habitat for migratory birds. That was an \$11.7 million joint program with the federal government and it was wonderful to see the completion of that project in order to be able to assist our migratory birds to have safe places to feed and rest. They have actually installed a water regulator that allows prolonged periods of inundation in that wetland, which provides the ideal place for migratory birds, when they arrive, to be able to rest and feed.

So I understand how important investment in resilience and building resilience and recovery in our migratory bird populations is. I appreciate the member's passion for this in her own electorate and I will endeavour to bring an answer back to the house.

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL BIRD SANCTUARY

Ms PRATT (Frome) (15:57): Supplementary: of the \$11 million just announced declared for migratory birds in Robe, how much funding has been allocated in the government's summer plan for the environment and migratory birds in the International Bird Sanctuary?

The SPEAKER: It's a separate question.

Ms Pratt: It's not.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L.P. HOOD (Adelaide—Minister for Climate, Environment and Water) (15:58):

Thank you for the question. In reference to the \$11 million project for Lake Hawdon North near Robe, that was separate funding. In terms of the environmental funding that we have announced today, that is more than \$20 million and that's looking at environmental resilience and recovery for our oceans and our marine life. As I was indicating earlier, that includes the native oyster reef restoration, where we establish limestone oyster reefs, and also the community reefs, seagrass restoration, blue carbon, and protecting vulnerable and threatened species. As I indicated, I understand—

Ms Pratt interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Frome can leave until the end of question time.

The honourable member for Frome having withdrawn from the chamber:

The Hon. L.P. HOOD: As I was indicating, we do have an extensive package of funding for our environment in regard to our marine life and the restoration of the coast. As I said to the member, I am more than happy to follow up that correspondence addressed to the previous Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, and bring back an answer to the house.

COASTAL TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN

Mr DIGHTON (Black) (15:59): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. Can the minister update the house on the campaign for tourism recovery in our coastal regions?

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (15:59): Thank you very much to the member for Black. I thank him for his advocacy for his electorate, which of course has had an economic impact during this time. Over the last few days, we have been announcing the summer plan. This is an extensive plan talking about what we can do now for our economy and, as we look to the future, in areas of restoration.

Just yesterday I stood with the Premier, the Minister for Environment, the federal Minister for the Environment and Water, and Shaun de Bruyn, the CEO of the Tourism Industry Council of South Australia. We were able to talk about those next stages, both the travel vouchers and introducing the dining cashback offer. Let me talk about the travel vouchers for the Coast is Calling campaign—bigger, expanded and extended. Whenever we have done these voucher programs, we are always listening to tourism operators. What is working for them? What could we do differently? How could this be better? So I am pleased to announce that we will have 30,000 vouchers in round 2 of the travel vouchers, with more focus on those higher value vouchers, the \$200 and \$500, which is for two-night and five-night stays.

We have expanded the vouchers to include holiday rentals for Airbnb shared accommodation providers that also have ABNs on the ATDW. We are going to involve the KI ferry and, of course, increase the number of operators and experiences that can be involved. We have also been hearing that people need a longer time to book this travel, so we extended the travel period from 5 December through to 26 April.

We know that these vouchers work. They motivate South Australians to get out there and support our coastal communities, to make sure that we have a call to action. People booking will also have a redraw facility during that time. Round 1 has been very successful—\$2.9 million in booking value, more than 6,000 redemptions.

Yesterday, something new we introduced was the dining cashback—300,000 South Australians can enter this ballot. Of course, this is a 'use it or lose it' type of policy. If they are a winner, people can have up to 50 per cent off their dining experience, up to \$50, but we are going to do it every month—60,000 vouchers every month—to encourage people to get out there to our coastal communities.

All the details are on southaustralia.com. I have had a great response from people, whether it be from hospitality or tourism operators, who often bear the brunt of the conversation. This is certainty and this is confidence for them. We support them and South Australians do also.

The SPEAKER: Before we head on to grievances, the member for Bragg is celebrating his 35th birthday today. He is a Libran. Apparently, Librans and Leos get on very well, so no wonder we are so compatible.

Grievance Debate

ALGAL BLOOM

Mr BASHAM (Finniss) (16:03): I rise to talk about the algal bloom, which is certainly something that has been impacting my electorate for many, many months. It is nearly seven months to the day from when we first heard about it on social media, from the surfing community from Waitpinga. I guess my disappointment has been in the communication and engagement of this government from those early days right through until now. But I must actually commend the Minister for Health. In that first week, I wrote to the minister, and by that Friday he offered me a briefing from SA Health, which I had and which was really important in terms of getting that information out early.

That is the only time I have felt the government has been proactive in making sure the community understands quickly and succinctly what is going on. From that briefing, I did social media and gave my community the opportunity to have a bit of an understanding of what was going on.

From there, we saw things fall apart. It was only a few days later, on that weekend, when a university in Sydney that had been asked to do the testing to identify the variety of species in the algal bloom, being *Karenia mikimotoi*, published it online themselves before telling the government. The government did not inform the people of South Australia until the following day. We have seen these things go on all the way through. We have seen people very concerned by many things and we have seen conspiracy theories arise.

There was a significant time during that late March period where a large group of kangaroos were found to have died or been in the final stages of life and had to be euthanased. That was being linked to the algal bloom. In time we found out—but it took a couple of months before we got results—that it was more likely to be phalaris staggers, which is from a type of grass that grows in that region that is toxic if it gets a bit of rain on it during the autumn months, and green shoots pop up: the kangaroos are likely to have eaten the grass. We are seeing again a delay in informing the people.

This has continued right through. Only this afternoon a phone call was received from a surf business down on the south coast. Luke from Surf&Sun said he was disappointed he had had a school ring up and cancel an excursion to his business for him to teach the kids how to surf. The reason they had cancelled was not because the algal bloom had miraculously returned to the south coast—I agree with the Premier in his statement on radio yesterday that there has not been any algal bloom for months and months along the south coast, but whoever did the report on the app said there is foam and the water is discoloured. In the Premier's own words today in his answers during question time: that is the indicator brevetoxins are present.

Sadly, the River Murray also puts fresh water that is not the same colour as sea water out into that region of South Australia. It is often discoloured but it does not often have brevetoxins present. Often there is foam because the fresh water carries organic matter with it and, when it hits the salt water, it foams up. We have seen their own app lead to a business losing business. This is a very disappointing response from the government. If they published the results on the app too, saying the latest results were that there had been no detection of the algal bloom, that would give some confidence for that school to still have gone. But, no, they do not do that. They are only putting up a photo followed by a bit of assessment, not necessarily well-trained assessment, that has led to this business suffering.

STUART ELECTORATE

The Hon. G.G. BROCK (Stuart) (16:09): I would like to talk about my recent trip to the northern section of my electorate. I covered in just under six days and travelled just under 3,000 kilometres during that period of time to have a firsthand experience, not for the first time but for the third or fourth time since I have been the member for Stuart. During the trip I had the great pleasure to inspect the new airstrip at Parachilna, which will be a great asset to not only the community but also the tourism opportunities there. For those who have not visited the Prairie Hotel

at Parachilna, ensure that you do, because during your visit up that way there is an exciting eating experience and it is something that everybody should enjoy at some time in their life.

Also, I had the opportunity to have a listening post at Beltana where I had an inspection of the historic Beltana Hotel, which is being renovated and will be open to the general public in a very short period of time. Again, this township has a very rich history; however, being off the main highway it is a bit of a challenge, but I encourage people and recommend anybody to visit that area to get some of the history of that township.

I also had the opportunity to visit the township of Farina—there is no-one there, but it is still a township—where I discussed the great restoration being carried out by the Farina Restoration Project Group, who are all volunteers, including the restoration of an original GM locomotive which was used in the early days of the Ghan railway.

I also had a listening post at Marree, where several people attended, and during that time at Marree I had the great pleasure and the opportunity to inspect the new barge facility being carried out at the Cooper Creek crossing to allow traffic to cross whilst the vehicular section is impassable due to the flooding. It was an opportunity to see that firsthand. The way they are building the facility, it is going to last many years. It will certainly see all of us in this chamber out. It will last for 50 to 100 years.

The number of tourists visiting the township is extraordinary, with the hotel serving nearly 200 meals per night; they have to do it in three different shifts. This community is ideal for those wanting to visit Lake Eyre, which is basically being filled again due to the rains in Queensland. This is a sight to behold and I encourage people to go up there to not only enjoy the opportunity but actually see some of the history, such as the cameleers in Marree.

From there I travelled to William Creek where again I had a listening post, with many locals attending, and during this period of time I had the opportunity to inspect the recently established \$2 million Royal Flying Doctor Service medical clinic, which was opened probably eight or 12 months ago. This service is utilised by those in need of receiving medical treatment or advice. You go in there and you push a button that connects you straightaway to a medical professional at the royal flying doctor base in Port Augusta.

I also inspected the existing airstrip, which is not only used by the tourist operator Trevor Wright but also by the RFDS and tourists, and there are also other tourism opportunities. It is very interesting to mention that Trevor and the group have been very successful in obtaining a federal and state government grant, from my information, up to about \$4 million to upgrade the airstrip and seal the ground where patients are transported when needing to be moved to the aircraft. They have to go over unsealed ground at this stage, so that will be all sealed. William Creek is a location in the middle of nowhere but, again, the hotel is serving in excess of 150 meals per night, and currently Trevor has approximately 15 pilots at the site.

During the visits to these locations and speaking to the local community, it has been mentioned that their current contractor, who was engaged by the previous government and is responsible for all the maintenance of those unsealed roads in that area, has reduced its maintenance gangs from five to two, which is causing great concern for the ever-deteriorating roads up there.

It is very difficult to travel on the roads up there, but whilst I was travelling on the William Creek Road from William Creek to Coober Pedy, the road was so bad that I was travelling very slowly at 15 km/h. I also had an opportunity to go to Coober Pedy and talk to the general public. That is my third visit there, even though it is not in my area at the moment, and I certainly got an update from the community and the businesses there about the issues going forward from Coober Pedy.

There are so many tourism opportunities and traffic in this northern section of my electorate that I really encourage people to have a look up there. It is absolutely an eye-opener and the community are very appreciative of the amount of support the government is offering, specifically with Cooper Creek and the opportunity there. It has been very frustrating, but I do thank Minister Bourke in the other place for going up there to Mungerannie Hotel and personally talking to all the pastoralists and getting the opportunity for what we are going to have in the next two months.

MORIALTA ELECTORATE

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (16:14): Service in parliament involves many roles, but if you are doing it right the central priority is serving your community. We are in a unique position to identify gaps left by generic government programs. We are the people to whom local residents, community groups and local government alike come for assistance. We are in a privileged position to amplify the voices of our constituents to solve problems and to get things done.

Over the last nearly 16 years, I have thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity. I am proud of what working together in our community has achieved. Members would be aware that I am one of nine members—a number that seems to be growing every week, in addition to some who have already departed—who will not be here after the election. While I hope to offer a few valedictory words later in the year, I would like to save colleagues and in particular my little children, if they make it to the gallery, the trouble of sitting through too many lists of stuff I am proud of and people to whom I am grateful. Instead, I am spreading them out in grieves such as this.

In no particular order, things that I am proud of in the community include: Morialta Secondary College—protecting this site from sale for a housing development, which had been planned at a time when new schools in the east were desperately needed, and delivering this outstanding school instead, which is now growing strongly, will be a boon for our area for generations to come. During the term of the Marshall government, other school upgrades included Norwood High, Charles Campbell College, Modbury High School, Stradbroke Primary School, Magill Primary School and more. Modest but welcome grants during COVID benefited all of our local schools, kindies and preschools as well.

There were traffic upgrades at Newton Road and Graves Street, Silkes Road and Gorge Road, and the resealing of Gorge Road in my first term; signalled crossings at Thorndon Park and Magill primary schools; the pedestrian refuge at Lower North East Road, Highbury, thanks to Abraham Shuken; and the traffic lights at the Dernancourt shops. These and more all have their own special stories.

We also helped deliver projects like Thorndon Park's Super Playground, championed by the Campbelltown council. I believe Dom Barbaro was the first councillor who brought it to my attention, but I know it was also championed by all of the councillors, the mayor and the staff. Credit where it is due: the excellent new playground at Morialta Conservation Park I think was commissioned by Ian Hunter as the former environment minister. I am also particularly grateful to former Liberal minister David Speirs, whose personal efforts saw the long sought-after upgrade to the car park happen. Local residents no longer need to put up with overflows into their driveways from visiting playground enthusiasts, nor the dust churned up during the summer as people parked nearby in the dirt.

Sporting club upgrades I have been pleased to support have included the Campbelltown soccer club on more than one occasion, the Athelstone footy club, the Rostrevor Tennis Club and more. I pay tribute to the presidents, the committees, the volunteers and the staff of all of these wonderful local clubs, without whose work these projects certainly would not have happened.

The member for Hartley and I have worked effectively together for many years as much of the infrastructure serving our communities, whether located in Hartley or Morialta, serves both communities equally. One of those projects, of which I am most proud, is the upgrade to the Paradise Interchange, delivered by the Marshall Liberal government. It was a long-sought upgrade. There are now hundreds of extra parks, and it is possible to get a park these days before 8 o'clock, which was not the case for a very long period of time.

It was a commitment Vincent and I made at the 2018 election with Steven Marshall, having also done so in 2014. We had been fighting for this project for longer than that, too. One of my first press conferences as an MP was with then leader Isobel Redmond and then shadow transport minister Steven Griffiths—which may narrow the timeframe—at the interchange. I am sure the press conference went really well, but what I remember were the awkward moments trying to gather footage of natural conversations between politicians and with people on the bus for background use for the TV.

There were several problems. The first was that one of my four or five colleagues with us—and I will not name which one—had apparently never used a bus ticket before and needed some assistance finding the machine and then guidance on where to put it. Tricks for young players: if you are doing a press conference on a bus, make sure your colleagues know how to use a bus ticket or indeed the reader, as it is now.

Isobel's efforts, which she was excellent at—she tried very hard on this occasion to chat with commuters, as she always would—were stymied as she was hemmed in on all sides by large cameramen who would not move to let her through to the back of the bus where some actual people were. Therefore, the footage that is still visible today is of her sitting by herself—it was not her fault. I do remember one journalist—who will remain nameless, although he is still on the telly—solving the problem he had of not having a bus ticket by casually walking by and ignoring the ticket machine altogether. If the police minister wants his name, I will let him know later so that he can pursue the matter further.

There is always more to do. I hope that whoever serves the people of Morialta later than me works very hard to do so for our community, speaking as a local resident. I obviously hope it will be the smart, committed, hardworking local firefighter for the CFS Scott Kennedy, a lifelong local who has always presented many strong ideas—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Clancy): Time is up, member for Morialta. I gave you a bit of leeway, but you are really keeping on going, mate.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: —and the people of Morialta and I are grateful.

THE RISING SUN INN

Ms O'HANLON (Dunstan) (16:19): This year we celebrate 180 years of one of the true icons of Kensington in my electorate of Dunstan, the Rising Sun Inn. To step into the Rising Sun Inn is to step into history, and it is also to experience the very best of hospitality and community spirit today. It is a place where the past and present sit perfectly side by side, where heritage is not just preserved but lived, and where stories that began nearly two centuries ago continue to be written every day.

Built in 1845, the Rising Sun Inn has stood through almost two centuries of South Australia's history. It has witnessed the early struggles of a fledgling colony, the growth of Kensington from a day-long journey into Adelaide into a vibrant and coveted inner eastern suburb, and all of the social, economic and cultural changes that have shaped our state.

Much of the original building remains intact. The four fireplaces have warmed locals and travellers alike for generations, and beneath the iron roof the original shingles are still preserved, but it is the bricks that tell the story most vividly. In those early days, travelling from the city to Kensington was a challenge, so the bricks were all handmade locally. Many still bear the fingerprints of the bricklayers who shaped them by hand.

My father was a bricklayer and I remember going with him to collect second-hand bricks from old building sites. He would point out the indentations and explain that they were modelled using the side of a man's hand, a human imprint in every brick. Whenever I see the Rising Sun Inn I think of my father's teachings and of the generations of craftsmen whose skill and effort built the foundations of our community.

The Rising Sun Inn has had many chapters. It was once a busy coaching inn providing lodging for travellers on their way to and from the city. Later it became a private home. In the 1950s it was even a motorcycle factory, the only place in South Australia where motorcycles were produced. In the 1990s three young visual effects specialists held their first meeting there and named their new company after it. Rising Sun Pictures went on to work on some of the biggest films in the world, including productions nominated for and even winning Academy Awards, quite the legacy for a local pub.

Today, thanks to the dedication of owners Grant and Jacqui Goodall, the Rising Sun Inn is both a heritage treasure and a vibrant local business. One might start the evening with a delicious South Australian red in front of a roaring fire on a chesterfield, followed by a modern Australian meal

in one of the dining rooms, or take one of Adelaide's most charming high teas, served on vintage crockery with crocheted tablecloths. I have had the pleasure of experiencing all of these over the years. Every visit is special and Grant never fails to have a story about the inn's long and colourful history. He has a gift for bringing the past alive and you cannot help but be caught up in the passion of the place.

But it is not just the locals who love it. The Rising Sun Inn has been named Best Pub or Bar at the Eastside Business Awards for the past two years running, an award recognising not only excellence in food and service but also the way a venue is woven into a community. Grant and Jacqui have achieved both. They have carefully balanced reverence for the past with a clear vision for the future, ensuring that the Rising Sun Inn is not a static museum piece but a living, breathing part of Kensington life.

The Rising Sun Inn is a place where birthdays, engagements and anniversaries are celebrated, but also a place for everyday meals with friends and family. It is where relationships begin—truly, I have heard the stories—and where friendships are enjoyed over good food and wine. I can also testify to that. That is what makes it such a rare treasure: it is both a landmark of history and a living part of our community fabric. It embodies continuity, connection and a uniquely South Australian ability to make spaces both deeply rooted yet welcoming to all.

This year there is an extra reason to celebrate: on 26 October the Rising Sun Inn will mark its 180th anniversary with an event that promises to be nothing short of spectacular. There will be live music inside and out, giveaways from Coopers Brewery and Paracombe Wines, and prizes for best period costume. It will be a celebration that honours the stories of the past and, deservedly, Grant and Jacqui, who have tirelessly ensured that it is every bit as much a part of our present and our future.

This milestone is not just about the longevity of a building, it is about the communities that have grown around it. It is a reminder of how powerful places can be in shaping how we live together. I might also note that the Rising Sun Inn is not only one of my favourite places in the electorate, but it is also known to be one of the Premier's, and I can hardly blame him. It is, after all, one of the few establishments in South Australia that has managed to outlast more than almost all our state's governments combined. There is something very grounding about that thought. As we raise a glass to the Rising Sun Inn let us celebrate all that it represents: craftsmanship, continuity, heritage and the joy of gathering together.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Clancy): Thank you, member for Dunstan, and happy birthday for Saturday! I call on the member for Frome.

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL BIRD SANCTUARY

Ms PRATT (Frome) (16:24): Thank you very much, Acting Deputy Speaker. Winaityinaityi Pangkara is the Kaurna language for the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary's name of country belonging to all birds, and Saturday 11 October was World Migratory Bird Day. There is a special association—Friends of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary—that was incorporated in 2016. They were established by a group of very enthusiastic people who wanted to make a difference for this particular pristine environment—specifically, the 60 kilometres of coastline that runs from the Barker Inlet into the electorate of Frome to Port Parham, and all the beaches in between, and it certainly does encompass the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary.

The bird sanctuary sits right at the southern end of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, and it is one of the key feeding and roosting sites for migratory shorebirds who use that flyway every year. An extraordinary number of birds fly between the Russian tundra in Siberia and Alaska, and make their way to Port Parham and Thompson Beach. More than five million birds a year use that flyway, and about 27,000 birds call the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary home.

While it is one of Adelaide's longest continuous conservation areas, the bird sanctuary is also home to 263 unique fauna and flora species. In particular, it helps protect resident and migratory shorebirds, including birds such as the curlew sandpiper, the ruddy turnstone, the red knot and eastern curlew. I was delighted on Saturday, when I was out with the friends group, to be introduced

to the great heron, the sooty oystercatcher and the red-necked stint—the shorebirds that were nesting too far away for us to see except through the scope of a beautiful Swarovski lens.

This is a space and an environmental group that I have not been able to explore previously, and I am delighted that I get to represent them, but they do this great work on their own. There are about 60 members. They attend this international bird sanctuary once a month for opportunities to come together to keep an eye on the birds. I joined them a few months ago when we were working on replenishing the habitat, and I cannot commend more highly people like Mary-Anne, Teresa, Anna and Lucy who helped me with the scope. They are dedicated volunteers and they deserve all the credit for the success, nearly marking 10 years of this friends group.

But there is, of course, the element of the environment we are trying to protect at play here, and that is the impacts of algal bloom beyond the dead marine life that we are aware of, beyond the impact to human health, business, tourism; and there is a fragile ecosystem that is tied to the algal bloom. Make no mistake, the algal bloom is certainly having an impact on the ecosystem and the migratory shorebirds. We just have to ask the commercial fishers in Gulf St Vincent who have had to make pretty devastating decisions to protect their business because that marine life is dead.

We know these birds feed on the food stock that is at risk of diminishing because of the algal bloom. Little molluscs are consumed whole and worms in the beach. They feed on fish; I was watching a great heron munch on one on Saturday. So it is very important that the government pays close attention to the concerns that are being flagged in correspondence to ministers and in observations by our park rangers. The friends group, FAIBS, is aware, and so is BirdLife Australia. In fact, they launched a campaign called Please Give Us Room in the Bloom. This is a campaign that is calling for funding, and it is a legitimate question to put to the government about the summer plan and its third instalment where we have seen the government drip-feed these announcements.

We learnt today from a successive environment minister that \$11 million out of a total of \$77 million with federal contribution has been allocated to migratory birds in Robe, so I am very optimistic for the Friends of the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary that, if applying to the government for funding to preserve that food stock, they should see great success. We want to see the environment protected in this important way, and the government must not lose sight of the impact of the algal bloom on our birdlife as well.

RIVERTON SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (16:30): A couple of weeks ago, I attended a community meeting held in Riverton, which was called by a group of local residents who were aggrieved by a decision made by their local council, the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council, to terminate an agreement between themselves and the state government in providing a community library through the library which is based at Riverton High School. The community raised a whole range of concerns at the meeting about access to library services, but also about access to technology, computer services, etc. They also expressed concerns about their ability to go to other towns for these services.

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Clancy): Member for Chaffey, please be quiet.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: A whole range of concerns were raised. The meeting was well attended. It was the second of two meetings that I am aware of, and there were quite a few people there concerned about this closure. The decision was made on 16 April 2025 in a confidential session, and that is one of the concerns raised by residents, that this decision to terminate this agreement was made behind closed doors. Also, the decision was not made public until recently, when the council was required to actually give notice to the government that it wanted to terminate the agreement. In addition—

Mr Whetstone interjecting:

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Madam Acting Speaker, I think it would be courteous if the member for Chaffey actually just kept quiet.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Clancy): Yes, it would be wonderful if the member for Chaffey could please show some respect, and then he would be able to stay in the chamber for his 90-second statement, which will be coming up shortly.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: This matter is on the council agenda this Wednesday, given the concerns raised by residents. I will just quickly read out some portions of the report to the council:

Having considered the options, the CEO recommends commencing dialogue and entering negotiation with relevant stakeholders (Department of Education, State Library, Riverton High School, community) to draft an amended community library agreement and seek endorsement from all parties.

He goes on to say in his report:

Pursuing this option could result in a win-win-win, for the community, Riverton High School, and CGVC [Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council]. Should CGVC's requirement to address concerns relating to governance, transparency and accountability, support...be met—

Then a new agreement could be signed. I fully support this recommendation by the CEO and I would strongly recommend to the council that it endorse it, because the key thing is that when they made the decision originally they did not consult anybody. It was made internally, and so they are actually now correcting an error they made. I think the CEO's advice to the council is appropriate and it should be supported.

One of the things which I would also ask of the council at its meeting is to actually release that confidential report. If they are now going to engage with the community and other stakeholders, which I think is appropriate—and is a good move and one which I highly support—I think there has to be trust and transparency in the process going from here. The reason for the original decision and the reasons for that should be known by the community. That confidential report should be made public so that the residents can actually see why the agreement was terminated originally and see what can be addressed. Also, it brings, importantly, the community into a genuine dialogue with the council.

All I can say in terms of what the original decision was made for—because the report is not public—is that in this report it says:

The rationale for reform centres on strengthening governance, improving transparency and accountability, enhancing support, refining funding arrangements, and ensuring more effective and inclusive strategic oversight.

To be quite honest, I have no idea what that means in the sense of why the council actually made the decision. Certainly, the community have no idea why it was made, so I think it is important that the council act in an open and transparent way. If they endorse the recommendation by the CEO at their council meeting on Wednesday night, that will be the very first important step in doing that. I would support that and urge the councillors to support the recommendation.

Private Members' Statements

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr BATTY (Bragg) (16:35): I rise concerning crime and antisocial behaviour in and around the Barwell Flats Housing Trust complex in Glenside in my electorate following a number of concerns being raised with me by local residents and following also some fairly shocking data that I sought by freedom information that shows that nearly 1,500 police callouts were made to the Barwell Flats Housing Trust complex over the recent three-year period. Clearly, something is going very wrong if we have the police being called out daily—indeed more than daily—to the same Housing Trust complex in Glenside.

I have been advocating for various safety improvements to be implemented at Barwell Flats. I am doing so on behalf of not only constituents who live in the Housing Trust complex itself but also on behalf of residents in the surrounding suburbs, particularly in Glenside, where I have had some really concerning reports of everything from house break-ins to yelling and screaming in the street in the middle of the night.

My constituents in Glenside should not have to put up with that. Everyone deserves to be able to feel safe in their own home, so I want to work constructively with the minister and the

government to ensure we can get some safety improvements at Barwell Flats to help make the Glenside community safer.

Mr BROWN (Florey) (16:36): I rise today to commemorate the public life of a man who was sadly taken from us recently. Hans Bailiht, although retired from the Department for Energy and Mining, had been a dedicated public servant whose commitment to the prosperity of our state and its people was inspiring to all those who knew him. He was dedicated to facilitating projects to advance our state, while protecting the interests of both landholders and the community more broadly. His lasting legacy in the area of mining regulation was attested to by the large number of former colleagues who attended his memorial service last week at Mount Lofty House.

He had also been a stalwart of our state's German community, rediscovering his heritage later in life and throwing himself into organising groups and events with his characteristic zeal and attention to detail. Mr Bailiht, who was also my father-in-law, will be greatly missed by his family, numerous friends and former colleagues. Vale Hans Bailiht.

Mr WHETSTONE (Chaffey) (16:37): Last week, the trade minister announced an all-time export record for South Australian lobster exports after tariffs were lifted in December 2024, so it is a low base to start from. It is a great success for South Australian businesses who have worked so hard to get us there. But let's not forget the government who sat on its hands while South Australian seafood exporters lost millions of dollars over the four seasons while exports were on hold.

While the minister pats himself on the back, many industries continue to suffer from the government's lack of direction and vision. In their latest ABS export stats, food exports are down 18 per cent, dairy is down 8 per cent, wheat is down 50 per cent and barley is down over 60 per cent. Animal feed, iron ore and mineral fuels are all down around 30 per cent and many other commodities are in the red. The alarm bells continue to ring across the wine sector, particularly the commercial wine up in the Riverland.

Here is the headline: while New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania all recorded increases, South Australia was the second worst performing export market in the last 12 months. While the minister praises himself and the efforts for hardworking South Australian businesses, our industries, our exporters and small businesses continue to suffer under this Labor government.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (16:39): Last week I attended a community meeting in Eudunda organised by a local community activist and advocate, Mary Morris. The meeting was predominantly for farmers in that locality and surrounding districts who are concerned about the ongoing alienation of good cropping land for housing developments, wind farms and transmission lines.

While acknowledging that these services are required, the community is concerned that some of the prime cropping land is actually being alienated. Not only does this have an impact on farmers directly in the sense of the land they lose but it also has quite a significant impact on the way they can actually farm their properties. This, in their view, is a cumulative effect; in other words, it is one issue plus another issue plus another issue. There is growing concern in those communities about ensuring that development has minimal impact, or reduced impact, on good cropping land.

Grain Producers SA have also expressed their views on behalf of farmers in the area and they are now working on a position statement to make it very clear that, if development is required, it needs to be done in a way that actually minimises impact. Food production is such an important ingredient of our nation's economic base, and the small towns it serves, that we need to take the views expressed by these farmers very seriously.

Parliamentary Committees

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills, Minister for Police) (16:40): By leave, I move:

That Ms Savvas and S.E. Andrews be appointed to the committee in place of the Hon. L.P. Hood and the Hon. R.K. Pearce (resigned).

Motion carried.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills, Minister for Police) (16:41): By leave, I move:

That Ms Stinson be appointed to the committee in place of the Hon. L.P. Hood (resigned).

Motion carried.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION

The Hon. B.I. BOYER (Wright—Minister for Education, Training and Skills, Minister for Police) (16:41): By leave, I move:

That Mr Hughes be appointed to the committee in place of the Hon. R.K. Pearce (resigned).

Motion carried.

*Bills***TAFE SA BILL***Second Reading*

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion).

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER (Morialta) (16:42): It is a privilege to continue my remarks from earlier in relation to the TAFE SA Bill. Members may remember that I had, prior to the lunchbreak, identified that the Liberal Party would be supporting the bill and that we considered that the bill was an improvement on the status quo. I expressed my own personal hope that in 10 or 15 years' time from now, future parliaments and future people involved in the TAFE sector and the training sector more broadly, when reflecting on how this bill, this new act, has served our state, will be kinder to it than we all are now about the reforms—the Gillard-Kenyon reforms, as I may start thinking of them—of 2012. Those reforms, of course, were designed to support a training environment, a market, that was never realised.

I said prior to the lunchbreak that there were Labor ministers hoping that contestability would become a reality even as late as 2017, and indeed over lunch I found a quote from the member for Port Adelaide when she was the Minister for Education highlighting, even as late as 2017, the work that TAFE SA had done to enable itself to be able to withstand the rigours of a fully competitive and contestable market. By the end of 2018-19, during the election campaign, that of course changed. I remember that one of our ambitions as the Liberal Party was to have that full contestability within which the act would be able to operate as intended, if we were elected, and the member for Port Adelaide at that time clearly had changed her mind and identified that it was a bad idea.

As I was frank about before the break, during the time that we were in government it became clear to me and to our government that full contestability was not going to work too. The times had moved on. The federal funding arrangements had moved on. Where TAFE SA was to be ongoing, continuing its work as South Australia's public provider, there was no real capacity for there to be a pure market in place.

TAFE SA's costs per hour were always going to be three to four times those of a non-government provider. I am not saying this critically. There were several reasons for this. One of them is the obvious one. I think 70 per cent of the costs identified to me were due to the staffing differences in the way that a public servant under the arrangements that were in place for TAFE staff would be different to a staff member doing the same job at a non-government provider. Those costs were just going to be higher, and our industrial arrangements were not going to make a different arrangement possible.

TAFE also delivers outcomes for the state in potentially low-margin areas that were not going to attract the interests of private providers. TAFE delivers outcomes for the state that the government needs it to. When we were identifying the need for a radical upskilling off welders in South Australia and the skills department wanted to invest \$1 million in purchasing virtual welders, which would enable welders to be trained more quickly so as to serve those working in our shipyards for the needs

of the state, TAFE was the only organisation capable at the time of operating those, so those virtual welders were installed at Regency.

The ambition is always to ensure that government-owned facilities are enabled to be used by non-government providers where possible. We endeavoured to do that through best endeavours, working with the CE, working with TAFE, and that happened to a greater or lesser extent. I know there are a couple of examples where it has happened since too, but it is not easy. Frankly, this change in the act may well be an example of where that sort of project is easier to deliver, which is one of the reasons that we support the bill in front of us today.

Staffing costs and those particular state projects were not the only ones. There were also remote and rural communities that TAFE serves, for which the subsidy to a private provider would have to be dramatic to take their interest, so there is going to be a public provider.

We endeavoured, through the time we were in government, rather than to focus on a fully contestable marketplace—which would not have worked, in my view—to have a curated approach instead. Depending on the thickness of the market—the number of quality providers that are capable of delivering outcomes for students, businesses, industries in the state that we needed, to a quality delivery that was respected by business and industry—we would make sure that the appropriate proportion of government-funded places were able to be delivered under that arrangement. TAFE was able to serve the state in delivering others.

This government has not an entirely dissimilar approach with their fee-free TAFE places. They have an articulated number, which I assume would have been negotiated with the federal government, that certainly within South Australia are delivered for TAFE SA, as similar government providers have an articulated number in other states, and then a certain number assigned to certain non-government providers too.

The government's processes in identifying quality are potentially similar to those that were there under the previous government. I am almost certain that it is mostly the same people doing many of those assessments, but the proportions have potentially changed a bit. In a funny way, it is less a change in principle as it is in the nuances of greater or lesser priorities, and that is fine.

Prior to the break, I highlighted that in this second part of my contribution I would provide some context for the arrangements that came into being as we came into government in 2018 that informed my experience. It also is relevant to the bill, because many of these circumstances were triggered by the same set of reforms that were contemporaneous with the current TAFE act's introduction.

The current TAFE act's introduction assumed a number of reforms that were described in South Australia as the Skills for All approach. I want to put in place a little bit of the narrative of those five years after the introduction of that, until we get to 2017, where we had what I would consider the three significant contemporary crises, and there were a number of others alongside them: the slash-and-burn Mid-Year Budget Review of 2017, which I spoke about in detail before the break; and the governance issues coming to a head, which were not necessarily public at the time but were later revealed by the Moran-Bannikoff review and the Nous report, which I will offer some quotes from—all of which contributed in different ways to the quality crisis highlighted by the ASQA accreditation process, during which TAFE initially failed 16 out of 16 courses, then 15 out of 16 as it dropped a number, and then failed 10 out of the 10 that they were still trying to do, until ultimately that was finally remediated in December 2018.

Prior to that, though, these things did not happen in a vacuum, and it was not necessarily the act itself that was the cause of many of the problems but it was possibly a symptom of some of them, a symptom of a system that was not designed as fit for purpose and did not have the attention from government that it deserved. I described earlier the member for Wright's status as the first Labor skills minister in 40 years to serve a full term—if he makes the next five months, and we wish him well in achieving that goal.

During the time of the 16 years of the former Labor government there were I think nine skills ministers who I named. Paul Caica might have achieved three years; most of them were two years. Well intentioned as many of them may have been, and whether or not they had the gravitas within

cabinet to assume that there was the priority demanded for this portfolio, or whether or not they had the attention to detail, that might be a different answer for each of those nine ministers.

But the circumstances created with the TAFE board were seen, I think, by Treasury as a cash cow, an opportunity to change budget fittings to suit the needs of the budget papers from year to year on the assumption that the TAFE board were not going to complain and the TAFE minister was not going to complain. And so the Treasurer of the time could put whatever they wanted into their forward projections, on the basis—it was not necessarily bad accounting, I am not blaming Treasury per se here—that they were able to apply to the TAFE board an efficiency dividend or, indeed, revenue assumptions that were completely impossible to achieve.

There were \$90 million-plus worth of cuts and inappropriate revenue assumptions over the forward estimates, when we came to office, that had not been disclosed to the public, and beyond that, unachievable targets, especially in a system that the government at the time had said was going to become more contestable. You could guarantee if that had continued as it had the problems that the current minister has foreshadowed with the act would have been put in place.

The salvation over the last seven or eight years has been that the departments and the ministers have put in place performance expectations and charters that have directed the TAFE organisation to the best interests of South Australia, for the most part. Over the last seven years I think Treasury and the ministers—and I count myself and the current minister and former minister Pisoni alike in that, and former Treasurer Lucas—were actually paying attention and having an understanding of the realities of the budget.

In the period where that was not the case, between 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2018, the impact of a different approach was dramatic. Apprentices and trainees in South Australia dropped by 58 per cent in real terms from 36,000 to 15,000 between the 2013 and 2018 March periods. The number of commencements for the same period decreased by even more, by 63.8 per cent, from 22,990 to 8,325.

We often repeated when we were in government the fact that the work done by Minister Pisoni and the education department and TAFE saw the fastest growth in apprenticeships and traineeships in the country. I guess if there is one thing that the minister might point to if he wanted to be political is that we came off a low base. I highlight that it was a really bloody low base. That 8,300 commencements in March 2018, according to the figures I have in front of me, is a low base. A drop from 36,000 to 15,000 apprentices and trainees in five years is remarkable.

I appreciate that I think we now have a bipartisan shared mission to highlight the benefits of skills training for young South Australians. Mr Deputy Speaker, you may not and other members of the parliament may not be aware, but the member for Unley used to be an apprentice. He holds it close to his chest that he went from cabinet-maker to cabinet minister. He is a discreet person who does not brag about such things.

What was really useful was having the insight of him as a shadow minister and a minister. He was able to help the department refine some of our messages and ensure that in the Department for Innovation and Skills, as it was, there was a laser-like focus on continuing to promote that message, and indeed expand the fields within which apprenticeships and traineeships are offered. It was not just to the traditional trades, the male-dominated industries, but to modern trades, such as might give more parents confidence in the future. The IT traineeships grew by, I think, over 1,000 per cent over a couple of years. It was a new field, admittedly, and one where great new opportunities are continuing to flourish.

The Minister for Skills, as was the member for Unley, also had a really significant focus on traditionally feminised industries, having the opportunity to have apprenticeship and traineeship pathways applied in those industries. It was traditionally always the blokes who were able to get paid while they were learning. We are very supportive and indeed put in place a lot of measures, including TAFE measures, to encourage women into non-traditional industries.

But it would be folly, when we are concerned about how to meet the pay gap, not to think about those industries that have traditionally had, and continue to have, high levels of female workforce. Therefore, for skilled qualifications including child care, the traineeship and apprenticeship

pathways in those fields were really encouraged and supported. There were changes made to some of the national agreements about how they are funded that made that easier. Those changes were all significant and helped us grow apprenticeship and traineeship numbers during our term in government.

There is another field where the early work, I think, was done by the member for Unley when he was skills minister and Renee Hindmarsh when she was the Skills Commissioner. I do commend the current minister and the current Skills Commissioner, Cam Baker, for the work they have done to continue and expand the ambition of that work, and that is to have university degree apprenticeships.

Particularly when the minister and I were in England visiting BAE facilities, talking to students who were doing degree apprenticeships, it was potentially a five-year apprenticeship where the student was working at BAE and getting the skills they needed. That is something that has not traditionally been a feature of the Australian landscape. I thank the universities, the Skills Commission and government, who continue the work that Minister Pisoni was also supportive of. This will become a really important feature in the future.

Going back to the circumstances pre 2018, when it comes to campus closures, one of the things that was notable during the former government's first year, when we were trying to identify some efficiencies that could then be reinvested back into TAFE, was some suggestions that came forward from the organisation to close some campuses. I made the point subsequently that some of those recommendations were a mistake, and indeed we reversed some. The Urrbrae TAFE campus, for example, was a savings measure from the 2018 budget that I absolutely regret. I am very proud to have had the courage to admit that mistake while still a minister within about a year and a half.

The thing was, although we backtracked on the decision to close the campus, we did in fact through that process identify some significant deficiencies. The facilities at Urrbrae that are second to none, that are absolutely world class, to deliver horticulture and a number of other skilled qualifications through TAFE needed to stay with TAFE. We needed those facilities to stay with TAFE. But some of the administration blocks, for example, that were very expensive pieces of real estate in the context of the operations there, and the location of some of the public servants who were working in those, did not need to be at Urrbrae. They were just as easily able to be transferred into other locations, including the city. The school had a desperate need for more area, too.

So it was a good outcome, for example, that the school was able to expand its footprint into some of the areas TAFE did not need. TAFE was able to save some money. But I make no bones about it: it was an error to say that it should close in the first place, and I am glad we did not. There were a couple of country campuses where we identified the savings of closing the campuses. In retrospect, they were so minuscule as to make the prospect of the proposal laughable, and indeed we were able to reverse those closures.

There were three campuses that closed, and they attracted a significant level of criticism from the Labor Party in opposition. At Port Adelaide, a number of the facilities were ageing, and courses had already been transferred elsewhere. I think the major one left at the time Port Adelaide closed was nursing, and those courses were then transferred to new facilities in the city and at Regency—I think maybe in the city in the end.

For a number of years, the service delivery at the Tea Tree Gully campus had been winding down, and by the time it finished and was transferred to Datacom, which took over all of the relevant site, it was to a point where I suspect Datacom is now training more people on that site through their everyday operations as business as usual than the campus was, with all the particular areas it was offering having been removed.

The third one was Parafield. I hesitate to include Parafield in the list. Parafield was closed because, in 2017, CASA did an audit of the programs that were offered there, which were all aviation related, and cancelled them. I will talk more about that in a little bit. Parafield was one that was closed, more by the TAFE organisation's inability to maintain accreditation to offer the courses than as a government savings measure. In the end, the advice that came to me as the minister was it would be impossible to resurrect those courses to the standard desired, and so that was closed too.

That criticism irked me, I have to say, because there was a real context in which we made those decisions. We admitted the ones that were mistakes and we fixed them, but the three that were closed were really very modest in terms of their scale, especially when the criticisms were coming from members of the Labor Party who had presided over double-digit closures in just the previous two years prior to changes in government.

The point that I made at the time was that sometimes campus closures work in the interests of students. Just because a campus had existed historically and was continuing to be maintained, it did not necessarily mean if it was within striking distance of another campus with better facilities that it was not necessarily possible to have that consolidation as a positive outcome for the state.

That is not to say that I supported every closure. As I have just said, Urrbrae is a prime example of where it was a mistake, it would have been a mistake. It would be a mistake to close certain other campuses where those services cannot be replicated. Any campus closure must be for a specific and important reason but that was not the approach taken by the Labor Party in opposition and I encourage them to reflect on that behaviour when they make criticism of the current opposition for doing what oppositions have to do, which is to hold the government to account.

On this occasion, I highlight closures in the years immediately prior to us coming to government: in 2017 the closures of the Naracoorte, Bordertown and Millicent TAFE campuses, and indeed Kangaroo Island; in 2016, Cleve, Clare, Kimba, Morphettville, Waikerie, Renmark and Gawler. In the years prior to that, in 2015, the English Language Services at Rundle Mall TAFE campus were closed. In 2011 to 2013, we saw closures at Yorketown, Marleston, O'Halloran Hill, Panorama, Croydon and Roseworthy. In the years prior to 2010, still in the term of the Labor government but prior to Skills for All and the current reforms, we saw Peterborough and Jamestown closed.

I highlight this to make the point that the TAFE board made those decisions. I do not know whether the ministers in the Labor government at the time were aware of them or supportive of them. I certainly hope they were. I would imagine they would have been briefed on them. I imagine cabinet would have discussed them and the Labor government would have taken ownership of them. The opportunity was always there, as we demonstrated when we reversed the decision of the TAFE board on places like Urrbrae, for the government to make its feelings known. These sorts of decisions would be more easily overseen with the changes to the act that are in the bill proposed today but that does not mean that they cannot be overseen and were not overseen and should not have been overseen previously.

We have talked about the massive drop in student numbers and the massive drop in campuses between 2013 and 2018. The other big change was the massive drop in staff. It was revealed in January 2018 in an excellent article by Daniel Wills, now Labor government Chief of Staff, who identified what he described as a \$65 million TAFE cull over five years. He wrote:

TAFE SA spent \$65 million in the past five years on golden handshakes to slash almost 600 staff, a move its former boss said led to many of its most talented being shown the door. The Auditor-General has revealed 583 TAFE staffers received targeted voluntary separation packages since 2012-13, including \$3.9 million in redundancy payouts offered last year alone—

that would have been 2017—

as part of a long-term cost-cutting scheme intended to reform the state training providers.

The point that is relevant, particularly here, is that sometimes there is this suggestion that the Liberal Party in government cut TAFE, and that the Labor Party has always been supportive. The Rea report, as I highlighted further, had this strange dynamic in its context period of being very praiseworthy of Labor governments from Whitlam to Albanese, and immediately and instinctively critical of the Fraser and Howard governments.

The government in South Australia's history that has cut more staff, budget and students from TAFE SA—and it is not even close, it is by a factor of tens if not hundreds—is the Labor government in the Skills for All period through to the 2018 election.

So, in that context—and I will come to the Terry Moran and Kim Bannikoff's remarks in a little bit—these problems became very public during 2017. In May 2017 there was a CASA investigation that cast doubts on the accreditation of TAFE SA's aircraft safety students.

The CASA investigation and accreditation issue, as I described, ultimately led to the closure of those courses at Parafield altogether. Some 90 students had to have their courses remediated, from memory, and it was a very difficult thing to do. I think there was a significant need to engage outside assistance.

The ASQA accreditation issue began with a question in question time from Steven Marshall, the Leader of the Opposition, to the Deputy Premier. This was in early September, I believe. The question was simply about whether or not there was an issue with an accreditation, an audit of TAFE SA. The former Deputy Premier, the education minister at the time, did not know the answer, which was fine as it had not been brought to her attention, and it became clear to us later why that was the case. I have some sympathy for her in this situation. We expect those people who are there to serve us and who are expected to serve the people of South Australia to give ministers useful information when it is their job to do so, as they were being paying \$100,000 a year as a part-time board chair. Anyway, that was not happening.

The Labor Party's Twitter account immediately started mocking Steven Marshall for asking questions on this non-issue. After a little while—it was only a few days—I think the member for Port Adelaide clearly had her office immediately have their attention drawn to what this question was about, and the penny must have dropped. Whatever information had gone to the opposition finally made its way to the government as well, and that was that ASQA had audited TAFE and, indeed, the 16 courses had gone very badly. The Adelaide newspaper *The Advertiser*, a little bit later in an editorial, summarised it thus:

These are dark days for TAFE SA.

The damning report from the Australian Skills Quality Authority, released last night, found 14 courses were deemed to be substandard, among a total of 16 courses; all of which were found to have problems.

I identified earlier, of course, that two of the courses were able to be remediated before the second review. *The Advertiser* went on to report that:

The human toll is potentially enormous, with 800 students facing an uncertain immediate future and needing additional assessment—and possibly further study—to finish their courses.

It did not take long for the bloodletting to start.

Chief executive Robin Murt has resigned from his post and Education Minister Susan Close was equally quick to throw TAFE SA board chairman Peter Vaughan under a bus, saying she would ask Governor Hieu Van Le to dismiss him on the grounds of no confidence.

The Advertiser article sums up pretty well what happened over those few months. On 25 September 2017 ASQA issued a notice of intention to remove or suspend 16 qualifications; 28 September the education minister announces the formation of a task force; October 2017, the Auditor-General finds 45 students have passed part of courses despite having withdrawn from them—that was actually a separate issue entirely but contemporaneous.

On 15 October there were 2,500 students identified at that point as having problems, and TAFE was no longer accepting enrolments in meat processing, automotive refinishing technology, motorcycle technology, commercial cookery, individual support (ageing), hairdressing, plumbing, leisure and health, building and construction, and visual merchandising. The revelations here about funding cuts and 600 staff being lost were received poorly, as you can imagine, and it is an area that I think was really worth noting. By 6 December, Daniel Wills—excellent journalist as he was—wrote an article highlighted: 'No faith, minister? Neither have we.' It reads:

Higher Education and Skills Minister [the member for Port Adelaide] has lost confidence in just about everyone who's running TAFE, and can't be surprised if the public does the same.

Their fury won't stop with a couple of bureaucrats and board members, but run right to the top as students and parents dump the blame for this latest bungle right on the Cabinet table.

He went on to write:

Now, with a new academic year and state election around the corner, [the member for Port Adelaide] says she will take 'swift' action to ensure this agency in crisis brings its performance up to scratch.

That looks to be a daunting—and maybe close to impossible—task.

Subsequently, on the same day, Alex Reid—who was then the Deputy Chief Executive of the Department of State Development—was appointed as TAFE's interim chief executive, and I reflected earlier on her good work at this time.

A couple of days later it was revealed that, far from *The Advertiser* editorial's concerned remarks, 800 students were in jeopardy. On 8 December, it was then again reported by state political editor, Daniel Wills—excellent reporter as he was—that hundreds more students would now be potentially caught up in the TAFE debacle than first revealed, 'as Premier Jay Weatherill says as many as 1300 may now be affected.'

Prior to the luncheon break, I highlighted that it ended up being about that number. Several hundred of them were students who required further assessments to be applied during the courses, several hundred of them were students who had completed but not yet received their parchment who then needed to do further assessment, and several hundred were people who had their parchments and who effectively had those parchments retrospectively not recognised and had to go back and do further assessments so that their parchments would then again mean something. More than 1,000 TAFE staff of its 2,000 staff were involved in that process of remediating the students and helping those students, but also actually fixing the courses—and not just the 16 that were identified: every single course on the TAFE list had to have a quality process applied to it.

There was a quality assurance committee with a new senior executive leading that work. I think it was Dr Norman Baker whom I believe, if I am not mistaken, has now just recently been appointed as the chief executive of TAFE in Tasmania, which is a credit to him and the work he has provided to South Australia over the last seven years, and we wish him well.

That culture of quality had not been applied before; it had not been a focus of the leadership of TAFE because it had not been a focus of the board whose agenda seemed to be focused on meeting the budget needs of the treasurer of the day from 2013 to 2018, whoever that was—I wonder if it is somebody still in the parliament—and, indeed, consequently no strategic approach to the training needs of South Australians. I remind members that, at the same time, 90 per cent of the training budget was going to TAFE SA and, in return, the non-government sector was denuded of funding.

I really enjoy when we have the opportunity to look at reports from journalists who have been serving the people of South Australia for some time. Still in the press gallery is the journalist of note, Paul Starick, from *The Advertiser*. Paul Starick wrote an article on 9 December 2017, and it was Paul at his best:

Inside the TAFE SA Crisis.

Broken system damned by culture of bungling.

The course accreditation calamity rocking 1300 TAFE students risks becoming a lightning rod for deep-seated discontent with a Labor government in power for almost 16 years, insiders claim.

Paul is a very good writer, it must be said, and that is very good writing. He went on to write:

TAFE has been turned upside down and inside out through divergent policy measures championed by nine different Labor ministers since 2002, the most recent being [the member for Port Adelaide].

Paul Starick broke another story highlighting some of the problems and the lack of oversight of TAFE:

Australian Medical Association chief executive Joe Hooper says his group spoke to Gail Gago, whose ministerial term expired in January last year—

that being January 2016—

'explaining the concerns we had regarding the quality of training in aged care at TAFE and that our own nursing lecturers who undertake accreditation of aged care standards estimated 50 per cent of TAFE graduates needed upskilling and were unemployable'.

'Nothing was done, to our knowledge, to help these students and save this much-needed health workforce resource,' he said.

'At the same time, quality private training providers in South Australia were defunded.' Mr Hooper's views are substantially shared by senior and highly respected education and training industry figures, some with intimate knowledge of TAFE's inner workings, spoken to by *The Advertiser* on the condition of anonymity.

Sheradyn Holderhead broke a story a couple of days later, 'TAFE scandal could impact on SA's image', with news that:

About 100 international students have been caught up in the TAFE SA scandal.

The Federal Education Department has contacted TAFE to seek assurance the students are going to be able to complete their study or get their money back.

In February of the next year, in the lead-up to the election, it became very clear, as a Senate committee by now was looking at this. They highlighted evidence from the Australian Skills Quality Authority that TAFE's response to the crisis did not address the issues, explaining why it was still a major problem. In the last of my round-up of journalists from *The Advertiser* of the time, Tim Williams, education reporter of note, highlighted:

An independent review of TAFE SA is costing taxpayers \$3000 for every day of work done by each staff member assigned to it.

And the final report will not be ready until late March, after the state election.

The price tag for that Nous report was \$152,000. That Nous report was quite useful, so I certainly thank the member for Port Adelaide for commissioning the report. I thank her for commissioning the Moran-Bannikoff report as well. They were both useful and I will get to them momentarily. I just wish that 16 years of Labor ministers had had better oversight of this, such an important part of their portfolios, so that we did not get into that mess.

My reason for going through the reporting of the time was that I find it a little bit unfathomable that the government's report that has been relied on for this bill highlights, only in two sentences in brackets with factual errors, dismissing any challenges of the time, what was for anybody who was involved in the training sector at the time—TAFE SA or non-government providers alike—a really difficult time, a time when most private providers either feared for or, indeed, actually lost their jobs, when non-government RTOs were closing their doors, high-quality providers like the MBA.

It was a remarkably difficult time, a massive drop, as I have identified, in students and staff and funding, and in confidence and reputation. The Moran-Bannikoff strategic capability review said:

TAFE SA's emphasis on cost-cutting and centralisation has overwhelmed and distorted its strategic focus. The business model does not enable educators to respond to business and industry requirements. Nor does it empower staff to take initiative and innovate within an accountable organisational culture.

They went on to say of the TAFE organisation:

Ageing infrastructure, obsolete equipment, unreliable technology and inflexible online platforms have severely limited organisational capacity and innovation.

This is in contrast to the advice given to the house by the member for Port Adelaide as minister a few months earlier in July 2017, when she said:

TAFE has undertaken an extraordinary effort in modernising its service operations. It has made significant savings in the process and is operating extremely professionally, so I have no reason not to believe that they are well on their way to the contestability anticipated by the end of 2018-19.

Once again, the minister was getting terrible advice from the organisation through whoever was reporting to her. It is a real shame. She, by the way, inherited that board. She did not appoint them, from memory. She appointed some good people. She appointed Jo Denley, who did some great work, but that collective failure of Labor governments over such a period of time had a tremendously negative impact on our state and on TAFE SA. The strategic capability review also said:

The corporate structure, operational business development strategies and focus on cost savings and external revenue targets have diminished TAFE SA's emphasis on education.

I spoke before about how so much of that, when we came into government, included those 2017 budget cuts applied by the Treasurer of the day that had not been identified to the public prior to the election, to my knowledge. He can come in here; he is still in the parliament. He has a job in the cabinet still. To my knowledge, they had not been identified to the public before the election. I came

in and we found \$90 million worth of cuts that TAFE was expected to manage. That was Labor's legacy in 2018. That was the starting point for the reforms in the work we did to rebuild confidence over the subsequent four years.

The Nous report in quality, the one that was identified before, produced a useful report. One thing I did highlight before lunch, but I want to highlight it again here, and I will use Nous's words:

There is a large contingent of highly motivated and loyal staff who want to help restore confidence in the institution of which they were very proud, but who have felt alienated from and unclear about the overarching strategy and role of TAFE SA in the wider system.

Nous reported that cabinet-approved time limited funding to assist TAFE SA meet its transition costs, primarily funding targeted voluntary separation packages on the basis that investment in TAFE SA's downsizing, would significantly ease budget pressure over the medium to long-term. However, the focus on cost cutting became an obsessive one, meaning that leaders and managers paid much more attention to cost inputs rather than the quantity or quality of outputs.

The Liberal Party is supporting this bill. We hope that it is an opportunity for a renewed fresh start for TAFE SA. TAFE SA is in such a better position now than it was in March 2018. I am pleased that it has had consistency in ministers. Obviously, the change in government saw an adjustment in priorities. That is fine. We disagree with some of the government's priorities—that is politics—but when it comes to legislation that is going to serve the state, I think for all of us, we really need to reflect on what is the impact of this legislation not on the newspaper tomorrow or the political culture over the next six months, but what is the impact going to be on the system that is impacted by this legislation over the next 12 years? It was not necessarily the current act that was responsible for the disasters, but it was part of the reforms that did impact it. We very much hope that under this new act there will be an improved future.

The Hon. Dennis Hood is the shadow minister for training and he has given me some words particularly to highlight the articulation of the Liberal position on the bill shorn of my commentary relating to the historical context.

The bill provides for TAFE SA to deliver high-quality, responsive and industry relevant education and training that responds to the current and future needs of employers, aligns with the strategic priorities of the state, and strengthens the state's economic prosperity through the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce; to ensure equitable access to education and training for all eligible South Australians; and to operate as an efficient, transparent, innovative and accountable public institution.

The TAFE SA Bill 2025 enshrines the legislative means to transition TAFE SA from a public corporation to a statutory authority without eroding corporate governance performance and accountability standards currently applied to TAFE through the general provisions of the Public Corporations Act 1993. Similar to legislation for other statutory authorities, the bill ensures TAFE SA obtains its authority and operating context from its enabling act, and its functions, level of independence, and the respective roles of the board, chief executive and the minister are derived from its enabling legislation.

The bill defines TAFE SA's objectives and functions as a public provider. Unlike the current act, broad application of the Public Corporations Act and the commercial principles therein, the bill ensures that TAFE SA performance functions in the public interest first and foremost. The bill changes the attributes for TAFE SA board membership to include members who collectively have expertise, abilities and experience required for the effective performance of TAFE SA's functions. The board is to consist of not less than six and up to 10 members nominated by the minister and appointed by the Governor.

The bill formalises the authority of the TAFE SA board to appoint an acting chief executive for any period for which the chief executive is absent or unavailable to carry out official duties and requires the board to meet a minimum of four times a year. The bill also formalises the authority of the TAFE SA board to establish committees or subcommittees to advise or assist TAFE SA in relation to its functions. The bill requires TAFE SA to prepare a business plan and compels the minister to provide a Statement of Priority to TAFE SA, which will replace the current Ministerial Charter and Performance Statement requirements under the current act and arrangements.

The Minister is compelled to consult with the Treasurer and TAFE in the development of that Statement of Priority and TAFE must address the requirements contained in it in preparing its business plan. A new power is authorising TAFE SA to issue barring notices in a manner stipulated in regulation in relation to specified conduct with the breach of such a notice resulting in a penalty that is enforceable. This provision endeavours to protect staff and students of TAFE SA on all its campuses from unwanted conduct by others. It increases the maximum fine for breach of a by-law from \$1,250 to \$2,500. TAFE SA's rule-making powers are expanded to include setting standards in relation to student admission and selection, staff behaviour and conduct, and staff and student academic standards.

The requirement for Governor confirmation of a proposed TAFE SA rule or by-law is removed from the current act by this bill; I imagine the Governor will be disappointed that she will not get these reports anymore, but it will save time. Proposed rules and by-laws will, however, continue to require agreement of the TAFE SA board, and in addition to ministerial approval, by-laws will continue to be tabled in parliament and subject to disallowance.

The Hon. Dennis Hood, as shadow minister for the Liberal Party, has consulted with peak industry bodies and stakeholders on this bill and, in broad, found in-principle support from most. There were issues raised by some and there were issues identified by Dennis Hood, which the Liberal Party will move on as I have described. We are indeed keen to ask some questions, which hopefully we will have time to do quickly tomorrow; I hope it will not take up much of the house's time. I indicate that at the moment I am not proposing to move amendments in the house. We will endeavour to provide them to the government between the houses so that they can be given full consideration ahead of debate in the Legislative Council, and hopefully they will be passed.

I think that there is worthy consideration of a review after three years to be undertaken of the proposed legislation. I wonder what might have been the benefits of a three-year review after the current act had been put in place. There is currently no requirement for regional representation on the TAFE board. When I was the minister, I made sure to appoint somebody from regional South Australia: from memory, Dr Jen Cleary—I will seek to correct the record if I am mistaken—and I know that she did a great job. I am sure that there is no in-principle objection from the government and I hope that if that is an amendment we move, it will be supported.

With respect to the proposed barring orders, I am interested in why the similar measures incorporated recently in the Education and Children's Services (Barring Notices and Other Protections) Amendment Bill for an opportunity to appeal to the minister have not been included in this bill. We will explore that and potentially consider an amendment between the houses.

I am interested also if the minister, in summing up, wants to make any comments on the anticipated impact of the legislative change on staff workforce numbers, student and industry outcomes, and how the bill will enable the government to consider—or indeed whether the government has any interest in considering—those facilities that are currently underutilised to see whether their utilisation opportunity is able to be maximised, or indeed if there are new opportunities that can be provided to share those facilities with non-government providers in the best interests of the people of South Australia.

The bill is worthy of the house's support. The opposition will support it and I look forward to further debate and the committee stage in due course.

Ms CLANCY (Elder) (17:27): I rise today in support of the TAFE SA Bill, which seeks to repeal and replace the TAFE SA Act 2012. This bill seeks to place TAFE SA back where it belongs: firmly in the community's interests. Since 2012, TAFE SA has operated as a statutory corporation under the Public Corporations Act 1993 at the direction of an independent board of directors.

TAFE SA is a public provider. It should be transparent, directly accountable to the public and given every opportunity to be the strong public training provider that South Australians deserve and need. This bill does exactly that, transitioning TAFE SA to a statutory authority, aligning it with other important state institutions. Similar to the Adelaide University Act 2023 and the South Australian Skills Act 2008, the bill before us today provides new objectives that reflect our contemporary and aspirational values for the vocational education and training sector.

South Australians rightfully expect a TAFE SA that functions unequivocally in their best interests, delivering high-quality, industry-leading education and training. No matter where they live, South Australians should have equitable access to the relevant and transferable skills that vocational education provides, and then have the opportunity and qualifications to give back to their communities.

In my community we have the incredible Tonsley TAFE, a place where I have always been very welcomed. I am so grateful to all the staff who have facilitated my visits there. It is incredible to meet with the people who are learning there as well as the people who are teaching them. It is an amazing place where you can basically see, before they put the concrete down, before they do the slab, all the sections that have been taken out of the soil—the place inside—so that people who are learning plumbing can actually learn how to do the plumbing before a foundation goes down.

There is also a section where you get up high and you can do some roofing. There is a lot of space for electrical work, refrigeration. There are some beautiful bricklaying examples, some fantastic painting. There is so much there. In construction, you can see people putting together frames of homes inside these facilities. It is really incredible.

After more than a decade of conservative government in the federal parliament, South Australia is not alone in facing a skills crisis. Across industries from defence to health, construction to early education, we need more skilled workers. This issue is most apparent in addressing the housing crisis, where, after years of gutting vocational and skills education, some of those on the conservative side of politics are now stoking fear and blaming housing accessibility and affordability on immigration. This is unproductive at its best and blatantly racist and offensive at its worst.

On this side of the house, we are focused on getting on with the job, providing South Australians with the skills they require to complete the work our community so desperately needs. We know that supply is the issue. To build more homes, we need more tradies. We need more carpenters, more bricklayers, more plumbers and more electricians.

By strengthening TAFE SA to train these workers, we are giving our state the best chance to meet this urgent challenge. Whether it is training workers for the Torrens of Darlington (South Road upgrade) project that runs through the guts of my electorate or for the new Women's and Children's Hospital, South Australians are relying on TAFE SA to provide the pipeline of workers to deliver these generational projects. But it is not just major projects. TAFE SA plays a critical role in training nurses, aged-care workers, childcare workers, disability care workers and a critical role in agriculture, clean energy and our sovereign capability, just to name a few things.

I am particularly proud that the Malinauskas Labor government is delivering on our commitment to build five new technical colleges across metropolitan Adelaide as well as regional South Australia. This is particularly exciting for my community, as construction is now complete and enrolments are open for students to begin their studies at the new Tonsley Technical College next year.

Just last sitting week, my office was contacted by Ewa, who had read in one of my previous community newsletters that we are opening the Tonsley Technical College and thought this might be of interest to her 15-year-old son. Guess what? He is now enrolled to begin to start at Tonsley Technical College next year, which is really exciting. This is an absolute game changer for my community and the broader southern suburbs of Adelaide, providing new pathways for young people to pursue trades, apprenticeships and technical careers. By establishing the Tonsley Technical College, we are not just building new learning environments; we are building new opportunities—new opportunities for more South Australians to learn hands-on skills, ensuring they can step straight into secure, well-paid jobs.

Another game changer for my community has been our delivery of fee-free TAFE in collaboration with the Albanese Labor government, which has already seen as many as 700 students in my community alone enrol in fee-free tuition over the past three years.

This bill also ensures strong government oversight for TAFE SA. It retains ministerial directions power and includes a new ministerial statement of priorities, which must be reflected in the new annual business plan and requires an annual report to be tabled in parliament. By providing

strong government oversight, we can ensure that TAFE SA is at the centre of public interest, delivering on our government's priorities in a manner that is responsive, accountable and transparent.

In closing, I would like to thank our Minister for Education, Training and Skills and everyone in his team for all of their work in bringing this bill before us today and their ongoing commitment and dedication to transforming vocational education in our state. Today and every day, the Malinauskas Labor government is delivering on our commitments we made to South Australians, like building the Tonsley Technical College, to ensure we have the skilled workforce we need to build the houses, staff the hospitals and deliver the projects that will shape South Australia for decades to come. I commend this bill to the house.

Ms HUTCHESSON (Waite) (17:34): I rise today in support of the TAFE SA Bill 2025, a bill that is not just legislation but a statement about the transformative power of vocational education in South Australia. I speak today not just as a member of parliament but as someone whose life and the life of my family has been shaped by TAFE.

I first attended TAFE through the Certificate II in Community Services at Panorama TAFE, and it really ignited my passion to get into cooking and also to think about how I can help others. It was after I got a job working at the local Belair Bhavan, the first Indian restaurant up the hill, from what I remember. As a waitress, looking after people was something that I thoroughly enjoyed, but one day they hired a chef called Steve and he was this new-fashion chef and he brought in all these fantastic ideas about things, including making little jammy love hearts in the custard, which I thought was just absolutely sensational, and so I asked him how to do it and from then on continued to ask him how I could get involved with cooking, because I figured that this was going to be my direction.

The Certificate II in Community Services was a way to get a foot in the door of cooking, because to get an apprenticeship you either needed to be indentured to an employer, or you did the certificate III all in one hit. Unfortunately I could not afford to do that, so I decided to do the Certificate II in Community Services, and that was cooking for childcare centres, hospitals and that kind of thing. Whilst we were not putting out Michelin star food, we were learning the basics.

It was so wonderful. We had some incredible lecturers who were really supportive of us. During that time I went and did work experience at our local Kalyra nursing home, where I learned from the chefs and the cooks there about what a really busy kitchen looks like, especially around mealtime, but it did not quell my interest in becoming a chef and I continued to look at ways in which I could do that.

An opportunity came up in the newspaper to apply to become an apprentice chef. I had two job offers, actually, and one was at Sizzler. It was when they were first looking at putting in head chefs and chefs rather than just cooks. I applied for that and then I also applied for a job at the Botanic Cafe on East Terrace, which was this fantastic, new, very flash restaurant straight out of Melbourne and was being run by these two chaps who had come over from Melbourne.

My parents suggested I went with Sizzler because it was a well-known company, but I decided to go with the Botanic Cafe and the two men from Melbourne because it looked like it would be a lot more fun than going to Sizzler. Thankfully I did, because Sizzler shortly afterwards, unfortunately, closed its doors, which was a shame. I think we all miss especially the cheese bread drastically.

The path of becoming an apprentice really threw the doors open to me and I worked as an apprentice for all of about three months before the head chef left, which thrust me into being head chef. So I went from apprentice to head chef in three months and for quite a long time ran the kitchen there and did not have a lot of time to get into TAFE for trade school, but finally the owners decided they had better employ a chef and I was able to get along to Regency hotel school.

It was such an amazing opportunity to go and learn from other chefs and also to meet other chefs in the industry. What I noticed is that chefs are really passionate, not only about their craft but about having a good time, and we learned a lot through that process.

I was about two years in when I moved to Melbourne and moved from Regency hotel school to William Angliss hotel school over in Melbourne. That was another interesting opportunity because I was no longer working in a fast-paced cafe. I was working at the Kelvin Club, which is not too

dissimilar to the Adelaide Club here and so it was a lot of traditional food. The TAFE training at both of these establishments was fantastic and I cannot stress enough how much it really opened up some doors for me in that space.

Within a couple of months, like I said, I became a chef and then I was able to have apprentices of my own and put them through TAFE as well. It was an incredible opportunity not only to give them what I had learned but then to hear what they were learning, which was newer and moving fast at that time. The lecturers who are at TAFE are chefs themselves, and they are really inspired to make sure that we turn out some fantastic new young people into our hospitality industry.

From there, I had the privilege of working as head chef at some of Adelaide's favourite places, including the Austral hotel, the Stanley Bridge Tavern and Jimmies in Crafers. TAFE did not just teach me skills; it opened the doors to a career and a life that I could never have imagined. I met so many people, including my partner, through hospitality. I did not think I would have headed into hospitality when I was studying science, but it is a different type of science, so it is not surprising.

My son also has followed me through the TAFE journey. He has completed a certificate II in construction down at Tonsley. It took us a little while. He put his name down to do horticulture for a little while, but unfortunately COVID got in the way of that, and then cabinet making, which again COVID put paid to. He put his hand up to do a certificate II in construction. He finished that course. It came out that his TAFE lecturer referred him as one of his best students, and he got a job straightaway out of that course.

I think that is the thing with TAFE: there are so many opportunities for roles, especially within carpentry but across lots of industries, to be able to move straight into employment. After doing his cert II, he has gone on to do a cert III, or a full apprenticeship, with his employer. The cert II that he did has given him recognition of prior learning, so he got credited for his whole first year of being at trade school. That allowed him to move on and move upwards. He is now in his final year, well on his way to becoming a fully qualified carpenter. Seeing him thrive after going through TAFE and after having that backing has really showed me the power of what TAFE can do for people.

I have also known people in our community, whether they are cleaners or support workers or even older students, who have taken up our fee-free TAFE courses. A cleaner that I know in particular took on aged-care training, and now he is well on his way to be able to work within that industry. That is a life-changing move for him. TAFE does that for people. It can take you from where you are, give you the skills you need and allow you to get into employment really quickly.

This bill is about more than just these individual stories. It is about ensuring TAFE provides a topnotch learning environment for everyone that puts excellence first. The bill repeals and replaces the outdated TAFE SA Act 2012, which no longer sets a vision for what TAFE should be. The 2012 act lists functions like even providing internet services, which is probably something that is a bit of a given these days. It does not really reflect the modern purpose of TAFE as a public provider delivering skills, training and opportunity in the public interest.

The Roadmap for the Future of TAFE SA, led by Associate Professor Jeannie Rea in 2023, recommended reform to reposition TAFE. This bill implements those recommendations. Under this new act, TAFE SA will transition from a statutory corporation to a statutory authority with updated functions, governance and management structures. It will be clearly required to focus on excellence, demonstrate integrity and deliver in the public interest, with accountability to students, staff and the broader community.

The board and the chief executive will have defined responsibilities, whilst ministerial oversight remains strong, including ministerial directions, a statement of priorities and parliamentary reporting. The bill also reflects contemporary values for the vocational education and training sector, ensuring that TAFE SA delivers industry-relevant training aligned with our government's priorities and that it provides equitable access to all eligible South Australians.

I think that is one thing around TAFE, that you have the opportunity to go to TAFE whenever you want to. If you find a subject or course that you want to do, you do not have to have a year 12 certificate, you do not have to come from university. You can put your hand up, you can do recognition of prior learning. They can get you to do an adult entry test, and you have the opportunity

to go a long way with your TAFE course. The bill also supports innovation, quality teaching and lifelong learning, engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and continues to provide critical training in regional and remote areas.

TAFE SA is at the heart of our state's response to the skills crisis, delivering vocational education and training that supports major projects, from our Hunter class frigates and AUKUS submarines to the new Women's and Children's Hospital, new preschools and the thousands of new homes that we need to build in South Australia.

I can tell you that my son is a busy guy. They are constantly out on site and, whether they are building brand-new houses or whether they are renovating old houses, they are never short of work. I think that is really positive for a lot of young people coming through who are considering doing carpentry—there is definitely going to be a job for you. This legislation ensures that TAFE SA continues to meet these needs while maintaining equitable access, especially for regional, remote and disadvantaged students.

I am especially excited about the connection of these TAFEs and our new technical colleges. The tech colleges offer young people a unique combination of education, apprenticeship and career pathways, whether that is in construction, advanced technology or motor mechanics. These are the things that are available down at Tonsley right near my community. For us, this is a game-changing opportunity. It allows students to gain these real-world skills and enter industries that are vital to the future of our state.

I recently went to the open day of the new Tonsley Technical College and, wow, as someone who is not a builder or a motor mechanic, I was blown away with the toys they have there and the opportunity for students to go there and learn. I think if my son had had that opportunity when he was at high school, or many kids who really want to get their hands dirty really early on—it is a huge opportunity to get in, start their apprenticeships early and start that journey on their way to their new careers.

The fact that we have teamed up with employers to make sure that every student who comes out of these technical colleges has the opportunity to get a job is just fantastic. It allows us to make sure that we have the skills of the future that we need. My story, my son's story and the stories of countless others in our community demonstrate what TAFE can do. It changes lives. It opens doors. Now, through this bill, TAFE SA will have a modern, fit-for-purpose legislative framework that ensures that it can deliver these life-changing outcomes in the public interest and is aligned with the priorities of our South Australian government. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms WORTLEY (Torrens) (17:46): I rise to speak on the TAFE SA Bill 2025 and, in doing so, put on the record my support for TAFE SA and the thousands of dedicated staff who, over the years, have delivered exceptional training across the state—the teachers, lecturers and skill trainers who provide opportunities for young school leavers as well as career changes for many who have found themselves out of a job, often due to technology, closure or a decrease in demand.

For thousands of people each year, TAFE SA provides a wealth of opportunities in the areas of aerospace; maritime and logistics; agriculture, animals, science and environment; automotive; building and construction; business and finance; creative industries; defence; education and community services; engineering and mining; English languages and foundation studies; health, beauty and fitness; hospitality, tourism and events; and information technology, library and digital.

Studying and/or training at TAFE SA is a win-win situation. It is a win-win situation for individuals and for South Australia as a whole, playing a significant role in the provision of a skilled workforce at a time when our state and, in fact, our nation is facing a skills crisis across so many areas, including construction, health and early childhood education.

The legislation before us today, introduced by the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, is our government's response to the recommendation of Associate Professor Jeannie Rea in the report for the 2023 Roadmap for the Future of TAFE SA. To deliver the road map, I am advised there was significant engagement with industry, unions, government, and TAFE SA staff and students, giving consideration to changes required to support TAFE SA delivering the skills needed for our

state. It included that the TAFE SA Act 2012 be reformed, with these reforms reflected in governance, management structure and functions.

The bill itself will transition TAFE SA from a public corporation to a statutory authority, with a clear explanation of the responsibilities of the chief executive officer and the TAFE SA board. Importantly, this bill ensures TAFE SA's focus is on excellence and now also delivering in the public interest. In this bill, government oversight remains strong. It retains ministerial directions power and a board with strong oversight. It includes a new ministerial statement of priorities to be reflected in the new annual business plan. The minister maintains approval of the CE, and both the minister and Treasurer's reps will continue to attend meetings and have access to papers. There is a requirement that the annual report be tabled in parliament.

Delivery of high-quality, responsive and industry-relevant education and training that responds to the needs of employers and aligns with the strategic priorities of the South Australian government is a requirement, as is equitable access to education and training for all eligible South Australians, assisting them to build the skills needed to contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of their communities, and performing as an efficient, transparent, innovative and accountable public institution underpinned by strong governance, effective leadership and a commitment to public interest in educational excellence.

Further under the bill, TAFE SA is required to focus on excellence and to demonstrate integrity. It is to demonstrate quality and innovation in teaching, including through the application of leading and contemporary industry practices. It is to enable pathways to further learning or training in VET or at university and promote lifelong learning, engage with the broader VET sector, provide appropriate student support services and be responsive to the diversity of needs of students. It is to focus on the impact and success of its services on students, staff and the communities that TAFE SA serves.

TAFE SA must also engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide appropriate education and training to meet not only the needs of our state in a broader context but also the needs of their communities. It is to provide inclusive and culturally safe services on all TAFE SA campuses. It ensures our continued focus on delivering training in regional and remote areas and equitable access to education and training for all eligible South Australians.

TAFE SA will also continue to perform its commercial functions. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to attend many of our TAFEs in my capacity as a member and in my teaching days. Many people tell stories of TAFE in days gone by. A lot of lecturers today will also speak about things that they believe need to happen and it is great that the bill before us today is going to address these. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr Odenwalder.

NORTHERN PARKLANDS BILL

Final Stages

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

No. 1. Clause 15, page 12, line 24 [clause 15(10)]—Delete 'The House of Assembly' and substitute 'Either House of Parliament'

No. 2. Clause 15, page 12, lines 29 to 32 [clause 15(11)]—Delete subclause (11) and substitute:

- (11) If, at the expiration of 6 sitting days, neither House of Parliament has made a resolution under subsection (10), it will be conclusively presumed that there is no objection to the prescribed levy proposal and that there are no suggested amendments to it (and in this case the prescribed levy proposal may proceed).

No. 3. Clause 15, page 12, line 36 [clause 15(12)(b)]—Delete 'House of Assembly' and substitute 'House of Parliament that suggested the amendment'

No. 4. Clause 15, page 12, line 37 [clause 15(12)(b)]—Delete 'the House of Assembly' and substitute 'that House of Parliament'

No. 5. Clause 15, page 12, line 42 [clause 15(13)]—Delete 'the House of Assembly' and substitute 'either House of Parliament'

At 17:54 the house adjourned until Wednesday 15 October 2025 at 10:30.

*Answers to Questions***KURLANA TAPA YOUTH JUSTICE CENTRE**

20 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4 May 2023). How many of the children and young people currently in the Kurlana Tapa Youth Justice Centre are under the guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

In May 2023, 11 young people under the guardianship of the chief executive were in Kurlana Tapa Youth Justice Centre.

CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

118 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). What is the detail of expenditure for the \$5.4 million being budgeted for leasehold, ICT equipment and furniture in the Department for Child Protection's 2023-24 budget?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

As part of the Department for Child Protection's office refurbishment program a budget of \$5.4 million was allocated, however, this was revised down to \$1.4 million. The revised amount was for multiple projects to ensure appropriate standards of suitability and value for money.

CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

119 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). How many of the additional 10 Principal Aboriginal Consultant roles, announced on 16 November 2022, have now been filled; and what, if any, has been the cause of delay in filling these roles?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries): I have been advised of the following:

All 10 positions were filled by the end of 2023.

CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT STAFFING

120 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). What was the staff turnover rate as a percentage within the Department for Child Protection for financial year 2022-23?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

Since forming government, we have increased our budgeted FTE by 254.8 FTE. Since forming government, the staff turnover rate has continued to reduce.

The government has continued to promote workforce development through a range of initiatives including the establishment of the Learning Excellence and Innovation Academy, Aboriginal Workforce Action Plan and the Child Protection and Family Support Sector Workforce Strategy.

CHILDREN IN CARE

121 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). Are there plans for any new residential care facilities to be established in the 2023-24 financial year, and if so, how many children will they cater for?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

Since forming government, we have been committed, through a number of programs, to building capacity within the department to better respond to the needs of children and young people in contact with the system.

These programs have led to a decrease in the number of children and young people in residential care. In the last financial year, the number of children and young people in residential care decreased by 4 per cent.

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCES

122 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). Which service provider/s will receive funding to undertake family group conferencing?

1. How many children do they cater for; and have any old facilities been replaced?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

Family Group Conferencing services are delivered by Relationships Australia South Australia (RASA) and Aboriginal Family Support Services (AFSS).

CHILD PROTECTION CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

123 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). What is the latest figure on how many child abuse notification cases are being classified as what was previously called Closed No Action (now called Not Proceeding)?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

In 2018-19, 43.6 per cent of screened-in notifications were Not Proceeding.

This has decreased to 7.1 per cent as at 31 July 2025.

DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

124 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). In relation to the evaluation of initiatives funded under the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-23:

- (a) What is the full list of initiatives funded under this partnership agreement?
- (b) Can the Minister advise the status of this evaluation?
- (c) Will it be made public?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

32 initiatives have been funded under the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-23. Initiatives include:

- Safe at Home Program
- Safe and Secure Housing Program
- Specialist sexual assault, forensic and counselling service
- REACH
- Women's Safety Contact Program
- Regional Women's Safety Contact Program
- KIND program
- Young Men and Young Fathers
- Safe and Well Kids
- Personal Protection App
- Kumangka
- EASE

I am also advised that under the agreement, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) received funding to evaluate particular initiatives. The status of this evaluation remains ongoing as of August 2025. Findings from the evaluation may be publicly released.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS LINE

125 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). In relation to the 24/7 Domestic Violence Crisis Line operated by Women's Safety Services SA:

- (a) Can you provide an update on the performance of this hotline?
- (b) How many calls are being answered?
- (c) What are the wait times?
- (d) What are the unanswered call rates?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

The Domestic Violence Crisis Line (DVCL) has seen an increase in demand post the commencement of the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSVM).

Between 1 January 2025 and 30 April 2025, the DVCL received 12,719 calls. On average, this is 3,180 calls per month. The DVCL's data reporting does not include wait times.

The state government has provided \$880,000 in additional funding to increase staffing levels and enhance capacity of the DVCL.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION SERVICE

126 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). What are the current staffing levels for the Women's Information Service (WIS)?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised of the following:

As at 14 August 2025, the Women's Information Service includes 6.1 budgeted FTE and is currently providing support and oversight of 119 volunteers statewide.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION SERVICE

127 Mr TEAGUE (Heysen—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (30 August 2023). Why was the number of client contacts for the Women's Information Service in the estimated result for 2022-23 below projection?

The Hon. K.A. HILDYARD (Reynell—Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Minister for Women): I have been advised:

The projected number of client contacts in 2022-23 for the Women's Information Service (WIS) is an estimate.

REGIONAL TOURISM

In reply to **Ms PRATT (Frome)** (20 August 2025).

The Hon. Z.L. BETTISON (Ramsay—Minister for Tourism, Minister for Multicultural Affairs): I have been advised of the following:

The South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) is aware that several regional tourism managers have resigned in recent months, and new appointments have been made or are in the process of being made.

Regional tourism organisations are not run by the state government, and it is recommended that the member for Frome make enquiries with those organisations for further information.

Estimates Replies

BETTER BOATING FACILITIES FUND

In reply to **Mr ELLIS (Narungga)** (20 June 2025). (Estimates Committee A)

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens—Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Mining): I have been advised of the following

Approximately, \$3.9 million is collected annually from the facilities levy into the Better Boating Facilities Fund and on average \$3.2 million is spent annually from the fund.