

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 5 April 2012

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. R.K. Sneath)** took the chair at 11:04 and read prayers.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (11:04): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable petitions, the tabling of papers and question time to be taken into consideration at 2:15pm.

Motion carried.

SUMMARY OFFENCES (WEAPONS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (11:04): By leave, I move:

That the sitting of the Legislative Council be not suspended during the continuation of the conference with the House of Assembly on the bill.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (11:05): By leave, I move:

That the sitting of the Legislative Council be not suspended during the conference with the House of Assembly on the bill.

WATER INDUSTRY BILL

Consideration in committee of the House of Assembly's message.

(Continued from 3 April 2012.)

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I move:

That the council does not insist on its amendment No.12 and agrees to the alternative amendment made by the House of Assembly.

The government filed this amendment to clause 96A. The government believes that any assessment of metering and any decision on how to proceed must take place within an explicit cost benefit framework. Under the government's proposal, there would still be a report by ESCOSA published by 30 June 2013, but there will be more explicit emphasis on a cost benefit analysis. The report would assess the costs and benefits of installing meters in the cases outlined in the Hon. Mr Brokenshire's original subclauses (1)(a) to (d), but it would also assess any other case that ESCOSA determines to include in the analysis.

In line with the Hon. Mr Brokenshire's original subclauses, the report will also have specific regard to the costs and benefits of installing meters in new properties or developments, as well as the costs and benefits of retrofitting existing properties. It is the government's view that the proposed clause 96A is consistent with the spirit of what was proposed by the Hon. Mr Brokenshire but it does not in any way seek to pre-empt or suggest an outcome.

The CHAIR: The Hon. Mr Ridgway.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Hon. G.E. Gago: Take your time.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Thank you, minister, I will take my time.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Some of us are actually energetic and want to get on with it.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I won't even be drawn into that interjection about being energetic and wanting to get on with it, given the number of times you are not here, Hon. Mr Brokenshire. The opposition is happy to support the government's position. I will speak

briefly on the issues we are dealing with. I think we all saw the merit in what the Hon. Mr Brokenshire was proposing in his original amendment, but we are uncertain of the cost. From what has been agreed in the House of Assembly, I think it is a sensible compromise position on Housing Trust properties. I suspect that at some point in the future, if new properties can be individually metered, maybe there is an opportunity, ultimately, for that to happen.

The other point I am delighted about in relation to this package that has come back from the House of Assembly, is an election commitment that was made when Rob Kerin was leader of the Liberal Party at the 2006 election and then again at the 2010 election, that we would relieve people who receive SA Water but not water from the Murray from paying the River Murray levy. That was something the Liberal Party firmly believed was inequitable: people in Mount Gambier, Kangaroo Island, the Far North of the state, and the like, paying a levy to preserve a resource they did not have any impact upon.

We thought that was inequitable and we are very pleased that finally we have been able to achieve a very small part of our election commitment of the past two elections, even though we are in opposition. We are delighted the government has seen the folly of its ways and has come to a compromise position where those people will not be charged the River Murray levy. I would expect that, if our party machine is working properly, those people will have received letters by now informing them of the great work the Liberal Party has done to relieve them of that burden.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: In speaking to the consideration of the amendments from our house to the other house, there are three things that Family First would say. Firstly, before getting on to the clause 96A, we were pleased to see that the government and all members in the lower house did adopt the SACOSS recommendations that were moved by the Hon. Mark Parnell and supported by, I think, everybody here in the upper house without exception. I think that is a good social outcome for those people and I put that on the public record.

With respect to the River Murray water levy, our amendment pushing the abolition of that did not get up, but it did stimulate deliberation with respect to what the honourable Leader of the Opposition has just said. So there is a win for some, but we will not apologise for continuing to put pressure on the government and the opposition as they come towards an election about where they are going to make a difference with what is hurting the South Australian community immensely and that is, levies, taxes, charges, imposts, cost recoveries and being the highest taxed, the highest levied and the highest charged state in Australia.

Something has to give. I look forward to policy initiative and how the opposition is going to actually deliver better outcomes towards the next election. I also look forward to how the government is going to start to address the massive deficit that is ballooning out without further hitting hip pockets or front-line services. I do not make any apology for continuing to move to get rid of some of these levies and imposts.

Thirdly and finally, coming to the amendment, we have made some ground with this. I would have liked to have seen the opposition hang with all those who were an absolute majority in this council to say that the time has come when something does have to be done about water meters. Having said that, I thank all members for their contributions and I thank the opposition for at least pushing this amendment on the government. I congratulate the government also for looking at this amendment, because this does at least achieve that, by the middle of next year, for once we will know what the costs, implications and ramifications are with respect to water meters and the total unfairness with all of that with respect to the public housing sector at the moment.

The challenge will then be to chart a way forward to address it. I finish with this point. Back in 2008, lots of colleagues in this house and many people in the South Australian community, through petitions that were tabled in this house last year, expressed concern about the lack of will to address the inequities with water meters in public housing. In 2008 the then minister responsible (now the Premier) said on the public record that he would fix this problem; and here we are today, four years later, with the problem unfixed. We do have a situation where we have moved slightly forward and for that I commend the amendment that we will be supporting. Rest assured, opposition, and government in particular, hopefully a number of us on the crossbenches will continue our fight to get something sorted out that is equitable for water meters in public housing properties.

The Hon. M. PARNELL: When this amendment first came up, the Greens supported it, and we did so with the caveat, or the rider if you like, that we could see that it would potentially create some problems, but we wanted to keep the door open for discussions with government to

make sure that, wherever possible, people who are on shared water meters could transition to having their own meters.

When I say we supported the amendment with caveats, basically the process of this place is that we can buy time—and it has only been a matter of days, so it has not been greatly inconvenient to anyone—to find out exactly what is going on. I appreciate the two meetings that minister Hunter has provided to me, where he has explained what the cost implications would be of having an absolute position where all these old single-meter properties would need to be converted to each dwelling having its own separate meter; it would be a considerable cost.

Having said that, I think the opposition could perhaps have held out a little bit longer in order for us to find out exactly whether all the low-hanging fruit has been picked. I can appreciate that there are some properties where it may simply be beyond the question of putting meters in (where you would have to demolish half a block of flats in order to install them); we do not want to force the government to do silly things like that. However, I am not yet convinced that there are not some properties that could still be fixed up.

In coming to the conclusion that we have on these amendments, I appreciated the discussions that I have had with representatives of Shelter SA, SACOSS and the Public Housing Tenants Association. I also had a long conversation with one of the private water meter providers, someone who makes a living from retrofitting these multiple dwelling properties with private in-line meters.

Based on what we have before us now, it seems clear that the Legislative Council is not going to insist on an amendment that requires the government to retrofit all these properties, but we will have some more information before us in a year or so, and I am hopeful that that information will identify whether there is some more low-hanging fruit. I think people do rail against the injustice of being sent a bill for a commodity where no-one can show exactly how much of that commodity they have used. Certainly none of us would accept a shared telephone bill. Just imagine it: have you made as many calls as your next-door neighbour? Splitting the bill equally just would not work for most people.

I appreciate that the government has, as a way of trying to redress the inherent unfairness of the situation, provided a 30 per cent discount to public housing tenants but, on my calculations, there are still some scenarios where there are some people who are paying more than they need to. Clearly, the majority of people getting a discount—so, by definition, the majority—would be saving, but there are still some people who are paying more than they have to.

It is a combination of factors, not the least of which is that the first tier in an inclining block tariff system, that first tier of cheap water, is actually spread over all of the people who occupy the property. All 20 units, if you like, in a block of flats share that first tier; if they were separately metered they would each get their own tier. The 30 per cent compensates for that in a lot of cases but not in all cases.

The Greens accept that the committee is not going to insist on this amendment. I look forward to seeing the report that comes back. I urge the government to see if there is more low-hanging fruit and if there is an opportunity to allow people to take more responsibility for their own use of water—and that includes responsibility to conserve and save water but also the responsibility to pay for exactly what you have used—and I look forward to that debate again in a year or so.

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON: I also am quite disappointed that we have not pursued this particular matter a little harder. I commend the Hon. Robert Brokenshire for the amendment that he put forward because I have also been contacted by many people from out north who are on shared water meters. I know now that there is technology, as the Hon. Mark Parnell mentioned, that allows for in-line metering which means that we do not have to rip up footpaths and driveways and all that sort of stuff in order to install meters for the majority, as a matter of fact, of the people who are on shared meters. I, too, have spoken to a person who is involved in that business and it would not be as much of a cost impost to have that done as the government would like people to believe.

I hope that in the cost-benefit analysis that we are talking about that if that technology or those methods are not included in that report, that they now will be and we can actually compare the difference between in-line metering and ripping up footpaths and driveways and whatever else to install the pipes and whatever for those meters. I think we would find that, overall, it would work out to be quite an efficient way to do it and quite cost-effective. I hope the government does not do what it normally does and take a one-eyed view of this, that it will just use the old technology of

installing individual meters and then cry that it will cost millions and millions of dollars and is not worth doing, is not cost-effective enough, and will be a cost impost on the people who are having those meters installed. I do believe there is a cheaper way and I would like to see that reflected in the report if possible.

The Hon. K.L. VINCENT: Very briefly, I would like to put on the record that I originally supported this amendment. I think we all understand why it is important to the people who are calling for this; I think people do want to feel they are in control of their water bills and that they are paying for what they use. However, I do understand that at the moment the working shows that the cost of installing individual meters would override the benefit of people paying for their individual use.

Like the Hon. Mr Parnell, I do think there are options or compromises that we have not yet considered. I thank minister Hunter for the meetings he has had with the Hon. Mr Parnell and myself, and I look forward to having more of them to ensure that we are doing as much as we can to ensure as fair a compromise as possible is reached.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I would like to take this opportunity to thank the opposition and the crossbenchers for their willingness to engage with the government in a rational discussion about these issues. I would also like to thank the Liberal opposition for seeing the error of their ways in supporting the original amendment, and I am pleased to note that they will be putting out letters to their constituents advising of the great victory that the Liberals have achieved in this regard. I am only too pleased to say that I will not now be putting out letters advising those people in South Australia who would be impacted about who brought them this huge cost impost that we will not now be imposing on them.

Motion carried.

AQUACULTURE (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 15 March 2012.)

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (11:22): I rise to support the second reading of this bill on behalf of Family First. In doing so I acknowledge the significant work of my colleague, the Hon. Dennis Hood MLC, as chair of the Select Committee into Marine Parks, as well as other members of the select committee, which covered the use of our coastal waters and issues more so affecting recreational fishers than industrial fishermen per se. There are crossovers on the issue, but I am making the contribution today on this particular bill. If it is the minister's intention to go right through with this bill today, then I query whether or not the minister will write to us with answers to questions taken on notice.

As the Hon. John Dawkins MLC said, I want to acknowledge that it was the previous government that first created the Aquaculture Act, one of the only states in Australia, if not the world, with such legislation. I note the Caribbean countries and the Arab nation of Oman, for instance, are only just now catching on; there might be an opportunity to export our intellectual property there. However, the challenge that also arises is possible competition into the future.

Priorities in the government's speech were about a clean, green food industry. I have said to the minister responsible, minister Gail Gago, that we are pleased to see that, but it is important that we now deliver on that priority. It stands to reason that, with a growing world population, whilst our task on the land is to produce more food to feed that population, the Japanese have shown how society can live off a larger proportion of a fish diet. Basically, there is far more ocean than land from which aquaculture and wild catch can support the world's food needs into the future.

There are also issues that need to be addressed between the mining and the aquaculture and fishing industries, such as the Sheep Hill project at Port Spencer, up the gulf from Port Lincoln. On southern bluefin tuna, I am pleased to be told in the briefing that the quota is being improved after drastic cuts by the commission for conservation of southern bluefin tuna. We were very concerned about those cuts. We know those cuts had to be worn by Australia, and particularly South Australia, when other countries did not.

Back in October 2009, I was critical of both the state and federal governments for not doing more to address those cuts and the inequity there. I am pleased to congratulate the minister today, though, because I am told that the industry and the department have worked to show the

evidentiary reasons why the quota cut was unfair, and we are reportedly some way towards getting back to the quota we once had. Well done to the minister and the government on that occasion.

I put on the public record some questions for the minister. How low was the quota? I have been told that we fell back about 1,250 tonnes. Where is it now? Again I am told we are back up to about 600 tonnes or, to put it another way, up to 32 per cent over two years—roughly speaking, 16 per cent per annum. It is not as high as 25 per cent where it was, but the work continues to get us back up there. The other question is: what level is the government hoping to get it back to? Is it back to 1,250 or 25 per cent? If the minister is proceeding with this bill now, it would be appreciated if she could advise us in writing of that.

I am commending here not only the government but the industry and the CSIRO for their innovative research that is helping to develop new ways of tracking fish stock numbers. There are still a lot of issues that need to be addressed regarding the aquaculture industry and tuna on the Lower Eyre Peninsula. The 'adopt a beach' program that aquaculture companies have taken on is to be commended. I saw it reported a couple of weeks ago that, for the Lower Eyre Peninsula, the aquaculture companies commit to at least four cleanups annually of debris that can wash ashore from aquaculture ventures along 155 kilometres of coastline.

The more natural form of poaching, if you like, by fur seals is a controversial issue being explored in the context of the little penguin survival debate and the question of the fur seal recovery in the post sealing era. Seals are now having an impact that some are trying to quantify both in environmental terms and in dollar terms.

In relation to abalone, Victoria is currently reviewing its abalone wild catch quota. I wonder whether there is a review of that quota being looked at here or what has been done. Is the government looking to follow the Victorian model, and will this affect the abalone aquaculture industry as opposed to the recreational wild catch of abalone?

In relation to aquaculture in the River Murray and the Lower Lakes, we have been talking recently about the Murray-Darling Basin proposal and I ask the minister, given past reports of perch and yabbies, what aquaculture is currently operating in the lakes and the Murray generally, what economic value does it bring to the state economy and does the river's health relate to the success or otherwise of those ventures?

There was some activity around the change of government into inland aquaculture with estimates that the industry stood to grow to \$2.5 billion by 2010 with South Australia meant to yield \$1 billion of that. I believe that for some time the government has supported that initiative. I ask the minister again, when she has been able to do her research on this, to advise in writing what became of that. Is that still a prospect for the future and, if so, to what extent does a guarantee of a healthy river in the Murray-Darling Basin plan relate to that prospect?

In relation to marine parks and aquaculture zones, I have been told that the aquaculture areas are not by and large infringed upon by the marine parks, although the aquaculture zones do to an extent cross into habitat protection zones, so I ask the minister if that is correct and to advise the council where the proposed parks infringe into aquaculture zones or, in percentage terms, how much those infringements occur.

I have also been told that we are only utilising approximately 5 to 10 per cent of our aquaculture zones commercially at the moment. Is that correct, and what scope does the government believe there is for further aquaculture ventures in dollar terms in the future? Whilst we are talking about the ocean, I remind the minister that the minister did not agree to table the scientific data in answer to my question about shark behaviour in relation to cage diving.

I am keeping an eye on the Neptune Island Conservation Park and the shark diving issue because it is an important industry in which all operators, I believe, do care about the sharks. They have to, as it is their livelihood, and I hope the government can take a science-based approach where licensees are allowed to continue operating with restrictions that match the science, not a 3.4 per cent real-terms reduction.

If there is such a scientific concern, we do not know; we are not being shown the science. I ask the minister, as we talk about the fishing industry, the aquaculture industry and oceans and gulfs generally: is the government working between fisheries and tourism on this issue? In conclusion, we have had no negative representation on this Aquaculture (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill, so Family First will be supporting this bill as put to the chamber by the government.

The Hon. M. PARNELL (11:31): This bill is probably the most significant review of this legislation, certainly in the time that I have been in the parliament, and I think it is useful for members to reflect a little on how we have actually got to the stage where we are now. Back when I was working as an environmental advocate and an environmental lawyer, the regulation around aquaculture was poor, and that is putting it generously; it was, in fact, dreadful. As I have said in this place on a number of occasions, it was racked with conflict of interest, and the ability of agencies to properly regulate this emerging industry was, in my view, completely lacking.

The Liberal government, I think it might have been, of the time, of course has never acknowledged the central role played by the Conservation Council of South Australia in creating the environment for this act to be brought into effect. When I say 'creating the environment', the Conservation Council, to its credit, tried very hard in discussions with government to try to get better regulation but to no avail. It took a number of court cases where the courts have thrown out aquaculture approvals on the basis that they infringed various regulations and the Development Act itself and also infringed the proper principles of good government.

It was only as a result of a number of cases that the government saw that this industry was not going away. In fact, if anything, it was going to grow and therefore it needed to be properly regulated. The most fundamental reason why it needs to be properly regulated is that, apart from land-based aquaculture, which is in tanks, dams and ponds, the vast bulk of this industry is in the commons. This industry is conducted in water and over land that is not owned by the operators: it is owned by the people of South Australia and, therefore, it is incumbent on us to make sure we have a good regulatory regime in place.

I think my record in challenging aquaculture developments was 10-0 at one stage, before this act came into effect. Of course, the main impetus was the cases that the Conservation Council brought against the Louth Bay southern bluefin tuna feedlots. As is now well known—it is part of environmental law folklore—having succeeded in defeating those applications in the longest environmental trial in South Australia's history, the government waited approximately one week before changing the law by regulation to make sure that no-one ever again would have the right to challenge tuna feedlots in that area of Port Lincoln. It was an appalling response to what, I think, had been very reasonable action on the part of the Conservation Council.

We now have an Aquaculture Act and it has within it a number of very laudable and worthwhile principles. Principles of ecological sustainability are enshrined in the legislation and they are written into the various plans and policy documents that are part of this regime; whether or not those high and lofty principles are being implemented in practice is still a matter for some debate. Whilst I think the industry and its regulation has improved, I think there is still a lot more room for improvement.

The regime for sea aquaculture is one of licensing and leasing areas of the commons for what is effectively exclusive industrial activity, and that I think means that it is beholden to the decision-makers under this regime to make sure that the public interest is paramount. That public interest involves both the economic development of this state and also the environmental protection of this state. That is why I found it quite remarkable that the Hon. Robert Brokenshire talked just now about the idea of marine parks infringing on aquaculture areas when surely the starting point for any natural resource allocation decision would be: which areas do we need to conserve? And, having made that decision, which areas might then be available for sustainable economic use?

In my view, the government has got this completely the wrong way around. What we have had over the last several years is the government facilitating the industry's acquisition of more and more areas of the sea for their activities well ahead of the government's program of declaration of marine parks. Put crudely, the system that we have adopted here in South Australia is that the industry gets to choose the areas of the sea that it wants for its activities, and conservation will get what is left. I do not think it is overstating it to put it as bluntly as that.

In fact, we know that undertakings have been given by the government to the aquaculture industry that marine parks will not infringe on their activities. We still see, even today, that applications are being lodged for aquaculture development inside marine parks whilst we still have not worked out which parts of those marine parks should be in the no-take sanctuary zones.

In fact, I attended a hearing of the Development Assessment Commission just across the road last year where I made that point: that the Development Assessment Commission should not be approving new aquaculture ventures inside marine parks until the marine parks have been

settled. Whilst the outer boundaries might have been settled, we all know that that is not the main game. The main game is the zoning within those parks.

If the area where aquaculture was being proposed was going to be in a sanctuary zone, it is certainly not going to be now. What we have here is industry effectively dictating to government where the high conservation value areas should go.

I am still disappointed that the Aquaculture Act regime does not provide for sufficient public notification and appeal rights. In fact, when the system was established, it continued to rely on notification and appeal rights under the Development Act primarily. As I have said, through regulation, the government has wound back those rights so that members of the public—the owners of the resource—now have no right to be notified about aquaculture applications under the Development Act or to appeal against development approvals that people might believe are unsustainable.

I think that this system, whilst it does seek to enshrine some ecological sustainability principles, still misses the point that we are talking about the commons and we are talking about providing exclusive industrial access to the commons.

The Hon. Robert Brokenshire made mention of southern bluefin tuna and his delight in seeing the quota lifted, and I share his concern that the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna had a very difficult job in determining quotas when we know that almost every other nation out there was cheating. We know that the Japanese were cheating, we know that the South Koreans and others were cheating on their quota, and we also know that there were some fairly dodgy statistics being kept, even by our Australian operators.

The reason why this quota was put in place was not some arbitrary, capricious attempt by the world community to stand in the way of a valuable industry: it was that these fish—southern bluefin tuna—were, in fact, the only ocean-going fish on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources Red List of Critically Endangered Species.

The definition of 'critically endangered species' is 'in danger of going extinct in the wild in the immediate future'. That is a remarkable thing. We are talking about a species whose bio-mass has declined by some 90 to 95 per cent in the few short decades I have been on this planet. It has been absolutely devastated globally. So, an international convention to protect that species was crucial.

So, I do not share other members' delight that the quota has now been raised. I think there is still uncertainty in relation to the status of the species globally and, in fact, I will put a question on notice for the minister, if she can provide an answer: is southern bluefin tuna still regarded by the world conservation union (the IUCN) as critically endangered? Will the minister also answer the question: what other states and territories have listed southern bluefin tuna as an endangered species? We have certainly have not listed it here in South Australia, as we make too much money from it. That is the test of endangeredness in this state; if we make money from it you do not list it as endangered.

The industry has also had to respond, albeit quite slowly, to mounting community pressure about the pollution and the waste they cause along the South Australian coastline. I have certainly been contacted by people down on Lower Eyre Peninsula who are sick and tired of the plastic wrapping that comes around the frozen pilchard blocks that come in, the plastic strapping, the ropes, the nets and all the other plastic detritus that can clearly be sheeted home to the tuna feed lot operations and their feeding regime.

That rubbish washes up on the beaches. Yes, it is good that the industry has now adopted beaches and decided to go out there every so often and clean up some of their mess, but really what we are talking about here is an industry that is conducted out of sight—it is off-shore and out of sight, and rubbish going over the side for some operators is still the norm rather than the exception.

We also have a situation where the government has shown that it is completely reluctant to revisit previous aquaculture decisions, even though they have been shown to have been poor decisions. A classic example would be the abalone farm over by Elliston, which not once but twice has completely disintegrated in the common and predictable storms along that part of the coast. As a result of the disintegration we have had plastic pots, ropes and nets washing up on conservation parks and on islands and also implicated in the death of local wildlife. So, we still have a long way

to go in learning how to manage the commons for all uses—conservation as well as for commercial production.

I want to pose another question of the minister, and that relates to the use of this legislation for managing activities for which it was never intended. Members would be aware that there was some controversy down on Kangaroo Island where the operators of the Swim with the Tuna operation out of Port Lincoln wanted to move to Kangaroo Island.

The regulation of that activity is under the Aquaculture Act, yet when that act was written it was never with a view to someone having, effectively, a tourist operation with lower densities of fish and not growing those fish for commercial consumption, growing them in fact for tourist consumption.

My question of the minister is: how adequate is this regime, which is designed for the commercial production of fish using aquaculture methods, and how appropriate is this legislation for managing tourist operations in our offshore areas? With those brief remarks I look forward to the committee stage of this bill and look forward to the minister answering those questions I put on the record.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (11:44): I understand there are no further contributions, so I would like to thank honourable members for their second reading contributions and the support they have indicated for the bill. The bill is obviously a piece of legislation that attempts to provide very important enhancements to the act. It is about underpinning the sustainable development of the South Australian aquaculture industry. The enhancements are about ensuring the continued sustainability of the aquaculture industry in South Australia into the future.

Obviously, this is an industry that is very important, it makes a significant economic contribution, it makes a very important social contribution, particularly to regional communities, and has significant environmental implications as well. A number of questions were asked during the second reading stage and I would request the indulgence of the chamber to give me the opportunity to answer those during the committee stage. I commend the bill to members.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: There were a number of questions asked through the second reading stage, most of those I will have to take on notice and bring back a response, I do not have those details here at my fingertips at the moment but work is being done on those. There was a question about the adequacy of the legislation to facilitate tourism. I have been advised that, fundamentally, this bill is about managing the farming operations of aquaculture, it does not go to tourism. Quite clearly, there are obvious connections between a thriving aquaculture industry in an area and tourism opportunities to develop around that in terms of the enhancement of food and wine and other activities.

The Hon. M. PARNELL: I might, if the committee pleases, just pursue that a little bit more, because the minister has an adviser present. I agree with her that this legislation is about farming, yet when the proponents of the Swim with the Tuna Kangaroo Island came with their proposals, it was going to be assessed under the Aquaculture Act. They were going to have to get a lease and a licence under the Aquaculture Act. If the minister is agreeing that this is not necessarily the best regime for that activity, I guess my question is, what else do we have? How else can we regulate this sort of marine tourism that has as its basis some, if not a lot of captured fish, in pens or cages or however else held?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have in fact been advised that the answer I gave previously was not quite accurate. I have since been advised that farming for the purposes of tourism is captured by this act, as long as it is farming, and that where tourism is a trade or business the Aquaculture Act has specific referrals to the EPA Act, such as checking conditions for licence.

I am informed that the other matters that you addressed are dealt with in the definitions. One is in the act itself, where the definition of aquaculture is farming of aquatic organisms for the purposes of trade or business or research, but does not include an activity declared by regulation not to be aquaculture. In the current bill, farming of aquatic organisms means an organised rearing

process involving propagation or regular stocking or feeding of the organisms, or protection of organisms from predators, or other similar intervention in the organism's natural life cycles.

The Hon. M. PARNELL: I thank the minister for her answer and I think that her correction is right; that technically these activities are covered, which is why the Primary Industries website had the notification for the lease and the licence for this operation. I will not raise this as a question now, but I will just make the point that I think it is the wrong tool for what we are really talking about. The department, the agency, the system that is set up to regulate aquaculture for production purposes, I think is not suitable for managing the range of impacts for tourism operations, but I will leave it there.

I know the minister said that she was not able to answer some questions but I am sure that, with the advice she has, she will know the answer to one of the questions I raise which is about the most valuable aquaculture species in this state—southern bluefin tuna. Is the minister able to say whether southern bluefin tuna is still listed as critically endangered by the World Conservation Union, otherwise known as the IUCN?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I advised earlier, we do not have the answer to those questions. We are checking and, hopefully, we will be able to confirm that shortly.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I recognise that the minister does have some difficulty in answering questions that have been posed just today. However, in my second reading speech on 15 March I posed a couple of questions about licence lease fees and also the clean-up of discarded sites. I wonder whether the minister has responses to those questions.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Hon. John Dawkins did raise some issues in relation to concerns raised by recreational fishers about aquaculture waste. I direct the honourable member to the Agriculture Regulations 2005 made under this act. There is currently a duty for all aquaculture licensees to clean up their waste. These regulations will be the subject of separate consultation as part of the regulation review.

I also note that the state government, together with the local Port Lincoln aquaculture industry, has launched a new beach clean-up program aimed at minimising the impact of debris on the coastal environment. The Adopt a Beach program will see 155 kilometres of coastline in the lower Spencer Gulf divided into 13 sites, with local aquaculture companies adopting a stretch of beach and committing to undertaking a minimum of four beach clean-ups a year.

Aquaculture fees are also determined each year as part of the cost recovery process. Aquaculture fees are set with an activity-based approach or a user pays system, where industry sectors that utilise government services are responsible for recovering the costs of those services. The fees are made under regulation and, as such, are not part of the bill amendments.

In relation to the rehabilitation of unused aquaculture sites, the bill allows greater and more flexible arrangements for the minister to take action where aquaculture sites are unused. For example, the bill incorporates the power for the minister to cancel a lease where the site remains undeveloped. In addition, and as the honourable member alluded to, the bill clarifies that the Aquaculture Resource Management Fund can be used to hold and pay out moneys collected for lease rehabilitation.

While these amendments support a government-held rehabilitation fund they do not seek to mandate such a fund for all aquaculture sectors. Where the obligations of the minister under the act are fully catered for by the industry-held rehabilitation funds, there would be no reason to duplicate those efforts. I have been advised that the southern bluefin tuna is still categorised as being endangered.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I thank the minister for that. First, I would like to clarify the latter part of that answer: am I right in saying that, where a sector of the aquaculture industry has its own voluntary fund for clean-up of sites, the proposed fund coming into this bill will not duplicate that effort?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that that is so, if it meets a requirement under the lease for rehabilitation and if the minister is, in fact, satisfied that it does so.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I thank the minister and reiterate that I think some sectors of the industry have a very good track record at looking after their own, and they do have the expertise to clean it up better than almost anyone else in the sector. I did not clearly hear the start

of the minister's answer, and I apologise for that, but did the minister respond to my request in my second reading speech for some detail on the increase in licence lease fees?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the setting of the fees is in fact not part of this bill. It is not dealt with by this bill; it is in fact dealt with through a regulatory process that requires industry consultation. Obviously, in the past we have moved to a much more activity-based approach and, as part of that activity-based approach, to a cost-recovery approach. There is a lot of detail available and we are happy to make that information available to you.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS: I would be very grateful to have that detail provided to me. The basis of my question was some information that was provided to me. It was a little bit out of date, and I admit that, but I would be grateful if the officers could provide me with that in writing in the near future.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We are happy to do so.

The Hon. M. PARNELL: I mentioned, in my brief second reading contribution, the undertakings that the minister has apparently given to the aquaculture industry that marine parks and aquaculture operations will be able to coexist. Can the minister outline the nature of those undertakings, on whose behalf they were made and the effect of those undertakings?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am happy to take the question on notice to bring back a more detailed response, but I just want to take this opportunity to note that the zoning around marine parks has not yet been finalised. We continue to engage with the industry stakeholders, including aquaculture, to work through their issues and those discussions are ongoing.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 to 43 passed.

Clause 44.

The CHAIR: I have to point out to the committee that clause 44, being a money clause, is in erased type. Standing order 298 provides that no questions shall be put in committee upon any such clause. The message transmitting the bill to the House of Assembly is required to indicate that this clause is deemed necessary to the bill.

Remaining clauses (45 to 53), schedule and title passed.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (12:11): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME) BILL

In committee.

(Continued from 3 April 2012.)

Clause 1.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I would like to make the following comments at clause 1. During the Liberal opposition's consultation on the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill and the Statutes Amendment (Serious and Organised Crime) Bill, we heard from a range of stakeholders with interest in fighting crime and seeking justice across the state. There is broad support to strengthen laws to deal with serious and organised crime and the Liberal opposition strongly supports law enforcement authorities having the powers they need to deal with the challenge of serious and organised crime.

Having said that, we also think it is important that law enforcement agencies operate within a robust legal framework which protects justice and the rights of law-abiding South Australians. Some stakeholders also expressed concern about the significant departure from the rule of law, the presumption of innocence and freedom of association within the legislation and the concern about the constitutionality of the laws.

As an opposition, we appreciate these laws are important and deserve close scrutiny—scrutiny to ensure that the laws are effective, scrutiny to ensure that the laws do not unnecessarily

affect law-abiding South Australians—but we also acknowledge that this government has wasted so much time since the Supreme Court decision in Totani that it would compound the offence for the bills not to progress expeditiously. To facilitate the legislation, we have not put forward detailed amendments to highlight our detailed concerns.

On 2 April 2012 I wrote to the Attorney-General requesting that he consider amending the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2012 and the Statutes Amendment (Serious and Organised Crime) Bill 2012. In that letter I suggested a number of changes to the control bill, namely, to consider limiting the initial application of declarations to two years, with an option to extend it if necessary; to limit control orders to two years; and to limit the application of the association provisions to members of declared organisations or persons subject to control orders rather than anyone who had a previous conviction for a major indictable offence. These suggestions reflect provisions of similar interstate anti-association laws.

As a general point, the scope of these laws is enormous. Only a very small proportion of the laws are actually targeted or limited to serious and organised criminals. The Attorney-General declined to take up those suggestions and also rejected suggestions put forward for amendments to this bill. I will speak at more length on the amendments to the relevant clauses that we suggested to this bill. As I advised the Attorney-General, we will not be moving the suggested amendments that the government has declined to adopt, but we will be proceeding with one amendment that relates to a proposal to have a basic degree of oversight through a parliamentary committee.

I want to address that issue in more detail at the relevant stage. We believe that what we are asking is reasonable. It is important that, at the very least, we do what we can to ensure that these laws are robust, responsive and implemented responsibly. Just for the sake of clarity, minister, my contribution in committee will mainly be by way of comments highlighting issues with the bill and, in particular, quotes from the Law Society/Bar Association submission to the August 2011 package.

For the accuracy of the quotes, I have retained references in those quotes to draft bill clauses, so they may not relate to what is actually in our act. I am raising them in the context of the issues rather than by way of reference to the clause, but I hope I raise them in the right place. I also indicate to the minister that I will be making comments. I welcome any comments that she might have on the issues, but I do not expect a response to a quote or a comment unless I ask a specific question.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 to 8 passed.

Clause 9.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I want to make a comment on the clause before the amendment, if I may. This clause is the first of a number of clauses that I have identified as an opportunity to highlight the breadth of this legislation and the concerns about potential impacts on law-abiding citizens.

This clause sees the usual bail process as being wound back upon suspicion of involvement in a serious offence. For these provisions to be used, there need not be any link, suspected or otherwise, to organised crime. Indeed, any aggravated offence meets the criteria. We have repeatedly heard that this legislation is about tackling organised crime, but repeatedly we see examples where alleged criminals acting alone are included within the scope of the provisions.

In the Law Society/Bar Association joint submission on the government's consultation package dated 19 September 2011, the submission makes the following comments on the Bail Act amendments:

We repeat the concerns expressed above about the scope of the bill being too wide. The offences captured by the definition of 'serious and organised crime' and the individuals falling within the definition of 'serious and organised crime suspect' include relatively minor offences and do not necessarily involve an organisation as such.

We oppose classifications such as 'serious and organised crime suspect' and the consequences flowing from it. The present system of bail is sufficient to ensure that those charged with serious offences are either not granted bail or are so under strict conditions. The problem with classifying alleged offenders other than by reference to the facts of the case is that individuals will suffer a detriment, notably deprivation of liberty, because of the classifying label rather than the seriousness of the allegations and the relevant factors.

Of course these provisions will inevitably affect the falsely accused. The damage of this would be limited, of course, if the government was properly managing the courts system and if we did not have one of the highest remand rates in Australia. Delays in the courts are regrettable, and the falsely accused are also a victim of that. This anguish is exacerbated by problems in managing the courts in relation to victims, which means the punishment for offenders is less effective as it loses the immediate connection with the crime, and of course it means our prisons are more overcrowded.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I will keep my comments brief but put on the record that we disagree with the honourable member's view that the scope is too broad. It is scoped to capture serious offenders, and that surely has to be a good thing to be doing, and that is the aim of this act. Therefore, I move:

Page 8, line 34 [clause 9, inserted section 3A(2)(b)]—After 'Supreme Court' insert:

or the District Court

This amendment addresses a matter raised by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia and the Chief Judge of the District Court. In feedback provided subsequent to introduction of the bill in the lower house, the Chief Justice correctly noted that, because the term 'prescribed proceedings' could refer to proceedings in the Magistrates Court and the District Court, this means that in accordance with the amended section 275(3) a person who is a serious and organised crime suspect could have their trial expedited to be heard in either the District Court or the Supreme Court under section 275(3). Therefore, section 3A(2) needed to be amended to refer to both the Supreme Court and the District Court.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: We support the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 10 to 24 passed.

Clause 25.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: This clause highlights the very broad potential impact of this legislation. Aggravated penalties can be imposed under these provisions without any connection with organised crime. These provisions are general rather than targeted. The Law Society has highlighted issues in its submission as follows:

We express concern the newly created aggravated offences are not in fact an aggravated version of the basic offence. The definition of 'aggravated offence' included offending which does not relate to an organisation as such. The difference in maximum penalty between the basic and aggravated offence is substantial and cannot be justified for the many offences falling within the aggravated offence definition.

For example, the first limb of the definition makes an offence committed at the direction of or in association with as few as two people an aggravated offence. This is because a criminal group consisting of at least two people is captured by the definition of 'criminal organisation'. In other words, two people who get together for a criminal purpose within the meaning of section 83D (CLCA) are a criminal organisation and therefore liable to substantially greater penalties.

Later in the submission, the society states:

A person is taken to have committed an aggravated offence if he or she displays a tattoo or wears clothing identifying a criminal organisation. There may be no connection to the organisation whatsoever, however the offender will be taken to have committed the aggravated offence and be exposed to a much greater penalty unless the offender proves otherwise. Discharging the burden of proof may be difficult.

Further on, the society states:

The risk of miscarriage of justice is too great to so determine circumstances of aggravation. It is otherwise unfair for the accused to carry the burden of proving that he or she should not be found guilty of the greater offence.

By way of conclusion, I have indicated that the opposition made a number of suggested amendments to the Attorney-General and they were, if you like, the limited set that the opposition was wanting to suggest. The quotes of the Law Society are more to highlight the issues. We would not necessarily endorse its suggestions for amendments.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: For the record, the government disagrees with the honourable member, we believe the scope is not too broad. It targets aggravated offences. Section 43 provides that an offence is an aggravated offence if:

- (a) the offender committed the offence for the benefit of a criminal organisation...or at the direction of, or in association with, a criminal organisation; or

- (b) ...in connection with, the offence the offender identified himself or herself in some way as belonging to, or otherwise being associated with, a criminal organisation...

So, we believe that is scoped to capture those serious offences that we should be capturing and protecting the community from.

Clause passed.

Clause 26 passed.

Clause 27.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: Just briefly, it is interesting to note this provision because it is one of a series of the Attorney-General's proposals for what he himself calls 'get out of gaol free' cards. We have had lower sentences for pleading guilty, lower sentences for acting as an informant and now lower sentences for providing information within a prison. I seek to ask a question relating to proposed section 29E(5)(f). The Law Society recommended the deletion of the word 'violent'. The sentencing court, in the society's view, should take into account any retribution, it should not be limited to violent retribution. I ask the government: why did it prefer not to remove the limitation 'violent' considering that serious and organised crime groups are known to use a whole range of forms of retribution and a non-violent form of retribution may be just as persuasive on the particular victim.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that, if you look at section (5)(a) to (j), it states that in determining a new sentence the court must have regard to all of those things and may have regard to any other factor or principle the court thinks relevant. So, really, the court has the capacity to consider any and all relevant matters.

Clause passed.

Clause 28.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: This is a clause that highlights the formation of a group, if you like. The Law Society again expresses concern about the breadth of the legislation. In their submission it says:

The definition captures offences against part 3 of the act. Part 3B defines criminal organisation to include a criminal group which is a group of two or more people whose aim is to engage or facilitate the engagement of a serious offence of violence. This definition is too broad. The definition captures people who are not in reality part of an organisation, criminal or otherwise. It will apply to two people who agree to cause serious harm to someone or to cause serious damage to property involving the risk of harm to a person. We suggest the definition be substantially narrowed to capture serious and organised crime as it is generally understood by that term.

My understanding of the government's response is that it actually went the other way in that section 5(2)(b)(4) added the words 'in connection with'. My understanding of that is the effect of that is to broaden the incidences in which an offender may be deemed to have identified themselves with a criminal organisation. Essentially a person would not need to identify themselves in the course of committing the offence, but if they do so in connection with the offence, then the offence will qualify as a serious and organised crime offence under this section.

The breadth of the provision, too, I think is highlighted by the use of the word 'aim'. I presume that the effect of the word 'aim' at the beginning of proposed section 83D(1)(a) and 1(b) is basically an intention that offenders having formed the intention to commit an act would be guilty of the offence. I would also just highlight to the council the impact that being identified as a criminal group or a criminal organisation has. Under proposed section 83E, if a person participates in a criminal organisation they are—

The Hon. G.E. Gago: Which number are you referring to?

The Hon. S.G. WADE: In relation to the aim comment?

The Hon. G.E. Gago: Aim?

The Hon. S.G. WADE: Page 19 is the aim comment.

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. S.G. WADE: Sorry, in that sense that comment was probably more relevant to clause 30. Sorry about that. If I could make the comment here, it is a definition here which then relates to the offence which appears in clause 30. The comment I was making about 'aim' refers to page 19, clause 30, proposed section 83D. Under criminal group in (1)(a), 'an aim or activity of the

group', (1)(b) 'an aim or activity of the group' is how it starts. My understanding of that is that having formed the intention they have not actually committed a positive act.

The consequences of being identified as a group or an organisation are substantial, because participation in a criminal group or organisation in and of itself is liable to 15 years' imprisonment and, of course, if you commit an act in the context of a criminal organisation, offences become aggravated; an assault which might otherwise be a two-year offence, because it is conducted in the context of a criminal group, becomes a 20-year offence. We would suggest that the scope is potentially very broad, and that the impact of that broad scope is potentially very significant.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Just a question on that about something that did get my attention as well when I first became aware of this bill. I would just like the government to clarify this. Presumably the use of the word 'aim' is required to be proven by the activities, nonetheless, of the particular organisation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the prosecution would have to prove that the organisation was, in fact, attempting to engage in some type of serious offence. The safeguard, if you like, is the court itself and the level of proof that can be demonstrated.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I do not disagree with what the minister said but the offence itself, if you like, may not be that sophisticated. My understanding is that a serious offence can include unlawful stalking. Perhaps I should refocus on what the Hon. Dennis Hood picked up in the comments. I understand that he was trying to explore the aim element. In that sense, I do not think the Hon. Dennis Hood has had an answer to his question: does it need to be supported by constructive action by the person?

For example, a group of people might have an aim in terms of, for example, a club: their aim is to deal with all people of a certain ethnic group. Do they need to act on it to come within this? According to the clause itself, it only needs to have two or more people whose aim is to cause harm to an ethnic group. I believe that would come within this provision.

Using another context, let us say we have young people who decide one evening that they are going to head down to the local freeway and throw a stone at a car—that is an aim. They may never get there but they have an aim. It is a serious offence and the fact that there are two or more of them (they are a criminal group) means they are caught by this legislation.

Perhaps this might be overly broadening the scenario, but I remind the parliament that only last year (or the year before) we considered street racing. One of the issues we specifically had to address was where two unassociated people encountered each other on the road and, if you like, determined that they were going to have a street race. In my understanding, two or more people with an aim of committing a serious offence (even though they do not even know each other) become a criminal group in the context of this legislation.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the prosecution would have to prove that the joint enterprise was to commit a serious offence to benefit them as a group. With rock throwing, I would not want to read the mind of a judge, but I find it very difficult to see how there would be any joint benefit for the group by throwing a rock at a car going past.

I want to stipulate that this legislation is untested; the courts will interpret and decide what evidence is needed to prove such aims. In addition, the penalty is a maximum penalty for offending, and obviously the lower end of the scale of offending would attract a much lower penalty.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I thank the minister for her answer. In a way it simply confirms my concerns. I should stress that the opposition does not propose to amend this legislation, but this would surely be a clause we would spend a significant amount of time on if the government had progressed the legislation in a more timely fashion after the Totani judgement in, I think, 2008 or 2009.

I actually like the street racing analogy. You have two people who have no connection with one another who decide to have a street race. It is clearly to their mutual benefit: they get a thrill from having a street race. The government has already identified in other legislation that that is a criminal event, and it is certainly to the benefit of them both.

However, as I said, my purpose here is not to tease out possible amendments; my purpose here is to highlight how broad this legislation is. I just foreshadow my amendment at what would be proposed clause 44A in relation to a parliamentary committee. I think clauses like the ones I have

highlighted up to now, and this clause in particular, highlight how important it is for us as a parliament to take our legislative responsibility seriously. If we are willing to allow such broad matters to go onto the statute book it is our responsibility to monitor their implementation to ensure they are used responsibly.

I can imagine a prosecutor who is having trouble establishing the constituent elements of a mainstream event, let's say street racing, turning to participation in a criminal group offence as a fallback. I appreciate the minister's point that having the aim of having a street race will not get you 15 years in gaol—I appreciate that courts do use their discretion—but this is an offence where it is not inconceivable that law enforcement agencies might use it well beyond what is the stated purpose of this legislation, to address serious and organised crime. Again, I stress that I am not proposing an amendment to the bill, but I do believe it underscores the need for oversight.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: I do not wish to detain the chamber; I will just be brief. Clearly this is a key clause in, I would argue, this suite of bills because of the use of the word 'aim'. As a general principle, we do not put people in prison in this country—with some exceptions—for what they aim to do rather than what they actually do.

However, I do believe on balance that it is not unreasonable to include such a term in this bill because I can think of a scenario where police have information that suggests to them that a potential crime is imminent or a potential crime may happen. I believe the use of the word 'aim' would therefore give them authority under this bill—at least to some extent—to act, because the onus would be on them or the DPP to then prove that there was an aim to commit a particular act.

On balance, Family First will support this clause, but I must say that I think the points of caution that have been raised are valid, and this is a very serious issue that needs genuine consideration and close monitoring, if enacted.

Clause passed.

Clause 29 passed.

Clause 30.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: If I may, I would like to mention the context of the amendment—

The Hon. G.E. Gago: If it helps, we are supporting this.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I appreciate that and I do thank the government for that. I should have indicated that. This is in the context of the proposed section 83E—the new offence of participation in a criminal organisation. Honourable members who are following the debate—a couple of us!—would want to refer back to the definition of the word 'participating' in proposed section 83D, the interpretation clause. I will just highlight that for members:

participating in a criminal organisation includes (without limitation)—

- (a) recruiting others to participate in the organisation; and
- (b) supporting the organisation; and
- (c) committing an offence for the benefit...; and
- (d) occupying a leadership or management position...

Again, in terms of words that in the opposition's view have a very broad meaning, the phrase 'supporting the organisation' caught our attention.

The opposition is very keen to monitor the implementation of this legislation and, if I might refer briefly to the point the Hon. Dennis Hood made in relation to why the word 'aim' might be there, I agree with him. You would want, if you like, a more widely drawn offence if you were wanting to deal with the most difficult criminals, for example, serious and organised criminals. My concern is that we are using not only broad offences but broad definitions as well. In my view, we could have had a better match.

In relation to this element too, we are talking about supporting the organisation. We believe that we need to make sure that people have appropriate access to legal rights and I acknowledge that the government will be supporting an amendment such that legal practitioners will not be deemed to be supporting an organisation when they are providing legal services.

However, I would also put to the parliament how broad this is. It may well capture a whole other range of people. We are not proposing to make any other amendments, but is it conceivable

that a clergyman—sorry, in the modern world, I should say a member of the clergy—is providing support to the organisation? Is a nurse who is dealing with the aftermath of an altercation in Hindley Street supporting the organisation?

I appreciate that these things are matters for definition, but let us put it this way: we saw only recently a funeral of a person who was associated with an outlaw motorcycle gang receiving support from a member of the clergy after a death. I am sure that in the confessional context within the Catholic tradition and within most religious and faith communities, a member of the clergy would regard it as their duty to provide support, no matter how heinous the criminal behaviour of the person is. As I said, we are not proposing a further amendment but, again, I think it highlights another example of where this legislation is broadly written. We need to be diligent as a parliament to make sure that the law is implemented responsibly.

Having made those introductory remarks, I turn to my amendment. Considering this is my first amendment, I might just bring members' attention to the fact that I am actually talking off [Wade-2] rather than [Wade-1]. There were a number of issues raised, including by the Attorney-General and other persons, that meant that [Wade-1] could be improved. All the amendments are included in [Wade-2].

If honourable members or members of their staff have received the email this morning from myself, you would be aware of the changes and the rationale, except for the new proposed section 44A. That is a late addition because a member of a MLC staff very astutely noticed that we needed to include the proposed parliamentary committee in the list of parliamentary committees. Anyway, that is by way of explanation to encourage members to use [Wade-2] not [Wade-1]. I move:

Page 22, after line 13 [clause 30, inserted section 83E]—After subsection (7) insert:

- (8) For the purposes of this section, a legal practitioner acting in the course of legal practice will be taken not to be participating in a criminal organisation or in an activity of a criminal organisation.

This amendment is necessitated by the basic right to seek legal advice and have representative counsel. The definition for 'participating', as I have said, includes supporting the organisation. As I have said, this is so broad as to cover virtually anything that could resemble support. We think it is important to provide provisions for legal practitioners.

Having said that, I am not ranking, shall we say, legal support as more important than religious support but, in the context of implementing legislation that relates to legal rights, that seemed to be the least that we could ensure was protected. As I indicated earlier, we thank the government for its indication of support to this amendment.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Just very quickly, I think that the point the Hon. Mr Wade makes is valid. I had, again, similar thoughts when I first became aware of this legislation but, on balance, the way Family First would see that issue is that we have to have some trust in the courts to adjudicate these things as appropriate. Whilst I think the word 'supporting' is broad—it could include, for instance, a taxi driver who drives somebody somewhere or whoever it is; you could think of a million examples—Family First cannot foresee the circumstances under which a judge would put that person in prison for that type of support to an organisation.

So, that is our basic position and I understand the comments the Hon. Mr Wade makes. I guess the real issue is to what extent do we leave the sort of common-sense judgements, if you like, to the courts or to what extent do we insist on them being specified in the bill.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: With all due respects, Mr Chair, this is an amendment on which I think I am entitled to respond to the comments the honourable member made.

The CHAIR: You have got the numbers for the amendment, but you can respond. It is just the debate going back and forth all the time and it is clearly taking a long time. The Hon. Mr Wade.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: Sir, with all due respect, I would suggest that this legislation is just as important as the aquaculture bill.

The CHAIR: All the Hon. Mr Hood said was repeating something that you said.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: I would make the point that, if the government agrees that it is appropriate to include an exemption, then they at least are of the view that these things should not always be left up to the courts. I fully agree with the Hon. Dennis Hood and, of course, we do that

with legislation all the time, but I would make the point that the government at least is agreeing with me that limitations are appropriate at times.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The government supports the amendment.

The CHAIR: The government supports the amendment. The Hon. Mr Hood, we are not debating back and forth and patting each other on the back. Let us get on with it.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Mr Chairman, nobody is patting anyone on the back. I have made two comments to two clauses and I am entitled to do so, sir. Let me say for the record though that we do support the amendment. Can I also say, sir, that what I said was not a repeat of what the Hon. Mr Wade said. I believe it was an extension of it because I was bringing in the discretion of the courts, if you like, to interpret these terms, which the Hon. Mr Wade touched on but did not go into the same level of detail. Anyway, I stand by my comments, Mr Chairman.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I move:

Page 22, lines 22 and 23 [clause 30, inserted section 83G(1)]—Delete:

'beyond a reasonable doubt' and substitute:

beyond reasonable doubt

The effect of this amendment is to replace the term 'beyond a reasonable doubt' with the term 'beyond reasonable doubt'. This amendment was in response to a comment made by the Chief Justice and the Chief Judge to ensure that the correct legal terminology is used and that it is consistent.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: We will be supporting the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 31 to 37 passed.

Clause 38.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I move:

Page 23, line 30 [clause 38, inserted subsection (3)]—After 'Supreme Court' insert:

and the District Court

This amendment also addresses the same issue raised by the Chief Justice and the Chief Judge concerning trials that may be expedited to either the Supreme Court or the District Court. In feedback provided subsequent to the introduction of the bill in the lower house, the Chief Justice correctly noted that, because the term 'prescribed proceedings' could refer to proceedings in both courts, section 275(3) needed to be amended such that both the District Court and the Supreme Court make rules for expediting prescribed proceedings.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: The opposition will be supporting the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 39 passed.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS (SURROGACY) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

[Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:17]

BAKER, HON. D.S.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (14:17): By leave of the council, I move:

That the Legislative Council expresses its deep regret at the passing of the Hon. Dale Baker, former minister of the crown and member of the House of Assembly, and places on record its appreciation of his

distinguished public service and, as a mark of respect to his memory, the sitting of the council be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

It is with sadness that I rise today to pay our respects to Dale Baker, who passed away last week after battling the very debilitating motor neurone disease. Known for his no-nonsense approach to business, politics and life in general, Dale Baker was variously seen as a character, a larrikin and a maverick.

Born in Millicent on 30 January 1939, Dale Baker was the son of the English migrant Bob Baker and his locally born wife Jean Spoehr. After attending a local primary school, Mr Baker was educated at Scotch College in Adelaide. After leaving school he returned to his beloved South-East to work on the family property.

He was a very fit young man and a keen sportsman, playing more than 200 senior games for the Millicent Magpies Football Club, of which he was a life member, I understand. He was also a devoted supporter of the Port Adelaide and Port Power football clubs. In fact, it was his wish that we would see both teams win the premierships in the same year.

He went on to become a successful grazier, running three properties near Furner. Ever the innovator, Mr Baker later turned his hand to native flower production and built a successful flower export business. He also pioneered Simmental cattle breeding in 1972 and later had an investment in the historic Padthaway House vineyards.

Having spent his entire life in the region, Dale Baker was very much involved in his local South-East community and, among other things, served for more than 20 years as the chairman of the Millicent Hospital Board. In 1985, at the urging of another South-East farmer, former federal defence minister Ian McLachlan, he turned his attention to state politics. He was elected the member for the House of Assembly seat in Victoria (later renamed MacKillop), an electorate that covers much of the prime South-East farmland and major winegrowing regions.

After just five years in parliament, he was elected deputy leader of the Liberal opposition under the then leader John Olsen. A few months later he was elevated to leader when Mr Olsen moved to the Senate. It was said by former colleagues that Mr Baker 'brought a larrikin streak to the Liberal leadership' and rebuilt the party at a difficult time in its history. Whilst he was a tough political commentator and competitor, he was liked and well respected by all sides of politics.

In 1992 he stood down from the leadership of the party and was replaced by Dean Brown. Later Dale Baker held the positions of minister for finance and minister for primary industries, mines and energy in the Brown and Olsen governments. He was a passionate minister for primary industries and strongly represented the South-East region. He was a staunch environmentalist and believed that South Australia could become the food basket for all Australia and South-East Asia.

After losing his seat at the election of 1997, Mr Baker, in his forthright way, said he would not hang around offering advice. Apparently he said, 'Nothing is worse than broken-down old politicians hanging around' and 'Once you're finished you're finished'. With that parting shot, he returned to the South-East to continue running his family business and being involved in the local community that he cared so much for.

In later years he served as chair of the Limestone Coast Regional Development Board until failing health forced him to retire. That failing health came in the form of the incurable motor neurone disease. The disease took away his ability to speak and he had to eat through tubing, but even that did not slow him down. He was still very much involved in the family business and he took to communicating via a portable whiteboard, email and text messages.

His courage and optimism in battling, I believe, one of the most cruel and certainly debilitating diseases is really an inspiration to all of us. In an interview with *The Advertiser* just six months before his death, he said, 'I have been one of the luckiest people alive, led an intensely interesting and varied life, and never had a day I was not happy.' We offer our heartfelt condolences to his son Tom, daughter Marina and four grandchildren, Piper, Charlotte, Olivia and Harry. Dale Baker will be remembered as a man who lived life to the fullest and gave a great deal to his local community.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22): I rise to second the motion and place on record some comments. I think a number of my colleagues have some comments to add as well. Dale Baker was a good friend of mine, one of the first people I knew in the Liberal Party. I first met him when Allan Rodda had announced his retirement from the seat of Victoria and a preselection was held. I was not that well involved in that part of it. I was on the

preselection college. I seem to recall my brother was involved in that preselection college. Nonetheless, Dale Baker was preselected. He did a tour of the next round of AGMs and that was when I first met Dale Baker, in February 1984, when he came with Allan Rodda.

That started a long friendship. As we look back on Dale's life, there were some important milestones. He mentioned numerous times his early life in the South-East and then his travel to Adelaide to come to Scotch College. I think one of the last times I saw him out publicly he was supporting the school. The school was one that he loved.

I cannot recall whether the Hon. Russell Wortley was at the opening of the boarding house about 18 months ago, but Dale Baker had long been a supporter of Scotch College, generous with his time and, I suspect, his financial support of the college. He was there, delighted to see that Scotch College had invested in a new boarding house, because he valued that time of his life when he was a boarder at Scotch College as one of the most important parts of his life and a turning point in his life.

As we know, he was elected to state parliament in 1985 as the member for Victoria (which went on to become MacKillop). He was Leader of the Opposition from 1990 to 1992. Of course, we all know that that was the time when the opposition was starting to unravel the State Bank, and it was Dale Baker who started the initial unravelling of that pretty dark era in our state's history in a financial respect. Dale was very much like a dog at a bone about that issue and very concerned for the future of our state.

He was always very involved in his local community and, as we have heard, he served 20 years on the hospital board and was very involved in football in the Lower South-East, playing for Millicent. He certainly was somebody who immersed himself in the community and had an incredibly broad following when he was first elected. I can recall Liberal Party functions and gatherings with guest speakers at Padthaway House (a property where he had a financial interest) or at the Banksia farm or even at the barn in Mount Gambier; it was not uncommon to get between 500 and 800 people from the South-East to come and support Dale. The enthusiasm he brought to the position was something rarely seen in politics where people are able to get that level of support.

From a personal point of view, looking at Dale's activity in the South-East, I saw in my early days of involvement with the party the things that he was involved with that made a difference. It is very easy to be a member of parliament and gloss over the top through your career but to not really make a big difference on the way through.

When Dale was minister for primary industries he imposed quotas on the Rock Lobster (Southern Zone) Fishery. I think it is fair to say that nearly all the members of that fishery were probably members of the Liberal party and they nearly all resigned when he imposed those quotas as minister for primary industries. However, he believed that it was the right thing to do to preserve that industry and that fishery.

It is probably fair to say that most of them now would say that that was the very best thing that could ever have happened to the industry. It gave them some financial security over licences and pots, but also the fishery was sustainable. They have probably not all rejoined the party but I suspect they now have a very different view of the action that he took at the time (which they so violently opposed) and it actually proved to be the right decision.

Another thing he saw as being vitally important for our state was to continue what I suppose the current government would call the PACE program—the program for accelerated exploration. It was the early days of collecting aerial magnetic data that had been started under the Bannon government, and Dale Baker saw that as an important investment to make. At the time that I was shadow minister for minerals I had some banners in my office, in chronological order, of the mining history of South Australia. I think John Klunder was the minister at the time and Dale was the shadow or vice versa, but there was certainly bipartisan support.

Dale saw that as being a very important part of the future of our state and often spoke at meetings about the wonderful opportunities that minerals and mining exploration and the mining boom would bring to our state. I am sure we all agree with him. We are talking 20 years ago that he was the local member of parliament talking about a mining boom—and we are still talking about a mining boom today—and it will be of great delight to all of us when it finally arrives.

There are a couple of issues that bring home to me, as a Bordertown resident, the value of a good local member. The first one is a story about the Tatiara Meat Company. That company, as members would be well aware, is a works that slaughters lambs in Bordertown. It was started by,

the Hubble brothers (Eric and Eckhart), and employed around about 400 people. In the early 1990s there were some major concerns, in a financial sense, and it looked as though it would have to close. Dale was primary industries minister and he became involved. They flew to Melbourne and brokered some deals with some bankers and managed to get the finances sorted out, and that business survived.

It is interesting when looking back over history, that when Dale lost the seat in 1997 the Bordertown polling booths were probably some of the ones that dealt him the harshest punishment. I cannot recall but I suspect that the feeling in the community was that he was not that popular at the time. Yet 18 years on, that community has a business with 500 employees, and at one point (and I think it is still the case) the primary school in Bordertown was the largest primary school in the state outside of metropolitan Adelaide in terms of the number of enrolments.

During Paul Keating's recession, that we had to have, the community actually grew in size. There was a whole range of things that spun off that decision, and that community has benefited from the sheer hard work of the local member at the time, from the hard yards he put in. It is a legacy that goes on well beyond when he left politics.

Another one was a business that some of us on this side of the chamber have visited—the Mackenzie Intermodal facility at Outer Harbor. For those of you who are not aware, it is an intermodal facility that does logistics; packs wine, hay, meat, etc. Lynton Mackenzie, who is a personal friend of mine, picked up a rock off the ground at Outer Harbor. He needed some guidance, and said 'I want to build a container packing facility.' He told me he was going to go to his local member.

Sure enough, a few weeks later, Dale Baker rang and said, 'I've got a meeting with a Mackenzie guy in Bordertown. Do you know much about it?' I said 'Well, he just wants to do this big project at Port Adelaide; I don't know much about it.' They met, and Dale gave him guidance on what he needed to do, showed him what he had to do, which ministers to visit, how to put a proposal together. Sadly Dale was no longer in parliament, but Lynton Mackenzie started on that journey.

He would be quite happy to tell you that it was Dale Baker who showed him the way through the bureaucratic minefield on the journey to building the successful business that, at its peak, exported, I think, 65 per cent of all Australia's bottled wine and handled some 25,000 to 30,000 containers of freight out of the South-East, and that has over 100 employees at Port Adelaide at Outer Harbor.

Those are just two examples where the local member took an interest and was able to open some doors and make a real difference. I am sure there are dozens and dozens of other examples of Dale's commitment to regional and rural South Australia where he made a difference in people's lives—a difference which, of course, went on for many years to follow.

I remember hearing on the radio a little story of a more humorous nature. We all know that Mitch Williams ran as an Independent and defeated Dale in 1997. I am sure that Dale was somewhat disappointed at that result, but when Philip Satchell interviewed him about a fortnight to a month after the election and asked, 'Dale, what sort of relationship do you have with Mitch Williams?', Dale's response was 'I could kiss the man. He has released me, he has taken the burden of being a member of parliament off me.'

While he was bruised, and a bit bitter, as the Leader of the Government said, Dale made the comment that former politicians should not hang around and get in the way. He got on with his life. He continued to make a significant contribution to the Limestone Coast Regional Development Board, and I was pleased to see him putting all the skills he learnt here at the sharp end of politics back into his local community again.

Like everyone, I was very saddened to hear about his illness. We thought he had had a small stroke, or that he just needed a bit of speech therapy because of a benign tumour he had had removed from his tongue, and we thought he was back on the road to recovery. Sadly, it was the beginning of motor neurone disease. It was a pretty tough time for those of us who knew him to see him waste away. As the minister and the Leader of the Government explained, it is probably one of the worst diseases that can afflict someone.

On behalf of the members of the opposition—and I know others are going to speak—I pass on our sincere condolences to his family, his friends, and in particular to his son Tom, daughter

Marina, and his grandchildren, who were at his funeral. Members would have seen some of the photographs in the paper; he dearly loved Olivia, Harry, Piper and Charlotte.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (14:34): I sadly rise to support this condolence motion. I would have liked to have attended his funeral and shown my respect and gratitude to Dale Baker, but I was not able to attend. However, I do want to put a few points of view on the public record, and my assessment of a man I respected and who taught me quite a lot.

First of all, I had the privilege of first meeting Dale Baker when he was leader of the opposition in the early 1990s. Straight away, he showed a different style of leadership to that of many premiers and leaders before him and, I would suggest, since. The parliament was not very well furnished at the time and his office was where government members are now, on the Casino side of the House of Assembly, prior to the upgrading of the opposition areas, full of a lot more cabinets and other stuff out in the corridors than we see today.

Dale Baker never—or hardly ever—had his door shut, and when I would walk past just to visit some other Liberal members, he saw me and said, 'G'day, come in. How are you going?' and wanted to immediately have a chat. I found that to be a huge honour and it said a lot to me about the fact that a man like Dale Baker never forgot where he came from and respected all people of all ages and all capacities.

I think he was actually a very good leader of the opposition. In fact, it would have been interesting to see what would have happened to this state had Dale Baker gone on to become premier because, when it came to business acumen, common sense and the ability to get the job done, I have not seen any who have been above Dale Baker.

We know the reasons why he stood down as leader of the opposition, but he was instrumental with Jennifer Cashmore and some others—against opposition from some of the media and the government of the day—in raising concerns around the State Bank. I suggest that, had Dale Baker and his team not raised those concerns, the state would have been in an even more difficult financial position than it was when discovered in the late 1992-93 period.

Dale Baker certainly had a passion, a love and an extraordinary ability when it came to agriculture, and that is where I had a lot of rapport with Dale as a farmer myself. He was articulate, professional and precise in the way he went about all of his agricultural duties, and they were diverse. He was innovative, with the Simmental cattle as an example. He saw the value in that breed. He was one of the pioneers, and not only was he a pioneer, but he actually worked with the Simmental cattle society for South Australia to ensure that, to this very day, there is still a vibrant, strong Simmental cattle breed in South Australia.

The only thing that I ever disagreed with Dale on was the team that he barracked for—Port Adelaide. You just could not get a word in on the reasons why he should have looked at some other teams but, again, he was consistent and passionate. He was a robust, tough man. Some may have said he was a bit of a larrikin, but he always stood by what he believed in. Mining and the aeromagnetic survey work has been mentioned. In 1994, very early in my time as a member of parliament, he was very keen to get all members of parliament who were interested out to the mines and energy area of government to be briefed. He wanted to include everybody; he wanted to educate everybody with those opportunities.

The second time I did not quite agree with him was on deregulation of the dairy industry. He was a deregulator. 'You get in there and you do your best and you just tough it out and you'll make a living' was the way Dale went about it. He certainly made a very good living for himself and his family and built up what I think is a pretty solid empire in agriculture.

When I challenged him on deregulation of the dairy industry as one who is not so much into deregulation at all costs, he said to me, 'Well, lad', or words to that effect; 'you might as well support this, because this is only state deregulation. Wait until the federal deregulation comes through and if we're not positioned for that, then you'll really see what's going to happen.'

In hindsight, whilst the concept of deregulation has still been a problem for many of us, he was right there again, because what he did was force the South Australian dairy industry into some restructuring and looking at other opportunities that were not specific to the bonus city milk that was around forever before that.

I am saddened by his loss. He was still a young man. He is the second person in this parliament, at least that I recall, to have actually contracted that very sad, debilitating and tragic disease. I would hope that all members of parliament, when they leave this place would have many

years to go back with their families and communities and enjoy. Sadly, Dale Baker has not done that.

The last time I saw Dale Baker was when he was starting to, unfortunately, really suffer with the illness, but it was actually at the funeral of the former police commissioner, Mr David Hunt. He was determined to go there even though he was unwell. He knew exactly what was going on. Whilst it was difficult for him to communicate, we could communicate with our eyes and with our handshake.

He has left a very strong legacy for the South Australian community and I am very appreciative of the many times I had with him. As I said, wherever he was, he treated everybody equally. When you needed a bit of a hand before an election, he did not get into a government car or anything like that, he got down in a candidate's car, namely my car, and doorknocked and canvassed the agricultural areas of the seat of Mawson and was very, very well received.

It is a sad day, but there are good memories of Dale Baker. I know his children were close to him and I encourage them to think of all the good times and the positive legacy left for South Australia. Vale, Dale Baker.

The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (14:40): I rise to support the motion and add to some of the memories of the contribution that Dale Baker made to the state of South Australia—a state that he loved. I suppose I really got to know Dale quite well in the years in which he was the leader of the opposition and also a minister in the Liberal government after 1993.

In the first part of that period, I was the secretary of the Rural and Regional Council of the Liberal Party, and followed that with three years as its chairman. I think that body within the Liberal Party has always had a very strong relationship with the leader of the day and also the shadow or minister for agriculture or primary industries—whatever it was called at the time.

Dale was prepared to offer great support to our organisation, but he made it very clear to me very early in those days that he was confident we knew what we were doing and that we did it well and he was not going to get in the way at all. I think that was Dale's attitude. If he thought you could do something, he was not going to try to change it, and I remember that very well.

I also remember coming down to this place in the early 1990s to assist the then shadow minister for agriculture, former member for Goyder, Mr John Meier, who was developing a policy in agriculture at the time. The current minister and Leader of the Government would, I suppose, be interested to know that, at that stage, there was a significant crisis across South Australia in agricultural pursuits. I remember that John, as the shadow minister, was extraordinarily busy dealing with people who were having a very hard time of it in their rural pursuits.

So, John asked me to help him develop a policy and he said, 'You had better go and see Dale. Dale is the leader and Dale will have a view on what our policy should be in this area.' Dale looked me up and down when I went to see him and he said, 'You know the issues; get on with it.' He was not going to meddle with it. He had a fair idea that I had a reasonable concept of what we needed to put in that policy.

The Leader of the Government and Leader of the Opposition have referred to the role that Dale decided to play post-politics as chair of the Limestone Coast Regional Development Board. As most members here know, I was the regional development spokesman for this party for a number of years and I have had a lot to do with those boards when we were in government and more latterly.

Dale was passionate about putting his experiences as a former member of parliament and former minister into that role. Some of us have seen that impact in people who have left this place, like our former colleague the Hon. Caroline Schaefer in her chairmanship of the Mid North and Yorke NRM board. It sometimes allows people to bring those skills and give that role an extra level. Dale certainly did that. He was extraordinarily passionate about a number of issues that were very strongly contested in the South-East at that stage. As my colleague the Hon. Mr Lucas knows, when there is an issue running in the South-East there are quite often a number of opinions and Dale stuck to his guns on a couple of those issues. I will not go into any detail, but I remember that very strongly.

One other matter that comes to mind about Dale and the South-East is that in 1994 there was a redistribution of state seats. People were waiting to see what the boundaries commission would come up with, as our colleagues in the lower house are at the moment. There was a trip to the South-East forests. I am not sure whether it was a parliamentary committee or a Liberal Party

visit, but Dale Baker was there—he may even have been the minister for forests at the time—and so was Mr Ivan Venning MP, the then member for Custance.

They were deep in a forest in the South-East examining *Pinus radiata*, etc. Dale received a phone call to say that the boundaries had been released and that Ivan's electorate of Custance had been abolished. So, Dale got to deliver that news to Ivan deep in this forest in the South-East. While Ivan says the colour went out of Dale's face, I think it is more likely to say that it went out of Ivan's face. Subsequently, the Liberal Party appealed that decision and, rather than re-create Custance, the seat of Schubert was born. That is a story that I am sure the member for Schubert is telling in another place this afternoon.

I join with other members in passing my sympathies on to the Baker family and the many friends that Dale had, and has, across the state. There was a really good celebration of his life at Norwood last Monday. It showed Dale in all of his lights as a farmer, businessman, sportsman and family man. I think the Hon. Mr Ridgway said that in a number of the photographs depicted you could see the adoration he had for his grandchildren. So, I pass on my sympathies to the family and support the motion.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (14:48): I rise to support members who have spoken to this condolence motion. I can only agree with the comments the Hon. Mr Dawkins just made, that there was a magnificent memorial service on Monday of this week and, I thought, three magnificent speeches from Ian McLachlan, as a friend, political associate and fellow businessman and activist (I guess) over 50 years, and two former staff members, Richard Yeeles and Ian Smith, who have both subsequently gone on to successful careers in their own areas. I thought all who were there certainly got a very good picture of Dale Baker.

One recurring theme through the speeches was the Dale Baker sense of humour that was known by people who knew him for a long time. I only met Dale in the mid-eighties when he came into parliament.

The material provided by the library shows that Dale's sense of humour stayed with him right to the very end. There are a number of articles in the *Sunday Mail* and in *The Advertiser*. In an article in the *Sunday Mail* in April last year, when Dale had lost the use of his voice and was using a whiteboard, a photograph showed Dale with his dog and, on the whiteboard that he used to communicate was the message, 'People did not listen when I could talk so this is more effective'. In another article that he wrote in support of voluntary euthanasia, he talked about motor neurone disease and about the fact that he had moved to PEG feeding by tube. He said:

The other main change is that I take my own packaged liquid food wherever I go, including overseas, plus a syringe to administer. Works very well and not a hassle. Champagne is fine through the PEG—no taste, but the same kick. The only drawback is that on visits to friends they now give me all their cheap wine.

I think those two examples are perfect. I have maintained a close friendship with Rex Jory and Richard Yeeles over the years, and they have maintained a close friendship with Dale Baker and have had much more contact with him in recent years since he left politics. The sense of humour evident in those two media-reported examples was certainly a recurring theme during their visits with Dale, they reported, and it continued right through to the very end.

As I said, I met Dale in the mid-80s when he first came into parliament. In the mid to late 80s, as the shadow minister for education, I can remember a couple of very hairy rides through his electorate as he made sure that we got from school to school in less time than I had ever contemplated being possible. I think his speed of transport was referred to by a couple of speakers on Monday in a number of humorous stories. Of course, those sorts of things do not happen these days because we are much more responsible when it comes to road safety issues.

The Hon. David Ridgway referred to Dale's success in relation to pushing issues through and bringing them to a successful conclusion. He talked about some issues at the state level and certainly a few in relation to his own electorate. In addition to his prosecution of the case in relation to the problems of the State Bank—together with others in the Liberal Party; he was not the sole voice—there was the prosecution of the case in relation to electoral fairness.

A significant influence on Dale's political career was Ren DeGaris, who came from the South-East as well. Dale and Ren were very close. Dale prosecuted work during his time as leader—and just before that as well—in relation to the electoral fairness test, which is now a part of our Electoral Act. It came as a result of the 1989 election, when the Liberal opposition at that stage won 52 per cent of the two-party preferred vote but did not win government. As a result of that,

significant changes were achieved in our electoral tests, and Dale Baker was a prominent proponent of that.

The Hon. David Ridgway referred to his work in other areas, as I said, such as the State Bank, mining and others, and I will not repeat those. He certainly chalked up successes, both as an opposition politician and as a minister for a brief period.

As would be said of us all, our careers are not always sated with success; some misfire. I remember the controversy—and it is still a controversy at the moment—when Dale surprised many of us in the Liberal Party at the time when he became the leader, with a passionate policy position regarding the privatisation of a number of assets, including the South-East forests, or the forests generally.

That was a very interesting period for the Liberal Party because his views were not necessarily reflected by the member for Mount Gambier at the time, Harold Allison. Nevertheless, soon after that, Dale took one for the team—as was said on Monday—when both John Olsen and Dean Brown returned to the state parliamentary party and contested the leadership pre-the 1993 election.

Unsurprisingly, the Liberal Party position reverted to what is still the position: not supporting the privatisation or the sale of the forests. In that speech, which was a comprehensive one as leader of the opposition in 1991, he talked about the sale of WorkCover and a variety of other assets, some of which (not all) have been privatised by not only Liberal governments but also Labor governments.

A story perhaps not widely known—again a fair indication that not all of every politician's bright ideas are successes—is that I recall in that period when he was the leader that one of his bright ideas was the suggestion that I should become the shadow attorney-general to take on the then Labor attorney-general, Chris Sumner.

All I can say, without going through the gory detail of those discussions, is that, luckily, wiser heads prevailed, both for the legal fraternity in South Australia and also for the Liberal Party, I suspect, as we had an outstanding shadow attorney-general, who went on to serve with distinction as attorney-general, the Hon. Trevor Griffin, at that particular time.

I suspect that, up until now, that story would not have been known to more than a handful of people. With all of us we have our ideas that take root and come to fruition and are very successful, but occasionally there are the ideas which, on reflection, fall on fallow ground and go nowhere, luckily, in relation to those issues.

I join with other members in supporting the condolence motion and, on behalf of my wife Marie, I pass on my condolences to Dale's family, friends and acquaintances.

The PRESIDENT: I support the motion as well. I knew Dale probably in my younger days more so than in later years because I grew up at Tantanoola and Millicent and played footy with Tant, and Dale was playing football for the Millicent Magpies at the time (now the Millicent Saints, of course). I also grew up on a property owned by the Hon. Allan Hookings, who became Dale's father-in-law and who was a distinguished member of this house, so I knew Dale's wife Margaret very well and grew up on those properties.

The Millicent area in particular has been blessed with a number of characters who have served in parliament here, starting probably with the late Jim Corcoran and late Des Corcoran, the late Allan Rodda, the late Ren DeGaris of course, Martin Cameron, and then along came Dale Baker, all characters in their own right and all very good local members. They served their areas very well and never forgot that they came from the South-East, and did not only take up the fight on behalf of people in the South-East but also in the state.

When I shifted away from Millicent and Tantanoola, the next time I heard about Dale was probably during the shearers' wide comb dispute, where he played a small role to his good friend Ian McLachlan, and I think he had some sort of a relationship with a fellow called Nifty Thompson during that period. I pass on my condolences, especially to Margaret, the children and his grandchildren. I ask honourable members to stand in their places and carry the motion in silence.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 15:01 to 15:20]

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the President—

Supplementary Report of the Auditor-General, 2010-11—Department of Health and Associated Health Service Activities, April 2012

By the Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion (Hon. I.K. Hunter)—

Parole Board of South Australia—Report, 2010-11

LIVESTOCK (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (15:22): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: During the Livestock (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2012 debate, I stated to the council that I was advised that the RSPCA ended up having to pay \$750,000 for the Brinkworth case, which is a figure that had been put to me by a number of people. I have since been advised that due to the circumstances around that case that was an incorrect figure and the correct figure was \$16,198, plus some commercial in confidence and other legal costs, which I am advised were not very significant.

QUESTION TIME

TOURISM COMMISSION

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:23): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Tourism a question about the position of General Manager within the Tourism Commission.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: As members would recall, I have a keen interest in the position of general manager, in particular the appointment of one Mr Rik Morris to that position in mid January. Under freedom of information I have been able to obtain some information in relation to that particular position. There were some 20 applicants. I have a copy of the job advertisement, which spells out the job specifications or the job description. There were some 20 applicants, but clearly all names are blanked out other than Mr Morris's. I have a copy of his contract and also a copy of his remuneration package.

Of course, the details have been blanked out, but we are aware that the general manager position is a full-time position, and I think he is being paid somewhere around \$150,000. I suspect this decision to advertise for and appoint a general manager was probably made by the former minister (the Hon. John Rau) or during the former minister's tenure. Given the circumstances of the government facing declining revenue and the Sustainable Budget Commission recommendations of a number of cost saving measures, on what basis was the decision made to appoint a general manager in a full-time position of \$150,000 a year in the light of the significant financial pressures facing the government?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:25): I thank the honourable member for his question. As I have said in this place before, I think it is disgraceful that the opposition continually comes after people. They name people in this place and—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is disgraceful.

The Hon. A. Bressington interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No, not everything is disgraceful but every time—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Not at all. What is disgraceful, as the Hon. Ann Bressington is suggesting—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. Bressington interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: What is disgraceful is when the reputation of people is significantly impacted on by being named in this place time and time again, where there is absolutely no evidence whatsoever in any way, shape or form to suggest anything about the appointment of Mr Rik Morris to the SATC as being untoward—even after the Hon. David Ridgway says he FOI'd the information.

There is nothing—no evidence has been brought here—absolutely nothing. He has gone fishing and he has asked a number of questions in this place before, which I have answered—every one of them. He has FOI'd and that is his right, if he wants to go and waste his money, and yet there is not one skerrick of evidence that has been put in this place by anybody to suggest that there was anything untoward in the appointment of this man—not anything.

That is what is a disgrace, because members come into this place and name people time and time again and there is an innuendo in the way that they are named, an underlying implication that something untoward occurred in his appointment. That is what is implied.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: And that is what I think is disgraceful. I have said in this place before that governments and members of parliament employ people all the time. We employ people from all different walks of life to do all different sorts of jobs. As I have said before, we have even employed journalists from *The Advertiser* before. People come and people go.

Mr Rik Morris worked for the Rann Labor government and he did an extremely good job, I must add. He did an extremely good job because he is a very bright and capable man. People come and go from these jobs. To suggest that somehow, once you have worked for the government or once you have worked in a parliamentary office, you have no right to win a job anywhere else in the world and, if you do win a good job somewhere else, that somehow something untoward has been done to influence that; that something untoward has happened to enable this man, who is capable and competent, to win—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: —a position fair and square. The absolute proper process was done. The FOI material even shows that. All of the proper processes were done and it was absolutely all above board. There was proper and due process and he won the thing on merit—and I am not surprised. I had no idea that he had his hand up for the job; no idea whatsoever. I only found out after the announcement was made that he had been successful; that was when I became aware that he had applied for the position. However, I am not surprised at all that he won such a good job because, as I said, he is a very bright and incredibly capable person. Based on my knowledge from dealing with him he deserved to win such a job.

In terms of staffing matters, they are absolutely matters for the board. The board is independent of the government. They manage their own business through their board and their chief executive. Staffing matters are absolutely matters for the board. The board is independent of the government and manages its own business through the board and the chief executive. Staffing matters and appointment processes are absolutely matters for the board. The organisational structure is a matter for the board; the job descriptions and skill set requirements are all matters for the board. So if the honourable member wants to know on what basis the board made its decision, I suggest he write to the board and ask.

TOURISM COMMISSION

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS (15:30): I have a supplementary question. What was the skill set and experience that Mr Morris brought to the quite specific role of tourism? Did he have any experience whatsoever in the tourism industry?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:30): The honourable member has not listened to a single, solitary word I have said, not a solitary word. It is a disgrace that opposition members sit over there and nod off, the dozy lot they are. They sit over there and do not listen at all. They are a complete and utter waste of space.

I have just made it very clear, in the answer to this question, as well as in answer to similar questions in the past, that these are matters for the board. They are operational matters; they have nothing to do with government. It is absolutely a matter for the board to identify the skill sets it wants, and what organisational structure that will best meet its purposes is a matter for the board. I think the board and the chief executive are incredibly competent, and they just get on and do the job.

TOURISM COMMISSION

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:31): I have a further supplementary. The minister said I should ask the board. I would like to ask the board, but it will not meet with me until the minister has met with the board. When will the minister meet with the board?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:31): There is nothing to stop the honourable member from writing to the board and requesting the information. I cannot believe that the honourable member cannot think broadly enough to contemplate writing a letter to the board or—and here is a novel idea—he could pick up the phone and ring them to ask. I am sure there would be someone who would take his call.

TOURISM COMMISSION

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (15:32): I have a supplementary question arising out of the minister's attempted answer. Given the minister's claim that the board is completely independent and that staffing matters are completely a matter for the board, how does the minister justify the fact that she was meeting with the Commissioner for Public Employment about the termination of the former chief executive before the chair of the board?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:32): Because in the act there is a requirement that—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! You might learn something if you listen.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: —matters to do with the appointment of the chief executive have to be agreed to by both the board and the minister. So the only position—

The Hon. R.I. Lucas interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The only position that, as minister, I have any statutory responsibility for is the appointment and contract of the chief executive. As I said, that appointment has to be made and that contract needs to be agreed to by both the board and the minister.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Three to the minister: none to the opposition.

YORKE AND MID NORTH PLANNING REVIEW FORUM

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:34): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for State/Local Government Relations a question on the subject of the Port Pirie Planning Forum on Friday.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! You might want to repeat that; I did not hear it.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: I ask the Minister for State/Local Government Relations a question on the subject of the Port Pirie Planning Forum held on Friday.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: I note that the minister said on ABC radio 639:

I'm very excited about the potential here. We're hearing of the future planning for infrastructure, power, water, skills, our youth, so look when I go back to Cabinet and I go back to the various agencies these will be put on the table and further discussions will take place around these important issues.

My questions for the minister are:

1. What plans does he have for infrastructure in the region, and from which agencies and how will that be paid for?
2. What are his plans to stem the outflow of skilled young people from the region?
3. What water supply is he planning to secure for the region?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (15:35): I thank the member for her questions. I did attend the planning forum in Port Pirie on Friday. At that planning forum there were quite a number of reports which highlighted the various issues which the regions face, in particular with the future mining boom.

I made it quite clear that I did find quite exciting the potential for the region arising out of the mining boom and all the future discussions and planning that will be required with regard to future energy needs and water needs. These are all issues that were spoken about at the forum, and I made it quite clear that going to these forums does give me an opportunity, when these issues are discussed at cabinet, to have some understanding with regard to their importance. I do not know if the Hon. Ms Lensink is criticising me for actually listening—

The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink: I'm just asking what your plans are.

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: The purpose of going to these meetings is to actually listen to what is happening out there, listen to the various reports and discuss issues with the various parties.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Lensink has a supplementary question.

YORKE AND MID NORTH PLANNING REVIEW FORUM

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:36): I take it that the minister is not going to answer any of my questions, but is he going to confirm whether there is any funding on the table for any of these projects, or is he just paying lip service?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (15:37): I find that quite extraordinary. For a minister to go out to a region and listen to various reports and various issues that arise and are concerns out there and to be then basically accused of paying lip service, I find that quite bizarre. I actually enjoy going out to the regions. I actually do a lot of touring of the regions to find out what issues are important to them out there and, when cabinet does meet and we do discuss various issues of infrastructure, water power, our youth leaving the state, I have a much greater knowledge to be able to participate in those discussions.

DISABILITY SERVICES ACT

The Hon. S.G. WADE (15:37): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Disabilities a question in relation to the Disability Services Act.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.G. WADE: On 19 October 2011, the Social Inclusion Board released its disability blueprint titled Strong Voices, A Blueprint to Enhance Life and Claim the Rights of People with Disability in South Australia (2012-20). The blueprint recommended a new disability act to replace the existing Disability Services Act. On 19 December 2011, Premier Weatherill announced that the government would be drafting a new disability act.

Given that the sector has been waiting 19 years for a new act and given Premier Weatherill's commitment, when will the minister be tabling the government's bill to change

the Disability Services Act or, alternatively, will the minister expedite the process by taking the Hon. Kelly Vincent's Disability Services (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill as a basis for public consultation on changes to the act?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:38):

I thank the honourable member for his very important question. The government is committed to bringing in a bill for a new act, as we have said publicly a number of times. It was a recommendation that the government accepted in the Strong Voices report which we took to cabinet. My department is working on a range of proposals for me in consideration of a new act and, once we have a draft act that we take through to cabinet, we will put that out for public consultation.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION SERVICE

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO (15:39): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for the Status of Women a question about the Women's Information Service outreach.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: The minister has informed this place before of the great work being done by the Women's Information Service. As minister for the regions, I know she is committed to engaging with women in the regions. Will the minister inform the chamber about some of the WIS's efforts to ensure that they work with women from regional areas?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:40): Indeed, the Women's Information Service (WIS) has consistently worked hard to ensure links with regional and remote areas. I am sure members will recall that a number of WIS information hubs have been established in regional areas where women can access a range of material and information.

Over the next 12 months, a WIS worker will be visiting each of the WIS hubs in rural and regional areas and meeting with local women and services to ensure that the hubs remain relevant and meet the needs of women in the local community. WIS workers and volunteers will continue to work with communities by attending community events, holding information stalls and giving presentations to community groups.

A WIS staff member visited the Riverland from 26 to 28 March. The worker dropped into a number of services in Waikerie, Barmera, Berri and Renmark to provide information about WIS services that are accessible to women in regional areas. Things like the rural women's phone link-up service, the WIS legal service line, the Family Court support program and access to information via the WIS Facebook page are just a few examples. If women living in regional areas need to access a service in South Australia that does not offer a toll-free number, there is a number they can phone WIS on and have their calls then transferred free of charge.

WIS has information hubs for women in both Waikerie and Renmark. The staff member visited the hubs to ensure that the information on offer was up to date and relevant to the women living in those communities. This visit included visits to a range of service providers as well, such as women's health providers. These visits enable WIS to broaden their knowledge of services available to women outside of Adelaide and to better assist women who make inquiries via the WIS phone service. There are of course other benefits to these visits, such as giving WIS the opportunity to:

- increase regional women's knowledge of SA government and community support services available to them;
- broaden their knowledge of services available to women outside of Adelaide, to better assist women to make inquiries via the WIS phone service;
- increase their knowledge about challenges for women in particular areas;
- talk with women living in regional areas about the issues that are concerning them and then share this information with other women's services and the broader Office for Women; and
- raise their profile and visibility to regional women.

WIS's work in the regions is part of a broader community engagement framework which aims to reach women who cannot access the WIS shopfront in Grenfell Street. I want to acknowledge and congratulate those staff who go out and do that regional work. They do an amazing job. There are very long hours and they are very committed and dedicated staff who are very committed to ensuring that all women, including regional women, maintain high access to services.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Lensink has a supplementary.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION SERVICE

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:43): Has the WIS itself, the Office for Women or the government generally given consideration to recording the history of the WIS in any way, shape or form?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (15:43): I thank the honourable member for her most important question. Not that I am aware of, but that certainly is a very good idea, and I am very pleased that the honourable member has raised it. It has a very proud history. It is an organisation that runs on a team of volunteers. Many of those volunteers have been with WIS for many, many years; some members well over a decade or more. Their commitment is phenomenal. As I said, the WIS service relies on that team of volunteers and also very dedicated staff. I think that is a great idea, and I will follow that up.

HOUSING SA FIRES

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (15:44): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Social Housing a question regarding fires in social housing government stock.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: It has been reported to my office, and in the media, that there have been approximately 19 to 25 fires within three months in a very small area, captured by three streets in a predominantly Housing SA area in Semaphore Park. There are allegations that there may be one or more firebugs living in the area, possibly even themselves Housing SA tenants, and claims that one was arrested after a recent fire but was released soon thereafter. My questions, therefore, to the minister are:

1. Is the minister confident that Housing SA does not have an arsonist living in a Housing SA property in the Semaphore area?

An honourable member: Nice one, Sherlock!

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: I am asking the de facto commissioner; it is not just a thought bubble.

2. Has the minister, or will the minister—

The Hon. R.P. Wortley interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: Well, you are the original for thought bubbles, minister; you get one every now and again.

2. Has the minister opened or will the minister open up the Housing SA database and make all staff available to assist police with their inquiries into recent fires in the Semaphore Park area? A further thought bubble: it might be good for the minister to go down there and experience the trauma these people are going through.

3. When fires occur on Housing SA properties, does the minister get the Metropolitan Fire Service to inspect every fire, or at least every fire occurring in this latest series of fires, to determine whether the cause was accidental or deliberate?

4. Will the minister either contact the Minister for Police or otherwise appoint a security company to ensure 24 hour patrols are being maintained in the area for the immediate future in the interests of public safety?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:46): I thank the honourable member for his very important question and for his promotion to Assistant Deputy Commissioner for myself. I can say that, as many people are aware, a fire occurred in a

Housing SA unit in Eagle Court, Semaphore Park, on Wednesday morning, 4 April 2012. I understand that a tenant escaped the burning building but has reportedly sustained extensive burns and smoke inhalation. I am advised that police have been investigating the incident and did arrest a person of interest, but later released that person. My understanding is that they are continuing their inquiries into this matter.

This is another salient lesson for honourable members not to jump to conclusions in these matters and to leave the relevant authorities to do their jobs. I am advised there is no, as yet, clear indication that the fire was deliberately lit (the one I have just referred to), as originally suspected, or at least reported in the media. Initial indicators, I am told, show that the fire could have originated from an interior starting point, rather than from the exterior, as was first thought.

This property was connected to a deliberately lit fire in a carport a few weeks back. Housing SA has just completed the rebuilding of the carport from the previous fire in the past week or two. Housing SA has spoken with nearby residents this morning to determine whether there is anything we can do to assist them in this situation. I am advised that the property was extensively damaged and is unfit for the tenant to return to once he is released from hospital. Housing SA is actively seeking alternative accommodation for him, as we speak.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Kandelaars, who seems to be impersonating Superman or Little Red Riding Hood.

FAR NORTH MINISTERIAL VISIT

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (15:48): Whilst on that, this is about Capril, which is a mental health awareness activity, and I hope all members in some way will support—

The PRESIDENT: Even Little Red Riding Hood has to seek permission to make a statement.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: Moving onto the question. I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for State/Local Government Relations a question about his visit to the Far North communities of Andamooka and Coober Pedy.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: I understand the minister recently visited the communities of Andamooka and Coober Pedy. Will the minister provide further information on this matter.

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (15:49): I thank the honourable member for his question. I must say I am a bit concerned about answering this question, for fear of being attacked by the Hon. Ms Lensink for being too in touch with the outback communities and getting to understand some of the issues which affect them. I will say that one of the most common comments I get from various regions is the fact that they no longer see members of the opposition since the Hon. Caroline Schaefer left. As I stated before, I do try to defend them and say, 'It's pretty hard for them, because most of them live in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide. No longer do they have the strong representation of the country and the regions they had in past decades.'

Getting back to the honourable member's question, I have previously informed members that in my role as Minister for State/Local Government Relations I have been visiting councils and outback local communities throughout the state. These visits give me an opportunity to talk to elected members, council staff and community volunteer groups on what issues are important to them, what challenges and barriers they face and what successes they have experienced.

My most recent visit was to the township of Andamooka and Coober Pedy. While in the region I also went on a tour of the Olympic Dam expansion site run by BHP Billiton. The purpose of my visit to Andamooka was to attend a land-use planning workshop sponsored by the Outback Communities Authority and the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association. In the coming years, the expansion of Olympic Dam will have an impact on Andamooka and there is expected to be significant growth in the township.

This workshop gave the local community and stakeholders the opportunity to have a say on where and what type of development should occur in Andamooka in the future, what areas should be protected from development and what infrastructure would be required to support the expected growth. From my observations on the day and the feedback given following the workshop, the experience has been extremely positive.

Members of this chamber would appreciate the fact that some parts of regional South Australia do it tough. I have great respect for the people who live and work in these communities. Community spirit and pride were evident in every community I visited. They continually have to find ways to do more, often with less. In some cases it involves basic services, such as a reliable water supply, something that we take for granted here in Adelaide. Despite this, most people are optimistic about their future and that of their communities. The Outback Communities Authority works closely alongside the communities to help support their aspirations as well as the appropriate services and infrastructure that can be delivered.

FAR NORTH MINISTERIAL VISIT

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:51): Can the minister inform us what other communities he visited when he drove to Andamooka and Coober Pedy?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (15:52): I popped past Woomera, bearing in mind that this was a three-day trip. We drove from Roxby Downs to Coober Pedy, and I met with various community people in Coober Pedy. I also met with the council in Coober Pedy and had quite a fruitful discussion. In Andamooka, I was informed that you were up there recently—is that right?

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: Yes, they said that you drove past, stopped and picked up a slab, kicked the dog, said 'G'day,' and then kept on moving. So, once again I had to defend them, to say, 'Well, he does live up in Mitcham; it's a long way to come'. It was a very valuable trip and the people of Coober Pedy and Andamooka certainly treated me well.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

PAROLE APPLICATIONS

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (15:53): My questions are to the minister representing the Minister for Correctional Services:

1. How many parole applications of inmates serving a life sentence have been approved by the Parole Board and are currently before the executive awaiting determination?
2. What is the average length of time that such applications are before the executive prior to being determined?
3. What process does the executive go through in assessing such applications?
4. Who does the executive take advice from in relation to those parole applications?
5. Does the minister meet with the head of the Parole Board and, if so, how often?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:54): I thank the honourable member for her very important question. I undertake to take those questions to the Minister for Correctional Services in another place and seek a response on her behalf.

HOSPITAL PARKING

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS (15:54): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Industrial Relations, representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, questions about parking problems at the Women's and Children's Hospital.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS: Parking in North Adelaide around the Women's and Children's Hospital has long been cramped and is usually full. This has been the case for a number of years. Rachel Sanderson, the hard-working member for Adelaide from another place, wants to see the car park expanded to accommodate patients and their families. My questions to the minister are:

1. What plans does the government have to alleviate the parking problems at the hospital?
2. If there are no plans, will the government commit to the member for Adelaide's plan and, if yes, how much will these plans cost and will they encroach on any current parkland?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (15:55): I thank the honourable member for his question. I will refer that to the Minister for Health in another place and get back an answer as soon as possible.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA (15:55): My question is to the Minister for Youth. Will he tell us how students with disabilities have been participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (15:55): I thank the honourable member for his most important question. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is an internationally recognised development program for young people aged between 14 and 25. It is a prestigious award and encourages young people to push their boundaries, step out of their comfort zones and expand their personal horizons by exploring potential talents and interests. The award comprises three levels, each requiring different levels of commitment and effort. Young people can start at the bronze, silver or gold levels, depending on whichever level they have been prepared for.

On Wednesday 21 March I attended and presented the silver awards at the first scheduled bronze and silver awards presentation for 2012. It was a very special ceremony to honour 186 young participants' impressive achievements. Ms Sue Wallace, the Executive Director for Communities and Social Inclusion, also attended the ceremony to present the bronze awards. Among this year's winners 45 of the award recipients were from regional South Australia; another 13 young people identified as having a disability of some description.

Eight students were from the Hamilton Disability Unit and five from the Riverland Special School. As Minister for Disabilities and Minister for Youth, it is heartening to see young people with disabilities achieve such outstanding results. This included a young man from Findon High School who volunteers with the Australian Air Force Cadets, studies computer communications and participates in swimming. Many young people give back to their communities in a number of ways, including volunteering their time to many worthwhile local and international causes.

A student from Kura Yerlo helped in a soup kitchen and students from Murray Bridge created birthing kits for Uganda. A highlight of the evening was a speech presented by Ms Victoria Cox, who is a holder of a gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, which she received in 2009. Ms Cox is studying her fourth year of medicine at the University of Adelaide and was awarded first-class honours for her work in the prediction of strokes using MRI scanning. This year Victoria will also represent Adelaide University on the national AMSA Medical Student Council, as well as the AMA(SA) Doctors in Training Committee.

Aside from her academic pursuits, Victoria is a keen swimmer and has represented South Australia at the Olympic and Commonwealth Games trials. Victoria Cox and the other award recipients are outstanding examples of how the Duke of Edinburgh Award is encouraging South Australia's young people to challenge their individual abilities, help communities and gain a sense of achievement and have fun whilst doing so.

OLYMPIC DAM

The Hon. M. PARNELL (15:58): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of Government Business, representing the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy, a question about seismic activity near Olympic Dam.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. PARNELL: On 26 March a magnitude 3.9 earthquake struck the north of our state. Geoscience Australia initially located the epicentre at about 10 kilometres north of the Olympic Dam mine. However, as the nearest seismographic station used to locate the earthquake was 286 kilometres away, this earthquake location is only a preliminary estimate. They did say, though, that this earthquake was unrelated to a series of tremors felt in the region over the last three weeks.

Members may know that mining-induced seismicity is an issue that goes back more than a century. When mining operations excavate rock, there is a significant change in the existing stress conditions in the surrounding rock as pressure is relieved or newly created, especially alongside changes in groundwater pressures. As far back as the 1890s in Broken Hill, an entire processing plant was swallowed up by a hole opened up by significant earth movement.

Due to the enormous size of the Olympic Dam expansion and the location of the mine on a fault line, it is in the public interest to have a much greater knowledge of seismic activity in the area. The latest tremors could be minor and inconsequential, or they could be a sign of greater activity in the future, particularly with the increase in stressors by the digging of the largest hole in the ground in the world.

I understand that located at the Olympic Dam mine site is a very advanced underground seismic data acquisition system. The problem is that, like most things connected with Olympic Dam, the data is never made public. Any data reported by BHP Billiton to the government is quite likely to be locked behind the restrictions to the Freedom of Information Act contained in the Roxby Downs (Indenture Ratification) Act. My questions are:

1. Does the government require BHP Billiton to report to it detailed seismic data from the Olympic Dam region and, if not, why not?
2. As the release of seismic data is of strong interest to geoscientists and the general public, will you commit to negotiating with BHP Billiton to ensure the public release of this data?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (16:00): I thank the honourable member for his important questions and will refer them to the Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy in another place and bring back a response.

HOUSING SA

The Hon. J.S. LEE (16:00): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Social Housing a question about housing trust accommodation availability.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S. LEE: Reported on ABC Radio on 23 March 2012, Julie Macdonald from the Housing Trust Tenants Association stated that the lack of housing trust accommodation availability is a common occurrence. She added, 'We hear stories all the time from single mums with children who are not being housed.' On 26 March, Alice Clarke, executive director of Shelter SA, confirmed on Radio Adelaide that there are 22,000 people waiting to be housed. She continued:

The reality is for people on category two and three they are never going to be housed; for the rest, who are on category one, there's about 2,000 or so people housed each year.

As a percentage, this equates to about nine per cent of housing applicants who are successful in receiving housing accommodation. Furthermore, the state Labor government is planning to sell 540 housing trust homes this financial year to raise approximately \$100 million. My questions are:

1. How many of the public housing facilities are currently occupied?
2. Can the minister confirm whether there are 22,000 disadvantaged people currently on the social housing waiting list?
3. What measures will the minister undertake to reduce the waiting list for Housing SA applicants?
4. How will the government secure housing availability for disadvantaged tenants if it is constantly running down public housing stock?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Social Housing, Minister for Disabilities, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers) (16:02): I am at a loss in some respects to know where to start with that question. It evidences, I think, a sad lack of understanding of the public housing sector in our state, but let me give you an attempt if I can. All Housing SA urban renewal projects are funded through the state budget, except for the Woodville West project, but the commonwealth is providing funds through the Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan.

Other current and recently completed renewal projects include areas such as The Parks, Westwood, Kilburn, Playford Alive, Hawkesbury Park, Northgate, Elizabeth Park, and there are several more. More than 5,400 housing outcomes have been created since these projects began. I acknowledge at the outset that we do, as a matter of policy, knock down old housing trust stock. There is a very good reason for that: they are old stock. They need to be renewed and they need to be refurbished.

The honourable member simply posits the question and then answers it as, 'Why do you do that?' It is because we want to create new housing trust stock. We want to create new and better housing trust stock to put our housing trust tenants in. Just keeping the old stock in place, trying to maintain old stock, is an never-ending cycle that just takes up more and more of Housing SA's money, which could potentially be invested in new housing stock.

That is what we are doing. We actually keep our stock and we renew it. Where we have old areas of housing trust stock, where we may have, say, 85 or even 90 per cent of housing trust owned stock, what we want to do these days, as opposed to the old days, is not to put in a new housing trust ghetto. We want to actually invest in mixed tenure, with mixed tenancies, so we have a different sort of community created.

No longer do we build in suburbs where we have 90 per cent of housing trust tenants moving in. We want to involve the private sector. We want to involve the not-for-profit, non-government sector, and we want to involve affordable housing outcomes in building entire new communities. That is what we do, and that is what we do through the Urban Renewal Authority, which is designed to do exactly that.

TASTES OF THE OUTBACK

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO (16:04): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Tourism a question about the Tastes of the Outback festivities.

Leave granted.

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: Each April, the Flinders Ranges and the Outback are the backdrop for four days of Tastes of the Outback festivities. Tastes of the Outback showcases the food and wine that the region has to offer. Will the minister tell the chamber about the 2012 event?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (16:05:): I thank the honourable member for her most important question. Our wonderful Flinders Ranges and Outback region was the place to find world-class food, wine and entertainment during the 2012 Tastes of the Outback festival held this past weekend (30 March to 1 April). I am delighted to inform members that the SATC provided funding of \$15,000 to Tastes of the Outback 2012 through its regional events and festivals program.

The event is run by a local event manager and tourism operators, and I am sure members will join me in congratulating them for what I hear was a very successful event. A range of food and wine-based events were held and I am told that these were events for the whole family to enjoy. I understand that one of the big events was the Outback Ball, which was held at the Royal Flying Doctor Service hangar in Port Augusta. The event was a sell-out, so I am told, with 300 guests attending on Saturday 31 March. Guests were rewarded with amazing sunset views of the very picturesque Flinders Ranges, and a night of fine food with lots of wine and dancing.

I understand that the three-course meal, featuring the region's local produce, was served along with Southern Flinders wines. It was pleasing to note that the proceeds from this long-running event went to benefit the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise and Your Space and FlipSyde Youth Health Services. I am advised that more than \$14,000 was raised from the auction items—and they are to be absolutely congratulated for that effort—which included holiday packages and sports memorabilia.

Other events included the Aussie Tea held at the Rawnsley Park Caravan Park and the Camp Oven Dinner on Saturday 31 March. At the North Star Hotel in Melrose the Platter That Matters event was held to allow people to consume the best of the region's seasonal cuisine with a free wine tasting of Bundaleer Wines also on offer.

The Steamtown Heritage Rail Centre at Peterborough saw what I am told was South Australia's first and only sound and light show. Attendees were also offered a taste of the outback with locally-grown olive oil and locally-grown and prepared food on offer. Visitors were also able to inspect the historic carriages which traversed the outback on the Transcontinental and The Ghan. Magnificent Wilpena Pound Resort hosted sessions of wine and native food tasting, while the Innamincka Hotel served up prime South Australian cuts, flame-grilled on redgum charcoal, all matched with South Australian wines.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I hear the honourable member groaning behind me; he is obviously very hungry! Finally, at the Wild Lime Cafe and Gallery at Blinman the multimedia exhibition was held from 30 March to 2 April. I am sure that all those who attended the Tastes of the Outback were very pleased to sample some of the amazing experiences and culinary and other delights that the region obviously has to offer.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (16:08): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing about the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: On 17 May 2011, this parliament passed the Safe Drinking Water Act 2011, and it received royal assent on 26 May last year but has yet to be proclaimed. My question is simply: what is the reason for the delay in the implementation of this legislation?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (16:09): I thank the honourable member for his very important question. I will take it on notice and refer it to the Minister for Health in another place and bring back an answer as soon as possible.

COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (16:09): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the minister representing the Premier a question about an internal consultant.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.I. LUCAS: The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, Mr McCann, is (as members might be aware) a part-time position at the moment, at 0.5, and he is paid approximately \$190,000 a year for the job as Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. Late last year the government appointed Mr McCann as an internal consultant to the Premier. Mr McCann is paid an additional sum of \$160,000 a year for being the internal consultant to the Premier, so his total package is \$350,000 a year as half-time commissioner and half-time internal consultant. My questions are:

1. Can the Premier indicate what specific tasks Mr McCann has conducted for him since October last year as an internal consultant to the Premier?
2. What are the general job and person specifications of the position of internal consultant to the Premier?
3. Can the Premier indicate how potential conflicts of interest between the two roles given to Mr McCann will be managed and resolved? That is, on the one hand he is meant to conduct an independent role as the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and, on the other hand, he is conducting internal consultancies to the Premier which, we understand, may on some occasions involve investigations in relation to either the performance or structuring of senior executive positions within the public sector.
4. Is it correct that this decision to appoint Mr McCann as an internal consultant was a decision taken by the Governor in Executive Council but that it has not been gazetted by the government, thereby avoiding any public disclosure of the decision? If that is the case, will the Premier indicate why it has not been gazetted and, therefore, why he chose to avoid public disclosure of that particular appointment?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (16:12): I thank the honourable member for his questions. I have been provided with some information about the employment arrangements of Mr Warren McCann. I have been advised that Mr McCann was appointed as the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, as per the Public Sector Act 2009, by the Governor in Executive Council for a three-year term commencing on 1 November 2011. I have been advised that Mr McCann is working full-time and that his total annual remuneration is \$350,000. This is a \$37,000 reduction from his full-time salary prior to 1 November 2011.

Mr McCann contributes approximately 50 per cent of his time to the role of commissioner and, in addition, provides internal consultancy services to the government. This involves high level

duties and special assignments assigned to him by the Premier and ministers. I have been advised that Mr McCann has completed the following reviews: the regulation of VET services for overseas students in South Australia; the review of the Cora Barclay Centre; the review of the operational performance of Housing SA; and the independent review of the Health Performance Council membership structure. Currently Mr McCann is conducting a review of accounts payment practices in the South Australian public sector and a review of Mad March.

I have been advised that Mr McCann is supported in both roles by the Office of Public Employment and Review. His internal consultancy role is supported through the secondment of staff from the relevant minister's agency, and I have been advised that this provides public servants supporting the work with valuable development opportunities and increases the internal capacity of agencies. Although Mr McCann does not undertake consultancy duties as part of his role as commissioner, his independent status provides a level of autonomy.

It is difficult to see how the nature of the reviews conducted by Mr McCann would result in a conflict of interest with his role as commissioner. However, should this arise, any conflict of interest would obviously be managed in the usual way. Other advantages in carrying out consultancy services within government include increased relevance and understanding of the issues and a more cost-effective approach than might be the case with the use of external consultants.

Just by way of background, I am advised that prior to 1 November 2011 Mr McCann led the Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity (ESPI) hosted within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Due to the revised arrangements, the creation of the Public Sector Management Division within DPC and the possible establishment of an office of public integrity, the name of the office—ESPI—no longer accurately reflected its functions. The new office is titled the Office of Public Employment and Review (OPER) and it came into operation from the date of approval of the revised employment arrangements on 1 December 2011.

I am advised that Mr McCann's appointment as Commissioner for Public Sector Employment was gazetted on 23 June 2011 and approval of the revised employment arrangement did not require additional gazettal. As we often see in this place, members of the opposition come into this place with inaccurate information, often with their facts wrong and poorly researched, as we see evidenced time and time again. Clearly, they have no shame in misleading this place.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Darley has a supplementary.

COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. J.A. DARLEY (16:17): Can the minister advise how many departments and agencies the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment has reviewed since he has held the position?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Status of Women) (16:17): The number of agencies that have requested reviews? I am happy to refer that to the Premier in another place and bring back a response.

YORKE AND MID NORTH PLANNING REVIEW FORUM

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (16:17): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for State/Local Government Relations about his attendance at the Yorke and Mid North Regional Planning Forum.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr Kandelaars has the call.

The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS: I understand that the minister recently attended the Yorke and Mid North Regional Planning Forum regarding the 2012 progress report. Will the minister provide further information on this matter?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for State/Local Government Relations) (16:18): I would like to thank the honourable member for his very

important question. I have previously informed members that, in my role as Minister for State/Local Government Relations, I have been visiting regional local government associations throughout the state. These visits give me an opportunity to talk to elected members, council staff and community volunteer groups about what issues are important to them, what challenges and barriers they face and what successes they have experienced.

On 30 March 2012, I attended the Yorke and Mid North Regional Planning Forum held in the Northern Festival Centre in Port Pirie. More than 80 community leaders met at this forum, which was jointly hosted by the central local government—

The Hon. S.G. Wade: Central local government what?

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: —region—don't panic, mate, I'll get there.

The Hon. S.G. Wade: You'll find your place somewhere.

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: I'll get there, don't worry—the Natural Resources Management Board and—

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: They hate it, minister—and Regional Development Australia.

The Hon. G.E. Gago interjecting:

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: What can I say? As I have stated in this chamber before, if it wasn't for me being out there—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable minister doesn't require any assistance from his colleagues.

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: If it wasn't for me going out there, these people would have no contact with this parliament. There are many issues that they face. As we know, the potential for benefit out in these regions due to the future mining boom is massive. It is important that ministers like myself, and there are many other ministers—I understand the Minister for Tourism and Regional Development was at Coober Pedy recently, and I actually think you were there during the earth tremor that was there—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: They did. The Hon. Tom Koutsantonis is out there quite often and any minister who has anything to do—I know that there are many comments in Port Pirie with regard to how many ministers frequent the city and how much interest they take in the future of Port Pirie. That is not only true of Port Pirie but also of Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln. All of these have great potential and great futures with this mining boom.

The Hon. D.W. Ridgway: Streaky Bay.

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY: Streaky Bay, yes. Over the course of the day, we heard about the region's strategic planning goals and measures. Topics covered on the day included economic development, health plans, infrastructure and land use planning, natural resources management, skills development, and planning for climate change and emergencies.

I was criticised a little while ago because I made the comment on television that I need to hear about these things, about the challenges, so that, when these issues are discussed in cabinet, I have some understanding of what goes on out there and I can contribute to that debate. I think that is what a responsible minister should be doing. I know that often, when we talk about certain issues, there are contributions from five or six ministers because of the fact that they are out there in the regions and they are discussing and listening to the issues of these regions.

There is a lot of optimism out there. While there are lots of challenges, there is a lot of optimism. I often hear and talk to the various mayors, the various councils and the various agencies out there. They are working towards ensuring that, if there are any benefits out of the mining boom, they are well placed to capitalise on them. These forums in themselves play quite a significant role in trying to coordinate all of these issues which need to be coordinated.

I am very excited about the potential in the Central Local Government Region. From my observations on the day and the conversations that I have had with other participants, the event

was extremely positive. We heard of the future planning of infrastructure, power, water, skill and youth. It is my intention to put the day's outcomes on the table to ensure further discussion takes place around these important issues.

MEMBER'S REMARKS

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (16:23): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: During question time, the Hon. Russell Wortley said that he was informed at Andamooka that I had only spent enough time there to pick up a slab and kick a dog. That is absolutely untrue. I was there for a meeting for two hours with APOMA—the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners' Association. At no time did I collect a slab or kick a dog. He has misrepresented—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: I drove all the way from Adelaide but I am not going to spend—

The PRESIDENT: Did you kick the slab and take the dog?

The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY: Mr President, you might think it is a joke, but I do not think it is fair to misrepresent the people he met in Andamooka and suggest that, when I was there, I picked up a slab and kicked a dog. I would ask him to withdraw the comments and correct the record.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Ridgway has made his personal explanation. If he took offence to what the honourable minister said, he should have called a point of order or some of his colleagues on his behalf should have called a point of order at the time the minister was on his feet.

At 16:25 the council adjourned until Tuesday 1 May 2012 at 14:15.