

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL****Wednesday, 7 May 2014**

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. R.P. Wortley)** took the chair at 14:17 and read prayers.

*Parliamentary Procedure***PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation (Hon. I.K. Hunter)—

Government's Response to the Natural Resources Committee's trip to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands and the Report Alinytjara Wilurara APY Ranges Sub-Region Fact Finding Visit—Camelot  
Government's Response to the State of the Environment Report South Australia 2013  
Operation of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007 Report dated December 2013

By the Minister for Water and the River Murray (Hon. I.K. Hunter)—

Save the River Murray Fund—Report, 2012-13

*Question Time***MEMBER FOR FROME, GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT**

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (14:20):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Water a question about the 'Brockument'.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY:** Tabled yesterday in this chamber was the agreement between the Premier, the government and the member for Frome, which we refer to on this side of the chamber as the 'Brockument', and I have read it. We were provided with a copy early in the piece. I think the Premier and the member for Frome released a copy very soon after the negotiations were complete.

I refer to the letter signed by the Premier, where he details a whole range of commitments that the government is prepared to make to the member for Frome and, in particular, point 4 of this letter states:

The Labor Party will commit to support the following projects which have been identified by communities in the electorate of Frome as significant to them.

Point 4.4 is the substance of my question, and it says that they will be:

Enhancing the water infrastructure to enable access to that infrastructure by the Port Pirie Golf Course, and assisting with irrigation improvements for the golf course to ensure more sustainable water use.

My questions to the minister are:

1. What enhancements are required for that access to be granted?
2. What is the time frame for delivering those enhancements?
3. What is the cost of those enhancements?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:21):** I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for his most important questions. I can advise that, having received the document, I have tasked my department to report back to me on the information that will be required to answer those questions, and I will bring a response back to the chamber when I have those answers.

**MEMBER FOR FROME, GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT**

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (14:21):** Supplementary question: how can a commitment be given by the Premier without knowing the cost and what is required? You can understand the time frame, because sometimes it never happens under this government, but the cost and what is required I can't believe that the minister doesn't know. What is the time frame and what is the cost, or was the agreement made without any reference to the time frame or the enhancements required?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:22):** I thank the honourable member for his repeated supplementary, but I refer him to my original answer.

**SA WATER**

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:22):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Water and the River Murray a question regarding SA Water.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK:** ESCOSA's report, entitled SA—Water Retail Service Performance Outcomes, revealed that South Australian water customers are continually failed by the services provided by SA Water despite paying the nation's highest water bills. For instance, in the previous financial year SA Water customers experienced more sewer, main and property connection breaks and chokes than comparable Australian water utilities customers, and SA Water customers experienced more and longer water supply interruptions than the average of comparable Australian water utilities.

My questions to the minister are:

1. Can he explain how this situation has arisen despite the fact that we are paying the highest water prices in the nation?
2. What strategies does he plan to implement to ensure that SA Water customers are better serviced?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:23):** I thank the honourable member for her most important question, and can I just say at the outset that the honourable member tries the past trick of the Liberal Party of actually only selectively quoting from the report. She doesn't advise the chamber that ESCOSA summed up the report by saying that SA Water is performing satisfactorily in a range of KPIs and matters.

*The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink interjecting:*

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** The honourable member doesn't want to talk about that. She was there. She heard the speeches. I was there with her when ESCOSA gave a glowing report about the first period of regulation under ESCOSA and of course they went through a series of measures where we accept SA Water needs to improve, but there are, of course, reasons for that which the honourable member also neglects to inform the chamber about. For example, when you compare water breakages from the Eastern States to Adelaide, you need to understand—and I am sure she does because I have said this to her before—that we have reactive clay soils in Adelaide.

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** Rubbish!

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** Oh, we don't have! The Hon. David Ridgway is the expert. He says we don't have reactive clay soils in Adelaide. I invite the Hon. Mr Ridgway to go out with a shovel in any of his company neighbourhoods, wherever he has his investment properties, and have a little dig to find out what the soils are in those properties. He'll come down to some reactive clay soils, and that is one of the things they don't have in the other states that we need to deal with.

Let me go to the particular issue. Again, I will come back in a moment and reflect on the commitment of the South Australian Liberal Party, in the lead-up to the election, on SA Water's performance and what their federal Liberal colleagues tell us privately. I have to say that it is a very

cute proposition indeed from the Liberal opposition to be talking about SA Water when we know from leaks from interstate that they had full-on plans to sell the assets of SA Water.

They had planned everything. They had it lined up. You should have seen the faces of the Liberal government in Canberra when they had to actually grapple with the fact that their \$13 billion privatisation plan had gone out of the planning stages when it came to South Australia. They had it already sewn up—they had it already sewn up.

**The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink:** We said no. That's a lie.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** The honourable member says, 'We said no.' When did they ever say no to Tony Abbott? When have they ever stood up for South Australia and said no to Tony Abbott? They roll over to have their tummy tickled every time he is in town. Let me give the honourable member a little lesson in how to read these performance reports.

Under SA Water's water industry retail licence, SA Water is required to report performance and compliance data to ESCOSA on a quarterly basis. The data in ESCOSA's performance report is from 1 January 2013 to 30 June 2013—only that period—and does not reflect improvements from this current financial year, for example. ESCOSA acknowledges that SA Water has performed satisfactorily—it is there in black and white in the report—against its regulatory obligations for this initial six-month period. However, as I said earlier, there is always room to improve on these service targets, and SA Water will endeavour to improve on those outcomes.

I understand that much of the data is based on the National Performance Report, which is a national benchmarking report prepared by the National Water Commission in conjunction with all state and territory governments. Each year, SA Water's performance, as represented in the National Performance Report, is relatively consistent and indicative of strong comparative performance with its peers. SA Water reports performance for the Adelaide metropolitan area, Mount Gambier and Whyalla, and performance across indicators, of course, can vary.

SA Water's performance during 2012-13 is favourable in comparison with its peers. SA Water was reported to have: low levels of customer complaints; the third highest percentage of customer calls answered within 30 seconds; low operating costs in metropolitan Adelaide, despite an increase of 21 per cent attributable to increased electricity costs and the water planning and management fee; the second highest percentage of effluent recycled in metropolitan Adelaide, being 32 per cent; the fifth lowest number of water main breaks per 100 kilometres of water main in metropolitan Adelaide, with satisfactory performance in the country regions as well; and a 21 per cent decrease in the average duration of water interruptions in metropolitan Adelaide and very low durations in regional areas.

There are less favourable comparisons in the report in comparison with peers interstate, including high levels of sewer mains breaks and chokes per 100 kilometres of sewer main in Adelaide and higher levels of property connection breaks and chokes per 1,000 properties in Adelaide, Mount Gambier and Whyalla. These indicators are consistently an issue due to our local environmental conditions, such as our highly reactive clay soils—which the Hon. Mr Ridgway doesn't believe we have in Adelaide.

It is a typical Liberal trait to forget about science, to forget about the evidence from our technical regulators, to forget about the technical details. No, that's not what the Liberals are worried about. 'Facts? Don't give us facts, they just get in the way of our arguments,' and we are used to that from the Liberal Party.

I come back to the proposition that the Liberal Party in South Australia wanted to privatise the assets of SA Water.

**The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink:** You know that's not true.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** Well, I do not know that, in fact. Every time you were skewered with that question, you fudged your way out of it. You fudged your way out of it. You would never ever promise you would not privatise the assets of SA Water. You never said that.

*The Hon. J.M.A. Lensink interjecting:*

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** You said you would not privatise SA Water and then when you were asked the further probing question, 'Well, what about the assets?' there was this stunned silence.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Lensink, can you let him finish his answer, please.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** The people of South Australia know full well from the last Liberal Party's privatisation efforts of electricity what that would mean. It would mean higher prices, private companies would come in and take the assets away from the states, away from the taxpayers, and charge higher prices for sewerage and higher prices for water. That is the policy the Liberals had in their packet of policies. That is the policy they did not want anybody to find out about in the state election and that is the policy that came back to haunt them from time immemorial.

Privatisation is the Liberal way. We see that at the national level with all the state Liberal governments and the federal Liberal government with their Commission of Audit saying privatise everything that moves. That is what they want to do and they have been foiled.

#### SA WATER

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:30):** Does the minister acknowledge the fact that SA Water has spent less money on pipe maintenance in recent years because it has had to spend so much money on the desal plant?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:31):** The honourable member is wrong again, and I refer her to answers to questions I gave in this place in the last session about how much expenditure we have put into those networks and she can refer back to those and get the real facts. Get the real facts. Get the real facts.

#### SA WATER

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:31):** Will the minister provide us with what the pipe and maintenance expenditure has been for the last five financial years?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:31):** Well, Mr President, I have already given those figures in this place last session. The honourable member can look up *Hansard* for them herself.

#### WATER AND SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

**The Hon. J.A. DARLEY (14:31):** I understand that 70 per cent of Adelaide's reticulated supply is through Fibrolite asbestos cement pipes. Can the minister advise: what is the average age of these pipes and what is the average lifetime expectancy of such pipes?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:32):** Indeed, sir, I do have that answer. I do have that answer, in fact, but I can't put my hands on it immediately. I will take that on notice. If I can bring it back this question time, I will attempt to do so.

#### STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (14:32):** I seek leave to make an explanation prior to directing a question to the Minister for Employment on the subject of the Department of State Development.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** The minister yesterday indicated that she had been appointed the minister responsible for the administration of this new department. Yesterday I placed on the record the fact that current chief executive, Geoff Knight, had a contract which doesn't expire until October 2017, at a total remuneration package of \$374,000. The other chief executive, Mr Ray Garrand, a former Labor staffer and State Bank adviser to former premier John Bannon, had a three-year contract expiring in August of this year and he was being paid at more than \$300,000. The minister indicated yesterday that of those two chief executives, she or the government had appointed

the former Labor Party staffer, Mr Garrand, to be the acting chief executive officer for this particular department.

The minister will be aware that another former Labor staffer to another former premier, Mr Lance Worrall, is still lurking in the corridors of her department. He was a former chief executive officer being paid more than \$300,000 per annum. He was moved sideways from that particular position or downwards, but continued to be paid at more than \$300,000 when he was made a deputy chief executive officer. He was then demoted from that position from deputy chief executive officer, and Mr Knight told the Budget and Finance Committee that—to use my words, not his—he had been put out to pasture at the University of Adelaide and he was working on a project being paid for by the taxpayers, still being paid at the chief executive salary of more than \$300,000.

Mr Knight told the Budget and Finance Committee that he had been seconded there for a period of 12 months, and his period of secondment commenced on 10 May 2013, so his 12-month secondment concludes this week. As I said, the taxpayers of South Australia are still paying former Labor staffer Mr Worrall more than \$300,000 for whatever job he is doing at the University of Adelaide.

Given that the minister has now indicated that she is the minister responsible for this department, my questions are: what job will Mr Worrall be undertaking when his 12-month secondment to the university concludes this week, and will taxpayers continue to pay for Mr Worrall at the chief executive salary from this week through to June 2015, when his most recent chief executive's contract expires?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:35):** I thank the member for his question. As I indicated yesterday, up until 30 June both the current chief executives—Mr Ray Garrand and Mr Geoff Knight—will continue in their current roles in operational matters of their respective agencies. I also indicated that Mr Ray Garrand has been appointed as interim acting chief executive for the joint agency, the Department of State Development, and will lead the executive for facilitating the transition to the Department of State Development.

I indicated that I had been appointed the minister responsible for the administration of the new department but that respective ministers will still continue with their portfolio responsibilities within that and that the chief executive will report to them in relation to that. I am responsible for administering the transition arrangements of the Department of State Development, so my current responsibilities relate to the transition arrangements of both DMITRE and DFEEST into a new state development department.

#### STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (14:37):** Supplementary question. As interesting as that was, my question was: regarding Mr Worrall, who is within DMITRE and therefore part of the ongoing responsibility of the minister, what will be his position and what job of work will he be undertaking as from the end of this week when his 12-month secondment at the University of Adelaide concludes and his contract still continues until June next year?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:37):** As I indicated yesterday, detailed arrangements for staffing and location of particular operations are still under discussion and consideration. Those details are yet to be fully resolved.

#### STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (14:38):** A further supplementary: does the minister believe that taxpayers are getting value for money from Mr Worrall, who continues to be paid more than \$300,000 and who is now doing nothing for the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy, or indeed for the other department, DFEEST?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:38):** I have given my answer, Mr President.

**STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (14:38):** A supplementary: can the minister assure the council that after the transition, when a new CEO is appointed, it will be an independent assessment removed from the ministers, with respect to that appointment (be it Mr Garrand, Mr Knight or any other person, for that matter), given the fact that so many appointments have been made recently directly by a minister and cabinet, and not on merit at all?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:39):** Like all positions in this government and our Public Service, they are awarded on merit. The best person gets the job.

**The PRESIDENT:** If you want to hear her, people should have respect and let her answer without any interruption. She gave an answer; you will have to read it in *Hansard*.

**STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (14:39):** By way of supplementary question, how many individual ministers have responsibility for sections of the Department of State Development?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:39):** I think it is about four or five at this point in time.

**The Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins:** You're sure it's not six?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO:** Four or 5.

**WATER AND SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE**

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:40):** By leave of the council, I wish to answer the question asked of me by the Hon. Mr Darley a few minutes ago, which I took on notice. I am advised that approximately 45 per cent of the water distribution pipes in SA Water's statewide distribution network are made of asbestos cement, with similar percentages in the metropolitan and regional areas. I understand that repairs to asbestos cement pipes are carried out by Allwater in the metropolitan area and by SA Water in the regional areas. Asbestos cement pipe is bonded asbestos-containing material, that is, it is non-friable, which can become friable from damage, disturbance or deterioration.

I am advised that, provided the correct precautions are taken, repairing asbestos cement pipes does not pose a risk to maintenance personnel. Common modes of failures of asbestos cement pipes are: circumference cracks from soil movement—that is, reactive clay or soil we were talking about earlier that the Hon. Mr Ridgway does not think we have in Adelaide—or pressure-related longitudinal splits. I am advised that the former can often be repaired with a repair band without the need to remove the pipe; the latter normally requires a collar to be broken and the damaged length of pipe removed.

I understand that both Allwater and SA Water have their own established standard work procedures for handling asbestos cement pipes and provide training to employees on them. The key requirements of the procedure include wearing personal protective equipment, keeping the pipe wet and cutting of the asbestos cement pipe with non-powered hand tools to minimise dust, using a drop sheet under the pipe to collect any cut-offs, collecting and wrapping in polyethylene any removed pieces of asbestos cement pipe, and storing of wrapped asbestos cement pipe in a designated waste disposal bin for subsequent disposal to a licensed facility.

The amounts of asbestos cement pipe required to be removed are normally below the threshold specified for a licensed contractor to be engaged. I am advised that during repairs members of the public are kept well away from the trench by placing traffic control devices around the excavation, and placing an observer at the site. Asbestos cement pipes have not been installed in South Australia since the late 1980s, I am told, having been largely replaced by uPVC and ductile iron pipe, and when asbestos cement pipes are replaced the old main is left in situ and the new main laid alongside. I hope that information helps the honourable member.

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** That is not what he asked.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** And had you listened you would have got it in the first sentence.

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** He asked what its life expectancy is—you never ever answer the question.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Hon. Mr Ridgway, the Hon. Mr Kandelaars is on his feet.

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (14:42):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question about vocational education and training.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS:** The Commission of Audit released its report on 1 May 2014, and so far many of the recommendations have caused much anguish and concern to the people of South Australia. Can the minister explain to the chamber the likely impact of recommendations relating to vocation, education and training?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:43):** I thank the honourable member for his most important question. I certainly agree with the honourable member that the release of the report has raised many concerns from large sections of our community. It has raised significant concerns for most of us, and one would be hard pressed to find a section of the community that would not be simply worried sick about the recommendations contained in that Commission of Audit report. Whether they be aged pensioners, workers, families in receipt of family payment benefits, people on the land dependent on things like fuel rebates, young people, people with a disability, industry and exporters or university students—all are feeling incredibly anxious and distressed about the implications of those recommendations contained in that audit report.

We know that the federal Liberal government agenda is to make deep cuts. It has made clear signals about dismantling our NDIS, our Medicare system—eating into basic and fundamental services that support the basic needs of many, many people in our community.

It can be difficult to rank these appalling recommendations, but of particular concern in my area of responsibility are the recommendations that attack the very fabric of vocational education and training, in particular, the abolition of the commonwealth vocational education and training programs, including support for pensioners.

I am advised that, if these recommendations were realised, it could mean the Abbott Liberal government would rip out anything up to \$74.6 million, perhaps even more, from young people looking to gain a trade qualification, people looking to upskill and people wanting to gain recognised qualifications. If this money was removed, it could have significant implications for our youth at a time when the full-time youth unemployment figures (that's leaving out students, and I talked about this yesterday) were 6.2 per cent in February of this year, and that actually fell to 4.4 per cent in March this year, which is below the national average. As I said, I commented on that yesterday.

Some of the programs that assist young people gaining skills and finding employment that the audit commission explicitly recommends abolishing are things like the National Workforce Development Fund and apprenticeship incentives. The commission's other recommendations mean that Skills Connect, workplace literacy and apprentice support programs and the Joint Group Training Program are all likely to be targeted adversely.

That is appalling, Mr President—absolutely appalling—but I am advised it doesn't even stop there. They want to abolish the Enterprise Solutions Program, they want to abolish the Small Business Advisory Services program, and they want to abolish the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. They are all earmarked to go. The Abbott government-commissioned report wants to shift responsibility for programs to the states but doesn't talk about transferring the revenue.

The good news for South Australians is that this Labor Weatherill government will stand up for South Australians. We are not afraid to fight for the interests of South Australians, and we have the courage and the fortitude to stand up to these Liberal governments that seek to undermine the very fabric of our society.

While the Abbott government commissions reports that recommend slashing \$74.6 million for vocational education and apprenticeships, this Labor government has a \$120 million strategy to support people into training, gaining new skills and jobs. We will always stand up for training, skills and jobs and for South Australians. That is in our DNA, whereas slashing and burning is in the DNA of the Liberal Party.

That is why this Labor government has invested heavily in our jobs plan and Skills for All, a training program that supports all state government strategic priorities, in that a skilled workforce underpins the achievement of social and economic development. Skills for All has attracted over 200 Skills for All training providers, offering more than 900 courses to South Australians, and in 2013 Skills for All funded 134,900 course enrolments, attracting more people to training and generating an increase on the 84,300 enrolments in 2012. This meant approximately 50,000 additional enrolments in government-funded courses—an additional 50,000 enrolments.

We won't stop there. Over the next three years, our jobs plan will support more than 14,000 people to find work in their local communities. We will support 20,000 South Australians without a job or a formal qualification, while the Abbott Liberal government has a report that gives them a mandate to slash support to industry and business and the people of South Australia. This Labor government will continue to build a stronger South Australia in partnership with industry, in partnership with business, in partnership with the not-for-profit sector and in partnership with the people and communities of South Australia.

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (14:49):** My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. Will the minister inform the chamber about the impact of the National Commission of Audit's recommendations in relation to Indigenous affairs?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:49):** In reflecting on what the federal Liberal Party in government is doing, we have to remind ourselves, of course, that this is what the state Liberals promised the South Australian electorate at the election: a commission of audit. We are seeing what a Liberal commission of audit looks like now. It is an outrage. Of course, it is a softening-up exercise that they are engaging in, but the real horrors will come in the federal budget.

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** You're pretty soft already.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** They say that, Mr Ridgway. They say that, indeed, and I am very pleased to be considered an old softy by you. Closing the Gap is a goal that all Australians must take seriously, I would suggest, if we are to break the cycle of Aboriginal disadvantage in this country. It is a goal that requires a partnership approach, a great deal of dialogue and mutual understanding if we are to succeed at our aims.

The Weatherill Labor government is committed to ensuring that the opportunities for Aboriginal people are shaped by choice, not by chance, in life. We have worked very hard to establish a good collaborative relationship with Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people must be at the helm making choices about their own destiny. That is fundamental to the concept of self-determination. For this to occur, we need to have strong relationships, but also mutual respect and an open dialogue with our Aboriginal peoples across the state.

This government has been very committed to a genuine and inclusive dialogue with South Australia's Aboriginal communities and their leadership. We have established the South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council to support the government in the appropriateness of its policies and programs with respect to Aboriginal people. On the recommendation of the advisory council, we created the Office of the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement to ensure an independent Aboriginal voice prevailed in discussions about broader policy decisions.

Aboriginal South Australians deserve sustainable, effective and accountable political representation across all of their interests. This is what must be at the forefront of our minds as we work to develop better ways to create opportunities for future generations.

This government will introduce legislation to recognise self-governance for South Australia's Aboriginal communities. This legislation will also recognise the unique cultural identity of Aboriginal



communities and set out guiding principles for cooperation between the different levels of governance and those Aboriginal communities. It will be complemented by community capacity-building initiatives that will improve the governance of Aboriginal organisations.

Such a partnership approach seems to have been ignored by the federal Liberal government—and also the Liberal opposition, but particularly the federal Liberal government—in its National Commission of Audit. I doubt that anyone could have missed the controversies surrounding the various recommendations contained in the commission's recently released reports, albeit they may have been deliberately manufactured to be controversial. As I said, it is part of a softening-up exercise. Nonetheless, they do show what Liberal governments look like, and it is a salient feature for us in South Australia to look at what a commission of audit—which was promised by the state Liberal Party—might look like.

The recommendations made in respect of Aboriginal Affairs have the potential to significantly set our efforts back decades. Most importantly, the recommendations were made without consultation with Aboriginal people, who are at the very heart of the services that the commission has reviewed.

I am aware that the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples has already strongly criticised the commission's recommendations. There is no surprise there. The congress is a growing community-owned and operated organisation that has a national role to defend the rights of the Indigenous peoples of this country and to deliver self-determination. Today it has, I am told, over 8,000 individual members. The congress is a direct expression of Australia's First Peoples' desire for self-determination.

Congress summed up the problem perfectly when it said that it would like to see 'government change the way it does business so that nothing is decided about us without us'. We should all agree with that very, very basic understanding about how to deal with these communities. We should be respecting them and working with them, not doing to them. The recommendations made by the commission, however, are far reaching. They include:

- collapsing about 150 Indigenous programs and activities down into six or seven;
- cutting Indigenous programs to fund a means-tested and needs-based education voucher program for Indigenous children;
- discontinuing the \$15 million in funding announced in last year's budget and included in this year's budget forward estimates for the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples;
- merging the Indigenous Land Corporation with Indigenous Business Australia; and
- reviewing with a view to merge, abolish or transfer—who knows——Aboriginal Hostels Ltd; four Northern Territory land councils; the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; the Torres Strait Regional Authority; and the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council.

These wideranging policy changes have the potential to severely impact programs and services for Aboriginal people across the country.

While there is merit, of course, in reviewing programs to ensure that they are delivering the best outcomes for Aboriginal people, the fundamental damage caused by these recommendations, if they are put into practice, is that they were done in isolation from Aboriginal people. They are being done to Aboriginal people without consultation, without their ability to play a role in this decision-making process. The danger, of course, is that this will be interpreted as a decision to oppose the rights of Indigenous peoples to that very self-determination they claim for themselves.

It is sad to say that we probably should not be surprised at this direction by the federal Liberal government. The Abbott government has already made a series of decisions that will severely impact services for Aboriginal people. They have already cut funding to the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, they have axed the position of Coordinator-General for Remote Indigenous Services, they have slashed Aboriginal legal aid by \$13.4 million, and they have given, at the same time as slashing legal aid to Aboriginal communities, \$2.2 million to farmers and miners to fight native title claims.

What have my comrades opposite had to say about the commission's recommendations and the other cuts implemented by the federal Liberal government? Hear that, Mr President? Nothing at all—absolutely nothing, not one skerrick of criticism of these Liberal cuts. Perhaps it is time that honourable members gave up their tactic of remaining absolutely silent when the federal Liberal Party comes into town to make significant cuts to the South Australian community, particularly to Indigenous programs.

No wonder the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples is deeply concerned at what it considers to be a flawed and shallow process, this National Commission of Audit—but that is what they would have got here in South Australia had the Liberal opposition won the last election.

I encourage those opposite to work with the government in a way that is productive, inclusive and seeks to put Aboriginal people at the heart of our solutions. I invite them to do so, but I sadly think that they are just going to kowtow to Tony Abbott and the way he does business.

### DEPARTMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

**The Hon. J.A. DARLEY (14:57):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Leader of the Government, representing the Premier, a question regarding internal departmental investigations.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.A. DARLEY:** On Saturday 3 May, *The Advertiser* printed a story regarding internal departmental investigations. In the story, the head of ICAC, Bruce Lander, speaks of his 'plans to end the culture of cover-ups in state government departments that are tasked with investigating themselves'. In the article, Mr Lander is quoted as saying:

There is a culture in some of the agencies that you investigate matters to exonerate the department, to arrive at a result that won't cause embarrassment. I find that completely unacceptable.

Can the Premier advise how the government intends to respond to Mr Lander's comments and outline what, if any, changes will be made with regard to internal departmental investigations?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (14:58):** I thank the honourable member for his important question. I will refer that question to the Attorney-General in another place and bring back a response.

### PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (14:58):** My questions are to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation and other portfolios:

1. Can the minister explain to the house why he now has responsibility for agriculture, fisheries and forests in the Legislative Council after the Leader of the Government having been minister for agriculture, fisheries and forests for several years?

2. Is this confirmation that this government does not care about agriculture, fisheries and forests?

3. What qualifications does the minister have as an environment minister that the leader of government business in this house does not have or did have and is not being used when it comes to agriculture, fisheries and forests?

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation) (14:59):** I can hardly contain myself. I thank the honourable member for his most pathetic question to me—the most pathetic I think I have had in my very short career in this place. The honourable member, clearly, despite having been a Liberal Party minister in the other place in a previous lifetime, would understand—I would have thought, I would have hoped—how the machinery of government is represented in this place: that we have representatives in the lower house who represent our portfolios and consequently we, the two of us up here, share the whole burden of representing the ministerial portfolios in the other place.

The honourable member may have a different point of view about who should have what division but, frankly, it does not make a lot of difference. We both give quality service to this chamber

in our representative duties and will continue to do so whichever portfolios are allocated to us from time to time. I won't draw any conclusions on the qualifications of the honourable questioner in terms of his ability to represent not now the Liberal Party, of course, but Family First in this chamber, and what qualifications you need to make such a terrible hash of the job of a ministry where you take out your ministerial staff with you to go doorknocking in your own electorate. What sort of qualifications do you need to be a minister—

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE:** Point of order, Mr President.

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER:** —in the Liberal government, I have to say. What sort of qualifications—

**The PRESIDENT:** Point of order. Minister, he has a point of order.

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE:** I am very happy to have a debate on this. Let's look at the last election and where ministers now went with their staff. Be very careful what you say because I happen to know what was going on in the last few months.

### TAFE SA

**The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS (15:01):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question regarding the future of the Murray Bridge TAFE campus.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS:** The very hardworking member for Hammond has recently been informed of a number of job cuts and program closures at the Murray Bridge TAFE campus raising fears that the state government is planning on closing this vitally important regional campus. My questions are:

1. Will the minister confirm the number of staff cuts at the Murray Bridge TAFE campus?
2. Will the minister confirm plans to shut down the automotive training centre for subsequent further job cuts at the Murray Bridge TAFE campus?
3. What plans does the state government have for the future of the Murray Bridge TAFE campus?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:02):** I thank the honourable member for his most important questions. The operational matters of TAFE SA are conducted through an independent statutory authority, and that is their responsibility and that of the independent board to make the day-to-day operational decisions of staffing and also matters such as courses that are available. We know that the training and education needs of the general public develop, change and alter with time and, as technology changes, we have different challenges before us and different pressures on us and we need to have a training and education system that equips people to be able to conduct themselves in the workforce in an appropriate way with contemporary skills.

So, of course, our training operations change in an ongoing way. They are always changing. Courses change, they develop, they have bits added on, and bits taken off; some new courses come, and old courses go. Decisions are made to ensure that we remain relevant and contemporary to our industry needs as their needs change in this contemporary climate. As I said, those matters are operational. Changes occur from time to time and they are matters for the TAFE board.

In relation to the ongoing future of the Murray Bridge TAFE campus, to the best of my knowledge, I am not aware of any proposed changes to the ongoing future of TAFE services being provided at that campus. It is a strategically located campus, it is a very important campus and, to the best of my knowledge, it has a long and healthy future at that site. It would be irresponsible of me, and also it goes beyond my realm of responsibility, to be making any guarantees about particular staffing numbers and particular course content.

### TAFE SA

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:04):** I have a supplementary question arising from the answer. Does the minister believe that under our current TAFE structure women's studies remains relevant and contemporary?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:05):** I certainly do. Women's studies is a most important course that is conducted here in South Australia. TAFE SA is the only educational facility that currently provides women's studies. They are provided at a range of different campuses throughout the state. Again, I am aware—and this is probably what the member is alluding to—that there have been some recent changes to I think it is the Noarlunga campus for the classes conducted this particular semester. Alternatives have been put in place for those students affected by those course changes, and we are obviously monitoring that very carefully and hope to have as many classes as possible reinstated in the next semester.

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Mr Brokenshire, the minister was answering your question a while ago, when you got up and made a point of order. You might not have liked his answer, but there was definitely no point of order there, and I think there could have been other ways of expressing your concerns about his question. The Hon. Mr Gazzola.

### SEAGRASS

**The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA (15:06):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Science and Information Economy a question about the health map of gulf seagrass.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.M. GAZZOLA:** I understand that this week SA Water has begun the testing phase of a research project to develop a more efficient and effective way of mapping seagrass in South Australia's Gulf St Vincent. Can the minister provide the chamber with more information?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:07):** I thank the honourable member for his most important question. I acknowledge his ongoing interest in these important matters. The Hon. John Gazzola has a deep and abiding passion with our ocean and the condition of the seabed. He is aware that seagrass plays a vital role in the health of our seabed. He also understands that a healthy seabed contributes to a healthy ocean environment and more healthy fish available for the honourable member to fish, and he is a very proficient fisherman.

This project that the honourable member refers to is a very important one to me and also to my colleague minister Hunter. It cuts across both portfolios. The project being done is in collaboration with the Taiwan-based National Cheng Kung University (NCKU) and also the Instrument Technology Research Center (ITRC). This collaboration is supported by the Premier's Research and Industry Fund through a \$300,000 international research grant received last year.

I understand that SA Water and NCKU have worked together in the past on a number of other research ventures. I am advised that last year they created the Global Water Quality Research Centre in Taiwan along with the China Steel Corporation. As members are aware, the Premier's Research and Industry Fund is managed by the Office of Science Technology and Research (OSTR), which is part of DFEEST.

The fund consists of five strategic programs. The SA Research Fellowship program is designed to attract eminent researchers to South Australia. The Collaboration Pathway program is open to all South Australia-based public or private research educational organisations to support both established and early stage collaborations undertake R&D activities aligned with our strategic state priorities, and this also includes the CRC assistance program.

The Innovation Voucher program encourages greater innovation in advanced manufacturing. Catalyst research grants are also provided through the fund to support early career researchers, and the fund also includes, as I have mentioned, the International Research Grant program. As I said, this particular project was made possible through an international research grant. The intent of the Premier's Research and Industry Fund—International Research Grants is to support and facilitate

South Australian scientific and technological research being conducted with an international partner and target research activities with outputs that are of strategic benefit to South Australia.

International research grants are very important because they drive innovation through global partnerships and collaboration and also because they ensure that our researchers have access to the most relevant and up-to-date information from around the world.

The joint project will evaluate advanced technology involving an underwater sensor towed behind a boat that can generate a detailed map of the coastal seabed. This technology is seen as a significant improvement on the traditional mapping method of aerial photography, which can be obviously very costly and is unable to collect what is referred to as 'digital hyperspectral information', which provides more accurate and clearer images.

Through the collaboration, technology is being brought to South Australia to test and develop underwater, satellite and remote sensor technology to better map the seagrass and coastal reef communities in parts of the metropolitan coast of St Vincent. I understand that this optical sensing technology holds the potential to be applied in other innovative environmental and water quality monitoring uses. For example, the sensors may also ultimately be used to monitor and manage water quality in both the ocean and reservoirs.

Over the next year, I am advised that data will be also be collected from airborne sensors, such as remote-controlled drones and satellites which will help build larger scale sea-floor maps. I understand that further fieldwork on the project is scheduled to be undertaken between July and August this year.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the project will give the research team a good picture of the health of the seagrass, and as you are aware, Mr President, there are actually more than 9,500 square kilometres of seagrass along South Australia's coastline and, as we know, seagrass provides much needed habitat to a wide range of marine species. It has other environmental benefits, too, such as preventing erosion and things like sand drift in particular.

I would like to welcome the scientists from the NCKU and the ITRC who have been here in Adelaide from 5 to 9 May.

#### YARROW PLACE

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:12):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for the Status of Women regarding the topic of her answer to the question I asked yesterday on Yarrow Place rape crisis counselling.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS:** In this place yesterday, in response to my question as to whether she had responded to the YWCA on the issue of women in particular, but anyone who had been raped or sexually assaulted and that incident having occurred more than seven days ago, having to wait a period of six to eight weeks for counselling at Yarrow Place, the minister replied:

To the best of my knowledge, I am not aware of that particular statistic the honourable member has provided to the chamber. I would be very pleased to look into those details and work with the Minister for Health to address improving our services wherever we possibly can.

I draw the minister's attention to the letter she wrote to the YWCA, dated 21 February, in which she thanked them for the opportunity to respond to their position statement ahead of the 2014 election and indeed specifically noted, with regard to their concern that there needed to be increased funding for rape and sexual assault services to ensure that they are able to commit to a maximum two-week wait for the first counselling session for any person who reports rape or sexual assault and requests counselling, that 'a re-elected Labor government will continue to look at ways to reduce counselling waiting times'.

I ask the minister again: has she advocated for an increase to funding for Yarrow Place in this current budget round, and what has she done between 21 February and the current date to advocate on this issue?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:14):** My answer still stands. The honourable member

brought in information to the chamber about the wait periods, and she put specific times on the table. What I said in this place was that I was not aware of those statistics, and I'm not.

We have done a correspondence check, and I'm not aware that that length of wait for those services was current, and I'm still not sure whether that is so or not, but I take the honourable member at her word. Unlike the members opposite me, she actually does come into this place well researched and well informed. What I did was be completely honest. I was unaware of those particular figures, but I am prepared to look into it to have those verified and do what I can. My responses are completely consistent with the responses I gave to the Young Christians—

**The Hon. T.A. Franks:** The YWCA.

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO:** Thank you.

#### YARROW PLACE

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:15):** A supplementary: does the minister recognise that this was a front-page *Advertiser* story earlier this year and that in fact the Liberals committed to the funding required?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:15):** I can only reiterate that I have given an open, honest and frank answer. I have said that to the best of my knowledge I am not aware of those particular statistics. They have not been brought to my attention, to the best of my knowledge. What more can I say?

I accept that the honourable member says that they were in *The Advertiser*; I accept that they were possibly in *The Advertiser*, but I don't see everything that is written in every paper. I have given an honest answer: I said that I am not aware. You can raise it as many times and in as many ways as you like, but my answer remains the same: I am unaware.

As I said, I went back to my office yesterday and asked them to do a correspondence check to see whether any information had come into my office about the length of waiting times for those particular services, but so far it has come up negative. All I can do is reiterate that I am prepared to look into those and do whatever I can to improve services if there are undue waiting times.

#### STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (15:17):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Please allow Ms Lee to ask her question. The minister responsible probably won't hear it.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE:** Thank you, Mr President. I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills a question about the merger of two government departments.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE:** I refer to the announcement made by the Weatherill government in relation to the creation of the new state development department through the merger of the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology and the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy. There seems to be a lot of confusion out there—some of which has already been raised by the Hon. Rob Lucas—and the public needs to know the impact of the merger. My questions are:

1. Can the minister confirm how many FTEs will be cut from the merging departments and where those FTEs savings will be found?
2. Will there be any changes to tenancy and accommodation arrangements; if so, what will be the total cost of those arrangements?

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (15:18):** I thank the honourable member for her most important questions. In the announcements of a new Department of State Development—which includes the amalgamation of DFEEST and DMITRE—it was indicated that an estimated 20 FTEs are likely to be savings in that amalgamation. The exact location of those FTEs still needs to be worked through but, in terms of areas where there is possible duplication or replication and improved efficiencies, through the combined efforts of agencies that have similar operations, particularly back of house operations, it's estimated that there is a potential 20 FTE saving.

In relation to the details of those other matters, as I have indicated, a process has been established to help work through those transition arrangements. It is a time of change, and I certainly acknowledge that it does cause anxiety when people are uncertain. However, we seek to work through those issues as quickly and as efficiently as we can.

The benefits of the new agency will be significant. It will be a great economic driving agency for this state. It will help drive and leverage growth in the economy. It will have a major role in administering our job plan. It will help coordinate the government's engagement with small to medium businesses and help foster innovation and growth in investment and trade, and bring together the responsibility for skills, employment and science.

There will be many benefits from this and, as I said, we are working through those operational issues as quickly and as efficiently as we can.

#### *Matters of Interest*

#### **PEER VEET**

**The Hon. G.A. KANDELAARS (15:21):** Recently I represented the Premier at the PEER VEET annual graduation awards evening. The Master of Ceremonies for the awards evening was well-known media personality, Mark Aiston. Distinguished guests included the Governor His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, who officially opened the awards evening; Senator Penny Wong, who was guest speaker for the evening; Mark Butler, federal member for Port Adelaide; and, David Pisoni, member for Unley in the other place.

Over 400 people attended the evening, which was a great success. The night saw 130 apprentices graduate in electrical, plumbing, data communications, and refrigeration and air-conditioning trades, as well as trainees in security installation and the business field. In addition, the awards were presented to high achievers in various trades and categories for their significant effort.

PEER VEET was originally established in 1986 and is managed through a bipartite board of employer and union representatives. PEER VEET is a registered training organisation and a group training organisation which employs over 500 trainees and apprentices and provided training to over 3,000 industry participants last year. In fact, PEER VEET was awarded the Large Training Provider of the Year Award in 2013 at the South Australian Training Awards. This is arguably the highest achievement award an industry organisation can achieve in the South Australian training industry. PEER VEET previously won the Small Training Provider of the Year Award in 2007.

In his opening address, the Governor His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce acknowledged on behalf of PEER VEET the support it receives from both state and federal governments, as well as the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB). Without this support PEER VEET would not be able to offer the level of assistance that apprentices and trainee students deserve and receive. This valuable industry assistance allowed PEER VEET to employ and train apprentices and trainees to the highest standards, which ensures that graduates have the support, confidence and knowledge they need to successfully enter the building and construction industry.

Senator Wong's speech applauded and encouraged students as they move towards their future career. Her speech highlighted the importance of education, telling her personal and family story to demonstrate a real-life example of resilience and optimism. Senator Wong highlighted the limited education of her Malaysian grandmother, who had little formal education. She then went on to talk about the opportunities that opened up for her father as a result of his winning a scholarship through the Colombo Plan. This saw him gain a degree from the University of Adelaide, where Senator Wong herself was later to graduate. Senator Wong told how this had opened up opportunities for her father that she and her family ultimately benefited from. She also pointed out

that education never stops and that it will be important for graduates to continue to upgrade their skills and knowledge throughout their lives.

Like all other educational pursuits and undertakings, completing an apprenticeship and traineeship involves hardship, dedication and sacrifice. Apprentices and trainees receive a significant amount of help from a great number of people, including trainers, field officers, behind-the-scenes staff members, host employers and, most importantly, supportive family members and friends. I congratulate each and every one of them for their efforts.

As I have mentioned, over the past few years PEER VEET and its students have had considerable success in other external industry awards at both state and national level. Credit for this, in no short order, is the result of the encouragement and dedication of PEER VEET staff and also of the motivation of students to continually achieve excellence. I congratulate all of the PEER VEET graduates and winners and I wish them well for the next stage of their lives.

### LABOR PARTY

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (15:26):** At a time when the state's unemployment rate has peaked at 7 per cent, and youth unemployment at over 40 per cent in some areas of South Australia, it has been an unedifying spectacle in recent weeks to see that the only issues of concern to members of the incoming Labor government have been who can knife whom and who can grasp the perks and spoils of office for themselves.

Mr President, as you would well know, former president Mr Gazzola was knifed by Labor Party colleagues in the caucus and in this chamber, and you, Mr President, assumed the office with the support of the all-powerful right-wing faction of the Labor Party. As you will be aware as well, Mr President, your wife, the member for Torrens, also joined the spoils of office, as I understand it, yesterday, and has been awarded with two paid committee positions in the House of Assembly. I guess one will have to wait and see whether the member for Torrens will also be appointed chair of a committee.

I can imagine the difficulties there will be in the Wortley household in the future, should she assume the position of chair of a committee, with a taxpayer-funded car and driver. The Wortley family household will have to extend the garage, I expect, for the line-up of taxpayer-funded cars that might be available for the Wortley household—both taxpayer-funded and chauffeur driven taxpayer-funded cars. I guess we will have to wait and see in relation to what the future holds.

That has been the unedifying spectacle I think for the people of South Australia. It appears that all the Labor Party has been concerned about is not the 7 per cent unemployment rate but who can grab what spoils of office in relation to the perks that can be spread. Clearly, the powerful right faction of the party has decided that they are going to get as much as they can for themselves. They have installed one of their own as the president. The Hon. Mr Kandelaars, I understand, is on four committees and will be chair of three of them. I think, on a rough calculation, the perk of office is almost \$80,000 extra in terms of paid committee positions.

In part, that is caused by the hatred that exists within the Labor caucus here. The Hon. Mr Gazzola has refused to take any paid committee position, as we understand it. He is not speaking to some members of the Labor caucus in the Legislative Council. There was formerly a strong friendship between the Hon. Mr Maher and Mr Gazzola and there has been a huge falling out between those two over recent weeks and, of course, a very strong fallout between yourself and Mr Gazzola as well. This is not going to make for good governance, this sort of hatred that exists within the Australian Labor Party.

The other issue I want to raise is in relation to some questions that have been asked of minister Close about the appointment of the new Commissioner for Public Employment. The minister says that she has not turned her attention to that particular issue as yet, but a whistleblower has informed me that minister Close and the Premier intend to appoint Ms Erma Ranieri to replace Mr McCann, and Mr McCann, who was meant to finish in October of this year, will conclude early. I am advised that Ms Ranieri has already spoken to staff and advised them that Mr McCann will be leaving before October and that she (Ms Ranieri) will be assuming the appointment of that particular position.

I am lodging freedom of information requests today in relation to a number of these issues. Certainly, if evidence is turned up to back what the whistleblower has indicated, then clearly what



minister Close has told the House of Assembly in relation to these issues is wrong and she has misled the House of Assembly. Time will tell whether or not the information the whistleblower has provided to the Liberal Party is correct. The freedom of information documentation, I guess after some weeks or months, will turn up the evidence one way or another in relation to the accuracy of the statement that minister Close has put on the public record in the House of Assembly.

### **CO-OP COFFEE SHOP**

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:31):** I rise today to speak on a positive note about the Co-Op Coffee Shop that is about to open on Currie Street. The Co-Op Coffee Shop was an idea constructed by a group of people interested in a new paradigm about how workplaces operate. What has been created is a workers cooperative. These people are committed to running the cooperative democratically, being an inclusive space serving the community and serving ethical vegetarian food and drinks. Everyone who works at the cafe is a worker-owner, meaning that they work in and are also owners of the cafe. There are nine partners in this not-for-profit venture and the cafe will focus on organic and vegetarian food made from local produce.

What is truly remarkable about the business model the Co-Op Coffee Shop will be adopting is that they will share decision-making, authority, profits and liability subjects. The business will be democratically and equitably run to benefit all members and not be hierarchical. The members will use consensus to come to their decisions.

In this business there is no boss and there is no profit motive, which might be anathema to some in this chamber. It is a different way of doing things; indeed, it is a successful way of doing things. Everyone will be paid the same amount for their work and they are all offered the same hours of work. The workers are paid for the hours they work and any profits that come from the business are reinvested into the coffee shop or, indeed, as a pay rise for all members. All workers will share the responsibility of running the cafe and it will be totally worker owned and controlled.

The reason I am mentioning the Co-Op Coffee Shop today is that I want to highlight this business model. Running a co-op business in Adelaide, and especially in the CBD, is actually quite a rarity, and registering the business has been a challenge. However, this business model is great at achieving a fair and democratic workplace and it is very empowering for workers.

The model works on the assumption that workers value a more humanised workplace where all input can improve the business. That might be a rarity in Adelaide, but they are a well-established business type around the world. In fact, according to the International Cooperative Alliance, co-ops provide 100 million jobs worldwide—that is 20 per cent more than multinational enterprises. If one were to combine the economic activity of the 300 largest cooperatives in the world, that economic activity would equate to the tenth largest national economy. Thus you can see that cooperatives are providing an excellent opportunity here for Adelaide workers and businesses.

The Co-Op Coffee Shop is aiming to set a precedent so that future co-ops will be easier to set up in Adelaide and, indeed, South Australia. I encourage members to take a look at this exciting new enterprise. For those who believe in supporting both living wages for people and worker empowerment, it is certainly something that we should be looking to support in this place. I wish this excellent initiative in Adelaide all the best for next month's opening.

### **ADELAIDE AND SHANGHAI JIAO TONG UNIVERSITIES**

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (15:34):** I rise to speak about the recent signing of the memorandum of understanding between the University of Adelaide and the Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Last week I was invited to be part of a meeting between these two universities. It was a significant occasion and a valuable opportunity to meet with the delegation from the Shanghai Jiao Tong University, including Professor Dan Wu, Vice President of that university.

The University of Adelaide's Roseworthy and Waite campuses are two world-renowned research facilities in the agricultural science discipline. They incorporate other research centres, including SARDI and the CSIRO. Collectively, the campuses are home to some of the best academic and research expertise in resource management, agriculture, food and wine production, and nutrition.

In a demonstration of the quality of science programs at Adelaide University, I recently had the privilege of attending the science faculty graduation, and I was able to congratulate several

hundred students on the completion of their degrees. Many of the students who achieved their research degrees highlighted the significant talent and high quality of research coming out of the University of Adelaide science faculty, particularly in the area of agricultural science. I would like to thank the university and, in particular, Leah, Director of Stakeholder Relations, for welcoming me to that ceremony.

Recently, I also had the honour of presenting the Lois Harris Scholarship to William Fairlie on behalf of the Advisory Board of Agriculture. The scholarship is awarded to the person starting a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree who has achieved the highest TER score. William is studying a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Adelaide University and was recognised for the award. He is the son of a farming family from Roseworthy, so I suspect that he is known to the Hon. John Dawkins.

Shanghai Jiao Tong University is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in China and a member of the distinguished C9 League and the Yangtze Delta Universities Alliance. The university has over 36,000 students and more than 2,000 professors and associate professors and is well known and regarded as an increasingly prestigious university on the world stage. It is strategically important that we are developing strong relationships with such a renowned Chinese university.

China is Australia's number one export market and trading partner, representing \$126 billion in trade for Australia in 2002, so it makes sense that two of our leading universities are working together in areas of agriculture and health. China has excelled in economic growth, and the increasing affluence of its people has created great opportunities for growth in trade, especially in food, beverages and fibre.

China is South Australia's fastest growing market for wine, and we know that there are great opportunities for our seafood, meat, dairy products and premium processed foods. This new partnership will focus significantly on issues of soil and water condition, food and wine preparation, and human health through safe and nutritious food. This alliance is important for South Australia, as it brings together some of the best academics, who will collaborate on cutting-edge research projects here in Australia and in Shanghai.

I am pleased to note that the principles of the agreement are well aligned with the South Australian government's strategic priority of promoting premium food and wine from our clean environment. South Australia's food and wine industry is a very important sector of the South Australian economy. I commend the universities for entering into this agreement, and I look forward to learning of the research outcomes and commercial application of this collaboration in years to come.

Two major facilities already proposed under the memorandum of understanding include a \$10 million twin of the Hickinbotham Roseworthy Wine Science Laboratory, to be established in China, and a Shanghai-Adelaide healthy food innovation hub as a one-stop shop for the food industry in both countries. These new facilities, coupled with the existing research expertise, present an exciting opportunity to improve understanding in areas of agriculture and health.

The continued focus on engagement and collaboration with leading higher education institutions around the world makes a valuable contribution to research and teaching here in South Australia. Opportunities for our students to study abroad or with students and academics from overseas can be a transforming experience for both Australians and people from overseas.

This type of high-level collaboration between leading research institutions will no doubt raise the capacity for commercialisation and growth in investment in agribusiness here in South Australia. I commend this partnership and the commitment demonstrated to achieve this significant agreement by Professor Dan Wu, Vice President of the Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and Professor Warren Bebbington, Vice Chancellor and President of the University of Adelaide.

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY**

**The Hon. T.J. STEPHENS (15:39):** I wish to speak today about the dire state of the South Australian economy. Everyone in this place would be aware that the Liberal Party ran on a platform of reinvigorating the economy through a combination of tax cuts and lowering government spending. Unfortunately, the election result, while close, did not see a change of government, but it does not mean that a similar outcome cannot be achieved. I implore the government to seriously consider

reforming these areas to reinvigorate the state. I am not the only one who knows that South Australia is in dire economic straits.

We have seen statistic after statistic from the ABS, the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies, and other like organisations, clearly showing that South Australia remains at the bottom of many economic indicators. A proven formula, and a philosophy that this side of the house believes strongly, is that keeping government spending and regulation low allows the government to keep taxes low. This results in an economy that is undistorted by constant and burdensome government intervention and a population that is freer and better resourced to participate within the same.

An economy unburdened by government intervention operates much truer to accepted economic theory and understanding; it therefore can be better analysed and more efficiently regulated. An economy that is over-regulated is harder to assist through intervention. Put simply, it is absurd to be continually correcting an overcorrection. Regulation and intervention should only ever be temporary and should be viewed as such by government.

It is not only the opposition that is imploring the government to focus on fixing the economy. Daniel Wills of *The Advertiser*, in an article on 19 April, entitled 'Budget: the ideal moment to get our house in order', says that South Australia is 'in desperate need of vision' and 'a plan for economic restoration'. A more accurate reflection of the state's woes could not be articulated. He goes on further to say that 'unemployment is rising alarmingly and needs urgent attention'.

What is the government's plan to address unemployment, particularly in the northern areas and amongst youth? In reference to the economic philosophy outlined above, it should not be to create endless task forces and commission departments to do study after study and hand down report after report. If the government cut regulation and taxes, freeing businesses of the shackles, it would allow businesses to dedicate more resources to productive activity. This would assist the wider economy and allow businesses the ability to hire once again.

All this goes to the heart of business confidence, which Mr Wills also identifies, saying that 'while South Australia's economic fundamentals are unarguably limp, its greatest problem is low confidence'. If business is good, confidence is high. While confidence can be intangible, it is not a hard concept to grasp, and it is an important indicator of economic performance. It is interesting that a Property Council ANZ study, which Mr Wills refers to in the article, shows that industry confidence has plunged since the election.

The business sector knows that Labor is not the party of business and delivers only poor policy outcomes for the economy. Mr Wills highlights that, stating:

...appalling job figures released last week showed it is harder to find work in South Australia now than at any time in the last 12 years.

These figures are clear evidence that everything that this government has tried has failed and that it is time to heed the advice of economists and those active in the business community by cutting taxes and regulation. We have seen this government time and again talk in a roundabout manner of similar themes, but what is obvious to us on this side is that the results do not follow the rhetoric.

The Premier promised payroll tax relief following the release of the Liberal Party's election policy, but it was significantly less than what is needed and what the Liberals committed to. These sorts of empty promises are demonstrative of a government that has long abandoned any desire for reform. It is tired and only concerned with preserving the woodwork and their lucrative positions in government. Mr Wills forewarns of another empty promise in the government's planned public sector reforms, as follows:

The government went to the election with a policy of shrinking the public service by about 4,000 jobs over four years. It has set similar targets in the past and come nowhere near them.

Those words should be embarrassing and damning enough for the government without my asking: if this is the standard, how do you expect business confidence to be strong and the business community to trust you?

While I would like to see the policy rationale of supply-side economics implemented here in South Australia, I understand that many opposite do not get it and will never understand how the economy works. Perhaps then they can start by sticking to the promises they have made to business and the South Australian taxpayer.

## STATE ELECTION

**The Hon. J.A. DARLEY (15:44):** I rise today to speak about the deplorable, dirty and desperate tactics used by the Labor Party, and their counterparts in the unions, during the recent election. In the more than six years since entering this place following the resignation of Nick Xenophon, I believe I have worked fairly, constructively and transparently with all sides of politics and stakeholders. Obviously, I cannot agree with everyone, but I feel that even in instances when I did not agree I have explained my reasons for taking my chosen position.

I have worked hard on a number of notable matters, including the Dust Diseases Act, the Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act, WorkCover and, most recently, work health and safety. These examples and others clearly show that I have been an advocate for workers' rights and are contradictory to the sentiments expressed by Labor and the unions.

The smear campaign used by these parties during the election smacked of their desperation to use whatever means possible to turn voters against me and the X-Team, including corflutes, personalised letters, radio ads and even robocalls to some 250,000 households. Coincidentally, my running mate and I both received these robocalls encouraging us not to vote for the X-Team. Worst of all, they were all based on blatant lies.

Some may say that I am being a little oversensitive. After all, the Labor Party has demonstrated that it does not discriminate with who they play their dirty tricks on. At the 2010 state election, Family First became familiar with the lengths to which the Labor Party would go to secure votes after Labor Party volunteers were caught wearing blue T-shirts saying, 'Put your family first,' and handing out how-to-vote cards which had the same message. The how-to-vote cards directed preferences to the Labor Party candidate instead of the Liberals.

Changes to the Electoral Act followed to stamp out this deception, but they invented other devious means to circumvent the legislation and trick the voting public. At the last election, residents in the seat of Elder received a Labor Party flyer with the words 'Can you trust Habib?' emblazoned across what looked like a bullet-ridden brick wall. The flyer clearly had dog-whistling undertones and was concocted to utilise the Liberal Party candidate's ethnic surname and play on the fears of some in the community. Despite protests otherwise, this was clearly a targeted campaign to capitalise on prejudices. We did not see, 'Can you trust Barry?' flyers in Colton or, 'Can you trust Wingard' flyers in Mitchell.

In the seat of Reynell, voters were led to believe that the Labor candidate and now incumbent, Katrine Hildyard, was the doyenne of doorknocking after receiving handwritten calling cards saying that she was sorry she missed them when she called. After questions were raised regarding the differences in handwriting on the cards, it was revealed that notes signed off as, 'Kind regards, Katrine,' were in fact signed by the Katrine team and not Ms Hildyard herself. These actions were seemingly taken to mislead voters into thinking the candidate had personally visited the household.

Traditionally, the Labor Party volunteers wear red T-shirts. Incidentally, on 14 March I noticed Labor Party volunteers in the Bright electorate wearing bright orange T-shirts, the same colour that Nick Xenophon has been widely using since 1997—a mere coincidence, I am sure. In all these examples, the actions have been condoned and encouraged by the Labor Party leadership. No apologies have been made or, if they have, they have been drowned out by those defending the tactics. At least the Leader of the Opposition had the decency to apologise for misleading ads authorised by their party.

The anti X-Team campaign deliberately misconstrued the truth and highlighted to the public that Labor and the unions were running scared. Instead of focusing on what they had to offer the public of South Australia, they focused their attention and finances on attacking an independent group which has historically fought hard for workers' rights. Despite their best endeavours, I am still here but, had it not been for the lies and deceit I am sure I would have been joined by my running mate, Connie Bonaros. The nature of the unhealthy relationship between the ALP and the unions has been highlighted of late, and I am glad the public were smart enough to see through the lies of this incestuous pairing.

### COUNTRY PRESS SA AWARDS

**The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (15:48):** Mount Gambier's *The Border Watch* newspaper has been named South Australia's BankSA Best Newspaper in the circulation over 6,000 category for the third year in a row. Country Press SA hosted the 2013 newspaper awards dinner at Adelaide Oval on Friday 7 March this year. The gala dinner was attended by 155 people representing newspapers from across the state as well as sponsors and guests.

Murray Bridge's *The Murray Valley Standard* won the BankSA Best Newspaper circulation 2,500 to 6,000 category for a remarkable 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row. The Millicent *South Eastern Times*, a sister paper to *The Border Watch*, won the BankSA best newspaper under 2,500 circulation category for the second year in a row. Country Press SA President, David Wright, from the *Northern Argus* paper at Clare said:

The awards recognised the outstanding efforts of country newspapers in serving and leading their local communities, while offering a benchmark for continued improvement and development.

He said:

Country Press SA was excited to present the inaugural SA Power Networks bright spark award to Dylan Hogarth of *The Murray Valley Standard*, who started as a cadet journalist with *The Standard* some four years ago.

Having hosted the Country Press SA AGM here at Parliament House earlier in the day, I was delighted to present my award for best community profile to Joanne Fosdike of *The Murray Valley Standard* and I am very grateful to Georgina McGuinness for once again judging my award.

Other awards that were presented on the evening included the best advertisement which went to *The Leader* at Angaston, with the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* in second place and *The Courier* at Mount Barker in third place. Best Advertisement (Priced Product) went to *The Courier*, with the *Katherine Times* in second position and the *Roxby Downs Sun* in third.

Best Advertisement Feature went to the *Port Lincoln Times*, with *The Murray Pioneer* in second and *The Recorder* in third place. The Best Supplement was won again by *The Leader* at Angaston, with *The South Eastern Times* and *The Border Watch* in second and third places respectively.

The Best News Photograph was won by the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*, with the *Katherine Times* and *Barossa & Light Herald* finishing in the placings. Best sports photograph went to the *Barossa & Light Herald*, with *The Plains Producer* second and *The Islander* newspaper third.

The Best Front Page was won by *The Courier* at Mount Barker, with the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* and *Barossa and Light Herald* second and third respectively. The award for Editorial Writing went to Mr Rob McLean, the editor of *The Bunyip* newspaper in Gawler, second was *The Islander* and third place went to *The Murray Pioneer*.

Excellence in Journalism was won by Jenny Oldland of the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*, with *The Pennant* at Penola and *The Courier* at Mount Barker second and third respectively. The Best Sports Story was won by *The Courier*, with *The Murray Pioneer* second and the *Plains Producer* third.

It is also worth mentioning again the outstanding efforts of the papers that won the overall circulation awards for multiple times. It is worthwhile in the time remaining mentioning that in the over 6,000 section, with *The Border Watch* having such a successful run, they won that award ahead of the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* in second place and *The Courier* in third.

The award for the 2,500 to 6,000 section—*The Murray Valley Standard*, which has won that 10 times in a row and had numerous different judges in that time, won that award from *The Recorder* at Port Pirie and the *Northern Argus* and *The South Eastern Times* victory in the under 2,500 section was won over *The River News* at Waikerie and the *Plains Producer*.

#### Motions

### STATE ELECTION

**The Hon. S.G. WADE (15:54):** I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established to inquire into and report on the following matters—

- (a) the extent to which the 2014 state election result reflected the popular will, the effectiveness of the 2011 redistribution to this end and the prospects of achieving this outcome by reforming the redistribution process;
  - (b) the effectiveness of measures to ensure that electors are not misled;
  - (c) access to and use of the electoral roll and other lists and databases for election purposes;
  - (d) provision of voting services, including voting by post, pre-poll voting, services to people with disabilities and residents of declared institutions;
  - (e) the integrity of the roll, including the identification of voters presenting and measures for subsequent verification;
  - (f) management of the 2014 state election by the Electoral Commission, including the powers and resources available to the commission;
  - (g) management of the 2014 state election count to facilitate timely, reliable and adequate information;
  - (h) opportunities to reform campaign funding and donations to reduce the risk of inappropriate influence;
  - (i) progress in implementing the recommendations of the Select Committee into Matters Related to the General Election of 20 March 2010; and
  - (j) any other relevant matters.
2. That standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.
  3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being presented to the council.
  4. That standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

After the 2010 election the Legislative Council established a select committee into matters related to the general election of the 20 March 2010. The committee looked into a range of issues in relation to the conduct of the election, in particular the use of dodgy how-to-vote cards by the Australian Labor Party, problems with postal voting and increasing access to voting for people with disabilities.

This motion proposes another select committee to both assess progress on the issues raised in 2010 and, to be frank, to deal with a fresh new range of ALP dirty tricks at the 2014 state election. It seems that at each election the Labor Party shows yet more examples of how to play dirty during election campaigns. In the view of the Liberal Party, there are more than enough issues that need to be dealt with to justify the formation of the select committee that I moved.

A key issue coming out of the 2014 election—or, shall I say, reiterated by the 2014 election—is the issue of electoral fairness. Earlier today my leader, Steven Marshall, made the following comments in the other place:

The party which clearly received the majority of votes in this election has not been in a position to form government, and this has happened far too often in recent years in this place...It is the people of South Australia who have been denied the government of their choice...Fifty-three per cent of people wanted a Liberal Party to govern this state. I accept that the system has delivered a Labor Party to form minority government, but this indicates, quite frankly, that this parliament needs to allocate resources and time to look at our system and to reform our system before the 2018 election. If we squibb on this, we are not doing our job. This will be a primary objective of the Liberal Party going forward.

The leader indicated that this parliament needs to allocate resources and time to look at our system, and the creation of the select committee that I move through this motion is an opportunity for further reflection on our electoral system.

The 2014 state election was like a number of others in South Australia; it delivered government to the party with less than the majority of the two-party preferred vote. Amongst psephologists and people interested in electoral matters, that is often referred to as 'a wrong outcome'. The Liberal Party received 44.8 per cent of the primary vote, that is, 91,377 more votes than the Labor Party. A full 9 per cent more of the primary vote was won by the Liberal Party than by the Labor Party. The Labor Party scraped in with just more than one-third of the statewide primary

vote; only one in every three South Australians felt comfortable giving the Labor Party their first preference vote.

The two-party preferred vote in favour of the Liberal Party was 53 per cent. The Liberal Party was the preferred party of government in 24 of the 47 seats. The Liberal Party won a majority of the two-party preferred vote; the majority of voters in a majority of seats wanted a Liberal government.

The government gloats about a fourth term, but let us remember that it has only won a mandate to govern in one of those four terms. This government did not win a two-party preferred majority in three of the last four elections. Clearly the government does not have a mandate; it does not have the support of the majority of South Australians. In 2002 South Australians did not get the party they voted for, in 2010 South Australians did not get the party they voted for, in 2014 South Australians did not get the party they voted for.

This problem is not new and, to be frank, it has affected both parties during our state's history. First, the Labor Party—particularly post World War II and in the early 1960s—suffered not just in terms of, shall we say, the Playford electoral rules, but the point highlighted by research by Professor Jaensch and others is that there was a significant disadvantage for the Labor Party in those years as a result of the concentration of majorities. In about the 1960s the demographics of our state changed, and that disadvantage became a disadvantage for the Liberal Party.

The Labor Party painted itself as the champion of democracy when it tackled concentration of majorities in the decades up to 1975. Now, of course, electoral reform is dismissed as sour grapes. Don Dunstan would not take such rubbish, and neither will we. The Liberal Party is of the view that now is the time to look at reform in this area.

It is clearly not enough to seek just prospective re-engineering of boundaries to try to create a level playing field. As I said, three of the last four elections have produced wrong outcomes. We must now look at what other measures could be taken that will actually deliver what the people of South Australia have demanded in three of the last four elections.

The principle issue here is not the impact on the Liberal Party or any other party: the offensive impact of the current electoral system is that the people of South Australia are repeatedly seeing their democratic will frustrated by the electoral system. To that end, the Liberal Party will actively pursue reform of our electoral system. The foundation of our democracy is that those with the majority support of the people should govern, and that has not been realised in recent years. Accordingly, my motion includes a term of reference that reads:

- (a) The extent to which the 2014 state election result reflected the popular will, the effectiveness of the 2011 redistribution to this end and the prospects of achieving this outcome by reforming the redistribution process;

The minority Labor government has been formed within the constitution. It has not been formed with democratic legitimacy, neither was it formed with electoral legitimacy. We will not forget how the Labor Party won its one-third of the vote.

Soon after taking office as Premier, the member for Cheltenham promised to lift the standards of parliament and parliamentarians. It appears that by the time he got to his first election all bets were off. The Premier's words were a distant whisper behind a torrent of disgraceful behaviour from the Labor Party. The Labor Party fought with misleading fear campaigns, they spread blatant lies about Housing Trust cuts, about the Flinders Medical Centre funding, about the council voting records of candidates, they deliberately sought to confuse voters with campaigns on federal issues against state candidates. They resorted to racist propaganda and dog whistling to scrape together the votes they needed to survive.

Let me quote Haydon Manning, Associate Professor in the School of Social and Policy Studies at the Flinders University. On 4 April 2014, in an article in *The Advertiser*, entitled 'Dirty tricks campaigning must be halted', Associate Professor Manning said:

This state election is now done and dusted, but occasionally an event during an election campaign is so breathtaking it leaves an enduring aftertaste because you can't believe that a party would stoop so low. For two consecutive elections Labor takes the dirty tricks prize, and one wonders where shameful campaign tactics will end up.

In 2010 Labor campaign strategists sought to deceive when they dressed up as Family First members and handed out bogus 'how-to-vote' cards to unsuspecting voters in a number of marginal seats.

**The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire:** Disgraceful.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE:** I agree. I continue to quote the Associate Professor:

Dean Jaensch and I criticised this at the time as an abhorrent low point in campaign tactical manoeuvring. Late in campaign 2014 that low point was trumped when Labor strategists aimed, I believe, to associate the Liberal candidate for Elder, Carolyn Habib's surname with the strife we observe bedevilling Middle Eastern countries.

Labor's leading lights, such as Tom Koutsantonis, tried in vain to conjure a rationalisation that the attack on Habib 'was not racist'. I am afraid his defence will not wash.

The racism in the pamphlet is implicit, it is not overt. By any reasonable assessment this represents a play upon racist sentiment in our community.

Entertaining dirty tricks is unbecoming at the best of times, but preparedness to tickle a racist nerve is simply deplorable.

Labor federal MP, Ed Husic, has called for an apology, I hope this is noted, because Liberal candidate Carolyn Habib deserves some contrition from Labor; in fact, we all do.

South Australian voters deserve a line—a very clear one at that—be drawn through this type of campaigning as it has no place in multicultural Australia.

Premier Jay Weatherill cannot avoid the flak either. He might consider addressing parliament and, by using his authority, commit his party to end 'dirty tricks'.

If the line is not drawn we will descend further into the mire of deceitful and shameless election campaigning.

Associate Professor Manning's comments are extremely strong, particularly for an academic, and I find it extremely disturbing that members of the Labor Party, who claim to be committed to a multicultural Australia, can stand by and allow this sort of abhorrent behaviour. I will quote again a couple of the key phrases from what Associate Professor Manning said:

For two consecutive elections Labor takes the dirty tricks prize, and one wonders where shameful campaign tactics will end.

Later he says:

South Australian voters deserve a very clear line to be drawn through this type of campaigning.

Later on, he says:

If this line is not drawn, we will descend further into the mire of deceitful and shameless election campaigning.

I would urge the parliament and the community of South Australia to take a moment to stop and reflect on what we can do to enforce that line. I honestly thought, after the 2010 election and the heat the Labor Party took in relation to their abhorrent behaviour in relation to Family First how-to-vote cards, that even they would see the risk to reputation of that morally offensive behaviour. But, no: we come into a new election and we have what Associate Professor Manning says—that is, a new low set. He said that what was done in the 2010 election against Family First and its parliamentary candidates was a low in the history of the state yet, at the next election, in spite of the moral risk they were facing, the Labor Party decided to set a new low.

Clearly, we cannot rely on the Labor Party to self-regulate. Moral self-regulation has not worked. They either have no morals or no interest in self-discipline. I find that disappointing because politics is a very dynamic enterprise and, of course, you will have robust debate. In fact, regulation of political campaigning can impair the robust exchange of political views, but we must try to raise the standards of our election campaigning. The Labor Party has shown in the last two elections in particular that it has no interest in doing so. In spite of all the high words uttered by the member for Cheltenham as he assumed the position of Premier, they failed to deliver with breathtaking audacity.

Let me remind honourable members about the process we went through after the 2010 how-to-vote cards debacle. During the 2010 election, as we know, we had Labor Party volunteers impersonating Family First volunteers to redirect second preference votes. Following that disgraceful performance by the Labor Party, they promised to change the laws to prevent their own dirty tactics. Members will remember that in 2010 a bill was tabled. The Liberal Party highlighted that it would do nothing. I think it was actually considered by the select committee, and it was indicated that it would do nothing to prevent dodgy how-to-vote cards, so the Attorney-General came back with another proposal.



What this election showed is that the Labor Party will do whatever it can to work around and evade the relatively light regulation that is currently in the legislation. When Labor's so-called solution was debated (this is when we considered the bill in the last parliament), the Labor Party consistently opposed the Liberal Party's attempt to create a robust ban on dodgy how-to-vote cards through picking up a recommendation of the 2010 select committee for registration in advance. The Labor Party used its numbers in the other place to force an alternative proposal into law. In practice, the changes provide little or no protection because Labor, as I said, just tried to dodge the laws.

**The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire:** Power at all costs.

**The Hon. S.G. WADE:** Exactly—whatever it takes. As the honourable member reminds me, 'power at all costs' reminds me of Graham Richardson, who said for the Labor Party, 'Whatever it takes.' The laws that Labor introduced, as interpreted by the Electoral Commissioner, did nothing to reduce the risks of a dodgy how-to-vote card. I am informed that the cards distributed on election day by the Labor Party only had an element in common with the cards lodged by the Labor Party under section 66, that being the representation of the ballot paper and the numbers inside it.

On no common-sense view of the legislation we passed could the Labor card have possibly been considered to have been substantially of the same appearance as this parliament laid down when it inserted section 112A(c) of the act. Despite the advanced notice of the requirements, and the clear intent outlined both in the law and in the parliament, the laws were not enforced to protect electors from dodgy cards.

The operation of the law, the conduct of the Labor Party and the commissioner's interpretation, in our view warrant further investigation by the committee. If the commissioner's interpretation is, in fact, justifiable, the parliament must come back to the drawing board to tighten up the laws. For its part, the Liberal Party complied with not just the letter of the law but the spirit of the law. The Liberal Party demonstrated that disclosure is workable, and our actions mirrored our words, which is more than can be said for the Labor Party.

A range of other issues have been raised with me in relation to the 2014 election, some of which include the lateness of the distribution of postal vote ballot papers and the slowness of the count. Another concern was the commissioner's lack of willingness to undertake a rethrow in key seats, which could have influenced the decision as to who should form government and, of course, issues were raised by my honourable colleague, the Hon. Rob Lucas, in relation to the misallocation of 1,000 Liberal Party Legislative Council votes, I think in the electorate of Bright.

I welcome the motion of the Hon. Robert Brokenshire also in calling for a select committee to look at the 2014 election. I think the motion from the Family First party highlights what they too would be hearing, namely that the community is extremely disturbed about the conduct of the Labor Party in particular in the election context.

I would suggest to the honourable member that there may be value in us working together to integrate our terms of reference. Obviously our parties share a determination to prove the democratic processes and there are elements in common with both motions. I would even dare to look forward to support from the minority Labor government. The agreement to support a stable and effective government—that is what they call it; it might be better to call it the agreement to support a stable and unelected government—was signed between Geoff Brock and Jay Weatherill. It includes a provision to look at election conduct. Clearly, the member for Frome was disturbed about conduct in the election. We on the opposition side would hope that the government, too, would accept that we need to form a committee such as this.

I indicate to honourable members that it would be my intention to bring this matter to a vote on 21 May, the next sitting Wednesday. It has already been recommended by the previous committee. It has already been anticipated by both the Brock agreement and the motions from both the Hon. Robert Brokenshire and I. Early commencement will allow early resolution, and it may well be that there are matters that are recommended that have implications for the electoral redistribution process.

None of these matters, in my view, requires significant analysis in terms of deciding whether or not a committee is justified. Clearly there are more than enough issues for a committee to look at. It is a well-established practice in at least two other parliaments. I understand not only that the commonwealth and Victoria have regular election reviews but I am also advised that Queensland

has adopted that practice. I am certainly of the view that, whilst we do not need a standing committee on electoral matters, a select committee after each election is a good opportunity to improve our electoral system. Clearly, the Labor Party is demonstrating that after every election it will be producing fresh challenges to the parliament to try to protect democracy from their dirty tricks.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. K.J. Maher.

### STATE ELECTION

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (16:13):** I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established to inquire into and report on the following matters related to the general election of 15 March 2014—
  - (a) the workings of Part 5 of the Constitution regarding electoral redistribution and the Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission, including but not limited to the interpretation and application of the considerations in section 83 for electoral fairness and other criteria;
  - (b) other aspects of the electoral system relating to marginal seats, the electoral pendulum and electoral fairness;
  - (c) the laws and rules relevant to electoral advertising and taxpayer-funded advertising in an election period, including but not limited to questions of truth in political advertising;
  - (d) the handling of complaints about conduct that may affect the result of an election, and sanctions available and applied thereto; and
  - (e) any other relevant matters.
2. That standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.
3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being presented to the council.
4. That standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

At this point in time, I will be reasonably brief with my remarks. I place on the record first and foremost that Family First would be prepared to work with the mover of a similar motion, namely the Hon. Mr Stephen Wade, to see whether or not there can be integration between the two proposals.

You might say that, on the surface of it, Family First parliamentarians in the Legislative Council may not have as much interest in the House of Assembly as the Labor Party and the Liberal Party, but that is not true for a number of reasons. We always work very hard and put up good quality candidates in the House of Assembly to give people options.

I have received an enormous amount of feedback from right across the state, asking what happened to the electoral redistribution act when it came to a range of matters, not the least being the fairness test. What they meant by that is that they thought that, when a party has 50 plus 1 per cent of the two-party preferred vote, you could form government with that result. In fact, when you have a look at federal politics and what occurs in most other states, the fact is that, if a party received 53 per cent two-party preferred, it would almost be a landslide.

So, in the interests of democracy, I think it is time to look at this issue. From time to time, people talk about gerrymanders and dictatorships. If you look at what has happened since the 1960s, and certainly in the last 25 to 30 years, you would have to say that there has been almost a gerrymander situation when it comes to who forms government in this state, in spite of the fact that more than 50 plus 1 per cent of the South Australian community chose another government.

I put on the public record that I think that it is always healthy for a state that governments are not in power for long periods because governments do run out of puff, energy and direction—and the way this government is going, they will also run out of money, and we need to intervene before that happens. Sure, everybody wants to be a minister or a parliamentary secretary, everybody wants the power and the glory and to get the white car—and they are privileges. But it is more than that, it is about good governance, good direction for the state, and that involves dedicated commitment and an absolute focus and energy, and you do lose that after a period of time.

But to come back to the key point, I have had a very detailed look at the issues around the redistribution of the seats and the fact that under 5 per cent on the pendulum, if there is a mood for change, then a swing is on and arguably you would get, with 53 per cent two-party preferred, a change of government. However, I suggest to the house that there are issues in relation to the way in which these boundaries are being drawn, particularly the last time this occurred—and I will not go into the detail now; I will wait until, hopefully, a committee is formed. However, I would say that, if any member of this house wants to look at Dr Jenni Newton-Farrelly's report and then look at it booth by booth, the way the process has occurred, you will see that the process is structurally flawed.

People can run around saying that incumbency is everything. The Hon. Gordon Bilney, the former member for Kingston, now sadly deceased, said that at best, if you are working very hard as a local member, incumbency is worth 2 or 3 per cent to you. It is interesting that in the recent election, where there were seats with less than 1 per cent, that you could not move them.

I suggest that members have a look at how the booths in those areas within those electorates were set up and formed. I looked at one seat in particular as an example, and the fact is that, while there were some swings to Liberal areas in that marginal seat, particularly with scare campaigns and what I believe to be blatant lies, in some cases, in respect of material distributed around some of the seats, the way the Labor areas are drawn in those seats, they are rock solid; you cannot shift them. Unless there are monumental changes to the structure, I suggest that there may not be a change of government for a very long time. I encourage members to have a look at that.

If there are structural problems in the way it is being done, it is up to the parliament, not the Electoral Commission or the Redistribution Commission. I very much look forward to having evidence and questioning opportunities with, for example, Ms Mousley, the Electoral Commissioner, to learn more about how they set up the last redistribution.

I say again, it was structurally flawed. I could not see it at the time but when you have a look now you can see that structural flaw, and that was never the intent of the legislation. The fact is that the parliament should look at that, not an electoral boundaries redistribution commission, because the parliament makes the laws on behalf of the people, and 53 per cent, an absolute resounding majority, wanted a change and it did not occur.

I also want once and for all to fix up what happened with Labor in 2010 with the dodgy Family First impersonators. One minister's partner (who I have a photograph of) was dressed up in a Family First T-shirt—an absolute impersonation of our people in that seat—and this sort of nonsense has to stop. Also, there are issues around third-party situations. Whether you are Liberal, Labor, Family First or whatever, you give credit where it is due, and I give credit to the Labor government on many occasions when I believe they deserve it. I give credit to the former Liberal government, namely, the Sir Thomas Playford government, when it came to them setting up a state-of-the-art public housing concept for South Australia that led Australia.

What happened is that a third party—arguably a third party representing an association but I would like to find out whether that party did in fact represent that association—received material in breach of the confidentiality act and broke the law. Who gave that material to that person? We need to know these things because this sort of stuff cannot happen. Somebody broke the law and that must never happen again. It scared people. People who might have voted for Family First, the Greens or Liberal, were scared back into voting for the Labor Party because a law was broken, a database was given to a person and/or an association and that went out around marginal seats. Those people received a letter saying that they would lose their home if there was a change of government and it was not a Labor government.

That is not acceptable in a democracy. They are just some of the things that we need to have a look at. We need truth in advertising, and we need to have a look at how we can do that because there is no truth in some of the advertising that went out during the last election. I would suggest that if some of the material that went out in this last election was from the business sector, they would be before the ACCC, they would be taken to court by opposition businesses, and there would be huge ramifications. This has to stop.

*The Hon. B.V. Finnigan interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE:** We can get interjections from Labor. Maybe they do not like it, but let's have a warts and all look at this in the interests of fairness for South Australian voters

who we represent, and that fairness is in a democracy in which 50 plus 1 per cent two-party preferred wins the election. What we have seen in the last two redistributions is an impossible drawing of the boundaries for that to change, and that is not the intent of the act, and that is why we need to have a select committee into this important matter for the future of South Australia.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. S.G. Wade.

### FAMILIES SA

**The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE (16:24):** With the leave of the council I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established into statutory child protection and care in South Australia, including a review of Families SA management of foster care with particular reference to—
  - (a) how foster carers are recruited, managed and supported; and
  - (b) the provision of information and support to foster parents regarding the history and needs of a foster child; and
  - (c) any other relevant matters.
2. That standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.
3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being presented to the council.
4. That standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

Members will be aware of recent commentary and coverage in tragic cases and major concerns about treatment of foster carers by Families SA. My colleague, the Hon. Dennis Hood, via a Channel 9 news report has also raised concern about working with children and the checks around that. Family First went to the election with a policy to have a standing committee. The next best we can achieve is a select committee. Our preference would have been a standing committee, like the Budget and Finance Committee, but if that is not to be then we believe this select committee needs to be approved.

The terms of reference are naturally broad. The intent, as the next motion will discuss, will be for referral of specific issues in addition to the broader work of the committee. I hope that the government does not just come out and say it is going to boycott this select committee if it gets up, as they did with the last select committee. I thought that that was very unfortunate because this should be above party politics. The number one thing that any government, any parliament and any decent person should do is ensure the protection, wellbeing and welfare of our children.

In 2008-09 the government chose to boycott, that is, not put any Labor members on the last Families SA select committee. I was very disappointed with that. In fact, I say that had some of those recommendations been adopted by the government and implemented by Families SA, then we would have a situation now where possibly some children would have been much safer than they are at the moment and perhaps some of the tragedies that we have seen may not have even occurred.

Putting that to one side, I asked to take a delegation to minister Rankine. To be fair to the minister, she said, 'I would like to meet with you first before I see a delegation.' As a former minister, I can understand that, so I agreed to meet with the minister. When I got there I had the minister, the minister's chief of staff, the minister's adviser, the chief executive officer of DECD and the executive director of child protection within that portfolio area. We had a good discussion and out of that there came an agreement, as I understood it, which said that I would be able to pick three of the dozens of concerns that I have had raised to me by constituents across this state—three files—and with the authority of those families be able to sit down with that executive officer and look at those files.

A meeting was organised not long after that. When I attended that meeting, or that officer came to my office here in parliament, that officer advised that I would not be able to look at the whole file. That left me guarded, I would say. Notwithstanding that, the officer did say that they would allow me to have copies of some parts of that file that were pertinent to whether or not I believed we needed

to move a committee or whether or not, as a cross-section of constituent complaints, I could see that the government were getting on top of these problems.

I waited 2½ weeks and I received no documentation from Families SA. That was the final straw for me, because I believe that in the last select committee Families SA treated the parliament with contempt, and if this committee gets up that must not happen again. I did not have the confidence after that to wait any longer and I owed something to the many constituents who were making complaints. It is to ensure the protection and best practice and resourcing within our capacity to protect our children of South Australia that I move this select committee.

I want to say that there are serious and complicated issues regarding child care, foster care and child protection generally. I acknowledge that it is a very difficult area, but consider that in the 12 years that this government has been in office there has been the Layton report (which collected dust for a long period of time and I understand still has not been entirely enacted upon) and there has been the Mullighan report—and there are still issues around the Mullighan report, as good as that report was, that need to be addressed.

There was the Debelle inquiry and a parliamentary select inquiry, and now we are proposing another one because the government has not been able satisfactorily to manage this very important area. I know there are a lot of dedicated people in the department; notwithstanding that, whether it is resourcing, the number of cases, policy and procedure, whether it is culture, whether it is training and development, whatever it is, we really need to get to the bottom of it and get the government to move proactively in crossing the t's and dotting the i's of giving absolute protection to our children.

The taxpayers of this state demand that, and the dedicated foster carers, who I think at times have been treated with absolute blatant disregard of their wellbeing and commitment to foster children, need the chance to have a voice and a say that is transparent, open and not manipulated by the government of the day.

I know that it will be a lot of work but it is an important committee, and with those words I ask honourable members to favourably support this when we take it to a vote.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.M.A. Lensink.

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**The Hon. J.S.L. DAWKINS (16:32):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes the significant and unfortunate increase in the rates of suicide across the nation;
2. Notes the motions of the member for Adelaide passed in the House of Assembly on 6 April 2011 and the Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins passed in this council on 24 November 2011 respectively;
3. Notes the subsequent development of the South Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy;
4. Encourages the efforts of all community organisations that are already working hard in this sector to continue their valuable contributions to suicide prevention throughout South Australia; and
5. Urges the government to build on the work of the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist by increasing support for the ongoing establishment of suicide prevention networks in local communities.

I rise today to move a motion about a subject that I have a great passion for, and I think an increasing number of people in the South Australian community and, might I say, across this nation and around the world are showing much greater interest in—that is, the issue of suicide, the prevention of suicide generally, and continuing the conversation and discussion in the community on a matter which in past days has been put behind us in the hope that it would go away. I think you, sir, and many other people in the community know of the enormous damage that suicide and attempted suicide causes in our communities.

The rates of suicide in South Australia and across the country are steadily increasing. According to Lifeline Australia, deaths by suicide have reached a 10-year peak, with a mortality rate approximately double that of the national road toll. I think most of us recognise that there are some deaths amongst the road toll which are not registered as a suicide, but which probably should be, but they cannot always be completely proven to be in that regard, so I think in many senses the suicide toll is even higher. For every completed suicide, it is estimated that as many as 30 other

people attempt to end their life, which equates to approximately 200 attempted suicides across the country each day.

I commend the government for the work it has done in recent times. I think its effort in relation to suicide prevention has increased, and that was necessary. In 2012, the state government released its Suicide Prevention Strategy, which was only initiated following motions carried in both houses of this parliament that were moved by Ms Rachel Sanderson MP, the member for Adelaide, and I in 2011.

I am very proud that the Liberal Party took a policy to the 2014 election that centred around partnering with community organisations and providing them with funding to act as community gatekeepers to endeavour to minimise emergency room and hospital-based presentations due to suicide or attempts to complete suicide.

That role is enormous. It is a role that so many of us in the general community can play to assist the mental health professionals not only in getting people to the right people at the right time but also, in many cases, by keeping them out of the system. My personal experience is that there are people I talk to on a regular basis, and I think that talking to those people keeps them out of the system and keeps them from taking their own life. The more we get people from the community to do that the better. I want to build on a couple of the points in the motion, particularly point 4:

4. Encourages the efforts of all community organisations that are already working hard in this sector to continue their valuable contributions to suicide prevention throughout South Australia.

There are so many of these organisations; some are based out of non-government organisations—and obviously the churches have a significant role in that area—but there are also many others that have been created in a certain demographic or geographic area to deal with particular issues in relation to suicide prevention or assisting families bereaved by suicide.

Last Friday night I was pleased to attend the Archbishop's Cathedral Banquet at St Peter's Cathedral. It served as the launch for an organisation created by Anglicare SA which will, I think, delve into another area of our fight against suicide and attempted suicide, and this relates particularly to the latter area. I will quote from the document we received that evening, from a page entitled *A Cry for Help*. It reads:

Anglicare SA, in conjunction with Flinders Medical Centre's emergency department, is developing a vital pilot program to support individuals and their families at one of the hardest times of their lives—after a first suicide attempt. When this occurs, we know that they can be shocked, scared and they don't know what to do or where to turn. That's where Anglicare SA will step in—we will hear *A Cry for Help*...

*A Cry for Help* is a holistic early-intervention program to support individuals and families, linking them with support services and providing them with a toolkit of what they might expect and where they can seek and receive help. Trained Anglicare SA caseworkers will assist them to connect with services—it could be help with communication, psychological support, financial counselling or increasing community connections.

The question was asked on this document: how will the pilot program work?', and the answer is:

When an individual presents at Flinders Medical Centre's emergency department after a first suicide attempt, the hospital will offer to connect them with Anglicare SA's *A Cry For Help*. The hospital will only make contact with permission. The next-of-kin—family or friends—will also be offered contact with *A Cry For Help*. Then the individual or their family will receive a phone call to start the process. After assessment, ongoing support will be offered over the phone, in person and through linking people into existing support systems. Where there is a gap in services Anglicare SA will strive to fill it. It is expected that the support will be offered over a six-week period on average.

This is a very crucial comment at the end of that page of the document:

Suicide doesn't discriminate, it can affect any family at any time.

It is relevant to repeat one of the statistics I mentioned earlier, and that is that for every completed suicide it is estimated that as many as 30 people attempt suicide, which equates to 180 attempts per day in Australia—that is more than one new attempt in this country every 10 minutes. Those sorts of things do bring back to our mind how extraordinarily serious is this issue.

I indicate that two of the great supporters of the establishment of *A Cry For Help* are celebrity chef Simon Bryant and his brother, Richard, and they featured in a video presentation at the banquet heartily supporting this organisation. Of course, members may remember that very recently the *Sunday Mail* ran a large article about the impact on Simon Bryant and his brother, Richard, following the death by suicide of their mother, who was a medical practitioner. As they said in the presentation

on Friday night, she was very good at looking after plenty of other people but not so good at looking after her own welfare. They wished that they had been able to see some signs and help her more in her time of need. That is something I want to do—to do as much as I can to get people and organisations from across the whole South Australian community involved in this work.

The final part of the motion urges the government to build on the work of the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist by increasing support for the ongoing establishment of suicide prevention networks in local communities. I give the highest of praise to the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist, particularly a lady in that office called Lynne James, who has been doing fabulous work around South Australia.

I think Ms James is the only public servant dedicated to rolling out the suicide prevention strategy, and she has been doing some terrific work getting the network started in a number of communities, working with local governments around the state, and I have been involved in a number of communities with her and, in a different sense, in different communities, and that is how it should be. I am aware of the work she has done in my own home town in Gawler and also places like Whyalla, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier, and I know she is working with a number of other communities around the state. I give her and that office great credit for involving me in the work they have done to launch these networks, and I am very grateful for that.

However, I urge the government and the Minister for Mental Health to consider giving some more emphasis to the work of the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist in this area, because I think they are significantly limited by the number of staff and the fact that I think Ms James is the only one who is dedicated to that work.

I was very grateful yesterday to listen to the speech by His Excellency the Governor and, certainly, there was a mention of suicide prevention—the issue of suicide generally—in that speech. I think it is important that we acknowledge, as the Governor said, that the rate of suicide in South Australia is unacceptable, and in rural areas the rates are significantly worse than those in the metropolitan areas. I do not disagree with the reference to the higher numbers in rural areas, but can I say that this issue is a huge problem for South Australia across the community, and it is not just in rural areas. It is not just young people or older men and it is not just in the Aboriginal community, although it is extraordinarily high in that community. It is in the defence force, it is in the gay and lesbian community, it is certainly in the disabled sector, and it is really high in so many facets of our community.

The thing I would like to say about the metropolitan areas is that, when there is an issue in a country community, generally those communities get together and work out a way of dealing with it. In many of the larger metropolitan communities, people can be lonelier than anybody, ever, in a country community, and sometimes those people do not do a lot more in that community than sleep there so they hardly know anybody. I think we need to do a lot more in the metropolitan communities as well.

I am grateful for the council's patience in listening to me on this subject. It is a great passion of mine. A similar motion will be moved in the lower house. As I said, I give credit to the government for its movement in this area but I think we need to continue to work very hard. One of the things that I am pleased the government did late in the election campaign was commit money to Lifeline in South Australia. It was late in the cycle: the Liberal Party had committed money to Lifeline much earlier, in the middle of last year. However, I am pleased that, finally, that commitment came because Lifeline is one of those organisations that is respected across the country but, like so many of these organisations that do the greatest work in this area, they run on the smell of an oily rag, and we need to make that rag a bit oilier.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. G.A. Kandelaars.

#### *Bills*

### **WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION (SACFS) AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:49):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986. Read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:51):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Greens rise today to reintroduce a most important piece of legislation to this chamber, the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation (SACFS) Amendment Bill 2014. This bill seeks to ensure that volunteer firefighters do not have to prove which fire it was that caused a cancer, should they contract one of the 12 cancers that are compensable in the qualifying schedule. What this means is that if a volunteer firefighter suffers from one of the 12 prescribed primary site cancers and they have been exposed to carcinogens, toxins, or hazards of a fire scene for a significant part of their volunteer service, then their cancer is presumed to be caused because of their duty as a firefighter. Therefore, the bill adds the presumption into the act that the volunteer firefighter's cancer was caused because of their firefighting. It is presumed that the volunteer firefighter's cancer was work-related.

Under this bill, the employment of the volunteer firefighter is taken to have contributed to the cancer unless proven to the contrary. It is about reducing the burden of proof on those volunteer firefighters diagnosed with one of those 12 compensable cancers.

This presumptive protection is what we currently have in place for MFS firefighters, but not in total for volunteer firefighters. To presume that a firefighter's work has caused the firefighter's cancer is an important amendment, and I commend the government for taking steps to ensure that those who fight fires in a paid capacity now enjoy this presumption. I also acknowledge that they have gone some steps in recent months towards ensuring that some volunteer firefighters are able to access the presumptive legislation; indeed, they announced in this new parliament a task force to review the workings and the calls for CFS equality on this issue.

The work of our volunteer firefighters is just as important and risky as that of our MFS firefighters, and that is why the Greens advocate that we should offer all firefighters equal protection and compensation under WorkCover as they currently enjoy.

Currently, the laws state that a volunteer firefighter has to prove that they were exposed to the hazards of a fire scene at least 175 times in any five-year period during their volunteer service to qualify for compensation. This is an additional threshold on the equality that we seek and it is imposed only on volunteer firefighters and needs to be removed.

This bill will ensure that volunteer firefighters who contract those cancers are better able to access compensation and rehabilitation if they have undertaken specific duties. Under the bill, the qualifying duties of a firefighter will include preventing, controlling or extinguishing a fire and dealing with an emergency that requires the South Australian CFS to act to protect life, property or the environment.

It is incredibly important that this bill should pass, and pass speedily, as it ensures that we protect those who protect us. Volunteer firefighters put their lives and their health on the line each time they go out to protect their communities, so now it is time for this government and, indeed, this chamber to protect them in turn. This is the bill that the Greens previously introduced; indeed, they sought to amend the government bill that passed in the last week of the last parliament.

We have seen the government politicise this important issue. We believe that the government, while well meaning, did not understand the full range of duties that a volunteer firefighter in this state undertakes, and that is why the government's original position to provide this presumptive legislation for only MFS firefighters was indeed a misstep and a miscalculation, but we will accept that the government did it without all the knowledge and without the due diligence it should have undertaken.

The review that the government has now announced and the task force the government has now set up should have been set up three years ago when the Greens first took this idea and this proposal to the government. We welcome the government's baby steps in the long journey towards CFS equality, but we remind them that the rest of this parliament has already finished the marathon that is the understanding of this bill. On that note, I refer the two new members of this chamber, if they are having a look at this, to my previous speeches on this issue. I am happy to provide that information to the new members in particular.



All of us would have vividly in our recent memory the declared sanctions of the CFS Volunteer Association against this Labor government, with members of the CFSVA refusing to be photographed with government ministers or members or anyone who voted against the Greens' bill that would have granted them equal compensation and protection. I commend our CFS volunteers for taking that industrial action.

They took an action that did not, of course, stop them performing their duties of protecting the public of South Australia or indeed the property of South Australians, but certainly I think that it hit the government where it most hurt—the publicity and the good news stories to which this government has grown so accustomed to milking from our volunteer firefighters.

Our volunteer firefighters fought many fires across this state in this last season. They fought the Bangor fire from 14 January until the properties in danger were protected by the rain that eventually came. In those weeks that that fire burnt, our firefighters took up shifts in excess of 12 hours to fight those fires and to protect lives. The fire continued to burn for quite an extended period of time; indeed, it was 14 April when it was finally declared as 'safe'.

Other significant fires during this period were at Eden Valley, Rockleigh, Ngarkat Conservation Park and several fires on Eyre Peninsula. I am naming these areas that have been threatened by fires to illustrate just how many homes, shops, workplaces, schools, parks, recreational areas and, indeed, lives have been protected because of the hard and courageous work of CFS firefighters. In total, 7,000 CFS volunteer firefighters responded and were deployed in some capacity to assist with firefighting efforts in this last season.

It was reported to me by one of the members of the CFS that, should the Bangor fire have continued any longer, they were looking at all available firefighting resources being depleted. Of course, we are seeing firefighting incidents occurring well outside what we would have traditionally thought to be the height of the fire season, and these incidents are often quite surprising in their strength and ferocity and the absolute immensity of the task at hand. If we did not have the CFS, we would see a far greater cost to this state than we are discussing with this bill.

These fires are classed as significant, but there have been numerous other fires, road crash rescues, hazmat and other incidents to which CFS volunteers have responded over this same period. Also over this period, the CFS provided backup to the MFS, either through direct support at fires or as a change of quarters for MFS stations. A change of quarter is when an MFS station is depleted of resources and fire appliances from other MFS stations and the CFS is sent to the station on standby.

During one of the recent Wingfield fires, the Burnside CFS was sent on a change of quarters to the Adelaide MFS station in Wakefield Street and responded to several incidents in this time in the Adelaide CBD. This certainly puts paid to the theory that our CFS only tackle bushfires and that their work is markedly different from that of the MFS. Here, not only were they supporting the MFS but they were also filling in and taking on the roles the MFS would normally play in those incidents and fires. It is quite common during times of high demand that the SES that CFS brigades also respond to those incidents.

Considering the ferocity and magnitude of the fires in South Australia over this summer, we should all be thankful for the enormous commitment and effort of CFS volunteers. They ensured that no lives were lost, and indeed so many properties were saved because of their efforts. Last year, we saw the government table the Taylor Fry report on the last sitting day of this place; they did so under sufferance and only because this council refused to continue the debate on that particular bill had that report not been tabled. The report estimates the cost of changes to the compensation of firefighters should we afford the CFS equal treatment to MFS firefighters.

The costs were estimated in that report without the qualifying periods we have used here and in the bill that was moved to insert the schedule which has a qualifying period between five and 25 years of service and lists the 12 primary site cancers scientifically linked to the act of firefighting. What was disturbing about that report, which this council finally ensured saw the light of day, was that those assumptions were not in that report. Indeed, the figures that were cited in the debates made an assumption that there were no qualifying periods, and I find that a disturbing politicisation of this debate.

I would also like to note that the industrial relations minister has to date not provided the cost of covering volunteer firefighters under this particular presumptive bill. He has in debate referred to several figures—\$25 million, \$1.8 million, \$36.2 million, \$84.8 million and \$60 million—in his second reading speech to the government bill and in media interviews during the debate. I think it is important to note that no matter what the cost is, not having a volunteer firefighter force to fight fires is going to be much more costly to our community.

I would like to see this task force provide the actuarial figures based on accurate presumptions and based on the proposal that the Greens, the CFS Volunteers Association and other members of this parliament have put up for debate, not on a theory that there is no qualifying period or that there are no borders put around what we are talking about here.

It is all very well to talk up the figures and say that this is going to be way too expensive. It would be far more useful for the government to ensure that we all have accurate figures based on what is being asked for by the CFS Volunteers Association, that is, equality and the schedule that is currently enjoyed by the MFS firefighters.

A firefighter chooses to be a firefighter not to be thanked for their services and efforts but to protect their community. However, this selfless commitment can result in their developing cancer due to the risks they have been exposed to in the line of that noble duty. The schedule of cancers listed here have been scientifically linked to the act of firefighting. They are not exhaustive, they are quite refined, and it is very little to ask that we support those who contract cancer in the course of those firefighting duties when they are there protecting our lives and properties.

It is absolutely crucial that we pass this bill and that we do so speedily. I would note that while the rest of the nation largely was out celebrating the coming of the new year, our firefighters this summer were protecting our communities, homes and livelihoods.

I met a couple who have been volunteering for the CFS for some years. They married during the summer period, just before Christmas, and they have never had a honeymoon because each year they have been out fighting fires. I know that they look forward to that honeymoon, but they certainly said that they look forward to the passage of CFS equality even more.

Now it is time for this parliament to protect our volunteer firefighters. CFS firefighters face equal risks to those faced by the MFS firefighters; they should be afforded equal protection and an equal presumption. That is equality and that is justice, and that is what the Greens will continue to push for in this chamber. With that, I commend this bill to the council.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. D.W. Ridgway.

#### *Motions*

### **GILLMAN LAND SALE**

**The Hon. J.A. DARLEY (17:05):** I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established to inquire into and report on the sale of state government owned land at Gillman, with reference to—
  - (a) the state government's holding of state government owned land at Gillman over time and the events that led to an agreement between the state government and Adelaide Capital Partners in relation to state government owned land at Gillman;
  - (b) the conduct, including public statements, of the state government in respect of the agreement, and the decision not to offer the land for sale by open tender;
  - (c) the interaction between the state government, including the Economic Development Board, Renewal SA and parties who identified an interest in land at Gillman;
  - (d) the involvement of lobbyists and other third parties in negotiations between the state government and Adelaide Capital Partners;
  - (e) the role of Renewal SA, including Renewal SA Board members, in the sale of land at Gillman;
  - (f) the role of Renewal SA and other parties in the development of the Gillman master plan;
  - (g) the state government valuation process regarding the subject land;

- (h) infrastructure planning undertaken by the state government to support development at Gillman and surrounding areas;
  - (i) the sale of other state government owned land at Gillman over the past 12 years;
  - (j) state government policies and guidelines;
  - (k) principles of good public sector practice; and
  - (l) any other relevant matters.
2. That standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only.
  3. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being presented to the council.
  4. That standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the select committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

This motion relates to the sale of government-owned land situated at Gillman and, more specifically, the circumstances surrounding the agreement struck between the state government and Adelaide Capital Partners, a joint venture between Gerlach Asset Development and ResourceCo led by former Santos chairman, Stephen Gerlach.

Members will recall that on 22 November last year, the government announced the release of the Gillman draft master plan. At the time of the announcement, the then minister for housing and urban development indicated that the draft master plan would enable suitable areas of land in Gillman and Dry Creek to be rezoned for employment use and identified about 240 hectares which, once filled and rezoned, could be immediately rezoned for industry. In a press release the minister stated:

The plan envisages a range of businesses establishing themselves in Gillman and Dry Creek, including distribution centres, warehousing, transport logistics, manufacturing industries, service industries and a variety of small to medium-sized businesses.

He also stated that Renewal SA was working with a consultant team, led by Jensen Planning and Design, to undertake the master planning for the area. This was said to follow:

...detailed investigations to determine the extent of land available for development, taking into account the need for stormwater management and environmental purposes, as well as other transport and infrastructure requirements.

Much to the surprise of many, just weeks later, in December of last year, news broke of an agreement reached between the government and Adelaide Capital Partners in relation to the same parcel of land situated at Gillman. According to *InDaily* media reports, Adelaide Capital Partners had finalised a 12-month exclusive deal with the government to purchase 400 hectares of land for more than \$100 million, with the purchase to be made in stages.

Almost immediately after the agreement was reached, half of Renewal SA's board members tendered their resignations. As speculation over the deal grew, the government was forced to defend its decision to accept an unsolicited bid from ACP rather than go to open tender. The government's position was that no credible proposals had been put forward by any other company and that the deal was executed as a proper exercise of cabinet authority.

We now know that several companies had in fact expressed an interest in the land, and in the weeks following the announcement more and more details came to light concerning the offers put forward by those companies. The government's dismissive attitude towards these claims has not been well received and nor should it be. In fact, several companies and stakeholder groups have been scathing of the government, not only in relation to the comments made to the media by the Premier and the former minister about the lack of any credible economic proposals, but also the lack of transparency that ensued in the sale of the land—and rightly so.

Integrated Waste Service chief executive, Joe Borrelli, criticised the government after his company's unsolicited bid, made in April of last year, was rejected by the government. In a three-page letter to *The Advertiser*, Mr Borrelli rejected the claims of the Premier and the former minister, claiming his proposal 'specifically included details as to how the site could be developed as a profitable joint venture'.

E&A Limited chairman, Stephen Young, has stated that he wrote to the Minister for Infrastructure in November of last year urging the project to go to tender and expressing an interest in the land. Adelaide Resource Recovery's general manager, Matt Size, and Bardavcol—a civil and engineering and construction company—both confirmed making bids and submitting proposals for the site which were also rejected. The then minister for urban housing and development has also denied that the resignation of four Renewal SA board members was prompted by a difference of opinion over the agreement with ACP, arguing instead that they had left for completely different reasons.

As members would be aware, the government has now become embroiled in not one but two legal disputes over the Gillman land—the first, an ongoing dispute with the Adelaide City Council, which previously held an interest in Dean Rifle Range; and the second, a multimillion dollar lawsuit over the deal launched by Acquista Investments.

According to *The Advertiser* media reports, this second action was initiated by the public waste company on the eve of the election in the hope that it would lead to a sale of the site by public tender. The entire deal is nothing short of a complete shambles at taxpayers' expense.

I turn now to Premier and Cabinet Circular 114, which came into operation on 11 October 2010. Part 70 of that document deals with the process for the disposal of government-owned land and part 72 with the basis for pricing. It provides:

The basis for price in all government real property transactions will be the current market value of the property as defined by the Australian Property Institute. That is, the estimated amount for which the property should be exchanged on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's length transaction wherein the parties have each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion. Valuers may use other appropriate processes to value a property where market value is difficult to determine, as provided by the Australian Property Institute.

Part 73 of the document goes on to state:

Valuations of the facilities and land should be undertaken by the Valuer-General or with the prior approval of the Valuer-General, another qualified valuer who is a member of the Australian Property Institute. The Valuer-General may give prior approval to individual agencies to use other qualified valuers on such conditions as the Valuer-General thinks fit and subject to regular review by the Valuer-General. Where a valuer other than the Valuer-General is used, the Valuer-General will retain a right to audit valuations.

Whilst Renewal SA are specifically exempted from the provisions of Circular 114, it is questionable whether they are exempt from pursuing an appropriate process for the disposal of land to achieve its optimum sale price. Notwithstanding that, it would appear cabinet itself is not exempt from the provisions of the circular, and it remains unclear whether the government followed the basis for pricing process set out in its own circular.

There is no question that the Gillman deal has created enormous community concern, especially amongst other interested companies and stakeholder groups. As a former valuer-general and chief executive of the then lands department, there is no doubt in my mind that there are major questions to be answered over the disposal process and ultimately whether the taxpayers of South Australia got the best value for money. There is no question that the best test of the market would have been for the Gillman land to go to open tender, registration of interest or public auction. There is also no question that consideration ought to have been given to optimising the land's maximum value based on optimum use which would have had regard to rezoning, subdivision and the like.

I do not think anyone accepts that an open tender process would have jeopardised the potential for job creation as has been claimed by the government. For all we know, it could have resulted in more jobs. The point is that we do not know. As a parliament we should all be concerned about the manner in which the Gillman deal was struck. We need to forensically examine the details of how it came about, the conduct of the government and, in particular, the Premier and the former minister, and whether or not South Australian taxpayers got bang for their buck. I urge all honourable members to support the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. M.C. Parnell.

#### **ELECTORAL NOMINATION DEPOSIT**

**The Hon. M.C. PARNELL (17:15):** I move:

That the regulations under the Electoral Act 1985 concerning nomination deposit made on 16 January 2014 and laid on the table of this council on 6 May 2014, be disallowed.

During briefings and debate on electoral reform at the end of last year, the government foreshadowed an increase in deposits payable by candidates seeking election to the Legislative Council. The deposit was \$450, and the feeling amongst the old parties was that it should be increased. The Liberals proposed \$2,000 but ended up agreeing with the government to raise the deposit to \$3,000. The Greens did not support such a big hike in deposits, but clearly the numbers were against us.

Aside from the attack on democracy, it was particularly galling that during debate in this place and during the various briefings we had with ministerial staff it was never declared that the government's real agenda was to increase the deposits of both the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly. However, as soon as parliament had risen for the year and the spectre of parliamentary scrutiny had disappeared, the government brought in regulations for an across-the-board deposit of \$3,000 for both houses. The House of Assembly deposit was never raised as a problem, and we were never told that the government was even thinking about touching it.

This was a sneaky and underhanded move that made it more difficult for citizens to exercise a democratic right to contest elections. What makes this move particularly obnoxious is that the regulations came into effect on 16 January 2014, just two months before the general election, with the close of nominations (and therefore the time of payment of the new \$3,000 deposit) being 24 February, a bare five weeks later. Parties and candidates had very little time to get that money together; in fact, the deadline for parties was even shorter, with the money needing to be paid by 21 February.

The increase in deposit affected intending Independent and small-party candidates particularly hard. Candidates who had been expecting to pay \$450 were shocked to find that they now had to stump up \$3,000 in cash or bank cheque just to contest the election. Unless they were regular readers of the *Government Gazette*, most candidates had even less than five weeks to find the money that they never knew they needed.

This can be compared with the situation we found when debating other electoral reform legislation, such as the bill in relation to donations and disclosure. Members might recall that the Greens wanted these new accountability measures to come into operation sooner, but Liberal and Labor agreed to give themselves two whole years to sort out their financial record keeping. Compare that with giving Independent candidates only five weeks to find a not inconsiderable amount of cash to be able to contest the last election.

It was not just Independent candidates who were affected; the impact on political parties was also significant. My party, for example, the Australian Greens, had to find \$150,000 to contest each of 47 lower house seats and a team of three in the upper house. Whilst we were confident of getting a deposit back in most seats, we still had to redirect money from our campaign budget to cover these deposits.

So, leaving aside the unfairness in the manner of introduction of these regulations, the question is: did the new deposit prevent would-be candidates from contesting the election? The answer is that it most certainly did. The number of Independent and minor party candidates contesting the House of Assembly election has plummeted, and the cost of the deposit is a significant reason for that decline.

At this time I seek leave to include two statistical tables into *Hansard* without my reading them. They are purely statistical and are taken from the Electoral Commission of South Australia State Election Reports. They are tables 28 from the 2006 report and table 27 from the 2010 report.

Leave granted.

TABLE 28: CANDIDATES, MEMBERS ELECTED AND SHARE OF VOTE BY AFFILIATION

	LC			HA		
	No.			No.		
Affiliation	Candidates	Successful*	% of votes	Candidates	Successful#	% of votes
ALP	7	4^(9)	36.6	47	28 (23)	45.2
DEM	4	(1)	1.8	46	—	2.9

Affiliation	LC			HA		
	No.		% of votes	No.		% of votes
Candidates	Successful*	Candidates		Successful#		
D4D	4	–	0.6	10	–	0.4
FFP	4	1 (2)	5.0	45	–	5.9
GRN	4	1 (0)	4.3	47	–	6.5
IND	17	2 (1)	23.5	17	3 (3)	2.8
LIB	7	3 ^ (9)	26.0	47	15 (20)	34.0
NP	2	–	0.7	4	1 (1)	2.1
ONP	2	–	0.8	6	–	0.3
SP	2	–	0.6	0	–	–
SSRP	1	–	0.2	0	–	–
Total	54	11 (22)		302	47	

(\*) Figures in brackets show no. of seats in the new government;

(^) single vacancies were filled on the first sitting day of Parliament for both Labor and Liberal.

(#) Figures in brackets show no. of seats won at 2002 election.

ALP Australian Labor Party, DEM Australian Democrats, D4D Dignity for Disabled, FFP Family First Party, GRN Australian Greens, IND Independent, LIB Liberal Party, NP National Party, ONP One Nation Party, SP Shooters Party, SSRP Stormy Summers Reform Party

TABLE 27: CANDIDATES, MEMBERS ELECTED AND SHARE OF VOTE BY AFFILIATION

Affiliation	Legislative Council			House of Assembly		
	No. of Candidates	No. Elected*	% of first preference votes	No. of Candidates	No. Elected #	% of first preference votes
ALP/CLP	5	4 (8)	37.3	47	26 (28)	37.5
DEM	3	-	0.9	8	-	0.4
D4D	4	1 (1)	1.2	3	-	0.1
DLP	2	-	0.8	1	-	0.03
FFP	3	1 (2)	4.4	47	-	5.4
FLT	2	-	0.6	9	-	0.2
FREE	2	-	0.4	4	-	0.2
G4C	1	-	0.8	5	-	0.2
GRN	3	1 (2)	6.6	47	-	8.1
IND	31	- (2)	4.8	22	3 (3)	4.7
LIB	7	4 (7)	39.4	47	18 (15)	41.7
NP	2	-	0.4	2	- (1)	1.0
ONP	2	-	0.5	-	-	-
SAVRAH	4	-	1.0	11	-	0.5
SP	1	-	0.8	-	-	-
UNITED	2	-	0.2	-	-	-
Total	74	11 (22)		253	47	

(\*)for LC-figures in brackets show the number of seats in the new Parliament

(#)for HA-figures in brackets show the number of seats won at the 2006 State election

ALP/CLP Australian Labor Party/Country Labor Party, DEM Australian Democrats, D4D Dignity for Disability, FFP Family First Party, FLT Fair Land Tax—Tax Party, FREE Freedom, Rights, Environment, Educate Australia Party,

G4C Gamers for Croydon, GRN Australian Greens, IND Independent, LIB Liberal Party, NP National Party, ONP One Nation Party, SAVRAH Save RAH Party, SP Shooters Party, UNITED United Party-Water, Housing Health Care

**The Hon. M.C. PARNELL:** The 2014 election report is not yet available, so I will refer to some of those statistics directly. Those tables show the following: in the 2006 election there were 302 House of Assembly candidates—the ALP, the Greens and the Liberals contested all 47 seats, the Democrats contested 46 and Family First 45. In terms of smaller parties and Independents, there were 37 other candidates. In 2010, there were 253 lower house candidates, and the reduction in number between 2006 and 2010 is overwhelmingly due to the demise of the Democrats who, in 2010, contested only eight seats. But, there were still another 57 Independent and small-party candidates. If you include the Democrats as a then microparty, 65 fell into that category.

But, when you get to 2014, this most recent election, again the ALP, the Liberal Party and the Greens contested every seat—all 47—and Family First contested 41. But the number of minor party and Independent candidates had plummeted to 21, so, in effect, only about one-third of the numbers in the previous election, and about half the number in the 2006 election. Why is it so? There is a range of reasons, but clearly one is the expense of contesting the election and that expense kicking off with having to find a \$3,000 deposit.

I have certainly received anecdotal evidence from people who were planning to be candidates but decided not to when the price went up. Most Independent and small-party candidates are realistic enough to know that they are unlikely to win the seat, and many also know that they probably will not get their deposit back after the election as they are unlikely to reach the 4 per cent threshold for the return of deposits.

Of course one could argue that the reason there were fewer Independent and small party candidates in the last election is that the major parties, particularly Liberal and Labor, are doing such a fine job that fewer people feel the need to stand against them. However, we all know that is not true. In South Australia in recent elections between a third and a half of all voters have voted for someone other than Liberal and Labor in the upper house. The figures are lower in the House of Assembly, partly because the fields are smaller, which is why these regulations are essentially self-serving for incumbents. They help to ensure smaller fields, which means less competition and a higher vote for those who can afford to run.

This motion is to disallow these regulations and therefore disallow the increase in candidate deposits. Throwing out these regulations will be good for our democracy and a clear message for the community that standing for parliament is a right of all citizens and that there should not be an unreasonable wealth qualification.

We do not want to go back to the bad old days when, for example, only property owners were eligible to stand for election to parliament. This is not to say that there should be no criteria for being a candidate. Increasing the number of signatures required to support a nomination has merit, and it was one of Antony Green's recommendations delivered to the committee for the Economic Development of Australia Forum, which a number of members attended late last year.

The issue here, though, is about the money. It is about the price you pay for putting your name forward for election. The Greens believe the price is too high and that our democracy is the poorer as a result, and that is why we believe these regulations deserve to be disallowed, and we urge all honourable members to support the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.M. Gazzola.

#### **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS (17:24):** I move:

1. That a committee, to be called the Budget and Finance Committee, be appointed to monitor and scrutinise all matters relating to the state budget and the financial administration of the state.
2. That the standing orders of the Legislative Council in relation to select committees be applied and accordingly—
  - (a) that standing order 389 be so far suspended as to enable the chairperson of the committee to have a deliberative vote only;

- (b) that this council permits the committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to any such evidence being reported to the council; and
  - (c) that standing order 396 be suspended to enable strangers to be admitted when the committee is examining witnesses unless the committee otherwise resolves, but they shall be excluded when the committee is deliberating.
3. That members of the council who are not members of the committee may, at the discretion of the chairperson, participate in proceedings of the committee but may not vote, move any motions or be counted for the purposes of a quorum.
4. That a full-time research officer position be made available to assist the work of the committee.

I do not propose to speak at length to the moving of this particular motion, although I acknowledge there are two members who are new to the chamber who will be new to the debate in relation to the Budget and Finance Committee. I refer those members, and those who may want to refresh their memory, to contributions in the last parliament (which are covered in *Hansard* of 12 May and I think a subsequent meeting of the council two weeks after 12 May 2010) and, in particular, the first motions to establish this committee back in the middle of 2007.

This chamber has supported, in the previous 2007 and 2010 parliaments, the establishment of a Budget and Finance Committee. The role and operation of the Budget and Finance Committee I think is familiar to all members. Speaking as one member of that committee over its lifetime, I believe it has undertaken work which is of value to this parliament and to the community in terms of ensuring greater transparency and accountability in terms of the state's finances.

Its operations have, in general, been accepted by all, other than, clearly, the members of the government party over the last seven years. I do not propose to outline the arguments for such a committee again, and I do not propose to outline some of the achievements and, I think, some of the benefits that we have seen from the workings of the committee over the period of seven years, but I propose to make two points; the first is to reinforce the operations of the committee.

Should it be established, the committee will comprise five members, but it is different from all other committees established in this parliament, in that under its terms of reference, Mr President, as you would be familiar as a former member of the committee, we welcome all other members of the Legislative Council to come as participating members of the committee. In the seven years of the operation of the committee, on no occasion has a member been refused permission to come and participate, and there has not been an example where a member who has participated has been unable to ask the questions, either directly or on notice, that he or she has wished to put.

Can I also indicate that there have been occasions when members of the Legislative Council who wanted to come and ask questions but who were unable to attend a particular meeting have asked other members of the committee, including me, to put questions on their behalf at the committee meeting to departmental representatives, and the committee has assisted those members with that.

I have not counted, but over the last four years I think at least half a dozen to eight other members of the Legislative Council at one stage or another have attended to ask certain questions which were of interest to those members during the committee. For example, if a member has a particular interest in the environment, they may only attend the meeting when the department that relates to environmental matters gives evidence. The operations of the committee tend to be on a regular rotational basis.

The other point I wish to make is that the committee during the last parliament, because the government had ensured that there was not an ongoing Public Works Committee monitoring of the new build for the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, resolved to take evidence on the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. Should the committee be established, I hope that it would resolve to continue to have a monitoring role for the operations of the new Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The final point I make is that, given that this is a tried and tested debate, done in 2007 and in 2010, as I have mentioned, I give notice today that I intend to seek a vote on the establishment of this committee when we next sit for private members' business, which I understand is in two weeks' time. That is, in essence, what we did last time.



As I said, most parties and members will have formed their view, and I give early notice that I will be seeking a vote on the committee, should the majority of this chamber support the establishment of the committee. It would allow the committee to meet soon after it is established and commence the scheduling of witnesses and to start taking evidence at almost the same time that the budget is brought down in the middle of June, which would be an opportune time to commence taking evidence from senior members of the Public Service.

If the committee is established, I am not aware of which hardworking members of the Australian Labor Party might be nominated. There would appear to be maybe only two nominees; the Hon. Mr Ngo would appear to be one of them. I am not sure whether the Hon. Mr Kandelaars—

**The Hon. D.W. Ridgway:** The Hon. Mr Ngo is saying yes by the sounds of it.

**The Hon. R.I. LUCAS:** The Hon. Mr Ngo might have said yes. I suspect that the other might be the Hon. Mr Kandelaars. Certainly from the Hon. Mr Ngo's viewpoint, it will be a new experience for him although, as a former ministerial adviser, I am sure he is aware of the work of the committee in relation to at least the health portfolio and other portfolios he might have been engaged in. He will now certainly be able to ask his own questions of those senior bureaucrats. He will know where some of the skeletons are buried—yes, he can rub his hands together—and we look forward to his active participation in the committee.

Sensible spending of taxpayer dollars and financial accountability is an issue that should be of concern to us all. Sometimes—only sometimes—I am sure that departments and agencies get up to business and decisions that even ministers or ministerial advisers might not be either approving or aware of. The Budget and Finance Committee will give the Hon. Mr Ngo and other members the opportunity to ask their own questions during any evidence taken, should the committee be established. With those few words, I urge members to support the establishment of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.S.L. Dawkins.

*Citizen's Right of Reply*

**CITIZEN'S RIGHT OF REPLY**

**The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills, Minister for Science and Information Economy, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Business Services and Consumers) (17:33):** I move:

That, during the present session, the council make available to any person who believes that he or she has been adversely referred to during proceedings of the Legislative Council the following procedure for seeking to have a response incorporated into *Hansard*—

1. Any person who has been referred to in the Legislative Council by name, or in another way so as to be readily identified, may make a submission in writing to the President—
  - (a) claiming that he or she has been adversely affected in reputation or in respect of dealings or associations with others, or injured in profession, occupation or trade or in the holding of an office, or in respect of any financial credit or other status or that his or her privacy has been unreasonably invaded; and
  - (b) requesting that his or her response be incorporated into *Hansard*.
2. The President shall consider the submission as soon as practicable.
3. The President shall reject any submission that is not made within a reasonable time.
4. If the President has not rejected the submission under clause 3, the President shall give notice of the submission to the member who referred in the council to the person who has made the submission.
5. In considering the submission, the President—
  - (a) may confer with the person who made the submission;
  - (b) may confer with any member;
  - (c) must confer with the member who referred in the council to the person who has made the submission and provide to that member a copy of any proposed response at least one clear sitting day prior to the publication of the response; but
  - (d) may not take any evidence;

- (e) may not judge the truth of any statement made in the council or the submission.
6. If the President is of the opinion that—
- (a) the submission is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or offensive in character; or
  - (b) the submission is not made in good faith; or
  - (c) the submission has not been made within a reasonable time; or
  - (d) the submission misrepresents the statements made by the member; or
  - (e) there is some other good reason not to grant the request to incorporate a response into *Hansard*, the President shall refuse the request and inform the person who made it of the President's decision.
7. The President shall not be obliged to inform the council or any person of the reasons for any decision made pursuant to this resolution. The President's decision shall be final and no debate, reflection or vote shall be permitted in relation to the President's decision.
8. Unless the President refuses the request on one or more of the grounds set out in paragraph 5 of this resolution, the President shall report to the council that in the President's opinion the response in terms agreed between him and the person making the request should be incorporated into *Hansard* and the response shall thereupon be incorporated into *Hansard*.
9. A response—
- (a) must be succinct and strictly relevant to the question in issue;
  - (b) must not contain anything offensive in character;
  - (c) must not contain any matter the publication of which would have the effect of—
    - (i) unreasonably adversely affecting or injuring a person, or unreasonably invading a person's privacy in the manner referred to in paragraph 1 of this resolution, or
    - (ii) unreasonably aggravating any adverse effect, injury or invasion of privacy suffered by any person, or
    - (iii) unreasonably aggravating any situation or circumstance, and
  - (d) must not contain any matter the publication of which might prejudice—
    - (i) the investigation of any alleged criminal offence,
    - (ii) the fair trial of any current or pending criminal proceedings, or
    - (iii) any civil proceedings in any court or tribunal.
10. In this resolution—
- (a) 'person' includes a corporation of any type and an unincorporated association;
  - (b) 'member' includes a former member of the Legislative Council.

This motion relates to the right of reply for any person who believes that he or she has been adversely referred to during proceedings of the Legislative Council. It is identical to the motions that have been moved at the start of previous sessions for many years, and I believe it is a very worthwhile part of the procedures of this parliament. I move this as a sessional order and seek the support of the council to ensure that this right of reply continues for this session.

**The Hon. D.W. RIDGWAY (Leader of the Opposition) (17:34):** I rise on behalf of the opposition to speak to the motion which, as the minister has suggested, could be referred to as a sessional order for a citizen's right of reply.

As the Hon. Mark Parnell reminded me a while ago, I am the only member in the chamber who has ever had to endure, or be privileged to have, two citizen's right of replies lodged against comments I made.

The Hon. Angus Redford, who was a member of this council some time ago, insisted on an amendment. I checked with the Clerk earlier today, and this is an exact copy of a previous motion from the last session. It states that the President must confer with the member who referred in the council to the person who has made the submission and provide that member with a copy of any proposed response at least one clear sitting day prior to the publication of that response. That was something that the Hon. Angus Redford insisted on.

In the situation where I was faced with these particular submissions that had been made, I thought it was a sensible amendment, where you could actually have a look at what the response was going to be and make some comment, or at least be informed and you were not caught by surprise.

I hope that this gives anybody in the community who feels that someone in this place has said something that has caused them to believe that he or she has been adversely referred to during the proceedings of the Legislative Council the opportunity of making a submission seeking to have a response incorporated in *Hansard*. With those few words, I support the motion.

Motion carried.

*Parliamentary Committees*

**SESSIONAL COMMITTEES**

The House of Assembly notified its appointment of sessional committees.

**JOINT PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE COMMITTEE**

The House of Assembly notified its appointment of the committee.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

The House of Assembly notified its appointment of standing committees.

At 17:40 the council adjourned until Thursday 8 May 2014 at 14:15.