

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 22 February 2023

The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens) took the chair at 14:20 and read prayers.

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

Parliamentary Committees

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (14:21): I bring up the 21st report of the committee.

Report received.

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS: I bring up the 22nd report of the committee.

Report received.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (Hon. K.J. Maher)—

Final Report of the Review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 dated 2022

By the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development (Hon. C.M. Scriven)—

Inclusive SA—Report, 2021-22

District Council By-laws—

Franklin Harbour—

No. 2—Local Government Land

Question Time

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:23): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question in relation to the state Electoral Commission.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: The Attorney-General was on breakfast radio this morning announcing that the government will look at a review of the whole process that was undertaken by the Electoral Commission in regard to the recent local government elections. My question to the Attorney-General is: why is it that you were happy to speak on breakfast radio this morning about the council elections but would not take responsibility for it in this chamber yesterday?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:24): I thank the honourable member for her question. As I said yesterday, the conduct of local government elections is the responsibility of the Minister for Local Government. However, one of the defining differences between how the Liberal Party conducted themselves in government and how we do is we support each other. We act as a team. We do things and we help each other out. That is one of the defining differences between that rabble over there and us.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Let me give you a quote that tells us all we need to know about the differences between how we conduct ourselves as a team in government and how the Liberal Party, as a shambolic outfit, conducted themselves in government. In a recent interview with *The Advertiser*, the now Leader of the Opposition and then environment minister described being part of the Liberal government cabinet like this, 'I was like a kid strapped in the back seat of a car and dad's passed out.' That's how he described being part of that government.

We are more than happy to help each other out. We are more than happy to look at problems together and to have solutions for South Australia. That's how we do it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:25): Supplementary: are you not the minister responsible for the administration of the Electoral Act, from which the powers and functions of the Electoral Commissioner come?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:25): The Electoral Act is, I think, one of about 189 or so acts that as Attorney-General I am responsible for.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I have said, and I am happy to say it again, in relation to the conduct of local government elections, that sits under the Minister for Local Government. I am sure if the people of South Australia are ever unfortunate enough to have a Liberal government inflicted upon them again, they will learn about ministerial responsibility and not be like a kid strapped into the back seat of a car while dad's passed out.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:26): Supplementary question: is there any section of the Electoral Act which is assigned to Minister Brock?

The PRESIDENT: Attorney, you did mention the Electoral Act.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:26): The conduct of local government elections is a matter for the Minister for Local Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (14:26): Supplementary: does the Premier have confidence in Minister Brock or is the reason you were on breakfast radio because the Premier does not have confidence in his ability to deliver these changes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:27): It is really a nonsensical question asking to speculate on the state of mind of another person. I can tell you this—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The conversations will cease! Attorney, finish your answer, please.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Minister Brock is an absolutely valued member of the South Australian cabinet. I have to say, I am amazed, when we go out to country areas for these things we call country cabinets that were abolished by the last government, at the huge esteem and affection Minister Brock is held in. It stands in stark contrast to being a minister strapped in the back seat of a car with dad passed out.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:28): Supplementary to the Attorney-General: is there a provision in the Electoral Act or the Local Government Act for a countback in the event of candidates being disqualified, and if there is, why isn't this step being considered by the government and the minister instead of trying to rush through retrospective legislation?

The PRESIDENT: Attorney, you did talk about the size and breadth of the act.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:28): I thank the honourable member for his question. I will take it on notice and check. I think there are differing provisions depending on whether an election is contested or not and if it's a mayoral election. My understanding is that certainly there will be quite a number of the—I think it was 45 councillors who failed to put a return in on time who would require a supplementary election.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (14:28): Supplementary question: can the minister advise if any part of the Electoral Act prohibits the commissioner from speaking to the Minister for Local Government?

The PRESIDENT: You did talk about the act in your answer, Attorney.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:29): I am not aware of a specific part of the Electoral Act that would prohibit the Electoral Commissioner from speaking to the Minister for Local Government.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable Leader of the Opposition, your second question, please.

RIVERLAND FLOOD RESPONSE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:29): I seek leave to provide a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development about flooding on farmland.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: On 8 February, I asked a question of the minister about farmers left inundated by River Murray flooding after the government levees breached. Much of the families' frustrations stemmed from no fortifications happening on the government-owned Long Flat levee prior to the breach and a 'total lack of communication' since. In response to my question the minister replied that, and I quote, 'There has been a large amount of community engagement to date.'

According to the *Stock Journal* last week, the community forum in Long Flat was arranged by locals with help from Livestock SA because, and I quote, 'This wasn't going to happen if we waited so as a community we decided to do it ourselves.' My question to the minister is: can she inform the chamber why the Lower Murray community was left out of the widespread community engagement?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:30): I thank the honourable member for her question. The event that was held a couple of weeks ago—unfortunately I was unable to attend due to a prior commitment that I had made. I am glad to say that the chief executive of my department, Professor Mehdi Doroudi, the Chief Executive of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia, was able to attend along with, I believe, other members of my department staff.

I have had a number of interactions as, indeed, has my department and other avenues of government. It is very important that we continue to engage and where there are any opportunities to improve engagement further then I am more than happy to be involved with that.

EYRE PENINSULA DESALINATION PROJECT

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:31): I seek leave to provide a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development a question regarding the Eyre Peninsula Desalination Project.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: The desalination project is vital for water security for the regional townships across Eyre Peninsula as well as for primary production. Eyre Peninsula is one of South Australia's most productive regions, generating approximately \$3.5 billion in gross regional product annually.

In light of the positive primary industries report card that the minister spoke about in the chamber yesterday, where \$17.3 billion has been generated in regional South Australia through primary industries, my question to the minister is: will her government commit to using a share of the state tax revenue from the \$17.3 billion generated in regional South Australia to fund the desalination project on Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32): I thank the honourable member for her question. SA Water is proposing to build a desalination plant at the Port Lincoln region to ensure that Eyre Peninsula's water supply and supporting infrastructure can meet the current and future needs of the local community.

On 15 October 2021, SA Water announced a site at Billy Lights Point as their preferred location and the preferred location is situated adjacent to the Aquaculture (Zones—Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013. Concerns have been raised with SA Water by the local aquaculture industry and the Department of Primary Industries and Regions in regard to potential impacts. Due to those concerns and the concerns of other stakeholders, SA Water established a site selection committee, including representation from the aquaculture industry to provide a recommendation to SA Water and the government for a suitable plant location.

I understand that the SA Water Board and the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water will consider all the available information, including the site selection committee, to make a final decision regarding a proposed plant location. Of course, as that process continues, all the matters around funding will be explored.

EYRE PENINSULA DESALINATION PROJECT

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:33): Supplementary: as the Minister for Primary Industries, will you commit to formally writing to the Treasurer and to the Minister for Water advocating for some of that tax revenue for primary industries to be used to fund the EP Desal Project?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:34): I thank the member for the supplementary question. I think I have already answered the fact that, as the report becomes available, issues around funding will be addressed. It's appropriate for that process to continue.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Minister, please continue and conclude your remarks.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I would imagine that, if I were to write such a letter, the question would come back, asking: 'What quantum of funding are you seeking?', 'What would the location be?' and so on. Given that is a decision that is being worked through with SA Water and the steering committee, as I have just outlined in my previous answer, it would be a very unusual way to go about trying to secure funding before all the details are even evident of what is required. However, I think the answer that I have given has addressed the tenet of what the member is asking, and I look forward to seeing some further outcomes from the minister in the other place who has responsibility.

MOBILE NETWORK EXTENSION DEVICES PILOT PROGRAM

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (14:35): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about the state government's recent announcement to expand the very well-named Mobile Network Extension Devices Pilot Program—a catchy title?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35): I thank the honourable member for his question and look forward to receiving his suggestions on a more catchy title for this particular device. I am very pleased that, during country cabinet last week, I was able to announce that the state government, in partnership with Telstra, is expanding the existing Mobile Network Extension Devices Pilot Program to residents on Yorke Peninsula. It is so important that there is access to reliable mobile coverage and connectivity in regional parts of our state. Unlike much of metropolitan Adelaide, of course, it is something that can't simply be taken for granted in regional areas, as often we do not enjoy reliable mobile coverage to the same standard.

The benefit of expanding this program that was previously only open to residents in the Adelaide Hills and Mount Barker council areas is that it can provide a localised solution for people who face difficulties with connectivity. Residents in the Yorke Peninsula, Barunga West and Copper Coast councils who experience connectivity issues in their homes or businesses are encouraged to get in contact with Telstra to understand what solution might be best for them and their particular situation.

The program subsidises the installation cost of the mobile repeater devices in homes or businesses after residents within the council areas I have just mentioned have purchased a Telstra GO repeater, either outright or on a monthly plan. Costs for the devices range from around \$800 for a standard unit. Again, Telstra can advise on the right solution and product, depending on what is needed.

Of course, there is more that needs to be done in addressing mobile blackspots, and I am heartened to see that the Albanese Labor government is taking its role in addressing these issues very seriously, with a \$656 million plan over five years that includes a \$400 million boost to mobile coverage on regional roads, at regional communities and for public safety communication facilities, as well as \$200 million for two additional rounds of the Regional Connectivity Program that will invest in place-based connectivity infrastructure.

The Malinauskas government will continue to work closely with our federal counterparts to ensure that South Australia gets its fair share of funding and that solutions are found that address the needs of our regional communities. The state government and Telstra's Mobile Network Extension Devices Pilot Program play an important role in, as I said previously, offering a localised solution that is likely to assist a number of residents in areas that don't have reliable connectivity.

I thank Telstra and their regional general manager in South Australia, Michael Patterson, for their role in this important program. I also want to acknowledge the member for Narungga, Fraser Ellis, in the other place, for his advocacy on behalf of his electorate in improving mobile connectivity for Yorke Peninsula.

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

The Hon. S.L. GAME (14:38): I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, representing the Minister for Child Protection, on the coronial inquest into the death of Zhane Chilcott.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: It's now approaching seven years since 13-year-old Zhane Chilcott tragically took his own life on 12 July 2016 at a residential care facility. Zhane had been rotated through 18 different placements over his short life and, despite multiple red flags being raised in the Department for Child Protection, he received only one visit on average per year by the Child and Young Person's Visitor between 2005 and 2011. Reports in *The Advertiser* say that the last foster carer whom Zhane was placed with had funding reduced, just as Zhane had settled and began

showing signs of improvement. Unfortunately, the foster carer was forced to relinquish Zhane, as he could not meet Zhane's needs with the reduced funding.

In Kate Alexander's November 2022 Trust in Culture review of the child protection system in South Australia, it is noted that a coronial inquest heard evidence in 2021 and that the date for handing down its findings is not yet known. Carers have expressed concern that the DCP manual of practice is not being followed to prevent child harm. Given the chief executive's resignation, effective 26 April 2023, the full inquest with recommendations should be released publicly prior to her departure, and I note that parliament is not sitting in April this year.

There appear to be multiple learning opportunities for DCP, foster carers and the community to ensure the likelihood of a reoccurrence in child protection does not occur again. My questions to the minister representing the child protection minister are:

1. Has the minister or her department received the findings and recommendations of Zhane Chilcott's coronial inquest and, if not, why not?
2. Does the minister believe seven years is a suitable delay before acting on recommendations that could prevent further child deaths and serious injuries from occurring?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:40): I thank the honourable member for her question. I will refer it to the Minister for Child Protection in the other place and bring back a response.

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:40): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs about Aboriginal children.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S. LEE: The Kate Alexander report called Trust in Culture, a review of child protection in South Australia, was released last year. The review was an investigation into deaths of children in care of family or the state. In her report, she states that seven of the eight children whose tragic deaths are at the centre of this review were identified as Aboriginal. There has been a 116.3 per cent increase of Aboriginal children in care in South Australia over the last decade and the number is trending up. Unfortunately, only half of those children are placed with family or kin.

South Australia also has the highest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term guardianship orders and the lowest rate of reunification for Aboriginal children compared with other Australian states and territories. My questions to the minister are:

1. As the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, what action has he undertaken to ensure that long-term guardianship orders decrease for Aboriginal children?
2. Can the minister explain what actions have been undertaken by the government to improve the rates of reunification for Aboriginal children with their families?
3. Can the minister indicate which recommendations in that report will the government implement, particularly in relation to the specific focus required for Aboriginal children?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:42): I thank the honourable member for her question. As the honourable member would be aware, the Alexander report, its responses and the child protection system sit under the child protection minister, the Hon. Katrine Hildyard, the member for Reynell, in another place, but these are very serious questions.

The rate of removal of Aboriginal children from their family is too high. It is too high in South Australia. It is too high across this country. The rate of reunification is too low. It is too low in South Australia and across the country.

One of the things that I firmly believe is that all the solutions are not found in what I think or particularly what any other minister or even a Minister for Child Protection thinks. They are found in the views of the Aboriginal community and that is one of the driving forces behind making sure

Aboriginal people have more of a say in these sorts of issues and in the policies that affect their lives. But I can assure the honourable member that the Minister for Child Protection is very well aware of the difficulties faced and also the need to do better in this area.

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:43): Supplementary: with the answers given, would the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs take a stronger advocacy and speak to the minister in the other place to perhaps bring back a more formal answer to this chamber?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:43): I do speak regularly to the minister in the other place about these issues.

FOODLAND SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (14:44): My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Will the minister please update the council on Foodland's Supplier of the Year Awards?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:44): I thank the honourable member for her very important question in relation to the Foodland Supplier of the Year Awards towards the end of last year. It was a pleasure to attend those awards with a number of my colleagues in this place. I had the distinct pleasure at the table I was at of having the company of the Hon. Frank Pangallo and the Hon. Connie Bonaros. It is a pleasure when it is just one but when you have both of the SA-Best representatives it is a fantastic night.

It was in a number of capacities that I was pleased to be at this event. Of course, as Minister for Industrial Relations, Foodland and the independent retail sector generally are a strong part of the South Australian economy and have worked particularly closely with not just the government but also SA-Best, the Greens and others about shop trading hours and making sure that we are giving the independent retail sector the best possible help in South Australia to employ South Australians. I was also very pleased to attend those awards in my capacity as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and invited to attend the awards to speak about the importance of our commitment to a First Nations Voice to parliament in South Australia and nationally.

Foodland is, of course, a great South Australian institution. Not only does it provide good well-paid jobs for South Australian workers and an important counterbalance to the much bigger supermarkets and national and multinational chains, it also supports local jobs right throughout the supply chain. I think I mentioned before, under the previous Weatherill government, as Minister for Manufacturing, I heard again and again that independent supermarkets were instrumental in helping small food manufacturers in South Australia get a start. The Foodlands and the IGAs would provide advice on product placement, on marketing and packaging, and there were quite a lot of times that small food manufacturers talked about the start they got through independent retailers.

As I said, it was a pleasure to attend the Foodland Supplier of the Year Awards and see so many of the local suppliers who have flourished and grown because of the strong independent retail sector. The dinner was attended by, I am told, in excess of 400 people, including retailers, store teams, state and national suppliers to Foodland. At this event, Foodland celebrated its 60th year of operations and inducted 17 past and present owners into the inaugural Foodland Hall of Fame.

Following the performance at the start of the night by Electric Fields and Tjarutja First Nations Dance Collective, 16 awards were delivered to suppliers in a whole array of different sectors. There were some very notable South Australian winners including San Remo, winning the South Australian Supplier of the Year, Ceravolo Orchards, winning the Sustainable Seven Award, and Vili's Family Bakery, winning the Bakery Goods Award.

At this event Foodland also announced that it would be commencing work to enter into a reconciliation action plan. Reconciliation action plans over recent years have been an important mechanism to ensure that there is a structured framework with targets and tangible actions implemented by organisations to promote reconciliation, increase understanding and promote

respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, and to have plans for a company to do better in terms of employment, engagement and supply.

Although it is very early on in their reconciliation journey, I commend Foodland for taking this very, very important first step, and I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank Foodland CEO Franklin Dos Santos for the invitation to speak at this important event. Reflecting on it, it shows a growing willingness if corporations like Foodland are very keen for speakers to come and talk about a Voice and the importance it has to the whole Australian community.

SILICOSIS

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:48): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Industrial Relations a question about workplace safety audits.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: On the weekend, *60 Minutes* was the latest media outlet to reveal the dangers of silicosis, something that has been raised in here extensively. It is an incurable lung disease linked back to engineered stone used in common kitchen benchtops. The exposé prompted the federal employment and workplace relations minister to warn that a coordinated national response is needed to address the deadly disease, which has been labelled as the asbestosis of the 2020s, with fears of up to 100,000 workers across all trade sectors being diagnosed with silicosis.

For those who aren't aware, silicosis is a lung disease mainly caused by inhaling silica, a mineral commonly found in certain types of rocks or soil. Silica dust is created by cutting, drilling, grinding or polishing certain types of stone, rock, sand and clay. The engineered stone is ground stone combined with resin to make a slab that resembles natural stone such as marble or granite and contains up to 95 per cent silica. Over time, inhaling the dust causes inflammation and scarring of the lung tissue and stiffening of the lungs, making it difficult to breathe. My questions to the minister are:

1. How many inspections, audits and investigations has SafeWork SA undertaken per annum for the last three years on worksites where there is cutting of silica-containing products?
2. What have been the outcomes of these audits, inspections and/or investigations?
3. How many compensation claims have been lodged in relation to exposure in the past three years?
4. How many of those have been accepted and/or rejected?
5. Can the minister provide an update on what it is doing to address the dangers exposed by exposure to silica dust, including discussions with his federal counterpart?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:50): I thank the honourable member for her question; it is a very important question. Next week, there is a meeting of all work health and safety ministers from all jurisdictions around Australia as well as with the federal minister, the Hon. Tony Burke. I will be participating in that meeting, and there have been quite a lot of discussions that have occurred to date.

I know my office has been talking to the federal minister's office almost daily for the last week, mainly about this particular issue. I know that the Australian Council of Trade Unions has made comments and has put views forward. I think it will be if not the first certainly very high up on the agenda for all work health and safety ministers to discuss. Also individual unions in South Australia have raised concerns, as they should.

I know that for some time now South Australia has participated in a national working group looking at the issues related to manufactured stone—related to the manufacture of the stone, the importation of the stone, but most importantly its use in South Australia. I don't want to pre-empt anything that may happen nationally, but it is something where there are aspects that are to do with national laws on importation and other matters of such stone, but also state jurisdictions have a role to play in their occupational health and safety regimes, and this is what we will be discussing next week.

In relation to the specific questions about how many worksite inspections, the outcomes of those, applications for compensation and acceptance and rejection rates, I will ask SafeWork SA for the first half of those and ReturnToWork for the second half of those and, to the extent that our figures are able to be broken down, as the member has requested, bring back a reply for her on those.

SILICOSIS

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:52): Supplementary: given what the minister has just said, does he accept that without some immediate action federally there may be no option other than to look at banning engineered stone in South Australia?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:53): I thank the honourable member for her supplementary. I think this is a thing that both levels of government need to work on, and that's certainly what we are working towards. I neglected to mention there is a committee of this parliament chaired by the Hon. Tammy Franks that I think—

The Hon. T.A. Franks: It's not chaired by me. It's Olivia.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: With the Hon. Tammy Franks that even as recently as today has talked about this matter and is taking evidence and submissions on this very issue. It is something we are alive to and have been participating in and take very seriously.

SILICOSIS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:53): Supplementary: as the minister is referring to relevant bodies, can the minister also please just update the council on how many South Australian workers were screened for silicosis in 2022 and how many X-rays were being sent to Queensland each year for reading? Out of that, is the minister confident that SafeWork SA is adequately resourced to support education and occupational health and safety training in South Australia?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:54): I thank the honourable member for her questions. The first two questions I will see if there can be an answer to, but I strongly suspect it's not information we would have as a government in terms of individuals' screenings or attendances, but if there is a possibility I will have a look at it.

SafeWork SA perform a very important role. We recently had a review of SafeWork SA and their roles and procedures and we spoke earlier this year about implementing some of those. SafeWork have a very important role and I think go about it diligently.

AUTISM SA

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (14:54): My question is to the Assistant Minister for Autism on Autism SA. Have there been any changes or forecasted changes to the funding given to Autism SA since the 2022 election and change of government? Will the rollout of your autism wellbeing and inclusion program impact on Autism SA's funding and program delivery services?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (14:55): I thank the member for her question. I am happy to take that on notice. As we have done with all our stakeholders involved in the autism area, we will continue to consult and work with our stakeholders and also members of the community. I am happy to take that question on notice.

EVOKEAG CONFERENCE

The Hon. T.T. NGO (14:55): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about the evokeAG conference being held in Adelaide this week?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:55): I thank the honourable member for his question. It is fantastic for our state that the evokeAG conference is taking place in Adelaide this week. The sold-out international event brings together over 1,600 delegates from all over the world, including Canada,

China, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Türkiye, the UK, the USA and Uruguay.

Delegates are made up of farmers, innovators, researchers, universities, corporates, investors and government with the aim of together making lasting impacts and creating change for the future of food and farm through the progress of agrifood tech in Australia and, indeed, in the world.

The state government has proudly provided \$110,000 in sponsorship for the event and I think it's money very well spent, with the 1,600 delegates and others working at or attending the event and also at side events, spending time and money in our hotels, shops, restaurants and attractions, all the while seeing for themselves why South Australia has the incredible reputation that it does for clean, green, high-quality produce.

I am also pleased that the federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, attended today and I had the pleasure of briefly catching up with him at the conference. evokeAG boasts 125 speakers from eight countries and has brought together 40 startups, selected in the evokeAG Startup Program, from around the world. The event is focusing on driving face-to-face connections, collaboration, investment and agritech adoption.

The theme for this year's event in Adelaide is Down to Earth, which I find fitting, not just for the agriculture reference but it reflects too, I think, our nature here as South Australians and also many in our primary production industries. They care deeply about our state and the important role that they play in it.

We know that agtech and its broader adoption is a huge part of the future success for primary production in our state and, indeed, around the world. Farmers are realising the opportunities that agricultural technologies can bring to their businesses, allowing producers to have better control of their inputs and resource allocation, optimising farm management practices to maximise outputs and quality, and also minimising risks.

It was great to hear that some delegates were able to visit the South-East recently to see the Best Practice Demonstration Farm at Struan and Kybybolite, and more visits will take place at demonstration farms at Loxton and Nuriootpa this week to see technology in use to support viticulture, citrus and horticulture.

I was very pleased to be able to visit the PIRSA stand while I was there today. Among other things, they are providing samples of South Australian produce, which was wonderful to see, and they were also demonstrating the online demonstration farms where we were able to link to the various agtech that's available—I was looking at the Struan one, which I visited last year—and click on each individual part of the different kind of agtech that was there and get some information about it.

Speaking on Monday as well as today, I encouraged delegates to explore our wonderful state while they are here and to share their skills and knowledge while learning from our many world-class primary producers. I would like to say well done to all of the organisers and all of those involved for a hugely successful evokeAG 2023.

GREYHOUND RACING

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:59): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, representing the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, on the topic of hot weather policy for greyhound racing.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: The risk of heat stress is dramatically increased when the air temperature is high. Repeated exposure to high temperatures can predispose greyhounds to organ damage, reduced exercise tolerance and respiratory problems. Research clearly shows that racing must stop at 38° Celsius and that larger, dark-coloured dogs are particularly at risk. This is extremely dangerous for the dogs, who are already being pushed to race at speeds of up to 65 km/h.

Yesterday, during question time I asked the minister, representing the minister, whether this government will ensure that greyhounds are not forced to run and race at temperatures over 38° Celsius, as we expect this week. There was much public support for the suspension of these races, and it has now been announced that the race at Mount Gambier for tomorrow has been cancelled due to the predicted forecast of 40° Celsius—a great win for the greyhounds and their safety.

However, I understand that a race at Murray Bridge is still going ahead on Friday, even though there the predicted forecast is a temperature of 41° Celsius. My question to the minister is: what actions has the minister taken with regard to the scheduled race on 24 February in Murray Bridge, given that it is due to start at 2.30pm and is expected to be 41° Celsius at the time?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:01): I thank the honourable member for her question. I did refer yesterday to the hot weather policy and the actions the minister in the other place has taken so far. I will forward the question the honourable member has asked to my colleague in the other place and bring back a response.

ALCOHOL SALES RESTRICTIONS

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:01): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General on the subject of alcohol sales.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: Liquor and Gambling Commissioner Dini Soulio has publicly reported that restrictions on alcohol sales first imposed last year have led to improvements in antisocial behaviour and acute harm in Port Augusta. Restrictions have also been imposed in Whyalla, with other regional areas under consideration. My questions for the Attorney are:

1. Has he received a briefing regarding all current and potential locations for restrictions?
2. What details has he received about the impact on harm thus far, including any measurable outcomes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:02): I thank the honourable member for her question. I don't recall having received a comprehensive briefing about all alcohol restrictions, what the evidence shows and what the outcomes are over a whole range of areas. I am happy to go away and see whether the commissioner, who forms part of Minister Andrea Michaels' portfolio, has such information and, if there is information readily available, bring it back.

I do very occasionally have an opportunity to have a discussion with the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner about a whole range of matters, and we do touch upon alcohol restrictions. Over quite a number of years, I have been impressed with how the commissioner goes about the work that he and his office do and the engagement they have, particularly with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal leadership in imposing alcohol restrictions that are mostly, and very often, as a result of that engagement and the wishes of Aboriginal leadership, but I am happy to go away and see whether there has been any comprehensive work through Minister Michaels and bring back an answer to the specific question.

COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (15:03): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the minister please inform the council about country cabinet held on the Yorke Peninsula last week?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:03): Yes, I certainly will. I was in the front seat of the car and not strapped into the back seat on the way to the Yorke Peninsula; I had a great view from the front seat. I had the pleasure of travelling to the Yorke Peninsula last week, along with the rest of cabinet, for the Malinauskas government's most recent country cabinet.

This is a fantastic initiative, and I can remember being involved in country cabinets from the very first time I started as a staffer more than 20 years ago with the Rann government and its initiative of cabinets held right around South Australia, a tradition that was proudly continued under the Weatherill Labor government but cruelly taken away by the Marshall Liberal government, which many in the region said was just another indication of taking people outside Adelaide for granted. That's what people tell me they thought about the Marshall government's decision to stop country cabinets.

Very pleasingly, country cabinets have now been reinstated. It takes a Labor government to listen directly to country people, unfortunately. It was, I think, a very welcome visit by many, many ministers, who travelled the length and the breadth of the Yorke Peninsula. We have heard this week the Hon. Clare Scriven, my colleague, talking about the—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Yorke Peninsula is important to me. Keep going.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It's exceptionally important, sir—exceptionally important, sir. I had the opportunity whilst on the Yorke Peninsula to—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —have various meetings that touched on a number of my portfolio areas in Aboriginal affairs and industrial relations. Also, it was a very touching moment to visit Kylie Hicklin from Kadina, who was a fierce advocate for voluntary assisted dying, who saw her father, her aunty and her uncle all pass away in their 40s from motor neurone disease. She has the disease herself and advocated fiercely during the discussion on that bill.

It was a real pleasure to visit her again in her home in Kadina, now that the legislation has been passed, and to hear firsthand from Kylie about what that has done for her ability to know that she will have some control, should she choose to use it, in the end and how much easier that's made her life and what she knows her life will hold, after having seen so many close to her suffer at the end of their lives. It was a good opportunity to talk to people in a range of my portfolio areas, as well as talk to Kylie, who is one of the bravest people I have encountered during my time in parliament, being able to talk about her condition in life to help others in the future.

It was also, as the Hon. Clare Scriven has talked about, a very good opportunity to hear firsthand at a community forum a whole range of questions on a whole range of matters. The feedback certainly was that members of the community appreciated having access firsthand to ministers in real time, to talk and answer questions. As I said earlier today, I am constantly amazed at the high regard that Minister Geoff Brock is held in in country areas. He is rarely referred to as a minister. He is generally referred to as Brockie, and it is a great credit to the esteem that he is held in in country areas.

Finally, I would like to note the presence and the great contribution that the local member, the member for Narungga, Fraser Ellis, made to the visit to the Yorke Peninsula. Certainly, the member for Narungga, Fraser Ellis, organised many meetings with many ministers and his constituents, including myself. I know we appreciated that very greatly, as well as the hospitality that so many on the Yorke Peninsula showed to so many of us.

MOUNT BARKER RAILWAY

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:08): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, representing the infrastructure and transport and energy and mining minister, about rail in Mount Barker.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: This government has been considering the trial of a train supplied by Spanish company Talgo capable of switching gauges and able to travel from Mount Barker to the city in under an hour. I understand delicate negotiations have been proceeding between the minister's department, Talgo and the Spanish government. I note that the hardworking minister and his department CEO, Mr Whelan, happened to be in sunny Spain last week. My question to the

minister is: did he and Mr Whelan meet with representatives of Talgo and the Spanish government to discuss the trial, and when will a decision be made regarding the trial?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:09): I thank the honourable member for his question and his ongoing interest in this topic. I will refer the question to my colleague in the other place and bring back a response.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JOBS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:09): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector regarding employment.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON: On 16 February, *The Advertiser* reported the nation's official unemployment rate jumped unexpectedly to 3.7 per cent in January, according to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. ABS head of labour statistics, Bjorn Jarvis, said the unemployment rate rose by 0.2 per cent in January as the number of people in jobs fell by more than 11,000 and the number of unemployed people increased by about 22,000.

The Australian Council of Social Service said the rise in unemployment demonstrated the RBA's rapid and drastic interest rate rises were having adverse impact on employment and should be paused. The RBA has raised interest rates nine consecutive times since May of last year, from 0.1 per cent to 3.35 per cent in its mission to slow the economy and clamp down on inflation. My questions to the minister are:

1. What is the government doing to secure jobs in South Australia?
2. How is the government stimulating the economy to create jobs?
3. What is the government doing to prevent brain drain?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:11): I thank the honourable member for her question. Obviously, her question relates to private sector jobs not public sector employees because we know that those opposite continually call for massive cuts in the public sector. Famously, in about 2014, the then leader, Isobel Redmond, wanted to cut, I think it was, a third of public sector employees and we remember how that ended—we remember how that ended.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Point of order: the minister is answering a question about the year 2014. The member asked a question about this year: what's the government doing now? The issue is relevance.

The PRESIDENT: I know, minister, you are about to bring it right back to where it needs to be.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I was saying, we know the very long history of the Liberal Party, both in opposition and government, advocating for less jobs in South Australia by their attitude to the public sector, which I am responsible for.

The member raised unemployment figures. I will check to make sure but I think in the period before the one the member was quoting, South Australia had its lowest unemployment rate on record—the lowest ever recorded. Also in the month before, and I will double-check to make sure I have this correct, I think it was the highest number of South Australians ever employed, on record. I don't have them with me but I will check perhaps what the Single Touch Payroll figures had to say about that and their relevance to employment.

It is an absolute priority of this government to make sure that South Australians have jobs, good jobs and well paying jobs. I will be happy to have a look at what my colleagues responsible for employment programs, such as the Treasurer and the Minister for Industry, have in play because it will take the rest of question time and probably the rest of the day to explain just how focused this government is on that issue of employment. I will be happy to take that on notice and bring back a

reply on the myriad ways the government is supporting that through a whole range of areas in many, many portfolios.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JOBS

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:13): Supplementary: interstate counterparts are advertising to try to incentivise people to move from South Australia to interstate for employment opportunities.

The PRESIDENT: You've got to ask the question. There is no preamble.

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON: What is the government doing to prevent brain drain, as my previous question stated?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:14): A short answer is: plenty. A longer answer is to look at everything the government is doing that makes South Australia such an attractive place to live. As I said, I think in the period before the current reporting period, South Australia—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —had the lowest on record unemployment rate; the highest employment we have seen in this state. South Australia is recognised as an amazing place to live, an affordable place to live with a great quality of life and we are doing everything aimed at ensuring that continues.

PUBLIC SECTOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:14): Supplementary question: in order to stem the impact of inflation, does the minister support increasing the wages of public sector workers?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:14): I thank the honourable member for his question. It is a good question and making sure people have a wage that can afford a decent quality of life is exceptionally important. That is exactly why, after we saw so many years of the former Liberal government refusing to entertain wage increases for some of the hardest working state public sector employees, when we got into government we changed that.

We didn't have a policy of just saying no to everything. Ambulance officers, firefighters had years without a single pay rise. It was outrageous and it devalued some of our hardest working people in this state. We came in, we acted in a good faith manner with the public sector unions and we have, in one year, done what the Liberal government—and particularly the former Minister for Industrial Relations—failed to do in a whole term.

We had wage increases for nurses, we had wage increases for ambulance officers, for firefighters—many of these unions who had been struggling even to get a dialogue with the government let alone to negotiate. We have a very different approach from the former government.

PUBLIC SECTOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:16): Supplementary question: will the minister be supporting the calls of the unions he mentioned to provide thankyou payments to nurses and other workers in our hospital sector?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:16): I thank the honourable member for his question. These have certainly come up during enterprise bargaining negotiations. We will continue, as we have done, to say that nothing is off the table, unlike the former government who had an absolute policy that there would be no back pay even when industrial agreements had expired. We don't take that approach and we bargain in good faith.

SINGLE TOUCH PAYROLL

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:16): Supplementary question arising out of the original answer where the minister mentioned the Single Touch Payroll figures: what are they showing at the moment, minister?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:16): What are Single Touch Payroll figures showing in relation to the state of the economy? Nothing.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JOBS

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (15:17): Supplementary question arising out of the original answer in relation to brain drain: minister, is there anything you can do to stem the brain drain on the benches opposite?

The PRESIDENT: Don't give up your day job, the Hon. Mr Hunter.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

REGIONAL RECREATIONAL FISHING FORUM

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:17): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about the regional recreational fishing forum held recently in Wallaroo?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:17): I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in the regions as well as in fish. I was pleased to hold a recreational fishing forum in Wallaroo last week at the fantastic Wallaroo Sailing Club with my colleague Minister Hildyard who, as Minister for Sport and Recreation, has made it possible for fishing clubs to apply for grants funding after recognising fishing as an eligible activity for those purposes.

There was certainly some competition in getting a crowd to the forum that night. Many of the people were down at the beach below the sailing club cooling off after quite a warm day and looking like they were having a fantastic time. It was great to see the people who did attend take the time to share their thoughts and their ideas about how to make recreational fishing in our state an even better and more accessible activity. We know that almost 300,000 or more South Australians already enjoy recreational fishing.

There were a range of topical and important issues raised, such as national consistency of measurement of some species, compliance, fishing licences—people both in favour and against that concept—fishing infrastructure and the new eligibility under our government for fishing clubs to access grants.

It was also a chance to talk with the recreational fishing community about measures the state government is taking that are of particular interest to them—during the extended snapper ban to give this iconic species a better chance at becoming a sustainable fishery once again, with nearly a million snapper fingerlings to be released between both Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent. We also mentioned the funding towards greater research that aims to improve our knowledge about the biomass and juvenile snapper coming into the fishery, as well as the important work in assessing whether the West Coast snapper stock should be included as it is now with the Spencer Gulf snapper stock or indeed should be treated separately.

I was very pleased to have the opportunity to meet with a number of volunteers, who are part of PIRSA's Fishcare program, helping to educate and give advice to the fishing community or, as one of the volunteers put it, to be our eyes and ears on the jetties and ramps around the state. They do a fantastic job, especially in one of our most popular fishing regions of Yorke Peninsula.

I would also like to thank RecFish SA executive officer, Asher Dezser, for his attendance and sharing some of the work that he and his organisation are doing as the independent peak body for recreational fishing in South Australia.

RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENCES

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:20): Supplementary: do those measures that the minister referred to include consideration by this government of a recreational fishing licence regime?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:20): I thank the honourable member for her supplementary question and also for her ongoing interest in this sector. What I said at the forum was that the government has not been presented with a proposal to have a recreational fishing licence and that we would not be implementing a recreational fishing licence unless it was called for by the majority of recreational fishers, and indeed it would not be happening in this term of government in any case.

I did, however, explain that we are always keen to hear from recreational fishers about their views. Indeed, at that forum a number of people put forward views both in favour of and against the concept of a recreational fishing licence. I am aware that it's something that does exist in other jurisdictions, particularly in Victoria, and has been considered by many to be successful there, but there are also concerns that it's not necessarily going to achieve the outcomes that some would like.

So I think it's an active discussion. I encourage those who are interested in the topic to also engage with RecFish SA so that those types of discussions can continue. Certainly, it's not something that the government is considering actively at this time.

REGIONAL BANK CLOSURES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:21): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Regional Development on the topic of regional bank closures.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: Yesterday, I asked the Minister for Regional Development about what action the government was taking regarding the bank closure in Coober Pedy and in other regional towns. The minister responded that:

...South Australia was amongst the worst impacted states in terms of regional bank closures. However...these are corporate decisions that are very much independent of the government of the day.

This morning, the ABC reported that locals in Coober Pedy are buying safes and are scared of being robbed while driving 500 kilometres to Port Augusta to make major deposits after the closure of the town's only bank. David Kelly, the Chief Executive of the District Council of Coober Pedy, was quoted in the article as saying that people are 'feeling pretty anxious about being pulled over on the road and robbed'.

My question to the minister therefore is: in light of these reports, what action has the minister taken to ensure the safety of people in Coober Pedy trying to access banking services? Specifically, has the minister raised the issue with the Minister for Police? Have any additional resources been allocated to manage this problem, or does the minister simply maintain her view that this is a corporate decision, independent of the government of the day?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:23): I thank the honourable member for his question. I will certainly make inquiries with the Minister for Police. I haven't seen the article to which the honourable member is referring, but it may well be that the Minister for Police has done so. I think it's also worth mentioning that the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee of federal parliament is currently undertaking an inquiry into bank closures in regional Australia. They are taking submissions until, I think, the end of March. They intend at this stage to report by the end of this year.

I think that is also an important opportunity to make a number of these issues known, and I would encourage the honourable member, if he is in contact with people who are affected, to encourage them also to make such a submission. I think it's an important opportunity to be able to shine even greater light on the inconveniences and difficulties faced by people in regional areas when banks do close, and that the banks are constantly making these decisions. They are independent decisions, but they seem to take no account of the difficulties that they place on regional people when they do take these decisions.

*Matters of Interest***SMART CITIES INITIATIVE**

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (15:24): Earlier this month, many of us had a chuckle at the unusual behaviour that was happening around Salisbury council and the response of a few to the Smart Cities initiative. I, for one, thought that adopting innovative technological solutions to common resource management issues was a good approach. Why would we not want a system that manages bin collections from our parks when they are almost full, rather than collecting them when they are empty or, much worse, overfull, and certainly why would we not want more security cameras to make people safer and to help manage crime?

What seemed logical to me was clearly not a view held by the 80 or so protesters who turned up at the council chambers to have their say. What was being espoused by the protesters and their organisers was that the Smart Cities initiative was akin to forcing people to live in an open-air prison. Leaving aside the ridiculousness of that comparison, they falsely argued that facial recognition software would be used to track everyone's movements 24 hours a day and that 5G telecommunications towers would be used to maim people.

The fact that the council had to move a motion confirming they were not part of a global conspiracy and would not be installing microchips into residents was, to me at least, quite extraordinary. While most of us may laugh at this, it is unfortunate and, to be honest, a little scary that there were people so deluded by the conspiracy theories that such steps had to be taken.

Police Commissioner Stevens condemned the protesters for wasting valuable police resources to manage the protest. While that is a point well made, there is something much bigger and more fundamental at stake. Australia truly is the lucky country. We have a comprehensive set of public institutions, like the police force, that were created to support community wellbeing, maintain and protect our rights and promote public safety.

Today, these institutions are broadly well respected and trusted, but this could be at risk. I believe the false and misleading information provided to vulnerable people can have dramatic consequences. If this misinformation seeks to erode public confidence in institutions like the justice system or perhaps the electoral system, dire consequences for our community and our democracy could result.

The Australian Electoral Commission and the Electoral Commission of South Australia are trusted, competent managers of elections and through their role advise on the installation of elected members and, in turn, governments. They take this most important role seriously and the Australian public trusts the results they provide. We have not, so far, had a situation where elections were reported to have been stolen, nor have we heard suggestions of corruption in these respected reliable bodies.

Thus far, people and parties across the political spectrum have remain united in our trust and our esteem of these important institutions that work hard to safeguard the integrity of our elections and this trust is vitally important to the maintenance of both a genuine democracy and a functioning society.

If trust is broken in these systems, we could well see ourselves follow the deeply alarming path of the United States, where a divided population is at odds with itself, and egos and a highly successful campaign of misinformation led to the storming of the Capitol on 6 January 2021. The terrible scenes of elected members and staff being rushed through the building by armed security was one of the most frightening things I have seen and not just for the violence and destructive behaviour of the protesters but for what it said about American society.

America seemed to have hit a tipping point, driven to be at war with itself and with faith in its institutions destroyed by so much misinformation and the misinformation came from a dangerous and self-serving place. It was strategic and deliberately dishonest, not simply ill-informed. By shaking the foundations of trust in the integrity of their institutions, the forces promoting insurrection intended to drive the average person away from the polls and by preaching to the fringe they would turn out voters who were inspired by this misinformed rhetoric.

The people telling the lies were trying to create an opportunity to cling to power, not to serve the best interests of society, and that is something I fear we could see attempted in South Australia if what we saw in response to the Salisbury council's Smart Cities measure is allowed to proliferate. How do we combat it? With truth, with good and accountable government and by explaining why we are doing things.

Thorough and honest communication with the electorate goes a long way towards ensuring that people who may be susceptible to misinformation are hearing from their elected representatives, and they feel heard by them as well. We will not convince everyone, but by being clear about our intentions we can make sure that people are fully informed when they turn up at the polls and that they continue to respect the importance of exercising their precious and fundamentally important right to vote at each election.

FAST-TRACK CITIES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:29): This afternoon, I rise to speak about Adelaide's membership of the Fast-Track Cities network. The Fast-Track Cities initiative is comprised of a global network of cities and councils around the world, supported by the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Human Settlement Programme and the City of Paris.

The Fast-Track Cities initiative was launched in the City of Paris on World AIDS Day in 2014, and since then it has grown to include 276 cities worldwide, including Adelaide. Fast-Track Cities are committed to an ambitious set of targets that are outlined in the Paris and Seville Declarations to end the HIV epidemic. These targets are:

- to ensure that 95 per cent of people living with HIV know their status;
- to ensure that 95 per cent of people who know their HIV positive status are on antiviral therapy; and
- to ensure that 95 per cent of people on antiviral therapy are with suppressed HIV viral loads.

Fast-Track Cities benefit from a range of supports, including:

- capacity building for clinical and service providers, community-based organisations and affected communities;
- technical assistance for health departments on data generation, monitoring and reporting;
- implementation planning for key stakeholders;
- eliminating HIV-related stigma in healthcare settings; and
- assessing quality of life among communities of people who are living with HIV.

The Paris Declaration was signed by the then Minister for Health and Wellbeing, the Hon. Stephen Wade MLC, at the opening night of *Silhouettes: Fashion in the Shadow of HIV/AIDS* at the David Roache Foundation House Museum on 29 January 2022, making Adelaide the third Australian city to join this important network. I do want to recognise the Hon. Stephen Wade's leadership in that regard. I recognise that he has since resigned from this chamber.

The International Association of Providers of AIDS Care are partnering with the South Australian Mobilisation and Empowerment for Sexual Health service (SAMESH) to advance the Fast-Track Cities objectives in Adelaide. Thorne Harbour Health, previously the Victorian AIDS Council, and SHINE SA have been working together to deliver the SAMESH sexual health service in South Australia since 2015.

I had an opportunity to meet with Carolyn Gillespie, the Director of Services at Thorne Harbour Health, and Thomas Jessup, the LGBTI Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Analyst at Thorne Harbour Health, last week to discuss the Fast-Track Cities program, and I would like to acknowledge the work that has been done by them and others in this space. I understand that

SAMESH provides support, education and training about sexual health and HIV for men who have sex with men and people who live with HIV, as well as services for the broader LGBTIQ community in South Australia.

SAMESH runs a number of programs designed to prevent new HIV infections. One such program worth highlighting in this chamber is Rapido, Adelaide's first ever rapid HIV testing service. This service offers free, less confronting testing experiences for gay, bisexual or other men who have sex with men, including trans and gender diverse people. The service is peer led—that is, the people who are administering the service are trained individuals who identify as gay, bi or trans themselves. The test involves a simple finger prick and, as a result, an outcome is produced in just 20 minutes, which is a pretty remarkable innovation to have available in this state.

Another program is the CONNECT project, which provides free HIV self-testing kits. Participants are required to answer a few questions and provide a mobile phone number where a code can be sent to access a free HIV self-test. Participants can access the self-testing kits from CONNECT vending machines either by entering the code from their phones or by scanning a QR code. While HIV diagnoses in Australia have hit an all-time low and the country is in sight of eliminating HIV transmissions by 2030, now is not the time to take our foot off the accelerator.

The Greens will be closely monitoring the progress of the state government in terms of HIV elimination and ensuring that we achieve the objectives of the Fast-Track Cities program. We certainly recognise the significance of South Australia and Adelaide signing up, and it is incumbent on us to ensure that the resources and the leadership follow.

END YOUTH SUICIDE WEEK

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:34): I rise today to recognise End Youth Suicide Week, which was held between 13 and 17 February. Tragically, suicide is the leading cause of death amongst Australians aged between 15 and 24. In 2021, 322 Australian young people took their own lives, with 71 per cent of the deaths being adolescents aged between 15 and 17. Deaths by suicide represented 34 per cent of all deaths in young people aged 15 to 17 and 35 per cent of all deaths in those aged 18 to 24. This is up from 17 per cent and 24 per cent respectively of all deaths in these age groups in 2001.

In order to combat this alarming statistic it is essential to create support systems for young people. The Youth Insearch Foundation's End Youth Suicide Week campaign strives to create greater awareness about the issue of suicide amongst young people and to help build greater resilience and coping skills to prevent youth suicide. The goal of the campaign is to ensure that young people access resources they require to help them manage their mental health needs. The campaign encourages our community and young people to defy the stigma associated with mental health and to openly talk about suicide with their friends, families and communities.

Youth Insearch are collaborating with a broad range of organisations for their campaign, including health providers, schools, community groups and governments across Australia. The Youth Insearch Impact Report 2021-22 shows that of the people they have supported 57 per cent were female, 35 per cent were male, 27 per cent were Indigenous and 14 per cent had a disability or impairment. The report shows that two out of three participants of Youth Insearch programs planned to complete suicide in the past and half of those had attempted suicide, with one in five stating on intake that they felt it was likely they would complete suicide in the future.

Youth Insearch evaluations found that 91 per cent of participants who felt suicidal prior to attending the program no longer felt suicidal, and 89 per cent of participants who had attempted suicide previously did not attempt suicide after attending the program. Overall, Youth Insearch has helped over 32,000 youth.

Supporting End Youth Suicide Week has played a role in the positive outcomes of the participants that Youth Insearch helps and can also have a wider positive impact in the community. It is important we have these conversations to break down barriers and stigmas surrounding mental health. It is important we continue to normalise that it is okay to not be okay, to normalise reaching out for help and having these difficult conversations, to remind people that whilst they might feel isolated when they feel this way they are not alone.

I stand in this chamber in an attempt to break down these barriers and continue to raise awareness of the prevalence of mental health issues, particularly within our youth. Today, I proudly wear my End Youth Suicide Week badge in our chamber and I speak on this very important issue.

REGIONAL HOUSING

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:38): If you look for properties to rent in regional South Australia right now, it is not great. The pressures on the housing market in regional South Australia have created a crisis of sorts that is both complex and simple. Lack of investment can be seen as both a cause and effect of why few rental opportunities are near where you might want to work. The failure of supply is complex too, as any young teacher, police officer or ambo might tell you. For lots of reasons a housing option of a four-bedroom family home with a big yard to water might not be all that attractive if you are in your 20s.

More rental options for regional South Australia: that sounds good, right? Everyone would agree with that, right? Well, you might be wrong if you thought that. I am reminded a little of *The Simpsons* episode where a young Ned Flanders is running amok in the office of the doctor to whom his beatnik parents have come to seek assistance with his behavioural issues. Ned Flanders' mother laments, 'We've tried nothing, and we're all out of ideas.'

You can imagine those words coming out of Steven Marshall's mouth during the previous term of government that saw a whole lot of nothing happening across our regions in the crucial area of housing. But that is really not the question we need to be asking ourselves. We should not be asking ourselves if there is a housing crisis in regional South Australia—anyone could tell you that; everyone knows that, or at least you should.

What we need to be asking ourselves is what action we can take about it. We do not want to see regional wellbeing and growth hindered by a housing shortage, including when it comes to attracting and retaining skilled professionals. Police, teachers, health sector workers—how can our regions attract and retain them if there is nowhere for them to live?

From tourism to agricultural and resources exports, our regions are so fundamentally important to this state. The regions contribute billions to our economy every single year. The least we can do is look to give a little back to drive supply, to drive investment in the crucial problem of lack of appropriate housing.

So what are we actually doing? We know the challenges that regional people face when it comes to building housing: the costs are high, obtaining finance is difficult, and there is a limited workforce to deliver housing builds. This is in part what makes it so difficult to do what the Liberals did, to sit back and let the market decide, to sit back and let individual home owner after individual home owner take that risk, to ignore both the human and the broader economic costs of that ideological approach to this important issue.

The fact is there is a better way, but it requires a bit of work. We are creating the Office for Regional Housing as a dedicated office within Renewal SA. What will it do? It will work with local governments, economic development agencies, regional employers, investors and the development industry to address housing shortages in regional South Australia. We want to drive supply. We want to drive investment. The Office for Regional Housing will administer the Regional Key Worker Housing Scheme, which will deliver long-term rental accommodation for critical workers across regional South Australia.

New homes developed in key regional centres under this scheme will be sold to private investors—very importantly—with long-term employer-backed leases attached. The pilot program will deliver a modest number of 30 homes for workers in key service sectors across the Copper Coast, Riverland, Mount Gambier, Port Augusta and Ceduna. Let's be clear: what we are undertaking here is a pilot initiative. The intention is not to stop at 30.

In fact, if you are listening now as a regional employer or a regional council, it is fair to say we want you on board. We want to make sure that we work in collaboration with communities, councils, regional employers and others to ensure that homes are being delivered in a way that addresses local needs. We want to deliver what is needed to where it is needed so that we can house who is needed where they are needed.

Our goal is not only to enable regions to attract and retain critical service workers to regional areas but to reduce pressure on the private rental market too. For instance, every worker out of a rental accommodation that does not fit their purpose is another home for someone else in the rental market. Beyond delivery of the pilot program, there is scope for the scheme to be expanded to other regions, as well as the potential for it to be expanded to organisations wanting new fit-for-purpose housing for their workers. Regional people deeply deserve meaningful action from government and this is a great example of how this Labor Peter Malinauskas government is delivering it.

NURSES AND MIDWIVES

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:43): I rise today to ask the people of South Australia to question the Malinauskas Labor government about their priorities. Before the last election, Peter Malinauskas promised to fix ramping as a top priority, but sadly, under this Labor government, our health system is rapidly deteriorating. It is very disappointing that Premier Malinauskas' priorities are all wrong.

Earlier this week, it was reported that nine people waited more than 24 hours for a hospital bed and 16 waited over 12 hours for a bed, trapped in hospital emergency departments. We repeatedly asked Labor ministers in this place and the other place questions regarding the health crisis in this state. We were ignored and we received no answers. South Australians who are sick and need urgent medical help are suffering the impacts of record ramping and chronic emergency department overcrowding.

Please allow me to take you back to earlier this month, on 2 February. Data showed that 20 patients waited more than 12 hours for a bed and some more than 24 hours. When vulnerable patients' lives were at risk and in need of urgent health treatment, where was Premier Peter Malinauskas on that day? Sadly, he was not in South Australia. He was on Bondi Beach, running shoulder to shoulder with New South Wales Labor opposition leader. A picture of the pair running, stamped with the Baywatch logo, was posted by New South Wales Labor on Twitter. It was the clearest sign that Peter Malinauskas had the wrong priorities.

For the public record, on Peter Malinauskas' watch ramping has soared 135 per cent to record levels. The health crisis has never been worse. Our hospital system continues to struggle under record ramping and emergency department overcrowding, with South Australian families paying the price.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (South Australia) estimated that by the year 2025 South Australia alone would be short by 10,000 to 15,000 nurses and midwives. To address this problem the Liberal Party is calling on the Malinauskas Labor government to make it easier for South Australians who wish to re-enter nursing to gain the required qualifications. Former nurses have raised concerns with the Liberal opposition over the difficulties and obstacles they are currently facing for them to regain their nursing registration. Many nurses who have been out of practice for five years or more are required to complete a Nursing and Midwifery Board-approved re-entry to practice program.

For registered nurses these programs are offered at the Australian College of Nursing in New South Wales, the Central Queensland University, La Trobe University in Victoria and Western Australia's University of Notre Dame. Students at ACN, CQU and Notre Dame must relocate interstate for at least part of their studies. La Trobe offers a more flexible online program; however, a fee of \$8,250 must be paid up-front, with no subsidies or FEE-HELP loan scheme in place.

There are so many barriers for former nurses wanting to re-enter the profession in South Australia. Former nurses who came forward to speak with the Liberal opposition indicated that they are keen to get back to work, reducing the pressures on our health system, but they simply cannot afford the costs involved or spend time interstate to get the qualifications they need.

The Leader of the Opposition, David Speirs, member for Black, together with the shadow minister for health, Ashton Hurn, member for Schubert, are calling on Premier Peter Malinauskas to step up and work with his federal colleagues to make sure that re-entry pathways for nurses are more accessible for South Australians. We need the Labor government to explore every avenue to remove barriers for nurses wanting to re-enter the workforce.

The current barriers for entry for nurses based in South Australia mean that many are simply giving up on the profession. The Malinauskas Labor government must take responsibility and address these issues. The Liberal Party is urging the Labor government to be more proactive in gaining and retaining nurses in South Australia.

WAR ANIMAL DAY

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:48): This Friday, February 24, is now officially recognised in many countries, including Australia, as War Animal Day or Purple Poppy Day. It began as a remembrance for the millions of animals who died in war and those animals who loyally served and still serve in conflicts. War Animal Day is now taking a more contemporary role, recognising the needs of animals killed, maimed or abandoned in hostilities like the current war between Ukraine and Russia. With millions of Ukrainians displaced from their homes, one of the biggest dilemmas is what to do with the large numbers of stray and abandoned animals in the combat zones.

We have seen harrowing and heartbreaking images of families clutching pets, with some belongings, as they attempt to flee. Dogs are tied to posts or left in bombed-out buildings in the hope that someone might rescue them. Animals are left in zoos and on farms to starve, are traded and abused and even eaten by Russian troops as bombs rain down and bullets fly.

Volunteers are risking their lives to deliver food and water from transport hubs to the frontline. It is estimated that 750,000 dogs and 5.5 million cats are owned by Ukrainian families. People who fled Russian bombs took nothing from their homes except necessary documents and animal carriers or dogs on a leash.

Australian Animal Aid, a spin-off charity of the Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation, reports that Ukrainian pet owners consider their dogs and cats to be well-loved members of their families. During conflicts, pets can provide emotional comfort. In some instances, these dogs and cats were the only things that provided the victims of war with a sense of purpose and hope.

Rather than flee from the Russian invaders, 39 per cent of Ukrainians stayed in Kiev, in part because of their pets. Fewer than 10 per cent of families that evacuated the areas being shelled and bombed by the Russians left their pets behind. There have been reports that Russian soldiers have deliberately targeted animal shelters and shot dogs and cats on sight.

Much-needed basic care products are running out across the country. Abandoned animals perpetuate stray populations and are vulnerable to outbreaks of diseases, and once the conflict has ended animals that were once healthy are likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder or physical ailments to decrease their likelihood of adoption.

I want to pay special tribute to the unstinting work of the Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation, a not-for-profit corporation and leading service animal charity, and its indefatigable founder and president, Nigel Allsopp, a former military dog handler who has been the driving force behind War Animal Day in this country and behind relief efforts to get much-needed supplies to the Ukraine.

He is the Florence Nightingale for animals. With the assistance of Queensland's PETstock, Nigel arranged for more than \$300,000 of essential pet care supplies to be sent to the Ukraine, where it was distributed by a pet welfare organisation, the Ukrainian Pet Association Worldwide. Nowzad, a registered British charity famous for its work in Afghanistan, is also helping.

Nigel and Peter Kotzur went to Ukraine to oversee the distribution, visiting overcrowded animal shelters and seeing firsthand the destruction and the tireless rescue efforts. There were heartbreaking scenes. At one canine sanctuary, Nigel was swamped by dozens of dogs seeking attention and a warm home. At the Limpopo Zoo, animals, including big cats and an orangutan, showed signs of PTSD caused by bombings. There are more than 100,000 horses unable to flee and seek safety, with no shelter and care.

The AWAMO has provided funding to a US-based non-profit equine charity, Fleet of Angels. The AWAMO will also send fresh fodder and other fresh food for animals starving and dying in zoos and farms. Soldiers have adopted dogs and cats on the frontlines and care for them. The animals give enormous morale and psychological boosts. The cats are also a great help, fighting the spread

of infectious diseases by hunting down rats and mice. Animal welfare is one of the unseen sides to the horrors of war.

It is gratifying to see Australians chipping in, and Nigel's efforts will continue in raising funds to establish a free vet clinic and rescue vehicle in Lviv. I gladly enlisted to promote the cause of AWAMO in this state four years ago. I am wearing a purple poppy today to mark War Animals Day, which will again be commemorated with a remembrance at the West Kilkenny RSL on Friday morning at 8am. Please join us.

ARTSAKH BLOCKADE

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (15:53): I rise today to speak about the ongoing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and in support of the people of Artsakh. I previously spoke about the conflict in February 2021, after there had been several violent border clashes, and progressed a motion that recognised the independence of the Republic of Artsakh.

Nagorno-Karabakh is an area inhabited almost entirely by ethnic Armenians. The region, which has been a home for Armenians for a millennium, is claimed by the breakaway Republic of Artsakh and is an integral part of historic Armenia. Members of this chamber may remember that in 2020, Azerbaijan launched a series of brutal attacks against the civilian population of Artsakh, leaving 70 per cent of the region occupied, and over the conflict in 2020 thousands were killed and over 100,000 people were displaced.

Last week, I met once again with the Armenian National Committee of Australia, which raised with me their community's ongoing concerns over the plight of their compatriots in Artsakh. On 12 December last year, a group of so-called ecoactivists blocked the Lachin corridor. This is the only land route that links Artsakh to Armenia and to the outside world and is a lifeline for the people of Artsakh.

For over two months now, 120,000 Christian Armenians have been under siege, unable to access basic food supplies, medical supplies and humanitarian relief. Hundreds of Armenians have been cut off from their families. The claims that this is a grassroots ecoactivist movement are dubious. The group is widely recognised to be Azerbaijani military forces masquerading as ecoactivists, protesting illegal mining to cover what is an indefensible blockade.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the USA, Canada, the EU and France have all condemned this brutal and illegal blockade and have called on Azerbaijan to restore freedom of movement and goods along the corridor forthwith. The blockade has triggered a severe humanitarian crisis. Grocery stores are empty, with even the most basic of materials becoming unavailable. Hospitals are turning patients away due to a lack of medical supplies. Natural gas pipelines, electricity and internet services that run through the blockaded Lachin corridor have been cut off by Azerbaijan during a brutal winter in an attempt to suffocate the population.

As agreed to in a ceasefire agreement after the conflict in 2020, the Lachin corridor is controlled by a Russian peacekeeping force. This peacekeeping force has failed to disperse Azerbaijani military personnel. This parliament has a longstanding commitment to supporting the Armenian people, who have suffered for too long at the hands of greater powers in the region. I condemn the inaction of the Russian peacekeeping forces, Azerbaijan's ongoing aggression and all forces that allow this illegal blockade to continue.

The people of Artsakh have the right to live freely in their ancestral homeland. There can be no peaceful resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict until this right is respected.

Motions

REGIONAL BANK CLOSURES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:58): I move:

That this council—

1. Notes with concern that:
 - (a) Westpac has decided to close their branch in Coober Pedy, leaving the community without a bank; and

- (b) at least 22 regional towns have been left without a bank branch including Burra, Kapunda, Mannum, Maitland, Peterborough, Roxby Downs, Tailem Bend, Tumby Bay and Willunga.
2. Recognises the adverse impact of the closure of banks on regional communities and in particular the impediment it places on community and business activity.
3. Condemns the closure of bank branches in the regions and calls on Westpac to reconsider its decision to close its branch in Coober Pedy.
4. Calls on the Malinauskas government to formally raise the matter with Westpac and advocate for the retention of bank branches in the regions.

This motion is calling on this council to note with concern that Westpac has decided to close their branch in Coober Pedy, leaving the community without a bank. It notes that at least 22 regional towns have been left without a bank branch, including Burra, Kapunda, Mannum, Maitland, Peterborough, Roxby Downs, Tailem Bend, Tumby Bay and Willunga. It recognises the impact of these closures on regional communities and it condemns the closure of bank branches in the regions. It calls on Westpac to reconsider its decision to close its branch in Coober Pedy and also calls on the Malinauskas government to formally raise this matter and to advocate for the retention of bank branches in the regions.

Ideally, a motion like this would not be necessary because the government would be doing everything in its power to address this issue and to ensure that regional communities have the services they require, but I have been very disappointed by the laissez-faire approach that seems to have been taken by the minister, the Hon. Clare Scriven, on this issue.

I have asked the minister repeatedly in this chamber what the government have been doing and, really, it seems that the minister's solution for people living in Coober Pedy, where they cannot access an essential service like a bank, is consumer pressure. I am not sure what level of consumer pressure one can apply when they do not have access to any alternate services in their community.

The latest innovation that the minister has proposed is to make a submission to a Senate inquiry. Of course, I am supportive of members of the community doing that, but I had hoped that we would see a little bit more of an assertive approach from the Malinauskas government with respect to such a vital service.

This is particularly pertinent when one considers the enormous profits that are being made by our big banks. Let's consider some of the facts. Let's consider the latest financial reporting season. Westpac recorded a \$5.65 billion profit and a 19 per cent decline in their operating costs. The NAB recorded a \$6.81 billion profit, which represents an 11.5 per cent increase from the year earlier. ANZ recorded a \$7.19 billion profit, which is up 16 per cent on the previous year.

On 15 February, the Commonwealth Bank announced that it had recorded a jump in its half-year profit to \$5.1 billion—an increase of 9 per cent from the year earlier—off the back of rapidly rising interest rates and stronger business leading growth. Despite these amazingly significant profits, these enormous profits, Australia's big four banks continue to close their branches in regional towns throughout South Australia as well as the rest of the country and, of course, they continue to profit from rising interest rates.

It really is an outrage. Investing in South Australia's regions is important for our region's ongoing economic growth, sustainability and quality of life, particularly following the recent challenges of widespread drought, bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic. Banks provide a variety of services to their customers. They include enabling customers to open and close accounts, to deposit and withdraw cash, to obtain various types of loans. Historically, banks have tended to deliver these services through their branches and we know that this is particularly vital for older South Australians.

When a bank leaves a town, it leaves locals unable to use these services. On 17 February this year, Westpac closed its Coober Pedy branch. The closure of the branch effectively leaves the town without a bank and it is already impacting vulnerable consumers, particularly the elderly and First Nations people. Customers are being forced to drive to either Port Augusta or interstate to Alice Springs to access a branch, both of which are more than 500 kilometres away.

We heard today—and I raised this matter in question time with the minister—reports that residents of Coober Pedy are anxious about travelling in a car with large wads of cash because they are living in fear that they might be pulled over and robbed. This is not a satisfactory response and, again, what does the government suggest: make a submission to the Senate inquiry. Vote with your feet. Really, this is not acceptable.

Unfortunately, Coober Pedy is not the only town in regional South Australia to have had all of their bank branches closed. Since 2012, the following towns have been left without a bank: Angaston, Barmera, Birdwood, Burra, Freeling, Gladstone, Kapunda, Lobethal, Mannum, Maitland, Uluru, Peterborough, Riverton, Roxby Downs, Strathalbyn, Tailm Bend, Tumbly Bay and Willunga. A total of 69 branches have been closed throughout regional South Australia since 2012.

There has also been a significant decline in the number of branches in remote Australia wide. In fact, 41 per cent of all branches closed were in regional and remote areas in 2020, despite these areas only making up 28 per cent of the Australian population. In its final report, the Regional Banking Taskforce, set up by the federal government in 2021, found that many older Australians, persons with disabilities, migrant communities and First Nations people face greater challenges and require more assistance when they are using their banking services.

When the banks close their doors, the challenges for these consumers are exacerbated. The task force ran for a year and received 416 submissions from rural residents who were distressed about dwindling essential services, limited access to cash and the slow economic death of their towns.

Not only do these bank branch closures increase the time and cost required to travel to access similar services but there is also a loss of face-to-face banking that is reducing the availability of information on services. That information is normally provided at a face-to-face level that is easier for people to understand and helps them understand their financial decisions and the options that they face.

It is morally wrong for these institutions that are making massive profits to close their branches in regional and rural Australia. Bank branches are essential services and they should be kept open for our regional communities. The government has a responsibility to advocate on behalf of these residents.

I know there has been a lot of discussion about the cost-of-living crisis at the moment. The narrative seems to be that this is being driven by wages growth. We know, of course, that that is not true and that wages have not kept pace with inflation. Rather, what we are seeing is profit price inflation; that is, large corporations are making enormous profits and, in turn, that is driving up inflation. Those costs are now being faced by consumers, and we are seeing that with the cost of housing and other essential services in this country.

The big banks have been one of the major beneficiaries of profit price inflation in this country, and yet, in the face of those record profits, they close regional branches with impunity, they thumb their noses at the community, and they rake in these record profits and do not invest in any level of community service. I think it is absolutely outrageous. Really, the Malinauskas government needs to step up here, rather than simply palming it off onto other levels of government or saying it is all too hard. They need to step up and show some leadership.

I do want to put members on notice that I plan to bring this matter to a vote in a future parliamentary sitting, and I look forward to members getting behind this very sensible push to try to bring these big corporations to heel.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

*Bills***STATUTES AMENDMENT (UNIVERSITIES) BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:07): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Flinders University Act 1966, the University of Adelaide Act 1971 and the University of South Australia Act 1990. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:08): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill aims to increase accountability, transparency and inclusivity in our South Australian universities. The provisions of the bill would apply equally to the University of Adelaide, Flinders University and the University of South Australia.

It is a timely bill because it comes at a time when the Malinauskas government have been pushing their university merger plans, and I know that people working in the university sector and people studying in that sector are not calling for mergers and are not calling for increased rationalisation of services. What they are calling for is reform to ensure that our South Australian universities are governed in a transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.

In South Australia, we should aspire to having trustworthy and fair educational environments for students, faculties and staff. Universities with good governance promote trust and confidence in the institution and help prevent mismanagement. When universities are inclusive there are a diverse range of perspectives, and this leads to better decision-making and barriers to participation can be addressed.

This bill provides much better accountability, and this ensures that universities are responsible for the decisions they make. A code of conduct is one critical part of the accountability provided for in this bill. This would set a clear set of ethical guidelines for council members to follow. University students and staff are already bound by codes of conduct and this bill simply ensures that university council members are bound by a similar code.

Another issue the bill seeks to address is that of excessive salaries for university executives. As you would know, Mr President, I have advocated in this place previously for a cap on vice-chancellors' salaries and that is a feature of this bill. It is obscene that vice-chancellors in South Australia are some of the highest paid in the world at a time when we are seeing cuts to university staff and when we are seeing such a reduction in the quality of the experience of university students, so this bill seeks to remedy that.

It is worth noting that last year the *Australian Financial Review* reported that 11 vice-chancellors in Australia received over \$1 million in salaries while making huge cuts, slashing staff numbers and putting infrastructure projects on ice, all under the guise of dealing with COVID. Last year, I asked a question on this topic of the government. The minister at the time replied that salaries of vice-chancellors are 'a matter to be determined by the councils of each respective university'. It is a bit like their approach to the banks, is it not: 'Oh, that's all too hard. Someone else can deal with that.'

The reality is that universities actually fall within an act of this parliament. We have the power to regulate the salaries of our university executives. They should be in step with community standards and that is precisely what I am proposing. After all, our universities should not be treated like large corporations. We should not see our university chiefs being paid like corporate CEOs. I think that what I am proposing in this bill, that is, that the salary of a vice-chancellor be capped at the same level of the Premier, would ensure that these positions are more in keeping with community standards.

Another critical element of the bill are the provisions that ensure that the voices of students are heard. There are 83,000 people attending university in South Australia each year. We need to ensure they have a voice at the decision-making table within our universities. One of the changes

that was made in a previous parliament was a reduction in the number of student representatives and a reduction in the representation of staff on university bodies. I am proposing that be changed and that the representation of those groups be increased. As observed by the NTEU in their discussion paper on university governance:

The size and composition of a university governing body's membership should reflect the institution's mission and the diverse constituencies to which it is accountable.

The paper goes on to state:

University staff and student representatives are critical to good governance because they have expertise and detailed knowledge on university matters, its culture and operations, including in relation to teaching and research activities.

Six years ago, staff and students at Adelaide and Flinders universities were appalled by the changes made by the then Labor government to the composition of university councils. This is seeking to undo those changes. The bill would aim to ensure there is a better balance between staff, students and graduates at the university council decision-making table. The bill would provide for two members of academic staff, two members of general staff, three students (one of each being undergraduate and postgraduate) and three graduates from the university. To be really inclusive though, we also need to ensure that First Nations people have a voice at the table of university council. This bill also seeks to ensure there is a First Nations representative at the table of decision-making within these institutions.

Beyond the accountability and inclusivity measures in this bill, we have also provided for increased transparency. It is crucial that university council meetings are open to the public so that all stakeholders, including students, staff and members of the community, can engage in a meaningful way. After all, these institutions play a vital role in our civic life, they receive large amounts of public money and they should be accountable to the broader community.

The bill requires university council meetings to be held in public with three days' notice given. Councils would be able to move into confidentiality if required on the same basis as that which applies to local government meetings. It also ensures that minutes would be made available for public viewing on a website or as requested by an individual.

Beyond transparency, accountability and inclusivity, the Greens believe that our universities also need to deal with the challenges of climate change. One way to do that is by ensuring that they divest their links to fossil fuels. This ensures that they are walking the talk in terms of addressing climate. We are in the middle of a climate emergency. We need to hold our major institutions to account for their investments in companies that contribute to climate change. This bill will ensure that all three of our state's universities divest their assets, any assets that are held in companies involved in the extraction, processing or distribution of fossil fuels. Additionally, universities would be prevented from acquiring any of these assets.

This is a comprehensive reform that the Greens are proposing, but in the main the bill aims to ensure that the governance of our universities is based on best practice. The changes that are included in the bill are consistent with those that have been advocated by the National Tertiary Education Union, and we believe this is the direction that the university sector should be heading in rather than down the path of mergers that have been advocated by the Malinauskas government. With that, I will conclude my remarks.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

Motions

CANTEST HEALTH AND DRUG CHECKING SERVICE

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:16): I move:

That this council—

1. Notes that CanTEST Health and Drug Checking Service:
 - (a) is Australia's first fixed-site health and drug checking service, launched by the Australian Capital Territory government as a six-month pilot on 21 July 2022, and has been extended for another six months;

- (b) provides a confidential pill-testing service that analyses contents of drugs to help service users better understand the unknown and potentially dangerous substances in illicit drugs; and
 - (c) provides appropriate information, counselling and advice to service users based on their specific test result, to encourage choices that reduce overall drug use and the harms associated with taking illicit drugs.
2. Recognises that drug checking is a harm reduction service that leads to most users of the service opting to discard tainted drugs.
3. Calls on the Malinauskas government to establish the fixed-site health and drug checking service in South Australia.

This motion calls for this council to recognise the CanTEST Health and Drug Checking Service, which is Australia's first fixed-site health and drug checking service, launched by the Australian Capital Territory government as a six-month pilot on 21 July 2022. This motion calls for the council to recognise that that has been extended for another six months, and notes the benefit of this service, and calls on the Malinauskas government to establish a similar fixed-site health and drug checking service in South Australia. This is an issue that I have raised many times in this parliament.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2021 there were 1,704 drug-induced deaths in Australia. In many of these cases the person took a substance that was stronger than expected or had a dangerous contaminant in it that they did not know about. The composition of illicit drugs is varied and highly unpredictable. Makers of these illicit substances often cut pills with other substances or include more dangerous drugs entirely.

These drug-induced deaths could possibly have been avoided through pill testing. The purpose of the pill testing is threefold: to prevent people from using unusually strong or contaminated drugs, to communicate messages around safer drug use and reducing harm, and to improve user knowledge on how certain drugs can affect them. Through conversations with experts on the results of chemical analysis of pills, pill testing better manages the service user's risks and helps service users make an informed decisions about whether they still want to take the drug.

In addition to preventing avoidable deaths, pill testing can create an opportunity for confidential conversations about harm reduction, counselling and support services between drug users and testing staff. For some people this might be the first chance they have to talk with health services about their drug use, and pill testing provides a unique opportunity to do this in a safe and non-judgemental space.

Pill testing can help detect when a drugs market is circulating potentially more dangerous substances. This is particularly useful for emergency services and can provide an early warning system, alerting the public to dangerous drugs that might be circulating in the community. Pill testing can also collect information on drug use trends in festival and nightlife environments. This information can be used to help build research and knowledge to assist police and health services in reducing drug-related harms in these settings.

There is a large body of evidence from across the globe which shows that pill testing can alter drug-taking behaviour, potentially saving lives and reducing harm. A report from the Checkit! program in Austria reported that 50 per cent of people self-reported that the results of the test affected their consumption. Most users reported that they would wait for a result before taking the drug and when presented with a bad result, two-thirds said they would not consume the substance and would inform their friends. A similar study in the Netherlands conducted by the Addiction Research Institute found that if the test results were unexpected, many respondents would choose not to take the pill.

There is a range of research in this regard that I think is worthy of consideration by the government. It is my hope that they consider what is happening in the ACT and that they roll out a similar program in our state. I think to do so would be of great value to people in our community and would indeed save lives.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon I.K. Hunter.

*Bills***PUBLIC SECTOR (MINISTERIAL TRAVEL REPORTS) AMENDMENT BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:22): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Public Sector Act 2009. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:23): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I rise to introduce the Public Sector (Ministerial Travel Reports) Amendment Bill 2023. This is a bill that tells ministers when, not if, they will be held to account for their spending. Why is this bill necessary? I want all ministerial departments to have their travel reporting standardised. There should be transparency, accountability, a standard of detail and a timeliness around spending reports.

I trust everyone in this chamber will support the clear measures outlined in this bill. During a time of rising inflation, rising interest rates and rental and housing crises, South Australians deserve to know that politicians are accountable for their taxpayer dollars. On 14 February, *The Advertiser* reported on a trip to the United States taken by the Treasurer, one public sector agency employee and one political staffer, and it was estimated that that trip for three people cost South Australian taxpayers \$78,000.

Politicians are servants of the people who elect them, and the Treasurer in particular is responsible for spending the money taxpayers give them on the necessities of running the state. The South Australian public is entitled to proper transparency as to how their taxpayer dollars are spent overseas and on interstate trips.

This is one trip in a list of overseas and interstate travel that this government has undertaken within its first years of office: Japan, Korea, United States and Spain. We all want to know how much you are spending and what you are spending it on. This simple amendment calls for all ministers to report on their ministerial travel within 30 days of undertaking travel outside South Australia. They must report on the reason and necessity for travel; the costs of travel, such as transportation, accommodation, food, beverages and activity expenses; and a summary of activities undertaken.

These reports are also applicable to all public sector agency employees and political staffers travelling with the minister. The report must then be laid before the parliament within six sitting days. There may currently be various departmental reporting procedures and bulk annual reports where numbers are thrown together in a one-line summary, or a code of conduct on spending, but they are not legislated and they are not standardised across all ministries.

The difference with this legislation is that it makes those reports specified and timely. Information is to be publicly disclosed in a relevant time frame, and it would expose any discretionary spending. I believe this amendment is the bare minimum the public are entitled to know regarding the interstate and overseas travel expenses of government ministers. It ensures all ministers report to the same standard. One Nation calls for politicians to be accountable to voters, and I believe we should be using taxpayer money frugally and conservatively in regard to travel. This amendment is overdue and I commend this bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (MEDICINAL CANNABIS DEFENCE) BILL*Introduction and First Reading*

The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:26): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Harbours and Navigation Act 1993, the Motor Vehicles Act 1959 and the Road Traffic Act 1961. Read a first time.

Second Reading

The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:27): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is a privilege to introduce the Statutes Amendment (Medicinal Cannabis Defence) Bill 2023 to the chamber. As a result of federal legislative changes in 2016, South Australian patients can access medicinal cannabis containing THC. For some health issues, CBD medicines are not enough and so the sufferer requires medicines containing THC for effective treatment. THC medicines are prescribed for use before bed and any impairment wears off while the patient sleeps, yet traces can still be found in a patient's system hours or sometimes days after.

Let me be clear: I am in no way advocating that a patient should be allowed to drive while impaired after taking cannabis medications. This bill brings us into line with current regulations in Tasmania and recommendations in many other states. Other countries do not have random drug testing stations the way we do in Australia and only test after observing signs of impairment. This bill would allow for a complete defence for medicinal cannabis motorists when THC is detected in the person's fluid or blood when (1) the person has a valid doctor's prescription for the medicine containing THC, (2) the person is not involved in dangerous or reckless driving, and (3) the officer cannot establish impairment in the person.

A senior executive in the Public Service told me that he was given a choice between tramadol or medicinal cannabis by his doctor. He says that tramadol was not an option as the side effects make it impossible for him to perform his significant responsibilities effectively and safely; hence, he has no choice but to choose medicinal cannabis. Even though he only takes a cannabis medicine a couple of times a week, he said he was forced to quit driving due to current drug laws. It is highly nonsensical that this gentleman can legally drive with tramadol in his system but cannot with THC without regard for lack of impairment. He says the presence in the blood does not automatically equate to impairment.

Others tell me about their struggle to decide whether to be healthy and pain free while breaking the law, or to be in pain with unmanaged mental health so that they can drive legally. For many, being able to drive is crucial for employment to support themselves and their families and to contribute to their communities. This bill does not nor has it any intention of offering a defence to driving under the influence laws. Driving under the influence laws make it an offence to drive while under the influence of any drug, as to be incapable of exercising effective control of a vehicle.

THC is an active ingredient in medicinal cannabis. It is provided as a treatment option from a pharmacist on prescription from authorised medical practitioners; couple this with the South Australian Labor government recently giving South Australia Police the power to immediately strip motorists of their licence upon detection of THC. Therefore, a defence must be implemented to protect medicinal cannabis patients who are also responsible drivers.

This bill is based on existing rules in Tasmania, which allow a defence for medicinal cannabis patients when THC is detected at the roadside, so long as the motorist is not impaired while driving. Medicinal cannabis can be accessed for conditions including paediatric and adult epilepsies, multiple sclerosis, various types of pain and to treat side effects from chemotherapy and HIV/AIDS therapy.

Australia is the only country with a widespread random mobile drug detection program for the detection of THC. Other jurisdictions—for example, the Netherlands, Belgium and France—have legal limits for THC in oral fluid, but typically only request samples when there is evidence of impaired driving. In Canada, where cannabis use was legalised entirely in 2018, oral fluid tests, such as those used in Australia, can be used to confirm a suspected case of drug-impaired driving but only when an officer can first demonstrate impaired driving.

A Canadian study published on 1 November 2021 in the *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* journal, volume 228, concluded there was no increase in traffic injuries following medicinal cannabis legalisation. A 2021 Australian study, published in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*, volume 97, concluded that:

There is little evidence to justify the differential treatment of medicinal cannabis patients compared with those taking other prescription medicines with potentially impairing effects.

Opioid and benzodiazepine patients do not have to fear penalties, provided they are not impaired when behind the wheel. THC can be detected in oral fluid for hours or days following abstinence. In blood, THC can be detectable for up to 30 days. This, understandably, causes law-abiding medicinal cannabis patients to face heightened anxiety whenever they need to drive, regardless of their capacity to drive. This could turn off medicinal cannabis patients from driving altogether, which threatens the increasing isolation of those suffering from poor mental health and disability.

At least prior to the government's recent change, drivers were afforded 28 days for their oral fluid to be forensically analysed to capture system errors. We all want safer roads, but instead of discriminating against responsible drivers with serious health challenges let us work on improving impairment testing methods, such as imaging techniques or studying concentration levels that cause impairment, putting the focus back on targeting the dangerous and reckless drivers, rather than those who want to feel well.

As previously mentioned, this bill does not offer a defence to driving under the influence laws. I put this bill forward for a commonsense approach. Medicinal cannabis is a legally recognised prescribed medication and the law needs to acknowledge this to stay relevant. The government should support my bill to ensure law-abiding patients are not stripped of their licence through no wrongdoing of their own.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

INDEPENDENT OFFICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE BILL

Introduction and First Reading

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (16:33): Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to establish the Independent Office for Animal Welfare, to make related amendments to the Animal Welfare Act 1985, the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, the Livestock Act 1997 and for other purposes. Read a first time.

Parliamentary Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE TIMBER INDUSTRY IN THE LIMESTONE COAST

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16:35): I move:

That it be an instruction to the Select Committee on Matters Relating to the Timber Industry in the Limestone Coast to amend its terms of reference in paragraph 1 by inserting 'and other regions' after 'Limestone Coast' and in subparagraph 1(b) by inserting 'and other regions' after 'Limestone Coast area' and in subparagraph 1(f) by inserting 'and other regions' after 'Limestone Coast'.

I rise very briefly to speak to this motion. At our first meeting of the select committee on 15 February, it was determined by the committee, on motion, that the scope of the inquiry should be broadened to other regions in addition to the Limestone Coast. This by no means lessens the importance of the Limestone Coast but will simply allow discussion around the timber industry in other regions around South Australia.

I do not expect this motion to be controversial, given its unanimous support in committee. I would just like to inform the chamber that I will be bringing this motion to a vote during the next sitting week. With those remarks, I seek the council's support on this motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

Motions

NATIVE BIRD HUNTING

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (16:37): I move:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established to inquire into and report on the hunting of native birds, with particular reference to:
 - (a) community values and perspective;
 - (b) cultural, social and recreational aspects;

- (c) sustainability, environmental and animal welfare aspects of native bird hunting;
 - (d) economic considerations;
 - (e) perspectives of First Nations;
 - (f) how native bird hunting is managed in other jurisdictions; and
 - (g) any other relevant matter.
2. 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.

The Labor government made a pre-election commitment to review the practice of hunting for native birds which are not over-abundant pests. To address this commitment, I recommend to the Legislative Council the establishment of a select committee as specified in my motion. I am aware that duck and quail hunting is a contentious subject, with passionate stakeholder groups either supporting duck and quail hunting or conversely calling for a ban on the practice.

Undertaking a review through a committee of parliament such as this allows for a transparent and open process that enables all views to be heard for consideration. The Department for Environment and Water currently regulates protection of native fauna and recreational hunting in accordance with the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

A specific duck or quail open season hunting permit must be held to hunt these protected species and, typically, open season declarations by the minister are based on advice provided each year by the department. This advice is based on assessment of climate data and forecasts, landscape and wetland conditions, and waterfowl abundance. The potential impact of hunting activities on the conservation and sustainability of waterfowl and quail populations and stakeholder feedback are also considered.

In South Australia, the Department for Environment and Water may also issue a permit to destroy wildlife to allow the destruction of protected native animals, including native birds, that are causing or are likely to cause damage to the environment, crops, stock or property or pose a health and safety risk. These permits enable mitigation of impacts created by protected fauna and do not allow for recreational hunting.

Where destruction of protected fauna is allowed by the National Parks and Wildlife Act, whether permitted by an open season hunting permit or a permit to destroy wildlife, this must be undertaken in accordance with a code of practice for the humane destruction of wildlife relevant to the species being destroyed as a condition of permit to satisfy the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act.

Recreational duck hunting is currently permitted in Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Recreational quail hunting is permitted in Victoria and Tasmania, and New South Wales allows volunteer hunters to help landholders manage the impacts of ducks on their agricultural lands.

Once the committee has undertaken this review, the recommendations from the committee will then be considered by the government. I commend the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. N.J. Centofanti.

HARMONY WEEK

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:43): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that Harmony Week is celebrated from 21 March to 27 March 2023, beginning with Harmony Day on 21 March;
2. Notes that Harmony Day has been celebrated in Australia since 1999 and expanded to Harmony Week in 2019;
3. Recognises the rich cultural, linguistic, racial and religious diversity of our South Australian community, and acknowledges that migrants and their descendants contribute to all aspects of our economy and society; and

4. Celebrates the success of multiculturalism and interculturalism in South Australia and encourages all community members to come together to show their support for cultural diversity and inclusion.

It is with great honour that I rise today to move this motion in my name to acknowledge the importance of Harmony Week. This year, Harmony Week is being celebrated from Monday 20 March to Sunday 26 March 2023. It is a national celebration that recognises our diversity and brings together Australians from all different backgrounds.

Harmony Day, held annually on 21 March since 1999, was introduced by the Howard Liberal Coalition government to promote a singular and unifying notion of multicultural policy for Australia. Since 2019, the celebration expanded to become Harmony Week in Australia. I am pleased to inform honourable members that I had the opportunity to host a reception here in Parliament House in 2019 when South Australia adopted Harmony Week in our state under the former Marshall Liberal government.

Harmony Day is a government-declared observance day that coincides with the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Harmony Day is typically marked by community events and local activities centred around the theme of equality and social justice. The message of Harmony Day is social cohesion and racial harmony and is expressed through community participation, inclusiveness, the celebration of diversity and respect, belonging and primarily the unity and togetherness from the community of different backgrounds residing within South Australia.

The designated colour representing Harmony Day is orange, a colour symbolic of peace and diversity in society. Traditionally, orange signifies social communication and meaningful conversations. It also relates to the freedom of ideas and encouragement of mutual respect. This motion seeks to recognise the rich cultural, linguistic, racial and religious diversity of our South Australian community and acknowledges that migrants and their descendants, together with the First Nations people, contribute to all aspects of our economy and society.

Our cultural diversity is a great strength and brings with it a whole host of traditions, cultures, religions, languages and of course performing arts, festivals and food. Embracing cultural diversity helps us to do things in different ways, reduces discrimination and challenges our unconscious bias, and opens our hearts, our homes and our workplaces to accept differences.

As a proud first generation Australian with a rich multicultural background, I am proud that I live in an accepting and harmonious society which has remained free from the most serious forms of racial intolerance and cultural conflict. Australians' innate sense of justice and fair play have helped us to create a very modern, diverse and accepting community in which we celebrate the values we share and respect our differences.

But this is no accident. All of us—communities as a whole and policymakers like us—have worked hard to achieve this goal. If we are to maintain our record as one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world, we have to make it clear that there is no place for racism in Australia. Racism is offensive to all Australians. It prevents people from actively participating in our society and from contributing their talents and skills to our development as a nation.

Everyone shares in the social and economic benefits of community harmony. Each year, there is a new Harmony Week theme. This year's theme is 'living in harmony'. This year's theme is asking all of us to embrace this responsibility and commitment to living in harmony. It requires every effort from everyone: parliamentarians, governments, individuals, families, communities and the corporate sector.

The campaign and activities of Harmony Week celebrate the strengths in which Australia is a multicultural country and it raises awareness of how different cultures can work together to create a harmonious society. Harmony Week is celebrated with a variety of community events and activities. Since 1999, more than 80,000 Harmony Week events have been held in childcare centres, at schools, community groups, churches, businesses and across federal, state and local government agencies across Australia.

Being the longest serving member of parliament in the portfolio of multicultural affairs, I have had the pleasure and privilege to serve our diverse communities and I have attended so many

Harmony Week events across South Australia over the last 12 years. This year will be no different and I look forward to all of them. I want to give a big shout-out to all the individuals, volunteers and organisations for their amazing efforts to organise local events that highlight the talents and contributions of our inclusive multicultural society during Harmony Week.

The ongoing theme of Harmony Week is 'everyone belongs'. It is a time of cultural respect for all involved. As I said before, Australia is one of the most multicultural countries in the world, from the oldest continuous culture of our First Australians to migrants from over 200 countries. Our cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths and is at the heart of who we are. It makes South Australia a great place to live.

Everyone here has a part to play in upholding the best of traditional Australian values, those values of equality, acceptance and living peacefully together, whatever our religious, social, cultural and racial differences. I encourage all South Australians to work together to celebrate Harmony Day and Harmony Week. I thank you all for your amazing efforts to preserve, to protect and to advance multiculturalism and interculturalism in our beautiful state. I commend the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

ASH WEDNESDAY BUSHFIRES

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. R.B. Martin:

That this council—

1. Recognises that 16 February 2023 will mark 40 years since the devastating Ash Wednesday bushfires;
2. Reflects and remembers the 75 people that died, 3,700 buildings that were destroyed, 2,545 families that lost their homes and the innumerable number of plant and animal species destroyed; and
3. Acknowledges the resilience of South Australian communities in overcoming natural disasters.

(Continued from 8 February 2023.)

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16:50): I rise today to speak in support of the motion. In 1983, Australia was in the grip of a severe drought. On Wednesday 16 February, a temperature of 43° was recorded over large parts of South Australia and Victoria that, combined with strong winds, led to the breakout of 180 fires across both states. The sheer number and magnitude of the near 200 fires and the lives lost and the devastating destruction of infrastructure, animals and our natural environment caused those fires to be dubbed the devastating Ash Wednesday bushfires.

In South Australia, it is known as Ash Wednesday II, as the state had experienced disastrous bushfires three years prior, on 20 February 1980, which also happened to occur on a Wednesday. Temperatures had already reached 40° by mid-morning and they were forecast to reach a high of 43°. The first fires broke out at McLaren Flat just before noon, shortly followed by fires in the Adelaide Hills, the South-East, Eyre Peninsula and the Mid North. The Adelaide Hills were the worst affected areas in South Australia. The hilly terrain made access hard for firefighting units, which were quickly overwhelmed by the ferocity of the fires.

In South Australia, the fires burned through a combined 160,000 hectares throughout the state and destroyed 383 homes and another 200 buildings. According to the South Australian History Hub, the estimated financial damage was \$204 million across the state. Absolutely tragically, there were 75 casualties across the two states, with 47 people dying in Victoria and 28 people dying in South Australia. Of the 28 lives lost in South Australia, 17 of those were volunteer firefighters, three of whom served with the CFS.

The Ash Wednesday II bushfires played a significant role in helping shape the bushfire management practices we have today. This included improvements to equipment and communications and led to an increase in the capacity to respond. It also paved the way for changes to public safety strategies. In 1983, Adelaide Hills residents were advised to return to defend their properties. This undoubtedly played a part in the number of casualties. People are now given the

advice to leave their properties well in advance and to make sure they are prepared to defend it if they choose to stay.

We should take this opportunity to reflect on the immense destruction that occurred 40 years ago and remember the 28 people who, sadly, lost their lives. We must also be thankful that we now have substantially better firefighting capabilities, so that we will hopefully never have another bushfire disaster as bad as the Ash Wednesday of 1983.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (16:54): Four decades ago, Australia experienced one of its most deadly bushfire events to date. Within a 24-hour period on 16 February 1983, a day we now know as Ash Wednesday, 180 fires burned across South Australia and Victoria claiming 75 lives, 28 in South Australia and 47 in Victoria. Scores more people were injured and over 3,000 homes were destroyed, not to mention the vast amount of farm sheds, fences and infrastructure burnt out as 400,000 hectares of land was consumed.

I was a teenager at high school, and I remember it well. My father was called on as a volunteer firefighter. Like many of my schoolfriends, I was gripped with the terror that he would be caught in the frequently changing conditions and not return. I was fortunate that he did return to our family, but many others were not so fortunate.

The South-East of the state usually enjoys good reliable rainfall, but in the year leading up to Ash Wednesday we were impacted by drought. On 8 February, just eight days before the fateful day, the Bureau of Meteorology reported:

The severity and extent of the current drought makes it one of the worst to affect southeastern Australia in the past 100 years.

Ash Wednesday 1983 had some unique characteristics. The Coroner noted that many long-term residents of the area said that it was the worst day they had ever experienced weatherwise. There were strong northerly winds gusting up to 100 km/h, temperatures reached as high as 44°, relative humidity dropped to 10 per cent and there was a high fuel load of very dry material. However, it was the cold front that came through later in the day that made these fires so terrible.

At midday, the first of many fires across the South-East broke out, spreading with great ferocity and travelling at unusually high speeds. One fire in those conditions would have been bad enough, but there were seven significant fires and two lesser fires in the South-East, with all but a few joining together by the end of the day.

At 3.45pm, the cool change came through a lot earlier than forecast, changing wind direction from north-west to south-west, catching many off guard and dramatically affecting the run of the fires. There was now a deadly 15-kilometre fire front, whipped up by ferociously strong winds. Firefighters trying to contain the flanks of the fire were now directly in its path, resulting in the deaths of local deputy CFS supervisor, Brian Nosworthy; CFS volunteer, Andrew Lemke; and truck driver, P.J. O'Leary.

Following the wind change, Mary Williams and her four children perished in their car trying to escape the blaze near Kalangadoo, as did their good friend and neighbour, Gavin Rogers, who tried to rescue them. Gavin posthumously received several awards for bravery, including one from the Royal Humane Society of Australasia. Gavin's uncle also died from a heart attack that day and, to compound their grief, both the Williams and Rogers families lost their homes and their properties. My heart goes out to family members as they commemorate these tragic events.

Over 500 people in the South-East suffered physical injuries requiring treatment, either in the field or in hospital, but many more were mentally impacted by the sights, sounds and smells they experienced not just on Ash Wednesday but also in the aftermath as they got to work cleaning up and rebuilding their lives and their properties. For many survivors, the distinct smell of bushfire and burned livestock is a trigger that brings back memories of these traumatic events to this very day.

However, the catastrophic impact of Ash Wednesday was a catalyst that led to improvements in the way we fight fires, especially in the areas of communications, equipment and infrastructure. For example, powerlines were the ignition point for many of the fires on Ash Wednesday due to the

high winds, so improvements have been made to infrastructure and precautions taken to reduce risk on extreme fire danger days.

Ash Wednesday also revealed the impact of cool changes on fire behaviour, leading to safer firefighting practices and better provision of information to emergency services and today of course we also have the advantage of technology to facilitate real-time communication, as well as firefighting aircraft so we can start attacking the fire as soon as possible after ignition.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the resilience of my community in recovering from that disaster. In the initial aftermath, farmers received support from far and wide to rebuild external fences and bury burnt livestock, but it took several years and a great deal of effort to rebuild the homes, sheds, cattle yards and internal fences that were razed.

It is also very important to note the mental health impacts of these types of natural disasters on survivors, first responders, health workers, community members, family members and, indeed, across the broader community. Fortunately, as societies and as governments we are now much more aware of these types of impacts and more responsive when we face other natural disasters today.

Ash Wednesday was a time of tragedy, but it was also a time of courageous deeds and remarkable feats, and of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. That is something for which we can be grateful, despite the tragedy that we experienced. I thank the Hon. Reggie Martin for bringing this motion to the chamber, and I support it wholeheartedly. I am sure I am joined by all in this chamber in remembering the events and sending our best thoughts to those who were impacted and those who still remember today.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (17:01): I rise today to support this motion on behalf of the Greens and reflect upon Ash Wednesday and remember those 75 people who died. I note that 3,700 buildings were destroyed and 2,545 families lost their homes, as well as, of course, the innumerable number of plant and animal species that were destroyed.

Ash Wednesday is a day that even 40 years on people still remember with chilling clarity—the smell, the sound, the haze. People could do nothing but stand and watch as their lives were destroyed and their communities burned. In the months leading up to the Ash Wednesday fire, South Australia was in the grip of a severe drought. On the day of the fire, temperatures were over 40° and the wind was strong. This, as we now know, is a catastrophic combination.

The speed and ferocity of the flames, aided by abundant fuels and a landscape immersed in smoke, made fire suppression and containment impossible. In many cases residents fended for themselves as fires broke communications, cut off escape routes and severed electricity and water supplies. The sheer scale of the destruction remains difficult to comprehend. Those 75 people died because of the fires, including 17 firefighters. More than 3,700 buildings were destroyed or damaged and, as I said, 2,545 individuals and families lost their homes—an extraordinary and sad part of our state's heritage. Hundreds of thousands of livestock and native animals were killed or had to be destroyed.

Psychological studies undertaken in the months and years after the Ash Wednesday fires found that those events left many in the affected communities with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, even decades after the disaster. We have known since the 1980s that more greenhouse gases entering our atmosphere increase the likelihood of conditions that drive catastrophic bushfires like Ash Wednesday. We are having more and more extreme fire days and we are seeing longer and more intense fire seasons.

Climate change has left forests and grasslands drier, which means bushfire season has started earlier and will likely last longer. Higher temperature and drier conditions have made the window for hazard reduction shorter. It is essential that governments act now to build the climate resilience and disaster preparedness capacity we so desperately need.

The Greens have actively listened to the community and to the experts and supported a range of steps to build resilience and to mitigate the effect of bushfires. We have long called for evidence-based hazard reduction burning. False claims by some commentators that Greens' policies have contributed to the severity of fires, particularly those in the 2019-20 year, serve as a way to deflect from the major underlying cause that fuels the increasingly severe fires we now face.

Now more than ever we need to lift funding for emergency services to support equipment and personnel acquisition that are critical for managing bushfires and other disasters. In 2020, the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements recommended that the commonwealth and state and territory governments develop an Australian based and registered national aerial firefighting capability, to be tasked accordingly to the greatest national need.

The Greens have called for the federal government to task Emergency Management Australia (EMA) with identifying gaps in our aerial firefighting capability, working with the state and territory governments as well as the Australian and New Zealand national council for fire and emergency services. This report will be the basis of a procurement strategy to create a national stock of specialised disaster response equipment that can be accessed by states and territories as needed.

That bushfire royal commission recognised the importance of First Nations land management and made two recommendations for governments to work with traditional owners to explore the relationship between First Nations people and fire management and natural disaster resilience. That is why the Greens have campaigned for expanding the rangers program and employing more First Nations people to protect their lands, waters, rivers, lakes and animals and plants that rely on them as well as expanding First Nations-led cultural burning programs to ensure First Nations people are involved in fuel and hazard reduction on country, which enhances the health of the land and its people.

Fossil fuel corporations that actively contribute to the escalating climate crisis should bear responsibility for the damage they cause. That is why at a federal level the Greens have introduced legislation into the parliament that would give people who lost their homes or loved ones from natural disasters the chance to sue and seek compensation from the coal, oil and gas companies profiting from climate damage.

This climate crisis is putting lives at risk right now, and we must take those steps necessary so we never again see the destruction on the scale of Ash Wednesday that was had in this state. I commend the motion.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:06): I rise to speak in support of the motion by the Hon. Reggie Martin marking the 40th anniversary of the Ash Wednesday bushfires in South Australia and across the border in Victoria. As we know, there was a shocking loss of lives and property as merciless flames, whipped up by gale force winds on a stifling hot day, tore through the Adelaide Hills and in the South-East of the state.

In the aftermath of those fires much was learnt from the horrific catastrophe, with many changes to firefighting procedures, communications and bushfire preparation and prevention methods implemented. Fighting the unpredictable nature of wildfires continues to be a challenge in an age of climate change.

Looking back to 40 years ago, I can see where and why those courageous volunteer firefighters and other emergency services were so underprepared and underequipped for such an inferno. Communications is one of the most important areas that has dramatically changed the way we can ready for disasters like fires and floods. The year 1983 was still four years from the introduction of the first handheld mobile phone by Telecom, later Telstra, an expensive model that was known as 'the brick'.

Now, the mobile phone is a life-saving communication technology tool that is widely and commonly available and affordable to all, but back then they were still reliant on two-way CB frequency radios, AM radio stations and television to quickly spread alerts, while loud fire alarms would still blare from towers dotted through the Hills and regional areas. Thankfully, the digital age and the advancements it has brought in mobile phone and internet technology has changed all that to provide almost instant communication in the community and with emergency services.

I can still vividly remember that terrible day. Adelaide had been experiencing dry heatwave conditions, but that day was especially ominous. A combination of searing 40°-plus heat and strong, gusting northerly winds turning the skies into a dark dust haze was going to be a recipe for disaster. As a later inquiry would find, many of the blazes were caused by arcing powerlines.

At the time, I was working at radio station 5DN in North Adelaide as the producer of Jeremy Cordeaux's top-rating morning talk program. The first reports of blazes started coming in that morning. Suddenly, radio stations like 5DN became an important communication centre for worried home owners and landowners. Warnings were issued for people to stay clear and not enter active fire zones, which were only a few kilometres from the city itself—unless, of course, they were enlisted firefighters with the CFS.

Tragically, some failed to take heed of those warnings and perished trying to get back to their properties to save them and their possessions or to evacuate and rescue loved ones and animals. My journalist colleagues at 5DN bravely went into the fire fronts without protective clothing that you see today—just their normal clothes, a two-way radio and their tape recorders tucked under their arms. Their coverage of this event was incredible and also quite moving.

The most chilling account of the personal devastation and heartbreak came from one of my own colleagues at 5DN, Walkley Award-winning journalist, the late Murray Nicoll, whom I also worked with at *The News* and later Channel 7. Nic was not just an accomplished and fearless journalist, he was also an emergency firefighter. He was covering the fires when he got word that his own house on Yarrabee Road at Greenhill was in the path of the flames and in danger. Murray got there just as the flames started licking his house.

What followed was one of the most dramatic and heartbreaking news reports ever broadcast. Wearing just a pair of overalls, Murray ducked flying embers as he was blinded by billowing smoke. Engulfed with gut-wrenching emotion, he vividly described his house and his possessions being destroyed and his fears for his own safety as he sought refuge behind a wall as huge flames, fanned by the winds, roared around him. I could not imagine the fear that would have gripped Murray and those who were with him at that time.

Murray deservedly went on to win one of his two Walkley Awards for journalism for that gripping report. That evening, people on the plains and along our metropolitan beaches could see a long line of flames and bright red embers of burnt trees capping the Adelaide Hills like a vein of lava. We were unsure of the extent of the damage, but it looked savage and massive, and we all prayed for a change in weather conditions and rain to put out the destructive fires.

In the days that followed, the enormous damage became evident. Haunting images on television and published by our two daily newspapers, *The News* and *The Advertiser*, gave us some insight into the damage that was wreaked. One that stands out was an image of a line of burnt out cars on the freeway going into the Hills in which drivers perished trying to get back to their homes. I can clearly recall, even as a youngster, we would often hear messages of how you should take care during bushfires. One of those messages that I recall was that if you were in a bushfire and you were in a car, that you should remain in the car. Sadly, there were consequences to that in later years and you do not hear that message anymore.

As I mentioned, there were ghostly images of the burnt-out cars on the freeway where drivers lost their lives. The smoke was still evident as it drifted through that area. They were gloomy images. Another was a ghostly image of the destruction at Mount Lofty and the devastation of losses in the South-East, as was mentioned by the Hon. Clare Scriven. We learnt a lot from that experience and methods and procedures, including power and natural vegetation management, which had to change, and it did. We continue to learn. I commend the motion to the chamber.

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:14): I rise to further acknowledge the devastating toll of the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires, and I recognise that Ash Wednesday is one of a long list of serious and deadly South Australian bushfires:

- the 1955 Black Tuesday bushfires: on 2 January 1955 a series of bushfires broke out in the Adelaide Hills, killing 26 people and destroying over 200 homes;
- the 2005 Wangary bushfire: on 10 January 2005 a bushfire broke out on Eyre Peninsula, killing nine people and destroying over 90 homes;
- the 2015 Pinery bushfire: on 25 November 2015 a bushfire broke out in the Mid North region of South Australia, killing two people and destroying over 90 homes; and

- the 2019-20 Kangaroo Island bushfires: on 20 December 2019 a bushfire broke out on Kangaroo Island, destroying over 200,000 hectares of land and killing two people. A simultaneous Adelaide Hills bushfire broke out, destroying over 25,000 hectares of land and 86 homes.

Australia has always been a land of extremes of fires and floods, although it is important to note that the bushfire data can vary. Depending on the source and methodology used, it is estimated that in the 2018-19 bushfire season there were over 46,000 bushfires nationally, with over 11 million hectares of land burnt and over 30 people killed. In the 2019-20 bushfire season there were over 50,000 bushfires nationally, with over 12 million hectares of land burnt, and again over 30 people killed. The 2020-21 bushfire season was less severe; however, it made up for that with back-to-back seasons of significant flooding events.

I take the opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work of our Country Fire Service and our State Emergency Service and all the first responders who give their all, and tragically sometimes their lives, to keep people, property and bushland safe. The 2020-21 South Australian Country Fire Service annual report notes that volunteers provided approximately 1.3 million hours of dedicated voluntary service. It is, unfortunately, not unheard of during bushfire events for these volunteer firefighters and their families to suffer personal loss whilst out saving other people's homes and property. We must ensure these selfless volunteers continue to be taken care of through an adequately-funded CFS Foundation and CFS Volunteer Association.

The South Australian State Emergency Service also had a busy 2020-21 reporting period, with over 6,300 calls for help lodged. As another volunteer-based organisation, the SES, according to their strategic overview, exists to provide an emergency response capability that enhances community safety and minimises the loss of life, injuries and damage from emergencies and natural disasters. This is a vital service for South Australians.

CFS and SES volunteers dedicate significant time to training and team building. They operate on very modest budgets and share the values of community service and tenacity. Importantly, I thank those volunteers who are unseen behind the frontlines during a bushfire emergency. These are service clubs and community groups who work tirelessly, making sandwiches for our firefighters, delivering drinking water to the CFS and SES sheds, providing home-cooked meals for those who have had to evacuate properties, and running activities and games for children who are camped out on football fields as last refuge locations.

Whether this is Country Women's Association, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis, Rotary, Men's Sheds, local RSL branches or any other, Australia would be a lesser place without the community spirit and volunteerism demonstrated in hard times. I recall meeting with the Lions Club of Murray Bridge City, who were providing meals to homeless locals. Circumstances had been exacerbated by the River Murray floods, as many people living in tents along riverbank were displaced. Their service is not only functional, providing healthy and hearty meals, but conducted with dignity and empathy for those in their community afflicted by hard times.

I have heard firsthand of the mental impact upon CFS and SES volunteers in the aftermath of an emergency response; the intense pressure to keep their family and community safe cannot be underestimated. We must continue to fund and support these organisations so they are able to provide adequate post-event care to their brave volunteers. A bushfire is a terrifying experience. Ash Wednesday left a grim mark on many South Australians' memory 40 years ago. Stepping up to assist your neighbours during an emergency, whether volunteering on the frontline or in a supporting role, is a part of our South Australian culture that we should preserve and celebrate.

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (17:19): I would like to start by acknowledging the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, the Hon. Clare Scriven, the Hon. Tammy Franks, the Hon. Frank Pangallo and the Hon. Sarah Game and thank them for their contributions and support of this motion. Ash Wednesday might have been 40 years ago but it has left an indelible mark on the soul of South Australia.

While we reflect on the tragic circumstances of that day, we can also be proud of the way South Australians came together to support each other and to prove their resilience to overcome the challenges of recovery. By passing this motion today, we pay our respects to all those who were

involved in the Ash Wednesday disaster and to those who have kept us safe in subsequent disasters. I commend the motion.

Motion carried.

SASANELLI, DR N.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:20): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges the outstanding contribution Dr Nicola Sasanelli AM has made to:
 - (a) the establishment of the South Australian Space Industry Centre;
 - (b) supporting and promoting the development and growth of South Australia's space industry sector;
 - (c) developing international strategies, policies and agreements for government agencies, universities, industry and research institutions in the fields of space, science and technology;
 - (d) the formation of the Andy Thomas Space Foundation and his leadership as chief executive officer; and
 - (e) strengthening bilateral relations between Australia and Italy.
2. Congratulates Dr Sasanelli on his distinguished public service and career achievements in Italy and in Australia and extends to him the best wishes in retirement.

It gives me much pleasure today to be able to acknowledge the enormous contributions made to this state and this country in the fields of science, education, diplomacy and space of Dr Nicola Sasanelli AM, also a fellow Italo-Australian. Nicola—or Nic, as many know him—formally retired a week ago, and his career and illustrious achievements were recognised at a farewell function organised by the South Australian Space Industry Centre at Lot Fourteen.

I will dub Nic our 'star man' because of his infectious passion and enthusiastic commitment as one of the driving forces in developing and making Adelaide the space capital of Australia and helping establish the Lot Fourteen space centre as an important hub for learning and innovation as well as an investment opportunity in an exciting industry with the potential for massive growth—not that it has not taken off already, with expectations it will soon become a multibillion dollar industry.

When he retired, Nic was the Chief Executive Officer of the Andy Thomas Foundation, which he founded in 2020 and which is named, of course, after our distinguished South Australian NASA astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas. The valedictory speeches given by a galaxy of distinguished figures, including Dr Thomas, reflected his love for his work, starting in Italy as an electrical engineer specialising in microelectronics and high-tech components.

He was appointed as a scientific attaché to the Italian Embassy in Canberra and moved on to the University of Canberra as an adjunct professor of science and technology. He worked for the South Australian government in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet as a special envoy for higher education research and technology transfer to Europe. He joined Defence SA in 2016 as a director of the space industry, mapping out strategies for growth, before his appointment as Director of the South Australian Space Industry Centre.

He was appointed as director of communication and outreach with leading international consortium SmartSat Cooperative Research Centre, a collaboration of universities and research organisations, to develop advanced communications and satellite technologies. I have not even mentioned his diplomatic efforts in furthering and strengthening bilateral ties with his native Italy and his new homeland, Australia.

It was clear Nicola is held in the highest regard and affection by all those who have been infected by his lively personality, leadership qualities, knowledge and insatiable work ethic. He has crammed a lot in since graduating from the University of Bari in southern Italy in 1987. His curriculum vitae simply overflows with impressive achievements and milestones, too many to mention here. I discovered that as well as being a smart guy, Nicola is a published author and a talented artist, although I do not think he is quite in the Italian masters category just yet.

In his own speech, humble Nicola chose to speak not about himself but his own aspirations for science, his love for what they call at Lot Fourteen 'the space ecosystem' and the progress taking place at the space centre in building our country's sovereign space capability through ongoing research and development.

I happened to be in Bari on an assignment for the Seven Network around the same time a young Nicola was completing his studies. I wish that happenstance occurred then so our paths crossed a lot sooner than they did. Nonetheless, I am happy that it happened only just a couple of years ago and I became imbued with his spirit and lust for all things in the heavens above.

Each time I bumped into Nicola at events, he would encourage me to visit the set-up at the space centre. Last year, I finally took my first steps into Lot Fourteen with my wife and a group of other members of the South Australian Italian Association for a tour guided by the irrepressible Nicola.

I was simply blown away with what I experienced and what we have there. From a dinky-di mission control centre, where there is a live shot showing nearly 30,000 satellites in orbit around the Earth, which are observed and can be redirected from Adelaide to prevent collisions, to the innovative space research and development going on there, including a start-up project to turn space junk into fuel and sophisticated artificial intelligence research. The staff, made up mostly of university students, under Nicola at the Andy Thomas Foundation, also share his passionate enthusiasm.

As the speakers at Nicola's farewell pointed out, there is a lot of work going on here and internationally in making South Australia once more the centre of space technology. There was even a hint that big rockets may again be launched from Woomera one day. Nicola also got me excited about the huge ecotourism benefits just waiting to be harvested in this state with the development of a dark sky reserve in the Murraylands.

Nicola introduced me to Dr Don Bursill, a former Chief Scientist in South Australia and one-time boss of SA Water, who is one of the proponents of this exciting project, which will give visitors to the reserve the opportunity to view the Milky Way and the planets through powerful telescopes. Unfortunately, the flooding of the Murray River has temporarily put things on hold. With Don and Nicola's help, I am hoping to reschedule an evening trip to the area for parliamentary colleagues to view constellations in one of the darkest areas on Earth. This is a huge advantage we have in this state over others because there is little to no artificial light to spoil views in the evenings. I will urge our government to get behind this emerging ecotourism potential.

Nicola Sasanelli does not strike me as being the retiring type. He has just founded and is Chairman of Agora High-Tech, a private consultancy company. I am sure Nicola's extraordinary talents, advice and vast knowledge will continue to be sought. I commend this motion to the chamber.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

CITY OF CAMPBELLTOWN BY-LAWS

Orders of the Day, Private Business, No. 34: Hon. C. Bonaros to move:

That by-law No. 6 of the City of Campbelltown concerning cats, made under the Local Government Act 1999 and the Cat and Dog Management Act 1995 on 16 August 2022 and laid on the table of this council on 6 September 2022, be disallowed.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (17:29): I move:

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried; order of the day discharged.

Bills

STATUTES AMENDMENT (ANIMAL WELFARE REFORMS) BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 30 November 2022.)

The Hon. C. BONAROS (17:30): I rise to speak on behalf of SA-Best on the Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill 2022 and indicate our support for the second reading of this bill. The bill seeks to enact the recommendations of the joint committee established to consider and report on a previous version of the bill, which aims to reduce the number of dogs and cats euthanised by the various shelters and rescue organisations operating in South Australia and establish a code of practice and licensing requirement.

Another important aim of the bill is to improve public accountability of the greyhound industry by requiring Greyhound Racing SA to submit an annual report to parliament on the number of greyhounds registered and destroyed each year. That is, I think, a sensible measure in line with the recommendations of the committee.

We know this industry has been plagued by scandals in recent years. Who can forget the award-winning 2015 *Four Corners* exposé on live baiting in Queensland and Victoria? The horrific footage showed live piglets, possums and rabbits being fixed to mechanical lures and flung around the track—as many as 26 times—before being caught and ripped apart by the chasing greyhounds.

No, it was not in South Australia, but nevertheless that very disturbing vision significantly impacted the industry's image Australia wide—as it should have. In South Australia, Greyhound Racing SA now publishes, as I understand, statistical overviews on key numbers. In the 2021-22 financial year, for example, there were 31,354 individual race starts, 752 registered dogs bred and 730 rehomed. Tragically, 22 greyhounds died at racetrack meetings.

Critics continue to question the accuracy of injury, death and rehoming numbers across the industry. Wherever the truth may lie, I think it is fair to say that we, on this side, consider transparency and accountability is certainly a positive step towards the longevity of the industry but also more importantly in terms of those animals themselves.

As the mover of this bill the Hon. Tammy Franks has highlighted in her second reading contribution, the public demands the humane treatment of those animals. Further cases of animal hoarding and neglect have come to light since the committee's final report, including the prosecution of the founders of SAHARA, known as SA Dog Rescue.

The government has now been undertaking some reviews into the way we treat animals in this state, namely, by the Animal Welfare Act review and the Dog and Cat Management Act review. Just earlier today, we had notice from the Attorney of the report of the Dog and Cat Management Act review and that is both timely and welcome, but it is certainly my understanding that we still wait for the Animal Welfare Act review.

I think some of the issues that have been raised in relation to this are whether we should be dealing with this bill as part of a broader review in line with the Dog and Cat Management Act as well, or whether we deal with this as a separate piece of legislation. I note that one of the things that has come to my understanding—and the government can correct me if I am wrong on this or perhaps the mover can correct me if I am wrong on this—but the issue of puppy farms, which we have already had one bill on, is another issue that ties into the broader context of what we are dealing with here. It is the government's intention, as I understand it, to pursue a separate piece of puppy farm legislation outside of that review framework. To my mind, that would be at odds with any argument that this bill cannot be progressed outside of that review.

I have to say that certainly we have been waiting some time now for those review outcomes. Anyone who knows anything about the Legislative Review Committee knows that I wholeheartedly welcome the Dog and Cat Management Act review—although I have not read it yet; I have just received it—because I hope that it addresses longstanding issues that the committee has dealt with in terms of cat management in this jurisdiction, something that has consumed way too much time of that committee because of by-law-making processes over many, many years now. I think everyone has been waiting patiently for that review to come out, in the hope that it does something to address that issue, going forward.

Members in this place have previously said, on the record, that they are hoping that there would be a statewide approach to dealing with those issues. I suppose, once I read the report, we

will have an indication of whether indeed there will be a statewide approach to dealing with those issues.

I cannot see the merit in this bill not being dealt with now, irrespective of whether or not there is a further review. We are satisfied that the bill has been thoroughly consulted on. The joint committee received evidence from key stakeholder groups, including the Australian Veterinary Association, the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League of South Australia. The Law Society's Animal Law Committee has also provided extensive commentary and professional opinion.

There are obviously some outstanding issues that have come about as a result of those opinions, and issues identified in the Law Society's most recent submission, on which, as we progress through this bill, we will be seeking some clarification from the mover. They include the absence of a definition of 'animal rescue organisation' and of the explicit manner in which a dog or cat can be euthanised, which in their view leaves no flexibility for field judgement by inspectors, who may determine that the best method is by shooting, for example. These are questions and issues that the society has raised that I think can be canvassed during the committee stage debate and addressed appropriately then.

With those words, we commend the mover of the bill for her ongoing, diligent work on this issue. As we know, she is a fierce advocate for animal welfare in this place. We indicate our support for the second reading of the bill.

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (17:38): I rise on behalf of the government to make some brief remarks on this bill. The government has commenced a review of the Animal Welfare Act 1985 to ensure that it meets community expectations, in line with previous commitments. The first stage of this comprehensive process is currently open for public consultation and is seeking a broad range of feedback to better understand the community's expectations about animal welfare and to identify opportunities for change that may improve the act.

This review, the first since 2008, will look at all aspects of the act and its role in promoting the welfare of animals, rather than individual components of the act. This comprehensive process will ensure that the act is updated to reflect contemporary practices and the community expectations of South Australians in relation to the welfare of animals. The consultation period closes on 26 March. Around 200 submissions have already been received.

The Dog and Cat Management Board has also undertaken the legislated review of the Dog and Cat Management Board 1985, consulting with local government, the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League and the Australian Veterinary Association. The board has provided a report on this review to the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, which was tabled in both houses, I understand, or so I am told, earlier today. The review considers opportunities to add value, resulting in a more contemporary approach to dog and cat management.

It is important that these significant reviews inform future legislative amendment. This is because they are based on extensive stakeholder engagement and consideration of the overall legislative framework and operational implications for implementation. Using these reviews to inform legislative amendment will better enable good animal welfare and animal management outcomes to be delivered. It is our view, I am told, the rules in this area should only change once, not twice, therefore we do not intend to support this particular bill at this time. It is our preference that the legislative reform follow the reviews underway in this space.

However, we acknowledge the Hon. Tammy Franks for her long advocacy in this area and for bringing this bill forward. We do not intend to delay the Legislative Council's deliberations on these matters, therefore, while we will not be supporting the bill at this time, we will not be seeking to divide on it or to delay the committee stage.

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:40): I would like to rise briefly to say that I will be supporting this bill.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (17:41): I rise to make a contribution on the Statutes Amendment (Animal Welfare Reforms) Bill 2022 on behalf of the opposition and confirm our intention to support the bill, subject to a number of amendments that I will move during the committee stage.

This bill has had various iterations since it was first introduced to this place by the Hon. Ms Franks in 2017 and I wish to acknowledge her commitment to advancing this piece of legislation. I would also wish to acknowledge the considerable efforts of Ms Mia Aukland, a member of the South Australian community, who set out to influence the law in South Australia and to improve outcomes for healthy and treatable dogs and cats who find themselves in a shelter and needing rehoming. She is to be commended for her perseverance and commitment to this process.

As the Hon. Ms Franks indicated, when the bill was introduced to this chamber in 2020, the previous Liberal government provided support for the bill to be referred to a joint select committee of the parliament to give detailed consideration to the reforms proposed, including through consultation with relevant stakeholders and the general public. The select committee was chaired by the Hon. Ms Franks and I was pleased to be a member of that committee, along with my former colleague Dr Richard Harvey, the former member for Newland, and the Hon. Dr Susan Close, member for Port Adelaide and now Minister for Climate, Environment and Water.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders who engaged during the committee and hearing process. Your contributions have ensured that the recommendations that were made by the committee were relevant to industry and community expectations and had input from the organisations and interest groups that would be most impacted by the proposed reforms.

I note that the version of the bill before this council adopts most of the recommendations of the committee, which were endorsed by all members of the select committee, including the now minister herself, the member for Port Adelaide, who is apparently no longer supporting the bill, which, can I say, is an absolute shame.

The bill achieves a number of sensible outcomes, including the requirement for rescue and rehoming organisations that meet the definition of a prescribed organisation to maintain a licence to operate, along with an endorsement to operate as a rehoming facility. I wish to emphasise that the definition of a 'prescribed organisation' that is set out in this bill includes the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and a person or body who holds a licence under the Collections for Charitable Purposes Act 1939 and collects money, property or bequests for the purposes of providing welfare services to animals. This definition does not apply to local government bodies or veterinary practices or pet shops.

The requirement for prescribed organisations to maintain the licence and associated endorsements will provide authorities with appropriate oversight to ensure that rescue and rehoming organisations, including their premises and facilities, meet an appropriate standard. The bill also creates the ability for inspectors or veterinary surgeons to apply to the Magistrates Court for animal cruelty intervention orders, which will ultimately lead to improved enforcement of animal welfare standards in South Australia.

However, the opposition has some minor concerns with some of the clauses of the bill. The proposed section 15F of the bill establishes a code of practice which addresses a number of provisions, including in relation to euthanasia of dogs and cats, permanent sheltering of dogs and cats, criteria determining the suitability of dogs and cats for rehoming, and minimum standards of care. Those rehoming and rehoming organisations that meet the definition of a prescribed organisation will be required to comply with a code of practice. But the provisions of the code of practice will also be relevant to the veterinary industry, which will be required to comply with the code of practice during the administration of euthanasia of a dog or cat.

Whilst the bill requires that the prescribed organisations be consulted with the minister adopting the code of practice, the bill does not expressly require that consultation occur with the veterinary industry, which the opposition considers to be important and appropriate, given that they will be required to comply with the code having regard to the provisions of the proposed section 15M, which relates to euthanasia of dogs and cats by prescribed organisations. In addition to this, the opposition is concerned that the provisions of the proposed section 15M, as they relate to euthanasia of dogs and cats and how it is performed, is overly prescriptive and onerous on the veterinary industry.

Finally, the bill contains a clause which requires Greyhound Racing SA Limited to provide an annual report to the minister responsible for the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, with specific

information relating to greyhounds. Whilst the opposition is supportive of appropriate transparency and accountability, it is difficult to see what may be gained by the disclosure of some of this information, such as the approximate number of unregistered greyhounds destroyed in the relevant financial year, so we will also be moving amendments in regard to that clause. These concerns will be elaborated on during the committee stage, and I look forward to working through those with the council in due course.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (17:47): I would like to thank those who have made a contribution this evening: the Hon. Connie Bonaros, the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, the Hon. Sarah Game and the Hon. Justin Hanson. I also echo the words of the Hon. Nicola Centofanti in thanking Mia Aukland from the PAW Project for her longstanding, indeed decade-long work on these particular issues.

This bill has been a long time in the making and, in fact, this is the third iteration. It comes here to us after a joint house committee of the parliament in the last parliament went for over a year. It took 18 submissions and had 25 witnesses and was not the Greens bill by the end of it but a compromise consensus bill that was agreed to by Labor, Liberal and the Greens. The bill that I brought forward was the recommendations of that committee.

The bill looks to ensure that we lift the standards, set the standards for shelters and rescues in this state, that we see transparency in the euthanasia of cats and dogs—and greyhounds—but it also has some other measures in there around transparency and reporting that were requested by the RSPCA, that they are still waiting on, years after they first requested them. There are other minor issues in this area that really are kicked down the road. We keep kicking the can down the road on these issues. It is difficult as a private member to work collaboratively and bring something forward without the transparency that we are seeking in this industry to be also reflected in the members in this place.

I would say that it has been a revelation to read the review of the Dog and Cat Management Act that was tabled earlier on today, and I have been making notes ever since question time. Suddenly, some things are becoming clearer, but I will remind members that when I introduced this bill I noted in the second reading explanation that I had already had animal welfare advocates contact me because 'they had sought to make submissions to this long-awaited and anticipated Dog and Cat Management Act in review' but they had not been able to find hide nor hair (to make a pun) of information as to how to make a submission, how they could participate and how they could have input into this very important area. I have to say that reading the review it is quite clear they were unable to.

I find this an extraordinary set of affairs. I note that the review of the Dog and Cat Management Board was due by December last year and has finally made its way to the parliament but has not been out for community consultation. However, it did look at this particular issue, but it looked at it with only certain stakeholders allowed to make a contribution and others silenced by a lack of their inclusion. I find that an extraordinary state of affairs, and I think that is how we arrive to the position we are at right now with this bill.

I look forward to continuing debate on this particular bill. I will invite members who have questions at clause 1 to put them on the record, and I will take them on notice and bring back answers in a future sitting week. I indicate that I support the amendments that have been circulated by the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, one of which was simply a clerical error that got lost in translation from the report and the other is an incredibly useful contribution of including the AVA—the Australian Veterinary Association—within the prescribed organisations.

In the spirit of compromise, I am happy to work collaboratively with any member on this very important reform, which was literally first mooted in 2017 and has been advocated and supported by many in the community who made contributions to the joint committee; who were not heard in the review, the recommendations of which we have just seen today in the Dog and Cat Management Act report; and who may well be heard in the animal welfare review that is currently ongoing but is due to close its submissions in March. In fact, that is not that far away; one should imagine we will be able to progress this debate come April.

With that, I commend the bill to the council and note that should it get past the second reading stage I welcome questions at clause 1 of the committee stage, but then we will be reporting progress.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Chair, I had something that I meant to say in my second reading summary, which was that I take on note the issue raised by the Hon. Connie Bonaros but also raised by the Law Society. I had expected, in fact, the government to come forward with that amendment with regard to clarity around the definition. I undertake that I will bring forward that amendment myself the next time we debate this bill.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: I thank the honourable member for that clarification. Just to confirm, will that include—I think there were two issues the Law Society raised, so perhaps the amendment plus any clarification around the further issue that they have raised. I am hoping that when we come back to deal with this the member might also be able to elaborate on the review process that we have touched on in terms of the Dog and Cat Management Act and the detail or lack thereof of the consultation process that she alluded to in her summation of the bill.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: I thank the Hon. Connie Bonaros for that particular question. Just note that I do not have a list of those who have made a contribution to the Dog and Cat Management Act 2022 review. I can see from the summary that some groups have been called stakeholders and consulted, but I also am going to hazard a guess that there are quite a few who made contributions to the joint committee who were not consulted in this particular document. I would ask the government if they could provide a list of the stakeholders that were consulted as part of the 2022 Review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995: Final Report—whether that could be made public. That would be very useful to all in this place.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: I echo the honourable member's request in relation to that group because that will certainly help inform the progress of this debate.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: I also rise to indicate my support for that request.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

Sitting suspended from 17:56 to 19:45.

Motions

STRANGERS GALLERY RENAMING

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. E.S. Bourke:

That the Strangers Gallery be renamed as the 'Public Gallery'.

(Continued from 8 February 2023.)

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (19:46): I rise to speak in relation to the motion to rename the Strangers Gallery. I thank the Hon. Emily Bourke for bringing this motion to the chamber. It is an idea born out of observations from students at Prospect Primary School during a visit to this chamber and to the House of Assembly. Our system of government was born of the Westminster system, which is steeped in tradition and custom.

It is important to acknowledge and be educated as to the origin of the term Strangers Gallery. The name 'stranger' was the term used for anyone in the UK parliament who was not a member of either the House of Commons or the House of Lords. It is not born from offensive origins. By convention, visitors to the House of Commons were referred to as strangers. This word has been used in other parts of the Palace of Westminster, such as the Strangers Gallery, Strangers Dining Room and the Strangers Bar. It is not dissimilar to this place.

The earliest reference to a stranger in the Commons journal appears to be on 13 February 1575. Nonetheless, I can understand the intentions of the students to ensure that this chamber is an inviting place. Whilst we can seek to modernise, I would perhaps suggest to the government that there are so many issues, and serious issues, that our state is currently facing at

the moment—things that significantly impact South Australians, things like the rising costs of living, the lack of cheap reliable power, the educational standards in our school, and let's not forget our health system.

Remember that South Australians were asked to vote like their life depended on it, only to see ramping experience a 98 per cent worsening in Labor's first 10 months of government. I would suggest that, perhaps if the government put as much effort into fixing these issues as they have to changing the name of our chamber's gallery, their ramping and hospital wait time statistics would be looking much better.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the young students of Prospect Primary School on their determination and action to achieve the renaming of both chambers in this place. Given this has already passed in the lower house, we see no need to create confusion, and the opposition will not oppose the motion.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (19:48): I rise to speak in favour of this motion on behalf of the Greens. As the honourable Leader of the Opposition has noted, many of the traditions in this place serve us well, are important and worth maintaining, but it is also important that we evolve as an institution. The students have rightly identified that the term 'stranger' is quite alienating in terms of its use here within the parliament.

This is a very, very simple change we can make that demonstrates that the parliament is, in fact, open to the whole community and accessible to the whole community. It is possible to have discussions around simple changes to standing orders whilst dealing with the myriad complexities we face here in our state, so I do not think that dealing with this is a distraction from ramping, the cost-of-living crisis or the other important issues we are dealing with here in this parliament.

I would caution the Hon. Ms Bourke though. Late last year, I proposed a very simple change to standing orders when I suggested that we might want to revisit the Lord's Prayer, and the front page of *The Advertiser* in response was, 'Greens ban God'. I am very concerned that the Hon. Ms Bourke may wake up to a headline tomorrow morning that says, 'Bourke bans strangers', so I do warn her she should be prepared for that.

I do think that as a parliament we are able to deal with these issues as well as the myriad other challenges that confront our state. Of course the Greens are supportive of this. It is a commonsense change.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (19:50): I also rise to speak very briefly on behalf of SA-Best on the motion to rename the Strangers Gallery as the Public Gallery, for the reasons that have been outlined by my colleagues and also for the obvious reasons behind the introduction of this motion.

I am told the word 'stranger' is derived from the old French word 'estrangier', meaning foreign or alien. As we know, in Westminster parliaments the word 'stranger' has traditionally been used to refer to a person who is neither a member of parliament or a member of staff—we do have tickets on ourselves in this place, don't we? The word does not convey inclusiveness, something primary school students who visited Parliament House last year were very quick to point out.

This parliament is not the first one to make the change. As we have heard, in 2004 the federal parliament led the way, replacing the word with 'visitor' via a revision of its standing orders. The Strangers Gallery in the UK House of Commons was renamed the Visitors Gallery in 2016.

As an aside, and something about which I was just having a side conversation with my colleague, and that has just been mentioned, we do have the Strangers Bar and the Strangers Dining Room. I know they are not up for change, but I really hope we take this opportunity to fix the grammatical error that exists on one of those signs. I have a real issue with apostrophes that are used in the wrong spot, and I can tell you there is one there and it drives me spare every time I visit. It would be nice if we could address the issue of the misplaced apostrophe that exists—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. C. BONAROS: There is a misplaced apostrophe. I see it every time. That aside, the only other thing I have to say about that is that no doubt it can also be a very strange place to visit, but I think that has more to do with its diners than its name. With those brief words, we welcome

the change the Hon. Ms Bourke has moved, and thank those students who advocated for this change. We look forward to many more schoolchildren visiting our Public Gallery—perhaps we could also take them down to visit the Strangers Bar and the Strangers Dining Room while they are here.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Bonaros, before you finish your remarks you might want to correct the record or inform me where the Strangers Bar is; I have been here for 21 years and I have not found it.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Was it the bar? It is the Members Bar—I apologise.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. I thought I was missing something.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: There may very well be a Strangers Bar tucked away somewhere in this building, Lord only knows; there are all sorts of things tucked away in this building. Anyway, I apologise and stand corrected; we are talking about the Members Bar and the Strangers Dining Room. With those words, I commend the mover of this motion and look forward to its passage.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (19:54): I will not take up much of the time of the chamber; I would not want to waste anyone's time on the opposition benches. I just want to thank everyone who is supporting this motion: the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, the Hon. Robert Simms, and the Hon. Connie Bonaros. I am not sure if the Hon. Nicola Centofanti is supporting it or opposing it.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti: I am not opposing it.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE: Not opposing it—really strong words over there by leadership.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti: I learn from the best.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE: I do not want to make politics of this. It is very unusual for me that I do not want to make politics of this. From the very beginning, this could have been a much stronger motion, but what I was seeking to do was to try to get the support of the chamber, because sometimes we need to do things that are bigger than politics. If we can engage one child, one student, one person who has never set foot in this parliament before and they feel like they are welcomed, that they can make change simply by advocating and being part of democracy, that is a big win.

When we have people into this parliament and when they walk past our parliament and they see it as their home and can feel like they have participated in part of this home, I think it is a big win for us as politicians. It is really important to be able to achieve this, because it sends an important message to every future school student who comes through the doors of this parliament, every future adult, teenager or whoever, that you can change this parliament and you can change it for the better.

We have seen that multiple times, with the flags, the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag in the lower house, and we are hopefully going to see it in this chamber. We have seen in the lower house chamber that when you do the right thing and advocate, campaign, lobby your local MPs, you can make change. Thank you to everyone who has supported it or not supported it. I look forward to not seeing the Strangers sign up there anymore.

Motion carried.

GIG ECONOMY

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. I. Pnevmatikos:

1. That a select committee of the Legislative Council be established to inquire into and report on the gig economy with particular reference to:
 - (a) the prevalence of gig economy work within South Australia;
 - (b) the various forms of gig economy work;
 - (c) the current legislative and regulatory regime and the extent of compliance within that regime;
 - (d) the impacts of the gig economy on workers inside and outside of the gig economy and the impact of gig economy work on families, communities and businesses;
 - (e) the individual, business, community and statewide economic impacts of the gig economy;

- (f) the impact of the prevalence and practices of the gig economy in relation to government procurement and expenditure;
 - (g) the intersection of slavery and slavery-like practices;
 - (h) current supports available to workers and employers;
 - (i) other jurisdictions' legislative, regulatory and policy solutions to address issues within the gig economy;
 - (j) the implications of the gig economy in respect of compliance with treaties and obligations;
 - (k) legislative, regulatory and policy and legislative implications in South Australia; and
 - (l) any other related matter.
2. 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.

(Continued from 30 November 2022.)

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (19:56): I rise to speak briefly on behalf of the Greens today in support of this motion. I thank the Hon. Irene Pnevmatikos for bringing this important issue to our attention. The popular perception of digitised irregular work, or gigs, applies to many different kinds of potential work across a range of industries and involves many types of business. Put simply, it is an imprecise concept.

Despite the wide variety of situations and terminology, several key features typify most forms of gig work. Gig workers typically face irregular work schedules, driven by fluctuations of demand for their services. In most positions, the worker provides almost all of the equipment used directly for their role, from a bicycle or a car for food delivery to more complex and expensive transportation or computing equipment in other jobs. Many gig workers also provide their own place of work, at home or elsewhere.

Most gig jobs are compensated on a piecework basis, with payment defined according to specific tasks rather than unit of time worked. Additionally, gig jobs are usually understood to be organised around some form of digital mediation, including web-based platforms. We continue to hear more stories about the impacts of the gig economy as it proliferates across the country and across the world. Dr Caleb Goods, Senior Lecturer in Management and Organisations at the University of Western Australia Business School said:

People are attracted to gig work because of its positive attributes such as low barriers to entry and flexible time commitments.

However, the pandemic shed light on the precarious conditions of gig economy workers. With cost-of-living pressures, including rising rents and mortgage payments, food and medical appointments, these additional sources of income are crucial to the wellbeing of so many South Australians.

Nevertheless, the growth of gig work also represents a new frontier in industrial relations disputes. Recent decisions in courts around the world have shown the divergence of opinion relating to the classification of gig workers. Australia's Fair Work Commission concluded that they are not employees and that they fall under the independent contractor model. In 2021, the UK Supreme Court declared them employees and a Dutch judge ruled that Uber drivers should be classified as employees and entitled to the benefits of that status. Across the other side of the globe, in Florida, legislation confirmed that Uber drivers are independent contractors. This is clearly a complex issue that does need further review.

This classification by the Fair Work Commission defining gig workers as 'contractors' means, because they are not employed on a formal basis, these workers are excluded from Australia's national employment system and, as such, they do not receive superannuation, comprehensive occupational health and safety coverage or minimum pay.

In a case settled out of court involving an Adelaide Uber Eats food delivery driver, we see the need to provide basic employment rights to gig workers. Ms Amita Gupta and her partner made 2,200 deliveries for Uber Eats over 18 months. In one week, the couple worked for 96 hours and

earned just \$300. When she was then 10 minutes late in delivering an order, Uber Eats cut off her access to its delivery app. Uber decided to pay Ms Gupta \$400,000 rather than risk having its legion of low-paid workers being classed as employees by a court.

Gig workers highlight underlying problems concerning how our nation regulates work and ascribes economic security to standard forms of work that are clearly not standard. Associate Professor Marinella Marmo from Flinders University's College of Business says the 'out of court settlement hinged on two key mechanisms of "algorithm control" taking responsibility from the company, and a popular narrative of worker autonomy and choice'. Inadequate legal reforms, limited power of unions and absence of other safeguards covering this new-economy industry continues to disadvantage gig workers and reinforce the powers of companies operating in such precarious, casual labour markets.

As we come out of this global pandemic, we need to address these issues urgently. We have a duty to South Australians to ensure their wellbeing as well as their working rights and interests are protected. With the establishment of this select committee, we can effectively address these issues. Without adjusting and strengthening labour regulations and safety nets to reflect the new practices of the gig economy, we will set back the prospect of an all-inclusive and fair labour market. The Greens look forward to supporting this inquiry. With that, I commend the mover for bringing this issue to the parliament, and I commend the motion.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (20:01): I rise to speak on this motion brought to the chamber by the Hon. Irene Pnevmatikos and indicate that I am the lead speaker for the opposition. I also indicate that the opposition supports the passing of this motion to establish a select committee in this place to inquire and report on the prevalence of the gig economy in South Australia.

The gig economy, also called platform economy, share economy and on-demand work, is a relatively new term but not a new concept—freelancing and doing odd jobs, sometimes helping a neighbour in need; the concept has always been around. But these days, with everyone having a phone in their pocket, help is a button away.

Safe Work Australia reported in 2021 that the gig economy is only growing, with more than 100 platforms operating in Australia. This explosion in apps drove Safe Work Australia to publish a fact sheet explaining workers compensation and its relevance to the gig economy. They can assist with anything from getting a lift in a car via an Uber, Ola or DiDi to having food, groceries or coffee delivered from your favourite shops at a time most convenient to you and your hunger pains, or Hire A Hubby, Airtasker and Freelancer-style platforms and apps that can bring friendly help or a tool to your house for assistance with jobs around the house, or help with graphic design, administration or crowdsourcing ideas.

The gig economy can fill a gap for some shops, both small and big, that do not have a delivery service, from your local chicken shop to McDonald's. There is seemingly no limit to the food services available to Uber, Uber Eats, Hungry Panda and Doordash, just as a few examples. Probably the most popular one that everyone seems to know is Uber. It has been around in some form in South Australia since 2014. When it started in South Australia, it ran into the great roadblock that is Tom Koutsantonis in the other place.

The gig economy can work in different ways for different people. For some, they use it to supplement their income, using their spare time to make money with all the tools ready at their disposal. It might fit in with a young person, driving while fitting around their uni timetable. For others, doing home-based or office-based work, it might fit around school pickup and drop-off and it could be done after the kids go to bed.

Hand in hand with some of these amazing opportunities there are some downsides, which are probably more likely the motivation for the motion before us. The exploitation of workers—who have to use their own car for example and maintain it—for an irregular income can be challenging, especially if that is the only income that person is relying on, and by its very nature it is not regular.

Another concern is liability for workers compensation, and the debate between employee and contractor will no doubt be teased out in the select committee. As the honourable member has noted in bringing this motion to the chamber, the Fair Work Ombudsman provides some guidance to

determine whether someone can be classified as an independent contractor where additional challenges and regulations may be faced.

Again, as the honourable member pointed out in her contribution on the motion, the gig economy is here to stay. I think a select committee is the right place to address and work through concerns that we as legislators have. I look forward to the passing of this motion.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (20:05): I rise on behalf of SA-Best to speak in support of the motion of the Hon. Irene Pnevmatikos to establish this select committee. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the words 'gig economy' are defined as:

A way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separate pieces of work, each paid separately, rather than working for an employer.

In Australia, we generally associate it with transport company Uber and food delivery services such as Uber Eats and Menulog, amongst myriad other sorts of work that have been highlighted by other honourable members.

Who does not like to order a meal or transport with the swipe of an app on their phone? I have to say for the record, I do not. I do not like it, but notwithstanding my personal dislikes of Uber Eats and Menulog and whatever else comes delivered in a paper bag, convenience is a driving force and the main reason demand has gone through the roof in recent times.

In the four years to 2019, the Australian gig economy grew ninefold to \$6.3 billion according to the Actuaries Institute. With cost-of-living pressures on the rise, it is likely more and more people will be looking to supplement their income with this type of work. While there are obvious short-term benefits for people who work in the gig economy, including that flexibility and low barriers to entry, the longer term risks, as we know, are very significant. Those risks are overwhelmingly borne by vulnerable groups, such as young workers and students, as well as people with language barriers and newly-arrived migrants.

Gig economy workers are generally not paid super, as we know. They also have no entitlement to a minimum wage, sick leave, other sorts of leave and workers compensation insurance. This is clearly an area of industrial relations that requires urgent attention and scrutiny, especially given some of the more recent decisions and judgements that have been handed down by those who have made claims against their 'employers'.

We from SA-Best certainly commend the Hon. Irene Pnevmatikos for her ongoing work in this area, including her prior committee on wage theft, slave labour and labour hire, something I know she is extremely passionate about, and for seeking to now establish this important committee that will follow on, I think, quite neatly from the work that this parliament has done previously on those issues.

I do not think any of us should be under any illusion just how much that wage theft inquiry helped shine a light on some of the unacceptable workplace practices that have come to our attention as a result of that very important committee process. For that, we commend the member and support the motion wholeheartedly.

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (20:09): I would like to thank the Hon. Heidi Girolamo, the Hon. Tammy Franks and the Hon. Connie Bonaros for their contributions. I anticipate, based on their comments, that the establishment of this committee will be supported and I look forward to the work that we have ahead of us. Some of it is uncharted, but I undertake to promise that we will not be exploring the activities and usage of the gig economy that individual members may have.

Motion carried.

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS: I move:

That the select committee consist of the Hon. Reggie Martin, the Hon. Laura Henderson, the Hon. Heidi Girolamo, the Hon. Rob Simms and the mover.

Motion carried.

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS: I move:

That the select committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from place to place and to report on Wednesday 28 June 2023.

Motion carried.

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF MOUNT REMARKABLE BY-LAWS

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (20:11): By leave, I move my motion in an amended form:

That by-law No. 4 of the District Council of Mount Remarkable concerning local government land, under the Local Government Act 1999, made on 19 April 2022 and laid on the table of this council on 17 May 2022, be disallowed.

This disallowance motion has been made by the Legislative Review Committee in its deliberations of that by-law.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF MOUNT REMARKABLE BY-LAWS

Orders of the Day, Private Business, No. 72: Hon. I. Pnevmatikos to move:

That by-law No. 6 of the District Council of Mount Remarkable concerning cats, made under the Local Government Act 1999 and the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 on 19 April 2022 and laid on the table of this council on 3 May 2022, be disallowed.

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (20:13): I move:

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried; order of the day discharged.

LEGALISATION OF CANNABIS

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. T.A. Franks:

1. That, in the opinion of this council, a joint committee be appointed to inquire into and report on—
 - (a) the potential impact of legalisation of cannabis in South Australia for adult use with reference to legal frameworks and approaches in other jurisdictions including implications for justice, health and the economy; and
 - (b) any other related matter.
2. That, in the event of a joint committee being appointed, the Legislative Council be represented thereon by three members, of whom two shall form a quorum of council members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.
3. That members of the committee may participate in the proceedings by way of telephone or videoconference or other electronic means and shall be deemed to be present and counted for purposes of a quorum, subject to such means of participation remaining effective and not disadvantaging any member.
4. That this council permits the joint committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it thinks fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being reported to the council.
5. That a message be sent to the House of Assembly transmitting the foregoing resolution and requesting its concurrence thereto.

(Continued from 19 October 2022.)

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (20:13): I rise in support of this motion from the Hon. Ms Franks. The Narcotic Drugs Legislation Amendment Act 2016 was introduced to the House of Representatives on 10 February 2016 by the then federal Minister for Health, Ms Sussan Ley. The amendment paved the way for the federal legislation on medicinal cannabis and was supported by the Coalition.

The former Liberal government committed to ensuring South Australian consumers had access to various treatments and services to promote the best health outcomes. The Marshall Liberal government launched a trial of access to CBD (cannabidiol) for paediatric patients with certain severe forms of epilepsy that have not responded to established treatments.

Throughout our term in government, and even recently, the Liberal team has supported multiple motions in support of medicinal cannabis. The South Australian Liberal team is open to understanding the facts and creating pathways for better legislation surrounding medicinal cannabis in South Australia. A joint committee dedicated to cannabis legislation will serve as an opportunity to better understand medicinal cannabis usage and allow the parliament to make well-informed, evidence-based decisions regarding medicinal cannabis moving forward.

Changes to cannabis legislation in recent years, especially regarding decriminalisation and medical usage, have revealed the review of cannabis legislation is both necessary and beneficial, and has positive outcomes for South Australians, so we look forward to taking part in the committee, and thank the Hon. Ms Franks for moving the motion.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (20:15): I wish to move an amendment to the proposal from the Hon. Ms Franks. I move to amend paragraph 1(a) as follows:

Leave out 'The potential impact of legalisation of cannabis in South Australia for adult use' and insert 'The legalisation of medicinal cannabis in South Australia'

The Hon. C. BONAROS (20:16): I rise to speak in support of the motion in its amended form, I believe.

The Hon. R.A. Simms: I don't know. I didn't even speak to my amendment.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Are you speaking to it, Mr Simms?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. C. BONAROS: I will just keep going. I rise to speak in support of the motion, regardless of whether it is in an amended form or not. I can speak to it in an unamended form if you like, because I have that speech in front of me, but I can speak to it also in an amended form. But, if we are speaking generally about cannabis then quite seriously I do believe that there are grounds for an inquiry in this jurisdiction.

It is of course a divisive and ongoing issue, and therefore I think there is merit in assessing what a regulatory framework could look like in the broadscale legislation of cannabis. Certainly, we have not had the discussion in this place about any potential positive impacts that this could have (a) on the reduction of criminal activity associated with unlawful sale of cannabis, but (b) in relation to issues of harm minimisation, treating cannabis—the Greens would be shocked to hear this come from my mouth—as a public health issue as opposed to a criminal issue.

The Hon. R.A. Simms: Hear, hear!

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Hear, hear! These are all, I think, very valid things that ought to be considered appropriately by this parliament. They are valid because they are always the subject of very divisive discussions amongst members of this place regardless of what position you ultimately take, so I think the broad scale of the committee remit would serve us well in fact, even if it were not amended.

I actually hope that even in an amended form there is scope still to look at that question of cannabis decriminalisation and legislation models from a variety of jurisdictions to assess and to inform ourselves of their merits or otherwise when it comes to harm minimisation or otherwise. These are what we do when we have open minds.

There are jurisdictional examples, I think, around the world, which provide regulatory insights into societal impacts the legalisation of cannabis has in various areas such as criminal justice, and health and wellbeing in particular. I will allude to the state of Colorado in the US, which is a notable example given the successes they say they have had as the first state in the US to implement a regulatory framework around the decriminalisation of cannabis.

There has been a significant financial benefit—obviously that is to be expected—which has collected, I think, to date an estimated \$1.6 billion in cannabis tax and fee revenues over the past six years, of which a significant portion is distributed to the state's education funding for construction and maintenance.

I understand 90 per cent of the cannabis market in that jurisdiction is supplied under strict regulation, which has led to the lowest level of cannabis seizures by border control and significant reduction in the value of illegally imported cannabis by millions. The legislation of cannabis in Colorado and indeed other jurisdictions around the world places control of the commercial cannabis market in the hands of the government. I do not know if that makes me feel any more confident, quite frankly, but perhaps more confident than in the hands of criminal organisations and organised crime.

I have spoken many times in this place about our position when it comes to dangerous drugs. They continue to be an issue that divides our community, and certainly the issue of legislation or decriminalisation around cannabis is a topic which divides public opinion as well. I think it is worth mentioning that in the past I have spoken at length about the need to have a coexistence between medicinal cannabis and illicit use and recognise that there is a very valid place, in my view—and in fact that is our position—for medicinal cannabis use, including cannabis oil and THC. This proposed committee will obviously be exploring those.

I have made it abundantly clear that it is our strong position and view that we cannot continue to allow terminally ill patients to suffer unnecessarily by restricting access to medicinal cannabis and medicinal cannabis-based treatment options, especially in circumstances where there is evidence-based medical research supporting these treatments.

We have made it clear when the Hon. Tammy Franks introduced her medicinal cannabis bill—and I note that just earlier today there was a subsequent medicinal cannabis bill introduced and I am not sure if they are based on the same model—that when we introduced our tough drug-driving laws in this place, it was our intention certainly from where SA-Best sits that those laws would coexist with subsequent medicinal cannabis legislation which would provide exemptions for individuals who have a prescription for medicinal cannabis.

That would be treated in precisely the same way that any other prescription drug is treated, because we know that each and every day individuals do operate vehicles and they do so with prescription medication in their systems. Regardless of whether it is medicinal cannabis or some other prescription, if your driving is impacted by whatever prescription it is that you are in possession of and have taken, then the police obviously still have the powers to charge individuals for offences committed as a result of dangerous driving under the influence of those sorts of medications.

That should not be a deterrent from including medicinal cannabis on the list of prescriptions that should not be subject to what are now very tough drug-driving laws. The benefits to the medicinal use of cannabis, as I have said, are vast. We know the THC in cannabis has pain-relieving properties that can prevent epileptic seizures and slow the progress of debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's and we know that there are a growing number of patients seeking to have access to those.

I do note that just today in a news story the Australian Lawyers Alliance has put out a plea during—I did not know this but it was Australian Medicinal Cannabis Awareness Week—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Yes, there we go—the inaugural Australian Medicinal Cannabis Awareness Week. They have said that our laws simply have not kept pace with the increasing use of legal medicinal cannabis in Australia and law reform is urgently needed:

There are several laws and regulations in place that make it difficult for people to use medicinal cannabis to treat their pain.

That is a quote by Mr Greg Barns SC, spokesperson for the ALA, and he continues:

Some of the most concerning are the drug driving laws in place in most Australian states and territories.

The current laws are simply unfair because they make it illegal to have any trace of cannabis in your system even if you have taken cannabis legally with a prescription and your driving is not impaired. Tasmania is currently the only state in which the use of legally prescribed cannabis can be used as a defence against a drug driving charge.

I want to point out again for the record that that is something we proposed from this side of the benches. It was always our intention. I think I made that clear at the time, and going forward, that this is an area that we have been looking forward to seeing amended so that we do not have the

same rules apply to medicinal cannabis as to other illegal or illicit drugs that are consumed by people who are on our roads.

Lastly, I want to note that, as of August 2021, the TGA has approved access to more than 150,000 medicinal cannabis products through the Special Access Scheme. That is a growing number, which is great, so clearly the momentum is building in this space. It has been tricky. I worked in the Senate when these things were first debated, and we had a lot of very divisive and heated discussions around that scheme. Individuals have contacted me over the years and said how difficult it is to even find a doctor who would prescribe those, so there is a very clear need to educate our medical professionals, I suppose, and normalise that.

Among international jurisdictions, the committee will, I expect, reference a domestic look at the ACT for an active example of legislation of cannabis reform in the House of Assembly passing laws legalising the possession, use and cultivation of small amounts of cannabis. While albeit still a prohibited substance under the commonwealth law, when it comes to the decriminalisation of cannabis more generally, there is, as I have said, a fine line that must be walked.

I also note for the record that just the other day, I think it was yesterday or today, New South Wales passed legislation that is effectively based on a three-strike rule. If you are caught once with small quantities—and indeed it goes beyond cannabis—then that is strike 1. If you are caught twice, that is obviously strike 2; and then there is obviously the last strike, which is strike 3. If you are caught three times in possession of a drug, then it is only on the third occasion now that you will actually be charged with possession of that drug.

That is a very new development, courtesy of *The Morning Show* that I watched this morning before work. I think that is something that probably the committee would want to also explore in terms of what is happening in New South Wales. With those words, I indicate our support for the committee.

The PRESIDENT: Just before I call the Hon. Mr Hanson, standing order 175 states that a member who has spoken may be again heard. The Hon. Mr Simms, would you like to explain your amendment? We sort of got cut off at the pass there.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (20:28): Yes, thank you, Mr President. I would welcome the opportunity to explain the rationale for the amendment that I have moved on behalf of the Greens. The Greens are seeking to move this amendment to change the focus of this inquiry to medicinal cannabis. While medicinal cannabis has been legalised in South Australia since 2016, the Greens recognise that there are still some significant challenges faced by both constituents and prescribing doctors when it comes to the accessibility of this medication under legislation.

The recent announcement by the Malinauskas government regarding the loss of licence for drivers who test positive for prescribed drugs, which the Hon. Connie Bonaros has alluded to, provides further impetus for such an inquiry. It is the view of the Greens that this would be a worthy use of the parliament's time in terms of examining the potential implications, and it is for that reason that we have chosen to narrow the inquiry proposed by the Hon. Tammy Franks.

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (20:29): I rise on behalf of the government to indicate our support for the motion with the amendments foreshadowed by the Hon. Tammy Franks and the Hon. Robert Simms. Medicinal cannabis is already legal Australia, including in the state of South Australia, as a result of amendments made to federal legislation in November 2016. Medicinal cannabis is now regulated under the Narcotic Drugs Act of the commonwealth, overseen by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Office of Drug Control. However, there are also state-level regulations under the Controlled Substances Act 1984.

We therefore expect that this committee will examine a wide range of issues across both state and commonwealth levels. We look forward to examination of the work of other Australian jurisdictions on this issue. The government supports an inquiry into this important issue, and we thank the Hon. Tammy Franks for her advocacy on this matter. We look forward to taking part in the joint committee.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (20:30): I would like to thank the Hon. Nicola Centofanti, the Hon. Justin Hanson, the Hon. Connie Bonaros and the Hon. Robert Simms for their contributions and, indeed, support. I will touch on the fact that we have amended the motion to focus on medicinal

cannabis. And this is the inaugural Medicinal Cannabis Awareness Week for Australia; in fact, you can read all about it in *The Senior* magazine.

I shall refer to that, noting that in that magazine they have a profile piece on Lucy Haslam, who now heads an organisation called United in Compassion. She came to this issue and came to prominence because her son Dan was in significant pain, dealing with his cancer. His father, Lucy's husband, a former drug cop, sourced illegal cannabis in the town of Tamworth to assist him. The town of Tamworth, through their support of that family, educated and informed themselves and created a movement that actually then got Premier Mike Baird on board and in fact turned things around in the country.

So often that law that people have referred to where we legalised medicinal cannabis in this country back in 2016 is called Dan's Law. However, I will note that the hashtag #FixDansLaw continues to be as relevant today as it was back in 2017. There are still issues with the way we went about legalising medicinal cannabis.

Last year, the number of those prescribed medicinal cannabis doubled in a year, and we expect it to be some 670,000 patients in Australia by the year 2030, which is not that far away. One in 10 doctors prescribe; however, 80 per cent of patients think that all doctors should be able to prescribe. We know there is lacking education, not just in the community but within the medical profession as well. It is no surprise that they were not necessarily trained in this, given it was an illicit substance.

We also know that the majority of those patients with those legal prescriptions are sourcing black market medication, so we continue to see patients criminalised through the lack of availability and lack of affordability, and, of course, with the recent drug-driving announcements and the ongoing drug-driving laws, the lack of adaptation of our laws to reflect the legality of a medicine continues to criminalise patients.

There is much to learn. This is an issue. I note that, when I moved the original motion, a motion was moved in the other place that very same week by the member for Mount Gambier, who has a long history and passion for this cause, and there was unanimous support in the other place in support of recognising that we have far more to do on medicinal cannabis but also the important role it has played in these last six years.

I look forward to a constructive, productive and collegial joint committee. I think I will never get over that particular pun, but we have serious work ahead—

The Hon. R.P. Wortley: It's played an important role.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: It has played an important role, indeed. But it is a really important issue to so many thousands of people in our nation. We have a fiction of a law that we have told them will now serve them that does not serve them. It is a broken law. We need to fix Dan's Law, and I hope that this committee will go a long way to doing that as well as addressing the myriad other issues that face us with access and affordability and availability and information and destigmatisation of medicinal cannabis, but also the opportunity for our state to perhaps support an industry that is helping people to live better lives. With that, I commend the motion.

Amendment carried; motion as amended carried.

DISTRICT COUNCIL OF FRANKLIN HARBOUR BY-LAWS

Orders of the Day, Private Business, No. 77: Hon. C. Bonaros to move:

That by-law No.2 of the District Council of Franklin Harbour concerning local government land, made under the Local Government Act 1999 on 9 February 2022 and laid on the table of this council on 3 May 2022, be disallowed.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (20:35): I move:

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried; order of the day discharged.

THE FLINDERS RANGES COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Orders of the Day, Private Business, No 79: Hon. C. Bonaros to move:

That by-law No. 2 of The Flinders Ranges Council concerning local government land, made under the Local Government Act 1999 on 15 February 2022 and laid on the table of this council on 3 May 2022, be disallowed.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (20:36): I move:

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried; order of the day discharged.

TRADE OFFICES

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (20:36): I move:

That this council acknowledges:

1. The importance of trade and exports to the South Australian economy and in driving future economic growth;
2. The significant export training and diversification programs run by the Marshall Liberal government;
3. The establishment of a trade office network across the world, in key export markets;
4. The crucial role that the regions play in South Australia's economy and growing exports; and
5. South Australia's global reputation as a safe and reliable producer of premium goods and service exports, particularly food and wine.

We know we are seeing economic growth across some sectors but we also know that will not last as this 'do nothing' government is in power. In the latest merchandise export statistics from the ABS, it is stated that South Australia is on the tear, recording a record \$16.4 billion in this 12 months to December 2022.

That figure has never been seen in South Australia before. These record exports are as a result of the Marshall Liberal government setting up this state for success. Despite several headwinds, such as bushfires on Kangaroo Island and the—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: Because you have not done anything.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Ms Girolamo, do not respond to interjections. The Hon. Mr Wortley, do not interject.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: I would never respond to such interjections.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Hunter, your laughing is out of order.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Girolamo, continue. The Hon. Mr Wortley!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: I was talking at the time about the bushfires on Kangaroo Island and in the Adelaide Hills, trade issues with China and the wine tariff increases. COVID was the biggest handbrake on trade and exports, which occurred in March 2020. The resulting difficulties of trading through COVID cannot be understated.

Flights became unavailable to send goods across the world in a timely manner, and it is a mark of the resilience and perseverance of our producers and manufacturers to continue to export in these tough times. Shipping delays, supply chain interruptions and other knock-on issues made it a very challenging time. But the former Liberal government supported these state producers, manufacturers and exporters.

There were a number of programs designed to scaffold the good hard work of those South Australian companies expanding and selling our goods across the world. The programs that the former Liberal government put into place are now paying great dividends. As I said previously, the record of \$16.4 billion of export in a year has never been seen in this state before.

New record numbers are assisted by several factors: the opening of the borders; the return of international students to Australia; the increase in prices of iron ore, wheat and barley, partially due to the war in Ukraine; and food around the world increasing in price due to inflation. It is the recognition of the extraordinary food bowl that South Australian regions have and the reputation for good, clean, fresh food that has enabled the recovery to happen so quickly.

Just recently, the PIRSA scorecard showed that South Australia's total agricultural revenue had surged by \$2 billion during 2021-22 to \$17.2 billion, showing the success of our state's cropping. This is yet another example of the regions being the engine room of the South Australian economy. We must not be complacent and rest on the good work of the previous government. Sadly, what goes up must come down, and the time that the export market collapses under the government is not a matter of if but when.

My colleagues and I asked numerous questions in this place about the support the government is offering producers and exporters to expand new and emerging markets and were often met with not much. In fact, the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development keeps sprouting lines about programs that were started under the Liberal government in June 2021, only emphasising our point. Compare that to the last financial year of the former Liberal government, when under Minister Patterson—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! You keep going. Minister, enough from you and the leader.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: —with the assistance from funding and grants, nearly 3,500 jobs were created and also attracted over \$700 million worth of investment into the state. The contrast is stark: the Liberal Party understood the role that trade and exports had in this state. We are a long way from the rest of the world, but we have world-beating produce and products that the world wants.

In our time in government, we created new funding initiatives and grant programs that supported more than 140 South Australian businesses to become exporters and enter new markets, diversifying our economy and bringing income to our state. Why is this good work not continuing? Why has this government put the cue in the rack and left it to South Australian businesses to go on their own with no support?

One of the many programs introduced by the previous government was the Wine Export Recovery and Expansion Program in response to losing more than \$800 million in wine trade that was expected to go to China. The hole that was left by the substantial increase in tariffs on Australian wine has not been filled and yet the government saw fit to close this program. Labor went to the election with a supposed bipartisan approach to trade and investment in this state, but came to the election with no trade policies and, in one of their first acts of government, cut the Paris trade office that, in the wake of Brexit, would have been South Australia's door to a new dawn of European trade.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: In the main, businesses who are confident and capable simply want government to get out of their way. It is government's role to capacity-build and assist our exporters to get their products to market—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: —smoothing the path and then getting out of the way.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order, the Hon. Mr Hunter!

The Hon. J.E. Hanson: 'You're in the way. Get out of the way. Wait, help me!'

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Hanson, it was a lot quieter before you came back in.

The Hon. J.E. Hanson: I'm not sure it was, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Don't you start.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: The former government knew this and in all its actions, including policies of new trade offices around the world which opened new markets, encouraging direct flights to South Australia. The former government also sought to further diversify our economy, encouraging new industries in such areas as plant protein and the space industry. As I forewarned, it is not a matter of if but when the trade statistics start to creep backwards again, and without the government's support of our businesses, that time will be sooner rather than later.

The Hon. R.P. Wortley: You should sack your speech writer for that.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: We on this side congratulate all those who are working hard every day to drive economic success in South Australia—

The Hon. C.M. Scriven interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: —and all they want is the scaffolding to sustain the success further.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Your own benches are not helping and the government can listen in silence.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: With that, we call on the government to do more to open markets, new industries and to guarantee the continuing of the strong success we have already had.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The sooner we do this, the sooner we can go home. The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The way you are going, you will be going home early, except I will not reward you.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (20:45): I rise—I have been risen for some time—to acknowledge the significance of trade and exports to the South Australian economy and its role in driving future economic growth. Trade and exports are the lifeblood of the South Australian economy, and the Hon. Mr Hanson is nodding his head—he does agree with me. Our state has a rich and diverse mix of industries and resources that can be leveraged to reach global markets. By exporting our goods and services we not only bring in much-needed revenue but we also boost our competitiveness and drive innovation.

The more we export the more opportunities we create for business, both large and small, to grow and thrive. Exporting also attracts investment and creates jobs, which in turn drives economic growth. The expansion of our trade and export activities opens up new markets and diversifies our economy, making us less reliant on one particular market or industry.

Between 2018 and 2022 the Liberal government opened up a significant number of trade offices around the world in key and emerging markets. This held us in great stead when the global pandemic shut down air travel and China increased wine tariffs to levels not seen before, yet South Australia achieved record merchandise exports. In the 12 months to July 2021 we hit \$13.2 billion—the first time we had reached \$13 billion. It was maintained at that level, finishing in the 12 months to April 2022 at \$13.7 billion.

The list of trade offices signed under a Liberal government included Shanghai, China, in 2018; Tokyo, Japan, in March 2019; Houston, Texas, in March 2020; and Singapore, in April 2021. Paris, France, was announced in June 2021, to open mid-2022; however, it was cancelled by Labor

in its first 100 days. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, it is crucial that South Australia remains at the forefront of global trade and commerce.

The Hon. J.E. Hanson interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Hanson!

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: The Hon. Mr Hanson clearly does not agree.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Hanson, interjections are out of order. Just continue, please.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: I am keeping on with my speech.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. Don't acknowledge them.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: By investing in our export capabilities and infrastructure we can ensure that we are well positioned to take advantage of the economic opportunities that lie ahead.

Our regions hit well above their weight on the global stage and drive South Australia's economy and continue to drive and grow the bulk of our exports. South Australia has a global reputation as a safe and reliable producer of premium goods and services, particularly food and wine. South Australia is blessed with a rich and diverse array of regions, each with its own unique strengths and specialties.

Whether it is the fertile farmlands of the Riverland, the lush vineyards of the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale, the rich waters of the Spencer Gulf or the rugged beauty of the outback and stockyards, and our plentiful mineral deposits, the regions of South Australia are integral to our economy and our success as a state.

In particular the regions play a key role in growing exports, especially in the production of premium food and wine. South Australia is renowned the world over for producing some of the finest and most sought after food and wine, and this reputation is built on the hard work and dedication of our regional communities.

I would like to make special mention of the importance of the wine industry, a major contributor to the state's economy. The sector generates jobs, supports local businesses and provides a valuable source of foreign income for South Australia, helping to boost the state's overall economic performance.

The wine industry also has a significant impact on the state's tourism sector, attracting wine lovers from all over the world to visit wineries and taste local wines. It is a vital sector that deserves continued support and investment, including assistance in finding alternative international markets now and into the future. Not only do our regions produce top-quality goods and services but they also provide a safe and reliable source of those exports.

The Hon. R.P. Wortley interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Wortley!

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Our commitment to strict health and safety regulations, sustainable production practices and high-quality standards ensure that South Australia's food and wine exports are amongst the best in the world. I may be biased, but the regions of South Australia are vital to our economy and growing our exports and our global reputation as a safe and reliable producer of premium goods and services, particularly food and wine. Let us continue to support and invest in our regions so that we can build a brighter future for all South Australians.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. C.M. Scriven:

That this council—

1. Notes that 15 October marks the International Day of Rural Women;

2. Recognises the crucial role that women play in ensuring the sustainability of rural workplaces, households and communities, improving rural livelihoods and overall wellbeing;
3. Recognises that women account for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labour force, including informal work, and perform the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work within families and households in rural areas;
4. Notes that emerging female leaders in the agriculture sector are recognised each year nationally in the AgriFuture's Rural Women's Awards, which acknowledge and support the essential role women play in rural industries, businesses and communities;
5. Notes the achievements of 2022 South Australian AgriFuture's Rural Women's Award winner, Robyn Verrall of McCallum. Robyn is a director, founder and mentor of Kere to Country, an Aboriginal owned and operated food supply company, that works to ensure high-quality and affordable meat is available to First Nations communities in South Australia and the Northern Territory; and
6. Also notes the achievements of 2022 finalists Lukina Lukin from Port Lincoln and Stephanie Lunn from Jamestown.

(Continued from 20 October 2022.)

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (20:50): I rise today to speak briefly on behalf of the Greens in support of this motion. The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on 15 October 2008. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in late 2007, this day is dedicated to the recognition of 'the critical role and contribution of rural women, including Indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.'

The theme for 2022 focused on 'rural women cultivating good food for all', highlighting the crucial role that women and girls play in ensuring the sustainability of rural households and communities, and how they impact food systems around the globe. From food security for their communities, building climate resilience and strengthening economies, rural women work tirelessly to feed families all over the world.

The United Nations Women made this statement on the 2022 International Day of Rural Women:

This [day] offers us the opportunity to commit to a different way of organizing our world, to build on the vision of the Feminist Plan and on the outcomes and multistakeholder commitments of the recent United Nations Food Systems Summit, so that rural women can benefit equally from their productivity, with good food enjoyed by all.

South Australian women have played, and continue to play, a pivotal role in our achievements as a state, yet for our regional and rural women here in our state gender inequalities, including discriminatory laws and social norms, combined with the fast changing economic, technological and environmental landscape, restrict their full potential, leaving them far behind men and women in their urban counterparts.

The limited access to employment, training and services, along with small populations and the need to travel long distances greatly impact these women. As a result, workplace opportunities in regional and rural areas are typically fewer and less diverse than in urban Adelaide.

When we talk about women's inequality—gendered violence, women's economic insecurity, and a lack of representation in leadership—we know that these inequalities are exacerbated in rural, regional and remote areas. We also know that these communities face urgent crises from natural disasters, supply chain pressures, business closures and production moving overseas. These financial pressures affect employment, education, health, and family violence rates.

Governments need to pay attention to the needs of rural women and invest in them, pursuing their political and socio-economic empowerment while also supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels. This means them being taken into account in their policies when developing specific assistance programs, advisory services and designing laws to ensure that regional and rural women are accorded full and equal rights.

I am delighted that this motion allows us the opportunity to highlight the contribution of outstanding rural women, as a girl born of the Bogan Shire and a daughter and a granddaughter and a great-granddaughter and a great-great-granddaughter of rural women. The annual Rural Women's

Award seeks to empower and celebrate the inclusive and courageous leadership of rural women across Australia. These women are encouraged to apply with a project, business or program that has a positive impact on rural and emerging industries, businesses, and communities. All states and the Northern Territory have the opportunity to nominate their own finalist.

In 2022, the South Australian finalist was Robyn Verrall, an inspiring woman from Keith. She was recognised for her work as a director, founder and business adviser of Kere to Country, an Aboriginal owned and operated food supply company bringing high-quality and affordable meat into First Nations communities in South Australia and the NT. Robyn's goal is to reduce food insecurity and increase food affordability in rural, regional and First Nations communities in our country.

Robyn grew up in a family of six. She notes her parents encouraged two things: community and fairness. When she was first nominated, Ms Verrall explained that 500 grams of mince can cost up to \$70 in rural, regional and First Nations communities, but Kere to Country was able to offer better quality meat at a cheaper price. Robyn told the ABC in October last year:

When I didn't have money to give to the schools for all the things, my mother said, 'Well, money's not always important. You'll find if you give more of your time, that's more valuable.' If you identify a problem, try and be part of a solution.

Her achievements are truly admirable, and I look forward to watching her continue to make positive impacts for First Nations communities.

I also acknowledge the work of the other finalists, representing a broad range of industries, including food security, agriculture research and diversification of the bluefin tuna industry. I congratulate the 2022 finalists from South Australia: Lukina Lukin from Port Lincoln and Stephanie Lunn from Jamestown. Both women continue to make absolutely outstanding and ongoing contributions to their communities and non-profit work.

I look forward to continuing our celebration of rural women, leading the charge in so many sectors, deserving our admiration and our respect and all the support that this parliament can give them. With that, I commend the motion.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (20:56): I would like to thank all the members who have made contributions on this important motion. It is incredibly encouraging not only to hear about the excellent things that the various women who have been nominated in awards have achieved but also to see that acknowledgement here in this place from across or, might I even say, around the chamber.

I look forward to celebrating International Day of Rural Women again this year, and I am sure we will all join in doing that and commenting more on the outstanding achievements that are being made by women across rural and regional South Australia.

Motion carried.

Bills

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CASUAL VACANCIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

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

At 20:57 the council adjourned until Thursday 23 February 2023 at 11:00.