

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**Tuesday, 27 June 2023**

The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens) took the chair at 14:17 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.

*Bills***SUPPLY BILL 2023***Assent*

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

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (WOMBAT BURROWS) AMENDMENT BILL*Assent*

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (SEXUAL OFFENCES) BILL*Assent*

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

*Parliamentary Procedure***ANSWERS TABLED**

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

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the President—

Report of the Office of the Inspector 2023/01: Review of the investigation and prosecution of Mr John Hanlon dated 26 June 2023

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

Ministerial staff employed pursuant to section 71 of the Public Sector Act 2009, Report, 2022-23

Fees Notice under Acts—

Education and Children's Services Act 2019
South Australian Skills Act 2008

By the Attorney-General (Hon. K.J. Maher)—

Rules of Court—

District Court—District Court Act 1991—

Joint Criminal (No. 2)

Uniform Civil (No. 9)

Uniform Special Statutory (No. 1)

Environment, Resources and Development Court—Environment, Resources and Development Court Act 1993—

Joint Criminal (No. 2)

Uniform Civil (No. 9)
 Uniform Special Statutory (No. 1)
 Magistrates Court—Magistrates Court Act 1991—
 Joint Criminal (No. 2)
 Uniform Civil (No. 9)
 Uniform Special Statutory (No. 1)
 Supreme Court—Supreme Court Act 1935—
 Joint Criminal (No. 2)
 Uniform Civil (No. 9)
 Uniform Special Statutory (No. 1)
 Youth Court—Youth Court Act 1993—
 Joint Criminal (No. 2)
 Uniform Civil (No. 9)
 Uniform Special Statutory (No. 1)
 Dangerous Area Declarations authorisations issued for the period 1 January 2023 to
 31 March 2023—Return pursuant to Section 83B of the Summary Offences
 Act 1953
 Road Block authorisations issued for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023—Return
 pursuant to Section 74B of the Summary Offences Act 1953

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

Fees Notice under Acts—
 Fisheries Management Act 2007—Fishery Licence and Boat and Device
 Registration Application and Annual Fees—No. 3
 Regulations under Acts—
 Mining Act 1971—Prescribed Costs
 Passenger Transport Act 1994—Metropolitan Taxi Fares
 Road Traffic Act 1961—Miscellaneous—Expiation Fees No 2

Question Time

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:30): I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding the seafood sector cost-recovery review.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: In March 2022, the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development announced that the government will be undertaking an independent review of the current seafood sector cost-recovery model. A cost-recovery review panel was established in February 2023 to provide advice to the minister on the most appropriate, fair and equitable cost-recovery arrangements for the commercial fisheries sector in South Australia. It is understood that the panel has now provided that report to the minister. My questions to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development are:

1. Will the minister be seeking stakeholder feedback on the draft report for the South Australian commercial fisheries cost-recovery review prior to making any decisions on the sector's cost-recovery framework, and when will that feedback commence?
2. Will the minister publicly release the draft report?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:31): I thank the honourable member for her question. In undertaking the review that she referred to, submissions were invited from the commercial fishing sectors and also the aquaculture sector, as well as other interested stakeholders, and the review also sought feedback from PIRSA and other relevant government agencies. The reports have now

been delivered to me and I expect to be briefed on those very shortly and give consideration to those reports and any actions that might arise from them.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:31): Supplementary: who will be briefing the minister on the report?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32): The department.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:32): Supplementary: has the minister read the reports?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32): They have only just landed and came across my desk this morning, I think. I am looking forward to reading them as soon as I am able.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:32): Further supplementary: can the minister confirm, in response to her first answer, that that report will be released to the relevant stakeholders for their consideration before any final decision is made?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:32): Once I have had the briefing then I will be able to make those decisions.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVIEW

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:33): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding cost recovery.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Policy and compliance functions within government agencies are often separated to ensure a clear distinction between the development of regulations and policies and their enforcement. Separation allows for an objective and impartial approach to compliance monitoring and enforcement, minimising conflicts of interest and potential biases that may arise if the same entity is responsible for both policy creation and enforcement. This separation helps maintain transparency, accountability and the integrity of regulatory processes within government agencies. My questions to the minister are:

1. Will the minister be seeking PIRSA's and SARDI's advice on the recommendations contained within the South Australian commercial fisheries cost-recovery review report?
2. Does the minister agree that PIRSA and SARDI, who are responsible for compliance and enforcement, are conflicted in their positions?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:34): I will be getting advice from my department, as I have already outlined, and I am very confident in receiving advice from a variety of sources and being able to make a decision.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:34): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development on regional development.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: It's novel, I know. In the 2022-23 budget, \$15 million was allocated to the Regional Growth Fund. On the department's own website, applications for the competitive round of strategic pool have been closed since at least 3 June 2022—more than

12 months ago. The Regional Growth Fund was established to unlock new economic activity in our regions, to deliver critical economic infrastructure, create direct benefits across regional industries and strengthen regional communities.

My question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development is: other than the \$600,000 Thriving Communities Program, how have regional communities wanting to invest in projects that enable regional industries to grow jobs and strengthen regional economies been able to access grant funding to that effect over the last 12 months?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35): Regional communities have been able to access funding based on guidelines and open grant programs that are advertised on the PIRSA website.

REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:36): Supplementary: what grant projects have been opened?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:36): I invite the honourable member to look at the PIRSA website, and that will answer that question.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

VETERINARIAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS (14:36): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Ms Pnevmatikos, sit down, please.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! We're wasting question time.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Minister, order!

The Hon. I. PNEVMATIKOS: 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 support Sophie's Legacy?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:37): I thank the honourable member for her question about what is a very important topic. I would like to start by acknowledging the friends and family of Dr Sophie Putland, who passed away in 2021. Sophie died through suicide. Those close to Sophie have established Sophie's Legacy, an organisation that honours Sophie by campaigning for more public awareness about the veterinarian industry.

I had the opportunity earlier this year, along with the Hon. Sarah Game MLC, to attend the launch of the Sick as a Dog podcast, which is a podcast series produced by journalist Caroline Winter, where Sophie's story was shared by her parents, Kate and Garry Putland. I would like to commend both Garry and Kate for the strength they have shown in ensuring that Sophie's story is shared widely, resulting in a greater spotlight and awareness of the issues that many vets can encounter when working in the industry. I have met with both Garry and Kate on a number of occasions, and it is clear that they are very strong advocates for reducing the suicide rate within this sector.

Concerningly, I am advised that veterinarians are one of the highest at-risk occupations for suicide, being four times more likely to die from suicide than the general population and twice as

likely as other healthcare professionals. Some research suggests that in Australia a vet dies through suicide every 12 weeks, and this figure, as I am sure everyone would agree, is shocking.

It is for these reasons that I can provide an update to this place that South Australia is the first state government to provide funding, in this case of \$25,000, in support of the Sophie's Legacy initiative, which is a new national mental health campaign for veterinarians. The South Australian government's funding will go towards assisting the South Australian-based programs and a public awareness campaign to educate animal owners and other vet clients on the importance of respectful behaviour and engagement with vets and their staff.

Specifically, the funding will ensure that the We're Only Human campaign is rolled out across South Australia and includes every veterinary clinic in the state. We are hoping that every clinic in South Australia will have a We're Only Human poster up in their clinic. It's a poster which encourages animal owners to be kind and respectful and to better understand the pressures impacting staff who are working in the industry. I understand that Sophie's Legacy is seeking to expand their campaign to not only South Australia but around the country, and I wish them the greatest of success in that endeavour.

Vets play a vitally important role in our community and should be treated with respect across the community. Of course, pet owners, when they are visiting a vet clinic, are often very distressed themselves and understandably, but we must also understand the stress that the vets are under and their staff, and I urge clients to show empathy, understanding and respect.

Vets are a key part of the primary industry sector and central to the wellbeing of all our animals. As is the case across many sectors, there is a shortage of vets across the country, particularly in regional areas, so it's in all of our interests to ensure we provide a safe pathway to encourage more people into the profession and, indeed, to stay in the profession. I look forward to working further with Garry and Kate and acknowledge once again their efforts in honouring the legacy of their beloved daughter.

VETERINARIAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:40): Supplementary: will the minister commit to introducing legislation to ensure the state reports on the number of deaths by suicide of vets to this chamber yearly to quantify this important and critical issue?

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. There is already in existence the South Australian Suicide Register, and my advice is that the occupation of the deceased person at the time of their death is recorded in that register. I'm working with the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, who I understand administers the register—or his department does—around how accessible that data is able to be for use, for example, for associations such as the Australian Veterinary Association or others who might wish and benefit from having specific information related to that profession.

VETERINARIAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:41): Further supplementary: given that the minister is about to introduce the veterinary services bill, does the minister not have the ability to include this kind of reporting within that piece of legislation?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:41): Given that there is already a register that records deaths through suicide, it's important that we utilise the information that is available in the best way possible. As I say, I am working with the Minister for Health in regard to how the appropriate data can be accessed for those who would have an appropriate use for it.

FLINDERS RANGES

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:42): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, representing the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, a question on the topic of the Flinders Ranges World Heritage nomination.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: In early 2021, the Flinders Ranges were nominated for a tentative listing as a World Heritage site with UNESCO, with our processes to be finalised by February 2024 in terms of lodgement. Over 600 million years old, the Flinders Ranges is one of Australia's magnificent landscapes. The Adnyamathanha people are the traditional owners and custodians of this diverse landscape, which is world renowned for its wealth of natural, cultural significance, historic and scenic values.

In 2016, the oldest known evidence of Aboriginal settlement was also discovered, in a rock shelter within the Flinders Ranges at a site called Warraty. It contains the first reliably dated evidence of human interaction with megafauna. Dating of the artefacts and fossil finds show that humans occupied this site somewhere between 46,000 to 49,000 years ago. The previous oldest known site in the arid zone, located at Puritjarra in Western Central Australia, is around 38,000 years old, so this is quite significant.

The operational guidelines for implementing the World Heritage Convention now call on state parties to include greater consideration and involvement of Indigenous peoples in all phases of World Heritage practice, from tentative listing and nomination through to management and monitoring of a listed property. In particular, paragraph 123 of the operational guidelines says:

States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the widest possible participation of stakeholders and to demonstrate, as appropriate, that the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous peoples has been obtained, through, inter alia making the nominations publicly available in appropriate languages and public consultations and hearings.

It follows then that the active involvement of Adnyamathanha peoples in the consultation process for the Flinders Ranges nomination is critical in demonstrating that free, prior and informed consent for the nomination. Therefore, my questions to the minister are:

1. What consultation has the department undertaken with Adnyamathanha traditional owners in relation to their cultural heritage in the Flinders Ranges?
2. How will cultural values be included and appropriately reflected in the World Heritage nomination?
3. What further consideration is being given in broadening the scope and including Aboriginal heritage sites, such as Warraty, in the World Heritage nomination?

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 question. Obviously, in relation to what the Deputy Premier's departments, in preparation for World Heritage nomination, have done, I will need to take some advice on that and bring back a reply for the honourable member, which I will do. I do know that the Minister for Environment and Water has a very deep interest in, and respect for, Aboriginal heritage and Aboriginal culture. It is something I discuss with her regularly.

Frequently, on the couple of times that I haven't been in South Australia, and on leave, the Hon. Susan Close has acted as the acting Aboriginal affairs minister on my behalf, so I know it is something she takes extraordinarily seriously and I know that the department that is responsible also has a deep commitment, and also experience, in consultation with Aboriginal people, Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal nations. There are a number of national parks, for example, that are in co-management arrangements around South Australia, including on the Yorke Peninsula and including, I think, in the Flinders Ranges, so I certainly will pass those onto the minister in another place to bring back a reply to those questions.

REMOTE VISITORS

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:46): I seek leave before directing a series of questions to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the subject of the multiagency response for remote visitors.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: The multiagency response for remote visitors. My questions for the minister are:

1. Can the minister advise how often he is briefed about the DHS-led multiagency response for remote visitors in Adelaide and regional South Australia?
2. What is the minister's understanding of the primary purpose of the response?
3. Does the minister understand DHS to be seeking to support remote visitors to return to country?
4. Has the minister met with the police commissioner regarding SAPOL's calls for more police powers?
5. What consultation has the minister undertaken with Aboriginal elders in relation to the response within the CBD?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:47): I thank the honourable member for her questions. I will answer the last one first. In relation to having met with the police commissioner on matters that the honourable member has referred to, I have not met with the police commissioner on those matters. In relation to the response, the Department of Human Services is leading the response, I think, as they have in the past as well when the honourable member was the minister responsible for the Department of Human Services.

I am trying to think of the last time that I have had an update and I think it was an in-depth discussion with Minister Nat Cook, the member for Hurtle Vale. I reckon it was on budget day, so that would have been the last sitting week. That was the last time I had an in-depth discussion with the minister about some of the steps that her agency are looking to take, and have undertaken.

The ability to provide services to return home to communities or to country, I understand there is a—and I can't remember now whether it is called Return to Country or Return to Community; I know there had been some discussion about what is the most appropriate terminology that Aboriginal people from north of Adelaide would like the service to be referred to as, but that is a service I understand has been around for some time and continues to provide that service.

REMOTE VISITORS

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (14:48): Supplementary: in regard to the additional powers proposed by SAPOL, when will the Attorney be meeting with SAPOL, and will he be likely to provide these powers?

The PRESIDENT: You did mention it.

The Hon. K.J. Maher: The tenuous connection to those questions—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I will make the determination.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Excuse me! Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:49): I assume what the member is referring to is declared public precinct declarations. I have to say there are requirements under the Summary Offences Act, I think is the act that governs those, and any such requests are given due consideration.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:49): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the minister inform the council about the recent and very successful visit to Kangaroo Island for the government's latest country cabinet?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:49): I thank the honourable member for his question

and his very close connection with Kangaroo Island, as other members of this chamber also have. I am very pleased to share with the chamber and with you, sir, the country cabinet that occurred last week. I am very happy to share with the members opposite because it's something that any of those who have served as ministers would be entirely unfamiliar with, having scrapped country cabinets in their term of government. We jumped on the ferry at Cape Jervis, with many of my cabinet colleagues, and headed across to Kangaroo Island—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —for this government's fourth country cabinet, which would therefore be four more than the last government engaged in in their four years in government.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It was remarkable but entirely unsurprising to see how the local community of Kangaroo Island responded so positively to a government that took the interest in visiting them to hear directly, as a cabinet, their concerns, as we found—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —at our recent country cabinet on the Yorke Peninsula. It was, again, remarkable but entirely unsurprising that people in that area responded positively, after a Liberal government for four years didn't even care enough to visit them as a cabinet. It's little wonder sometimes—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —as I have said, that people had that feeling, given it was four long years of a Liberal government where that was scrapped and sent a very, very strong message to people in country South Australia—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —about how they are cared about. I hope I may have a chance to talk about some of the—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —things in more detail that we saw on Kangaroo Island, but I will just share some of the highlights from that country cabinet now. It was pleasing to have an opportunity to meet with members of Regional Development Australia and the Kangaroo Island Business and Brand Alliance with my colleague Minister Andrea Michaels (the member for Enfield) to discuss the promotion of local businesses and engagement in things like SafeWork SA's wellbeing programs.

I was also very fortunate to see the excellent work of the company Kangaroo Island Ocean Safari, an Aboriginal-owned and operated business that's based in Penneshaw, offering a choice of different tours that showcase the natural beauty of the island. It was also a pleasure to catch up quickly with the president of the Dudley United Football Club in Penneshaw to learn a bit more about the highly successful Aboriginal programs that the football club run to include Aboriginal players from remote areas around Australia.

Despite the very cold conditions and rain, the community barbecue and forum on Thursday night were a huge success, with a large turnout at the Kingscote school Performing Arts Centre, demonstrating that the local Kangaroo Island community really do appreciate it when a government gives that little bit of respect and turns up and makes an effort to hear directly from them their views.

Some of the views that were put and responses to questions talked about just how forgotten Kangaroo Island had been by the previous government—not just forgotten but completely ignored and completely taken for granted. One thing that came up was a decision, I think it was in the very first budget of the former Liberal government, to get rid of the 50 per cent reduction in registration for vehicles from Kangaroo Island.

What the former government did, how they thought they would show their appreciation to the residents of Kangaroo Island: not turn up as a cabinet to listen to them but double the cost of their registration of vehicles. This had a huge impact; for example, one freight company on Kangaroo Island found their registration increasing by \$70,000 a year. What that meant was those costs were passed on to local residents of Kangaroo Island. So not only did the former government have the lack of respect to even show up as a cabinet but they doubled the registration for vehicles on Kangaroo Island. I hope to revisit later in the week or the next sitting day—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: I'm watching the clock. Everybody, stay calm.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —some of the comments the member for Mawson, the local state MP for Kangaroo Island, has made over his time about the views that he saw from members of the former government, who would land in a plane, get out and take photos for two hours during the bushfire crisis. I'm going to be very happy over the next few days to relay some of those, but that's for another time. Many were concerned at people landing on the island, getting out for photos and then returning. That was the level of respect the people on Kangaroo Island were shown before—

The PRESIDENT: Your time is about up.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —and I'm very proud to be part of a team that shows much greater respect and hears directly from the community.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:55): Supplementary: was the issue of blue gum wildings raised with the government while they were holding their country cabinet, and what action are they taking?

The PRESIDENT: I never actually heard anything about that, but the minister is happy to take it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:55): I thank the honourable member for his question. It certainly wasn't raised with me, and I don't recall it being raised at the public forum. Certainly, matters about roads and matters about health were raised at the public forum.

Having attended country cabinets as a minister in the Weatherill government and having attended four as part of the Malinauskas government and quite a few in opposition, it was very unusual that quite a number of the questions didn't involve questions but were general comments about what the government has done for that community, such as supporting it after the bushfires. The level of response and goodwill towards a government at a community cabinet stood out to me as unusual, but that issue wasn't raised with me and I don't think it was raised as part of the forum.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:57): I have a supplementary, which I will preface by declaring my own interest in Kangaroo Island. As the Attorney-General raised the matter of vehicles and roads on Kangaroo Island, did the cabinet convoy encounter significant potholes on the main bitumen roads between Penneshaw and Parndana that locals have described to me today as being extremely dangerous and a risk to safety, and what will be done to fix them?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:57): I thank the honourable member for his question. On this visit, I didn't get down to Parndana. I know that on previous visits, I have certainly spent a lot of time in Parndana, but on the roads—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —I did notice significant roadworks on the road from—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —Penneshaw to Kingscote and I did not encounter the potholes the honourable member talked about.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I have appreciated the hospitality and working with parts of the community in Parndana before when the local member, Leon Bignell, the member for Mawson, organised some of us to help cut trees down and clear people's properties in the immediate aftermath of the bushfires to get potential fire hazards away. The member for Mawson also organised a number of us, including myself and the member for Wright, to camp out on Parndana Oval and roll up fences as part of BlazeAid in the immediate aftermath of the fires.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:58): By way of supplementary: given this was a country cabinet and in light of the additional funding for health at KI, did the government get around to talking about the critical shortage of midwives and forced closure of Whyalla's birthing services and, by contrast, how forgotten locals from Whyalla are feeling right now, and what is the government doing about it?

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Bonaros, as much as I would like to allow that as a supplementary question, given that—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! As much as I would like to allow that, given it was about Whyalla, I am sorry but that wasn't arising from the original answer.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Because I am always going to be biased towards Whyalla.

RETAIL ENERGY PRICES

The Hon. S.L. GAME (14:59): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, representing the Minister for Energy and Mining, on retail energy prices.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: The Electricity Trust of South Australia was a government-owned monopoly from 1946 until 1999, when the Liberal government broke its promise and privatised it, with the help of two Labor members. The electricity distribution and transmission business of the trust were bought by a company now known as SA Power Networks, which continues to operate as a monopoly in this state.

Each South Australian electricity consumer has paid around \$1,200 more for electricity over the period 2014 to 2021 than they should have, according to one submission made to the government's retail energy prices inquiry. My constituents are telling me that, as of 1 July this year, their electricity charges increased by over 21 per cent, coupled with their solar rebates decreasing by over 17 per cent. I refer to the Minister for Energy and Mining's retail energy prices inquiry under part 7 of the Essential Services Commission Act 2002 and due for report to the minister in late May 2023. My questions are:

1. When will the government release the Essential Services Commission report into retail energy prices in South Australia?

2. How will the government overcome South Australia's winter weather, which renders solar panels and wind turbines useless much of the time, leaving our state dependent on expensive gas to generate electricity?

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 very important question and her ongoing interest in these matters. I will refer it to the relevant minister in the other place and bring back a reply.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (15:01): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General on the Public Trustee in South Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: Recently, the ABC reported grave concerns with the Public Trustee in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, regarding the potential overcharging of fees for vulnerable people, with one lady being charged up to \$120 per week, a quarter of her pension, leaving just \$100 a week as a living allowance.

When this lady attended the Queensland tribunal, the Public Trustee representative said her fees would be about \$8 a month. Instead, she is paying 60 times that amount, totalling almost \$500 per month. My questions to the Attorney-General, as the minister responsible for the Public Trustee, are:

1. Is the Attorney confident that South Australians whose finances are managed by the Public Trustee are not being overcharged?
2. Are there likely to be increases in the Public Trustee's fees and charges in the next financial year?
3. When did the Attorney last receive an update from the Public Trustee?

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 questions in relation to the Public Trustee's fees. The Public Trustee charge fees as part of administering estates and also in the administration of protected persons' finances. The Public Trustee of South Australia has, in particular, several options that are able to financially assist customers with low asset values. Commissions and some fees are waived or reduced for the administration of estates with low values and certainly estates with assets valued under \$5,500 as a general rule are automatically provided with a full fee waiver.

I certainly don't have any evidence of systemic overcharging, as I think the honourable member may have referred to as having been raised about interstate public trustees. Certainly, it is an area where people do raise concerns that are sent to me from time to time about the very specific questions about the administration of the finances of a person or the estate of a deceased person. I think there are members of this parliament who raise those with me on behalf of their constituents, as is entirely appropriate from time to time. When that happens, as a general rule I seek a briefing from the Public Trustee about the administration of that specific estate so I can respond to the people concerned.

My guess is the last time there was a question—and there would be a few of these every month—would have been some time in the last month a briefing about the administration of a specific estate that has generally come about as a result of a representation from someone to their member of parliament. Sometimes, it's questions such as, 'We wanted money for this outing or for a new bed,' or something of that sort, where the Public Trustee makes these financial decisions regularly about what can be afforded and how it's done. So in relation to specific estate administration, certainly within the last month I would have had a briefing about a question that an MP had raised on behalf of a constituent.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (15:05): Supplementary: is the Attorney able to provide an answer on whether fees and charges will increase in the next financial year, relating to the Public Trustee's delivery of service?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:05): I thank the honourable member for her question. I will double-check that, but I think it's about 4.8 per cent that has been the general government fees and charges rise that has been announced and has been applied to most fees and charges. I will double-check, but my guess is that would apply as a general proposition for the fees and charges that are applied right across government, including the service of the Public Trustee. If that's wildly wrong, I am happy to bring back an answer for the honourable member.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:05): My question is for the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Can the minister tell the chamber about her recent visit to Kangaroo Island as part of the Malinauskas government's country cabinet?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:06): I thank the honourable member for his question about my recent visit to KI. It was a pleasure to join my cabinet colleagues, and a particular pleasure to join the member for Mawson, recently for a country cabinet last week on Kangaroo Island. This visit is the fourth in a series of formal country cabinet visits, which has already seen the cabinet—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —visit Port Pirie and Port Augusta, Mount Gambier and Yorke Peninsula. The government is making significant investment into the Kangaroo Island region, notably with \$10 million to improve essential health services and to bring back birthing services to the island. Also, as announced in the recent state budget, \$6.2 million will be allocated for road improvements, which is an important issue both for residents and for primary producers.

The honourable Attorney-General has already mentioned how pleased a lot of residents were to have the Malinauskas Labor government bring back the vehicle registration concession after it was cut by the former Liberal government. It's worth noting that the member for Mawson collected signatures on a petition on that matter—signatures from more than half of the island's residents. The community barbecue and forum was held at the Kingscote school's performing arts centre and, as has been the case at each of the three previous country cabinets of this government, the forum was very well attended.

I would like to particularly acknowledge the Kangaroo Island residents who came out. It was an awful night, weatherwise, and the whole day, I think. It had barely stopped raining all day and it continued into the evening, so I am sure there was a huge temptation for locals to stay at home in their warm and dry houses. It was an absolute credit to the community that so many people attended, notwithstanding the weather, to hear and to ask questions of the cabinet.

The Hon. R.P. Wortley interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Wortley!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: I would also like to acknowledge the island community for the constructive and meaningful questions that they asked of the cabinet. The community of course has faced significant challenges in recent years, particularly the bushfires, as well as the impacts of the pandemic. The island is now bouncing back after a very tough few years, so this really was an important forum for the cabinet to hear directly from the locals—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Wortley and the Hon. Ms Girolamo!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —about what our government can do to help make the region an even better place to live, work and visit. It's interesting that those opposite are not bothering to listen to the events of Kangaroo Island because it just shows how disinterested they are—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —totally disinterested in Kangaroo Island, it would appear.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, I am watching the clock. Come on.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: A significant announcement—

The PRESIDENT: This is repetition.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —for the local community was that Qantas and the state government, through the South Australian Tourism Commission, are working together to increase flights between Kingscote and Adelaide. These flights will provide many more options for islanders, for industry and for government services, as well as increase certainty for tourism operators as the economy continues to recover from the bushfires and the pandemic.

Amongst my visits to various producers and meetings with industry across the island, I had the pleasure of meeting up with the newly appointed Kangaroo Island agtech extension officer, Ashley Balsom, who is now available to assist producers wanting to take part in the demonstration program. The Kangaroo Island agtech program will be funded by the Australian government's Regional Recovery Partnerships program and highlights the potential for technology to improve the productivity and profitability of primary producers in the island's agricultural sector, particularly in the wake of the 2019-20 bushfires.

Led by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, in close association with AgKI and the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board, the program aims to grow with the awareness of agtech solutions on the island. With Kangaroo Island's unique agricultural and biosecurity characteristics, the agtech program will partner with local producers to identify and showcase technology that is best suited to the island's specific conditions. Further information on that program can be found on the PIRSA website.

Once again, my acknowledgement goes to producers, industry representatives and local island residents who I met and spoke with during our country cabinet visit. I have also visited KI on a number of occasions since becoming minister. I would like to thank them for their warm reception and I look forward to continuing to work with them into the future for the betterment of this very unique regional community.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:10): Supplementary: what action has the government taken in relation to the news revealed at country cabinet that a Kangaroo Island woman had spent five days fearing for her daughter's life after a ruptured appendix was wrongly diagnosed at the local hospital?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:11): I thank the honourable member for his supplementary. Of course, I will get a detailed answer from the minister in the other place, but I do know that the Minister for Health had a conversation with her straight after the country cabinet forum and, of course, the chief executive of SA Health was also there.

That is one of the benefits of country cabinet, in that you have not only the ministers there, keen to listen to the issues that people raise, but also the chief executives of the departments so that they can also hear firsthand about the issues. It is one of the excellent ways that issues are resolved. But in terms of the details that have occurred since then, I will be happy to bring an answer back to the chamber.

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:11): Supplementary: given the minister mentioned birthing services, is the government equally committed to addressing, as a matter of urgency, the indefinite closure of Whyalla's birthing services?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Yes. I would like to, but no.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Supplementary, Mr President.

The Hon. R.P. Wortley: Wise decision, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: I don't need your endorsement.

An honourable member interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon. the Leader of the Opposition, what is your supplementary question?

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:12): Whilst on the trip, my understanding is that the health minister announced that there would be a review into paediatric services on Kangaroo Island. Will the results of this review be made public?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:12): Thank you. I am happy to refer that question to the minister in the other place and bring back a response.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Bonaros, your question?

KANGAROO ISLAND COUNTRY CABINET

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:12): Shall I just ask the birthing services question? Actually, you know what, stuff it, let's do that one instead today. I don't have the minister here.

The PRESIDENT: Sorry?

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Sorry; I am going to seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Primary Industries a question about country cabinet in KI recently.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: During her contributions earlier today, and indeed during the Attorney's contributions earlier today, we heard about the importance of birthing services and the additional funding for health at KI and the KI hospital. Given this was a country cabinet get-together, and in light of those additional funding arrangements, did the government get around to talking about the critical shortage of midwives and the forced closure of Whyalla's birthing services and how forgotten the people of Whyalla are feeling, by contrast to the people of Kangaroo Island, and, if so, what is the government planning to do and how urgently?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:13): I thank the honourable member for her question. In answer to the first part, I certainly wasn't involved in any discussions on Kangaroo Island about the Whyalla birthing services.

In answer to the second part, I do have information from the Minister for Health as follows: due to a critical midwifery workforce shortage, women due to give birth at Whyalla Hospital and Health Service will temporarily be required to deliver at other locations from Monday 26 June 2023. This decision was made to ensure that women are able to deliver their babies in the safest way possible. I am sure we would all agree that safety has got to come first. We, the government, are currently working on recruiting qualified staff with the aim of reinstating birthing services as soon as possible. I think everyone would be aware in this place how difficult it is, with the shortage of midwives and other birthing staff. It is an issue that is faced across regional Australia, not just regional South Australia, so it is something we continue to work on.

I am advised that SA Health is currently working with each woman who is due to give birth imminently, supporting them to develop a personalised plan and arrange their birth at an appropriate alternative location. Antenatal and postnatal care will continue to be provided at Whyalla hospital, and medical staff will remain available to respond to maternal emergencies. Women in Whyalla who believe they may be in labour, even if it is the early stages, are encouraged to attend the Whyalla Hospital and Health Service as soon as possible. Anyone who has concerns or questions can also contact the Whyalla hospital directly.

WHYALLA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:15): Supplementary: does the minister acknowledge that that shortage of services has been reported as indefinite and not temporary, and how do expecting mothers planning already to have their babies at the Whyalla hospital, with no alternative arrangements, deal with this situation?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:16): I think the response did refer to the alternative arrangements in that the hospital is supporting each woman to develop a personalised plan and arrange their birth at an appropriate alternative location. I don't think anyone imagines for a moment that this is an easy situation.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: Recruiting qualified staff is an ongoing challenge and it is something that SA Health and the health minister continue to work on.

WHYALLA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:16): Supplementary: exactly how is the government facilitating the recruitment of more midwives in regional South Australia?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:16): I am happy to get an answer from the Minister for Health and bring back a response.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti: There's nothing!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

WHYALLA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

The Hon. L.A. HENDERSON (15:17): Supplementary question: can the minister advise what the average drive or commute time will be for expectant mothers in order to receive services and care, now that they can't access it closer to home?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:17): Each woman's circumstances will be unique to her, of course, depending on the complexity of the birth—

The Hon. L.A. Henderson interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —and whether complications or similar are expected. That will inform the decisions around what is the most appropriate place for her to give birth, and obviously that will affect the travel times.

WHYALLA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:17): Supplementary: in the very unfortunate event that there is a tragedy as a result of these services ceasing indefinitely, will this government accept responsibility for anything that happens to an expecting mother or child?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:18): I am sure we would all hope that we don't have any

tragedies. If anyone knows of qualified staff members, particularly qualified midwives, who are interested to relocate to an area such as Whyalla, I would encourage them to get in contact with the Whyalla Hospital and Health Service. It is important that we all do whatever we can to try to recruit qualified staff, but essentially, if there are no qualified staff available, safety has to be the number one concern.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Dennis Hood has a final supplementary question before we move on.

WHYALLA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:18): What are the alternative locations available to patients in these circumstances?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:18): I understand that, depending on the woman's individual circumstances, that will determine what is the most appropriate place—whether she needs to go to another regional hospital or come to Adelaide.

ROAD TOLL

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:19): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Is the minister aware that South Australia's road death toll is tragically set to reach 120 fatalities by the end of the year compared with last year's total of 71? If so, does the minister find the \$2.5 million per year for four years allocated to regional road safety treatments in this year's budget adequate for protecting regional South Australians and capable of reducing the road toll?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:19): I thank the honourable member for his question. I am sure we are all deeply saddened by the level of deaths on our roads. It is something that I think particularly those of us who live regionally feel acutely, but of course anyone who is involved or connected in any way to someone who loses their life through a road accident will be saddened by that statistic. There were a number of road safety initiatives in the recent budget as well.

Whilst this is specifically the purview of the Minister for Transport and indeed the Minister for Regional Roads, I do have some relevant information that has been provided to me, and I am happy to share that advice. First of all, in terms of the funding for roads, the Minister for Regional Roads advised that the \$56 million being referred to is new money in this budget, but at the same time there is \$795 million worth of roads in the program for the next 12 months, and in the forward estimates for the next four years there is a total of \$1.86 billion for roads.

I think we need to also remember some of the history around regional roads, and particularly around their maintenance, for example. In 2022, the annual report of the Auditor-General, which was published in June last year, detailed that the rough order of magnitude cost over four years of completely eliminating a backlog of road maintenance was estimated at around \$1.96 billion.

The then transport minister, Corey Wingard, said in a media release in February 2021 that they—supposedly—'inherited a \$750 million backlog in maintenance works', and that they were 'continuing to chip away at that list', was the particular quote. In fact, far from chipping away at the backlog, the Liberals were instead walking away from it, with former Treasurer Rob Lucas outsourcing the government's road maintenance contract from late 2020. In fact, in the period from 2020 to 2022, when the Liberals lost government—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN: —the \$750 million road maintenance backlog grew by almost three times. That was the last two years of the former Liberal government, with the former government failing to prioritise the upkeep of South Australia's road infrastructure.

The state continues to reap the legacy of the former Marshall government's era of error, with then Treasurer Rob Lucas locking South Australians into a seven-year contract for his sell-off of the state's road infrastructure maintenance. That was despite the fact that the Liberals had made a pledge that they had no privatisation agenda, and yet they privatised road maintenance, and what happened? In the three years since that betrayal, the maintenance backlog blew out from \$750 million, according to former transport minister Corey Wingard, to just short of \$2 billion.

REGIONAL ROADS

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:23): Supplementary: can the minister confirm that the \$1.86 billion in the budget is for regional roads, or is this all roads in South Australia?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:23): I am advised that the 2023-24 state budget provides a total of \$1.867 billion in funding over four years for major projects in regional areas.

REGIONAL ROADS

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:23): Supplementary: did the minister, as the Minister for Regional Development, speak with or advocate for regional road safety treatments in this year's budget to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport or the Minister for Regional Roads?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:23): I advocate to both those ministers on numerous occasions.

SALISBURY NORTH FOOTBALL CLUB INDIGENOUS ROUND

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (15:24): My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Will the minister please update the chamber about his recent attendance at the Salisbury North Football Club's Indigenous round?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:24): I would be most pleased to update the honourable member about the Salisbury North Football Club's recent Indigenous round. It was my absolute pleasure to attend the Indigenous round organised by the Salisbury North Football Club once again. I think it was last season was their inaugural Indigenous round celebrations, which I was also very pleased to be able to attend. I was joined in attendance by a number of my colleagues, including the Premier, a very keen and self-described ordinary footballer, the Hon. Peter Malinauskas MP—

An honourable member: Average. Average.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: —very average, not very ordinary; they have very similar meanings but I better correctly describe how he describes himself—and the member for Reynell, the Hon. Katrine Hildyard MP, who is an extraordinary footballer that I have clashed with on the football field a number of times, and I have never come off better for my clashes with the member for Reynell on the football field. I put that down to the coaching she receives from the Hon. Tammy Franks as part of the football coaching in that team, I suspect. The member for Ramsay, the Hon. Zoe Bettison, also recently attended. I want to particularly acknowledge the Mayor of Salisbury, who I think has been in attendance every time I have been to the Salisbury North Football Club.

Coinciding with the beginning of Reconciliation Week, this event celebrates the contribution that has been made by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander footballers at a local level as well as at the highest levels of South Australian and Australian football. We recognise often, quite rightly and quite proudly, the substantial achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the game of Australian Rules football and also the contribution made by many Aboriginal people to its growth, in addition to many of the individual contributions made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Salisbury North is no exception to many of the clubs that have produced a remarkable array of Aboriginal footballers wearing the green and gold in their earlier days. This includes people like Brownlow medallist Gavin Wanganeen, Ricky and Michael O'Loughlin, Troy and Shane Bond, Shane Tongerie and, of course, Eugene Warrior, the current A-grade coach. The people I have

mentioned have accumulated more than 800 AFL games between them, and many other Salisbury North juniors have gone on to become greats in the SANFL, including people like Wilbur Wilson.

Events like this highlight not just the game of football itself but encourage us all to look at ways we can break down barriers for more participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our society, particularly through sport. It also provides a unique opportunity to come together—and there were many discussions on the day that I had with various people who were there who had previously been associated with the club, such as Eugene Warrior senior, the father of the current A-grade coach, and people like Tim Agius, both of whom assured me of just how good they were on the footy field back in the day, particularly in the 1970s.

I would like to take this opportunity in particular to congratulate Eugene Warrior junior for the passionate way he goes about what he does, particularly the Indigenous round at Salisbury North Footy Club and the other activities that the footy club are involved in. I also want to acknowledge a five-goal win by Salisbury North on the day that capped off a very good Indigenous round for the green and gold.

REGIONAL SCHOOLS

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:28): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development on the topic of teacher shortages at regional schools.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: On 4 April, *The Advertiser* reported that our four regional schools were struggling to fill teacher vacancies for any longer than 19 days, which is the maximum length of a relief teaching contract, and that one of those schools, Lucindale Area School, has been unable to find a permanent replacement to teach its year 8 to year 10 maths and science since the start of the year. My office has also been advised that Whyalla secondary school has been carrying three unfilled vacancies in 2022 and that there have been as many as eight unfilled vacancies during 2023.

The problem is not limited to Whyalla. I understand some reports have been heard from Port Augusta and the broader country regions. Across the state there are between 40 and 50 unfilled teacher vacancies, according to the Department for Education.

The Advertiser quoted the Australian Education Union of South Australia's President, Andrew Gohl, who said finding qualified educators was a widespread problem and that 'most country schools will be experiencing this now or have experienced it in the last 12 months'. He went on to say that short-term solutions such as offering \$10,000 extra as an incentive to find a qualified maths or science teacher are proving ineffective, and that the excessive workload for teaching needs to be addressed.

He has also added that there needs to be additional country incentives, such as access to quality housing, as some teachers are starting their teaching career living in a caravan or in a motel room. I note that the official government of South Australia Department of Primary Industries and Regions website states that the minister is committed to regional development, improving educational opportunities, along with supporting small business and promoting the importance of primary industry sectors. My question therefore to the minister is:

1. Is the minister concerned about the impacts of teacher shortages on development in the regions and educational opportunities for regional people?
2. What action has the minister taken to address the problem?
3. Has she made representations to the Minister for Education in relation to the matter?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:30): I thank the honourable member for his question, and certainly I echo some of the quotes that he made in there that attracting qualified educators is a widespread problem, and in common with other professional occupations in regional areas it is a widespread problem. It is something that we have been acutely aware of and have been working in a number of ways to address.

Specifically in terms of the teacher workforce, one of the initiatives that I know that our government has done was make the country teachers retention allowance—forgive me if that is not the correct name—permanent. Previously, as I understand it, it was only available for the first five years of someone's tenure in a country area, teaching in a country school, so that was one step that was an important part of encouraging those teachers who had been in regional areas for five years to continue their stay, and hopefully to actually become permanent.

Secondly, housing, as the honourable member mentioned, can be a limiting factor, and certainly I have told in this place stories of schools that have attracted teachers and have unfortunately then seen those teachers living in a caravan park for two terms, resulting in them returning to Adelaide. That type of experience is one of the reasons the Malinauskas Labor government has implemented the program for regional housing for essential workers, which we announced last year and then alluded to also in this year's budget.

The importance of that can't be underestimated. That is about ensuring that regional professions, be they healthcare workers, be they police, be they teachers, or a number of others, can access housing. The program has been established in such a way as to hopefully make it self-sustaining in the sense of long-term leases being taken on, which gives confidence in building housing in some of those regional areas where perhaps the market by itself would not provide that. In terms of other issues, I am happy to refer to the Minister for Education in the other place and bring back a response.

Bills

FORFEITURE BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 23 February 2023.)

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:33): I rise to make some remarks in relation to this particular legislation. Forfeiture law has been an important principle for some time, going back, as I understand, through concepts advocated through the Old Testament and Greek times as well. It is universally one of the most common law practices. I will not go into an in-depth speech in the same way as the Hon. Mr Simms did on another bill, but just make those opening remarks.

The review into the South Australian application of modern common law forfeiture rules has been ongoing for multiple governments. Initiated in 2011, a report by the South Australian Law Reform Institute (SALRI) landed in 2020 under the former Liberal government, when the Hon. Vickie Chapman was the Attorney-General. It contained 67 recommendations, one of which is that forfeiture should be contained within a standalone piece of legislation. An initial version of that bill was introduced in 2021. The former Attorney-General actively sought feedback and community consultation on that bill; however, it did not progress in that session of parliament.

The bill before us today is very similar to that of the former government. It is presented under the implication that, while the premise of forfeiture rules remain sound and vital to the prevalence of justice in our community, there are circumstances and situations where there needs to be less rigidity in the application of forfeiture laws to ensure that it reflects the core of our modern community expectations.

This bill extends the scope of forfeiture to apply to not only murder and manslaughter as it currently stands but to all homicide described by the Criminal Law Consolidation Act. It also specifies any person found guilty of aiding or abetting those offences.

In current law, an individual who is found to be mentally incompetent of committing an offence has not, in the eyes of the law, committed the offence. An individual who is alleged to have killed another yet is then found to be mentally incompetent of committing the crime of murder is not able to be convicted of that crime; therefore, forfeiture laws should not apply to that person. Our understanding is that this was generally the practice, but by stipulating it in the bill it crystallises the legal position.

Part 3, clause 9 allows an offender the right to application for modification of orders to the Supreme Court. I understand there have been questions of common law as it stands when there are situations of moral culpability. Clause 13 of the bill acts on another recommendation by SALRI to ensure that, when a conviction is overturned by a court after an estate has already been distributed, there is the ability for recompense. The explanation of clauses run the argument that:

...return of benefits that were distributed in accordance with the forfeiture rule...where the offender is subsequently found not guilty of the unlawful killing by a court or a conviction for the unlawful killing is subsequently quashed on appeal.

We are pleased to offer support for this law but will have some questions and seek clarification during the committee stage.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:37): I rise on behalf of SA-Best to speak on the Forfeiture Bill 2022, which we know is the result of 67 recommendations presented by SALRI in their report, 'Riddles, mysteries and enigmas: the common law forfeiture rule', examining the utility of the forfeiture rule in a modern context. I have to be the first to admit that I enjoy these reports more for the value of their titles and their artwork at times. They do provide lots of entertainment.

I will take the opportunity at the outset though, on a very serious note, to acknowledge the extremely important work of those involved in this report at SALRI, in particular Dr Villios, Dr Plater, Olivia Jay, Terry Evans and Emily Ireland, of course with the most valuable input from Professor John Williams, but also, and even more importantly, the number of University of Adelaide students who took part in this report, including Charlie Hamra, who many of us in this place will know. I know they would have been in good hands with Dr Villios at the helm in terms of preparing this report.

As many of us in this place will recall, the bill is based on that SALRI report and was tabled in 2021 by the former Attorney but did not progress, and like that bill this bill shares basic commonalities in the pursuit of expanding the application of the forfeiture rule beyond just all cases of murder and manslaughter. Of the 67 SALRI recommendations, this bill picked up the most substantive ones that relate to the issues raised in the report around fairness and equity of the rule as it operates at common law.

The legal maxim of the common law rule of forfeiture, as we know, is steeped in history, which I will not go into in detail in this place but it stems from a broad range of public policy principles, the cornerstone of which is that no person should benefit from his or her or their wrongdoing, which to the attitudes of most people is a reasonable underlying rationale.

As part of that wholesale review of the utility and performance of those forfeiture rules at common law, SALRI made those 67 recommendations that I referred to, which in essence form the foundational basis for this act. I think the need for reform in this space, as is highlighted in the report, is very welcome. It is clear that the limitations of the common law application of the forfeiture rule simply do not meet today's community expectations when it comes to a host of complex consequences arising from the rule in its current form.

In practice, it has been identified that the common law application rule of forfeiture, even at its most flexible, often delivers outcomes that are incomplete or unfair when weighed against the circumstances of a range of cases and is no longer appropriate. The limiting aspect of the rule's application means that consideration for persons charged for unlawful killings, the competence of the individual committing the offence or the ability to preserve deceased assets to protect the interest of third parties until a finding of guilt is made, are not able to be put before a judge.

What SALRI discovered is that the operation of the rule has created mounting uncertainty with its public policy effect and scope, with criticisms from the legal profession and those seeking the utility of the rule that in its present form it is not fit for purpose.

The bill does make consideration for some of the shortcomings identified by SALRI, as I said, by allowing, for instance, interim orders in the Supreme Court to apply the forfeiture rule to a person who has been found by a court to be mentally unfit to stand trial on a charge of unlawful killing. This prevents the default position currently found where the killers retain a benefit by virtue of no guilt being found due to mental incompetence to be tried.

I am pleased to see that the bill before us today does go some way to address the narrow application of the common law rule by including a broader definition of 'unlawful killings', which will capture the offences of unlawful homicide in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, inclusive of aiding and abetting, criminal neglect, and death by dangerous driving in a culpably negligent manner, recklessly or at a speed in a manner dangerous to anyone.

An example of this is the application of the forfeiture rule to unlawful killings in various circumstances where a lesser degree or moral hazard and culpability are recognised. The concern is that this leads to poor and unfair outcomes. A circumstance that comes to mind is voluntary assisted dying, or in the context where the offender of an unlawful killing has diminished responsibility due to a cognitive impairment. Perhaps one that is most front of mind is in the family violence context, where a victim kills an abusive spouse and is convicted of manslaughter on the basis of excessive self-defence or provocation.

At present, the common law application of the forfeiture rule strictly prohibits outcomes related to these examples described as unnecessarily harsh and inconsistent with the maxim of the rule's public policy rationale. There are some problematic but interconnected implications and consequential effects this bill will have with respect to issues of intestacy and inheritance that come some few weeks after this chamber passed comprehensive succession law reforms.

Issues raised by SALRI that are based on the English Law Commission in a 2005 report identified, when analysing the application of the rule in various property, succession and inheritance situations, the potential for the rule to result in the sins of the unlawful killer being visited upon their blameless children. In effect, this has created conditions where rational and reasonable outcomes are not capable of being yielded. This is particularly evident, as I said, in those family violence settings where the killer is a victim of spousal abuse. We are pleased that this bill implements a version of the SALRI recommendation that the act codify the effect of the rule on the killer and on the succession rights of third parties.

I note that section 67 of the bill has been amended to give courts discretion to consider reasonable grounds to administer the estate of a deceased person to 'any person the court considers appropriate' in the case the person entitled to a grant of probate of a will has committed an offence relating to the deceased person's death. Further to this and consistent with the Succession Bill, we see the adoption of the SALRI recommendation to address the flow of intestacy in circumstances where a person is disqualified from taking an interest or a share in a deceased estate. I think that is probably a nice, neat and consistent change.

One of the most significant and transformative elements of the bill is the provision to allow for the modification of the operation of the forfeiture rule to allow courts to exercise a discretion to modify the forfeiture rule through consideration of exceptional circumstances, which is also very important, such that it is in the interests of justice to modify the effect of the rule. In considering an application to modify, the court must have regard to the circumstances of the offence, the effect of the application of the rule and the offender, and other purposes that the court determines to be material.

I think by introducing a modification scheme, the bill certainly does modify the forfeiture rule. It brings us in line with other jurisdictions, including the ACT and New South Wales, and also international jurisdictions, the UK and New Zealand, which have all implemented a version of the modification rule. Given I have mentioned New Zealand, while New Zealand has fully codified the forfeiture rule, this bill seeks to follow the New South Wales and UK format where the modification of the rule falls within the discretion of the courts.

I think with that in mind and given those recommendations, it does appear that we have sought to strike the right balance to allow for greater consideration of individual circumstances while also ensuring underlying policy rationales are not weakened. I think there are a number of consequential amendments, which we will get to shortly when we get to the committee stage of this bill.

In all, we note that the utility of the forfeiture rule in practice is not a common feature of our justice system, but the need for clarity in the scope of the rule's operations and the ability to consider individual circumstances closer was certainly made clear by SALRI. I think we should take heed of

those reports because they were provided to us for very good reason and based on a lot of impartial advice. With those words, we support the bill.

The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:47): I rise to speak on behalf of the government about the Forfeiture Bill. Firstly, I think we can all agree that an unlawful killer should not be able to profit from his or her crime. Stated briefly, the common law forfeiture rule prevents an unlawful killer from receiving any benefits as a result of their crime.

I note that this bill's passage for reform began back in September 2011. The then South Australian Attorney-General, the Hon. John Rau MP, asked the South Australian Law Reform Institute (SALRI) to review the role and application of the common law forfeiture rule and any need for legislative intervention in South Australia. At that time, the Attorney-General drew SALRI's attention to a suggestion that there was a need for a new law to permit the common law forfeiture rule to be mitigated. In 2020, the former Liberal government Attorney-General, the Hon. Vickie Chapman MP, supported SALRI undertaking this reference.

An earlier draft exposure of the bill was developed by the former government and tabled in parliament for public consultation in 2021. However, the bill did not progress any further. The current bill is noticeably the same as the former government bill, with some minor changes. This rule stems from a longstanding principle of public policy that no person should gain from his or her wrongdoing. It is pertinent to note that this rule dates back to Jewish and Roman law and various medieval doctrines that were only formally abolished in 1870. The rule in its current modern form was first formulated in 1892. The forfeiture rule was extended in 1914 to include both murder and manslaughter.

Rather than relying on the judicial form of the rule, SALRI recommends that the South Australian parliament should, for clarity and certainty, introduce a standalone forfeiture act as the preferred vehicle for reform. This bill has been prepared to implement SALRI's recommendation that there should be standalone forfeiture legislation in South Australia.

In addition, the bill extends the common law rule so that it applies not only to murder and manslaughter but to all forms of homicide under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935. In South Australia, the common law rule applies to all cases of murder and manslaughter, with no discretion to modify the operation of the rule, regardless of the presence of extenuating circumstances. In view of this, the scope and operation of the rule has been criticised for its uncertainty and inflexibility. A strict application of the forfeiture rule to unlawful killings in circumstances where a lesser degree of culpability is recognised could lead to potentially unfair implications.

Examples of this would be in situations such as being the survivor of a suicide pact, assisted suicide, euthanasia or mercy killing, or where the offender has a major cognitive impairment (also termed 'diminished responsibility'). Another vivid example is in the context of domestic violence, where a victim of domestic violence kills an abusive spouse and is convicted of manslaughter on the basis of excessive self-defence or provocation.

This bill will provide greater clarity and certainty regarding the operation of the forfeiture rule. The current automatic and inflexible application of the rule is at odds with changes in community attitudes. In today's world, this is reflected in the greater range of offences and sentencing options today compared with when the rule was first formulated. As I mentioned, this was more than 100 years ago.

The Forfeiture Bill 2023 will bring relevant and important reform while enhancing justice outcomes for the community by enabling the Supreme Court to modify the application of the rule where it considers that exceptional circumstances exist and it is in the interests of justice to do so. On behalf of the government, we hope the house supports the passage of this bill. In doing so, we will be protecting individual rights and ensuring due process and fairness once this standalone forfeiture legislation is in place.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:53): I rise to speak on the Forfeiture Bill 2023. As has been stated by other speakers, the bill seeks to reform the common law that prevents an unlawful killer from receiving any profit as a result of their crime. The forfeiture rule is a rule that disallows a person

who unlawfully kills another from acquiring a personal benefit as a consequence of the killing. The killer forfeits any entitlement to inherit from the victim, either under the victim's will or, if no will disposes of all of the victim's estate, under intestacy law. If the killer and victim were co-owners of property as joint tenants, the rule prevents the property from passing to the killer.

The forfeiture rule is consistent with a longstanding legal maxim that no-one can derive an advantage from his or her criminal wrongdoing. The rule was first enunciated in the 1891 decision of the English Court of Appeal in *Cleaver v Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association*. In *Cleaver*, the court held that the woman who had been convicted for murdering her husband could not claim the proceeds of her husband's insurance policy. Lord Esher MR stated that the rule of public policy in such a case prevents the person guilty of the death of the insured, or any person claiming through such a person, from taking the money.

At present, the rule applies to all cases of murder and manslaughter, with no discretion to modify the operation of the rule regardless of any extenuating circumstances, such as a victim killing an abusive spouse in self-defence. The South Australian Law Reform Institute reviewed the common law forfeiture rule in 2020 and produced a report with 67 recommendations to reform the act. This bill is the result of those recommendations.

The bill applies the forfeiture rule to murder, manslaughter and all forms of homicide, including any person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission of these offences. It also allows for the executor or administrator of a deceased estate to apply to the court for an order specifying whether or how the forfeiture rule applies to the distribution of that estate.

The bill will not apply the forfeiture rule to someone found to be mentally incompetent in committing the offence. The bill will allow any interested person to make an application for an order to modify the application of the forfeiture rule where exceptional circumstances exist, such as where the offender is the survivor of a suicide pact, has a major cognitive impairment or, in the context of domestic or family violence, where a victim kills an abusive spouse and is convicted of manslaughter on the basis of excessive self-defence or provocation.

The bill empowers the court to make any other ancillary orders in relation to the forfeiture rule and allows the court to make orders in relation to the enforcement of the forfeiture rule where benefits have already been distributed or where the offender has their conviction quashed on appeal.

The Greens note the South Australian Law Reform Institute's assessment that the application of the forfeiture rule in South Australia does not reflect contemporary public policy or social values, is too rigid and inflexible, risks applying the rule harshly to certain unlawful killers whose culpability is less than other unlawful killers, and has resulted in its application in a manner that is inconsistent with contemporary values and attitudes. We therefore welcome this opportunity to fix this area of the law, and we support the bill.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (15:57): I thank the Hon. Michelle Lensink, the Hon. Tung Ngo, the Hon. Robert Simms and the Hon. Connie Bonaros for their contributions, and I look forward to the committee stage of the bill.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage

In committee.

Clause 1.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: This is pretty straightforward questioning in relation to the differences between the 2021 bill and this one, in particular removal of section 10, if the Attorney-General is a person who can make an application in proceedings for an interim order relating to preserving property that may be subject to the forfeiture rule. We are seeking more information about why this alteration was necessary and what advice the government received in order to make that change.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thank the honourable member for her question. It relates to seeking an interim order effectively to preserve an estate before further work or investigation is undertaken. The SALRI report suggests that it could be the Attorney-General who could seek that interim order. In consideration of this, and taking into account advice, that may necessitate the Attorney-General of the day actually forming a view about the merits of whether an interim order should be made, and perhaps even forming a view about the merits or the likely outcome.

The legislation instead allows an interested person to make such an application. It is not the Attorney-General as essentially a middle step forming a view but an interested person, being an offender, the executor or the administrator of the estate of a deceased person, a beneficiary, a person claiming through an offender, or any other person who has a special interest. The idea behind that is that these people would be better placed than the Attorney-General of the day to make such an application.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: I have a question in relation to the SALRI recommendations. I note that there are recommendations that have been implemented in whole, there are others a version of which has been implemented and then there are some that have not been implemented at all. In relation to those where a different version has been adopted or not implemented at all, where was the decision made for those changes? We have SALRI on the one hand giving us a very detailed report as to why we should make them and then we have changes in the bill on the other.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: For a number of them that have not been implemented, one of the main reasons is that they are not things capable of being regulated at a state level. For some of the areas where there is partial implementation—that is, implemented in a different form—that is to be as flexible as possible in the application, and for other areas, like I have just answered for the Hon. Michelle Lensink, it varies because we think an interested person rather than the Attorney-General does not have the Attorney-General effectively as in some way an interim decision-maker.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: Just to confirm: I understand the jurisdictional issues, but there are some that have not been implemented because the government simply does not agree with the recommendations. One example was that which applied to the identity of a judge, for instance, and there was a different view taken by the government. Did we go back to SALRI and consult further? Did we consult with anyone before making those sorts of changes, or did we just think that this was a better approach?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Of course, there will be others that are not jurisdictional issues but are ones on which SALRI has made recommendations. There are some on which successive governments have not agreed. The former government had thought about legislation for this and we have the legislation we find before us now. On some of those a government of the day will take a different view.

That is one of the benefits of reports we have had from SALRI over many years: most of the reports are extraordinarily comprehensive, hundreds and hundreds of pages of thorough investigation, research and recommendations. I do not think there has been a SALRI report where every single recommendation has been acted upon, but that is one of the benefits of the SALRI reports: they give an exceptionally comprehensive suite of possibilities.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: I have to agree with everything the Attorney has just said about the SALRI reports and the work that goes into them. To confirm again: where those changes are made, for whatever reason they are made—and I understand that successive governments will have their own position on something—is that something on which we have consulted with others? Have we gone back to SALRI to say, 'Look, we are thinking of doing this instead,' or have we gone to the Law Society or somewhere else to say, 'Actually, this is this government's position on this,' and had any feedback on that change?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thank the honourable member for her question. As a matter of course, I am advised that governments do not go back to SALRI and say, 'Hey, we are thinking of doing this differently,' or, 'We are not going to implement this; what do you think?' But often with legislation that is developed as a result of SALRI reports, as was the case with this with the former government, there is regularly extensive consultation that occurs once a bill has been drafted. Through that consultation process it is often raised, not necessarily by SALRI but by other

stakeholders, 'SALRI recommended this; these are our views on you implementing them or implementing them in the way that you have done.' Of course, feedback also comes back, 'You have implemented what SALRI says. These are the reasons why we think you ought not implement that part of it.'

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (2 to 18), schedule and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

Third Reading

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (16:06): I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Bill read a third time and passed.

SUPREME COURT (DISTRIBUTION OF BUSINESS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 18 May 2023.)

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (16:07): Be still my heart—the content of the matter of this bill before us. No, I am not actually mocking our esteemed learned colleagues of the law. This is a pretty straightforward piece of legislation, from what I understand, which allows for the distribution of business between divisions of the court through agreement between the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the President of the Court of Appeal.

Clause 3 of the bill amends section 47(1), resulting in the decisions relating to distribution of business to be the responsibility of the Chief Justice in circumstances of complexity of a specified proceeding and the limited availability of judges for the general division, after consulting with the President. Clause 3 of the bill would also allow the movement of judges from one division to another for the purposes of specific procedures such as complex matters, not just for a set time period.

Clearly, it is an important matter, which is to enable the courts to manage their own business in a more efficient manner. I think we all appreciate that justice delayed is justice denied. All efficiencies and improvements to the management of flow through the courts is something to be supported and therefore we will be supporting this bill.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:09): As has been noted by the Hon. Michelle Lensink, this bill aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our courts. I understand the current situation is that the Chief Justice possesses the authority to distribute court business by assigning work to members outside the Supreme Court for a limited period of 12 months. The Chief Justice has identified that, to have greater flexibility within the law, it would be preferable to allow for assignments to be made for a particular setting.

The primary objective of this bill is to improve the flow of cases through our courts. By extending the assignment duration, we can provide the Chief Justice with the necessary tools to manage the workload effectively, ensuring cases are heard and decided in a timely manner. I do hope that we see an improvement in the speed at which matters move through our court system because there have been unacceptable delays, and that is not, of course, the fault of the judiciary, it is the fault of governments—both Labor and Liberal—that have not provided appropriate resources to our court system.

We know that access to justice that is delayed is access to justice that is denied. It is really important that we resource our court system appropriately, so that it can expedite matters through the court and ensure that justice is served. In recognising the importance of swift justice, we recognise the impact that it has on all of the individuals involved, not just the victim and their families but also defendants, alleged perpetrators, who have a presumption of innocence as well or who may

represent a serious threat to the community should they not be appropriately dealt with through our justice system.

It is important to note that this bill does not compromise the integrity of our judiciary in any way. The bill includes a crucial safeguard that requires the Chief Justice and the President of the Court of Appeal to mutually agree on any assignment. This preserves the checks and balances required for a robust system.

While the Greens are supportive of the bill, I understand that there may be some amendments, and we reserve our right in respect of those amendments and will certainly consider those. We support the bill. We acknowledge the demands of our legal system and believe that we need to adapt the administrative framework accordingly. That said, we will consider any amendments that come before us in the days ahead.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. I. Pnevmatikos.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO) BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 4 May 2023.)

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:13): I rise to indicate the Greens' support on the Statutes Amendment (Education, Training and Skills Portfolio) Bill. This bill contains some technical amendments to support the administration related to education, training and skills. The Greens believe that education is a right of all people at all stages of life. The opportunity to learn unlocks potential that reduces inequality, and it allows people to live a good life. We should ensure that the administrative provisions in any legislation do not create unnecessary difficulties for the delivery of good quality public education in our state. Sometimes that means we need to deal with some technical amendments to existing legislation.

The bill addresses some inconsistencies between what occurs in practice and the provisions of the Education and Children's Services Act 2019. I understand that under the existing act approved learning programs, such as the VET programs, are not listed as being required to report on non-attendance. That is ironic, given the number of members who are not present in the chamber at the moment who are due to speak.

The PRESIDENT: Order! We do not reflect on that.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: While we have been advised that this already happens in practice, it is not reflected in the legislation. The bill also removes principals of schools as the authority to waive fees for international students. Currently, fees are administered by the Department for Education, and thus it is more fitting for that responsibility to sit with the department. We understand that there have been circumstances recently where this applied, such as fees being waived for families who were evacuated from Afghanistan and resettled in Adelaide. We welcome fees being waived in these circumstances.

The bill also provides for the registration and standards boards to have a deputy act for a board member while their position remains vacant. This is a reasonable measure to ensure seamless operation of the board when vacancies arise and while the process to fill the position is still being undertaken.

Finally, this bill allows for an amendment to the History Trust of South Australia Act 1981. The amendment, I understand, comes at the request of the History Trust to ensure that artefacts and other historic items can be protected from unwanted behaviour where the History Trust is holding an educational event at locations other than on their own premises. It allows for the provisions of that act to apply to locations that the History Trust is temporarily using. The Greens consider these to be sensible provisions and we are in support of the bill.

The Hon. J.S. LEE (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:15): I rise on behalf of the Liberal Party to make my contribution regarding the Statutes Amendment (Education, Training and Skills Portfolio) Bill 2022 and to indicate our support from this side of the chamber. The bill before us

will amend a number of pieces of legislation—namely, the Education and Children's Services Act 2019, the Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 and the History Trust of South Australia Act 1981—to rectify a number of small or minor technical, legal and administrative issues associated with the operation of provisions of those acts.

A substantial contribution has already been made by my colleague in the other place the Hon. John Gardner, shadow minister for education, skills and training. The bill was passed with strong bipartisanship and there is no doubt that we all want to advocate for the advancement of a better education system in South Australia. I take this opportunity to recognise the tremendous work of those who have helped shape this bill and would also like to put on the public record the significant advancement made by the former Marshall Liberal government in education reform between 2018 and 2022.

Improving attendance requires a deep appreciation of the complex factors that influence student, family and community engagement. Understanding the relationship between attendance and achievement can help teachers, school leaders, parents and school communities create welcoming school environments, promote positive attendance habits and tailor early and individualised interventions to address problematic absenteeism. It is a testament to the efforts of the former Marshall Liberal government that the current government is seeking to continue its approach to dealing with attendance and truancy.

Due to the significant challenges presented during the COVID period, we must acknowledge that it was difficult to achieve consistent school attendance and hence we were unable to make progress in this space as fully as we would have wanted to when the Liberal Party was in government.

We are thankful to parents and school communities as a whole for following health and SAPOL directions and ensuring children stayed at home if they were sick or had any COVID symptoms. Their sacrifices and responsible actions helped in safeguarding the health and wellbeing of their communities and, later on, paving a much faster COVID recovery compared with interstate and other places in the world when it comes to face-to-face education in a classroom setting. I commend everyone for that. We have so much to be grateful for.

Some of the important steps the Marshall Liberal government were able to make included the establishment of the educational family conference tool. This helped the education department and staff to engage effectively with families and ensure kids were supported to return to school. The Liberal Party has always prioritised children and young people remaining engaged with school, as education creates important pathways for future success and empowers young people to reach their full potential.

Research has shown that non-attendance has a variety of effects on students, both academically and socially. Absenteeism can increase social isolation, including alienation and lack of engagement with the school community and peers, leading to emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is also associated with the increased likelihood of students dropping out.

My esteemed colleague the Hon. John Gardner, member for Morialta, served us well as the Minister for Education in the Liberal government. John advocates strongly for the need to support families to address the issues which may lead to lost school days and impact children's learning.

During the 2018 to 2022 period, truancy officers were increased from 20 to 30. Resources available to truancy officers and social workers were also increased by 50 per cent. This reflected the growing demand from schools for support from truancy officers to help get kids back on track with their education and back in school.

In the 2020 and 2021 school years, COVID prevented the full benefits of the work being realised. We expect the current government, with the opportunity that they have with things back to normality after the pandemic, to continue to improve the support available to those working diligently to keep our kids and young people across our schools engaged.

Clause 3 of this bill will amend section 75 to clarify that section 75(2a) applies to both the notification of persistent non-attendance at school and persistent non-participation of a student in an approved learning program. This section 75 requires a principal of a school and the head of an approved learning program to notify the chief executive or cause the chief executive to be notified if

a student of the school or approved learning program is persistently failing to attend school or participate in an approved learning program.

Section 75(2a) enables this notification to be made in the form of an electronic report at least once a term; however, as currently drafted, section 75(2a) does not expressly state that the head of an approved learning program is able to provide notification of a student's non-participation in this manner. Clause 3 of the bill will insert a new section 75(2a) to address this issue.

When a student is engaged in a VET program as part of their school studies, that program may involve a student doing some of the hours outside of the school in a registered training organisation or through a service, or it could be a school-based apprenticeship. As that relates to truancy, this bill makes it clear there is no difference whether a student is at an RTO or inside the school grounds, provided they are present performing that sort of activity, and deals with the ambiguity that currently exists. The Liberal Party supports this change, which makes these cases clear beyond any doubt, as was the intent of the legislation.

Clause 4 of the bill amends section 130(4) to provide the chief executive the discretion to waive, reduce or refund a charge, allow it to be paid by instalments, or require a person to give security of payments of a charge under section 130. This discretion will relate to charges fixed by the chief executive of the Department for Education under section 130 for full fee-paying overseas students, students enrolled in school who are not residents in the state, and children enrolled in school who are dependants of a person who is the subject of a visa of a kind prescribed by the regulations. Currently, this discretion rests with the principal of the school and is inconsistent with the practical administration of these fees, which is undertaken by the Department for Education.

These amendments also remove unnecessary ambiguity around the powers of principals. While there are many reasons why school-aged international students may be attending school here, it is often because their parents have come from overseas. I have experienced a lot of those during my time as the shadow minister for multicultural affairs.

Although often delegated to a chief executive or chief finance officer, principals can apply a school discount or exemption. It is not hard to imagine there would be some very sympathetic cases, particularly where there are multiple children. The administrative change proposed by this bill will remove the burden for principals to make the judgement where someone asks to have the school fee burden relieved due to personal circumstances. The change would rightly leave the decision-making to the chief executive.

I would like to talk about the Education Standards Board, which is the third part of the bill. The role of the Education Standards Board includes matters of compliance, supporting and ensuring that new services are fit for purpose, as well as the ongoing monitoring, assessment and rating of schools and early childhood services.

The Marshall Liberal government invested millions in our first budget for education to ensure this work can continue to be done at the expected level. We do not want children, particularly at the early childhood services level, to slip through the cracks due to a lack of appropriate assessment and monitoring of compliance with safety issues. Evaluating whether individual cases of breaches are a once-off, could have been foreseen or are systematic is an important call to make. The Education Standards Board works very hard to make the right call.

I would like to acknowledge that the Education Standards Board is supported by a board of professionals with varying experiences in the school and early childhood sector and has a very important group of deputies acting beneath them. The significant change in this bill will enable the deputy members of the Education Standards Board to serve as full members without having to go through the cabinet process again should a member of the board step down or be removed for some reason. This change will make life easier for the Education Standards Board and the cabinet office and we are happy to facilitate it. The Liberal Party will support this measure.

The fourth part of the bill relates to the work of the History Trust. The History Trust manages our state's museums, such as the Maritime Museum, the National Motor Museum and the Migration Museum, as well as the Centre of Democracy. In addition, it also has responsibility for our state's

history collection. This includes a vast number of artefacts, memorabilia and items of significant value to our state. These items tell the story of South Australia.

To carry out this role, the History Trust is given certain powers to protect the property it is entrusted with preserving. Currently, the History Trust could ban someone from one of its sites for a day or for longer to ensure good order. These powers have not been used or been required to be used; nevertheless, that does not mean there would not be circumstances that could arise where it would be appropriate for these powers to be utilised.

The clause in this bill extends the powers of the History Trust to sites being used temporarily to conduct activities or events related to its function. The Migration Museum, for example, might want to rent a room to do a display while it was undergoing some significant renovations, included those funded dramatically by the former Liberal government. In this case, the History Trust might use some other spaces for its displays. This bill addresses those circumstances. We believe that, if these powers are to continue to exist, it would seem a logical extension of the powers of the History Trust. The Liberal Party offers our support for this change, which is part 4 of the bill.

In conclusion, we believe that this bill provides many sensible measures and therefore the Liberal opposition will support the bill.

The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:27): I rise very briefly on behalf of SA-Best to speak on the Statutes Amendment (Education, Training and Skills Portfolio) Bill 2022. As we have already heard, it is very technical in nature. It makes a number of minor amendments to various acts, in particular the Education and Children's Services Act. I think it is the second tidy-up bill following the enactment of that act under the previous government.

It seeks to clarify the reporting requirements for school principals for persistent non-attendance or non-participation of students, namely, the requirement for an electronic report just once per term. I understand that this relates to a student aged between six and 16 being absent for more than 10 days without excuse.

We have been told it is not crystal clear in its present form, hence the reason for the changes. It seeks to further clarify that it is only the chief executive who has the discretion to waive or vary fees for certain overseas and non-resident students, rather than individual principals.

An amendment to the act that prescribes the composition of the board seeks to manage circumstances where a temporary vacancy arises towards the end of a term. If a long term remains, we are told the minister is likely to seek to make a fresh appointment, which I think makes perfect sense.

Finally, the bill seeks to amend the History Trust of South Australia Act 1981, as already mentioned, to broaden the scope of vandalism offences to include temporary locations and allow fines to be imposed for damaging work at those temporary locations. I understand the advice from OPC was that this update in the act was a necessary change as opposed to any changes via regulations.

We do support these changes. As everyone has highlighted, they are technical in nature. There is nothing earthshattering or groundbreaking here, but I think given that we are dealing with the issue of education, training and skills, it is important to bear in mind that there are probably a number of other very significant changes we could be making. On a more general note, when it comes to education, training and skills, we certainly stand by our policy that we really need to rethink the way we deliver education outcomes for our kids.

We need to think outside the box more and provide more choice for students, particularly at a younger age. It would probably do a lot towards the absentee rates that I mentioned earlier. The reality is that there are students who are not always going to fit the mould of the curriculum and schools and education facilities should be trying to adapt to that to provide them with as many education options as possible. I am pleased that this government has, in that respect, invested in the training and skills portfolio in particular.

I was pleased to see the Premier at the EV launch of the MTA recently. The importance of those programs is in terms of providing students who are not ever likely to go off and become

academics or follow down that path of going to university or TAFE, or whatever the case may be, with real, viable options, particularly young women in trades and areas of training and skills development that they are—or were historically—less likely to go into.

I had the great opportunity on that day to speak to the principal of St Patrick's private school. They are running what I think is an extraordinary project in terms of adapting their teaching methods, bringing on more training and skills development and really attracting kids to areas that they would not have otherwise necessarily pursued or had the ability to access through registered training organisations, like the MTA, that I think are doing an exceptional job at pointing kids to all the very different options that actually do exist, rather than our insistence on a curriculum at schools that does not necessarily always suit all students and does not result in the best outcomes for those students.

I appreciate that these are technical amendments. I appreciate that they are minor in nature, but I think at some point there is very valid scope to look at education in a broader context and in light of the important outcomes that we are expecting of kids, providing them with as many options as we can to make sure that they go on to successful employment at the end of their education. With those words, obviously, given that this is a technical bill, we support it and look forward to its swift passage through this place.

The Hon. R.B. MARTIN (16:33): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Statutes Amendment (Education, Training and Skills Portfolio) Amendment Bill. This bill amends three acts to strengthen important safeguards for our students, early educators and the History Trust. The amendment that I am particularly interested in speaking on today is the commitment to increase the powers contained in the History Trust of South Australia Act 1981.

This bill expands the definition of 'premises' contained in section 2 of the act, from those premises 'owned or occupied' by the trust, to:

...premises being temporarily used by the Trust to conduct activities and events related to its functions under this Act during the course of such activities or events.

This is an important amendment, as it gives the trust additional powers to deal with inappropriate behaviour at events, to manage parking and the unauthorised reproduction of exhibits. The effect of this small but meaningful change is to allow the History Trust to properly protect our exhibits and our history and to make sure that all South Australians feel safe and included when attending any of the fantastic activities put on by the trust, wherever they are held.

The History Trust is an extremely important South Australian institution and one that, in my view, sometimes does not get the attention that it deserves. I believe that understanding our history is essential because it allows us to better understand ourselves and the world around us.

The History Trust is responsible for the operation of the Migration Museum, the National Motor Museum, the South Australian Museum and the Centre of Democracy. Its function is to carry out and promote research relevant to the history of South Australia, to conserve objects of historical interest and to encourage the dissemination of historical information.

Recently, I had the pleasure of taking Dr Kiera Lindsey, South Australia's History Advocate, on a tour of Parliament House. I was extremely impressed by the breadth of Dr Lindsey's knowledge and her commitment to preserving and promoting the history of this state. I must add, I was quite nervous taking someone who is an expert in history on a tour of this house, as I thought she may well know more about this place than I do. The following passage from her inaugural address as South Australia's History Advocate elucidates her respectful approach as to how we can reimagine our state's history:

To truly tell the stories of this country, Australian history must grow beyond its western traditions. While historians once confined themselves to written archives and objective analysis, many Australians now recognise that this Country and its precious Elders are living repositories of ancient knowledges about this land and who we have been—as well as all that we might yet become. For some time now, a growing appreciation for First Nations cultures has been inspiring new approaches to our shared past. Approaches which are often more intimate, and embodied, subjective, and speculative than those once allowed by the strict edicts of conventional history. But that is what so many of us sense is now necessary if we are to tell our stories our way.

I congratulate Dr Lindsey on her work as the History Advocate so far, and I look forward to seeing her work in the future.

I would also like to take a moment to congratulate the History Trust on its recent South Australian History Festival, which was held between 1 and 31 May. The History Festival explores the state's places and spaces and the stories, collections and ideas that make us who we are. The theme for this year's festival was Past, Present, Wonder. It involved hundreds of innovative and exciting events held all over the state; in fact, even here in Parliament House, where a number of themed tours were held and a screening of the re-enactment of the suffrage debates was shown.

This important change to the legislation governing the History Trust is yet another demonstration of the Malinauskas government protecting and promoting the history of our state for the future.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. B.R. Hood.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES (PROTECTION OF PROSPECTIVE TENANTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Final Stages

The House of Assembly agreed to the amendment made by the Legislative Council without any amendment.

At 16:38 the council adjourned until Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 11:00.

*Answers to Questions***SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS**

274 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Small Business Industry Support Grant?
2. How many applications have been processed under the Small Business Industry Support Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Small Business Industry Support Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Small Business Industry Support Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off—Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.
- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.
- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant—up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to Councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.
- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.
- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation bookings—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.

- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.
- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the Small Business Industry Support Grant is as follows:

1.	Applications received:	201
2.	Applications processed:	189 (plus 12 under assessment/incomplete)
3.	Expenditure to date:	\$1.250 million (126 applications)
4.	Ineligible applications:	63

Applications assessed as ineligible were as a result of applicants providing insufficient evidence to demonstrate a 30 per cent or greater decline in revenue as required by the grant guidelines, incomplete applications and some applications were suspected of being fraudulent.

PRIMARY PRODUCTION IRRIGATION GRANT

275 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Primary Production Irrigation Grant?
2. How many applications have been processed under the Primary Production Irrigation Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Primary Production Irrigation Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Primary Production Irrigation Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off—Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.
- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.

- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant—up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to Councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.
- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.
- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation bookings—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.
- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.
- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants is as follows:

1. Applications received: 142
2. Applications processed: 126 (plus 16 under assessment/incomplete)
3. Expenditure to Date: \$2.003 million (114 applications)
4. Ineligible applications: 12

Applications assessed as ineligible were as a result of applicants providing insufficient evidence of a class 3 water licence, an Australian Business Number or were unable to provide evidence of expenditure as set out in the guideline eligibility criteria.

FLOOD RECOVERY GRANT

276 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Flood Recovery Grant?
2. How many applications have been processed under the Flood Recovery Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Flood Recovery Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Flood Recovery Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off-Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.
- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.
- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.
- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.

- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation bookings—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.
- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.
- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the flood recovery grants is as follows:

Small Business Recovery Grant

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | Applications received: | 66 |
| 2. | Applications processed: | 41 (plus 25 under assessment/incomplete) |
| 3. | Expenditure to date: | \$532,763 (24 applications) |
| 4. | Ineligible applications: | 17 |

The applications assessed as ineligible included a number where the business was assessed as being a primary producer and referred to the Primary Producer Recovery Grants program, incomplete applications and inactive Australian Business Numbers.

Primary Producer Recovery Grant

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Applications received: | 124 |
| 2. | Applications processed: | 100 (plus 24 under assessment/incomplete) |
| 3. | Expenditure to date: | \$3.008 million (88 applications) |
| 4. | Ineligible applications: | 12 |

The applications assessed as ineligible were primarily a result of applicants providing insufficient evidence to demonstrate that they derive at least 50 per cent of their income from primary production or that there was primary production potential as per the guideline eligibility criteria.

EARLY CLOSURE GRANT

277 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Early Closure Grant?

2. How many applications have been processed under the Early Closure Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Early Closure Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Early Closure Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off–Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.
- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.
- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant—up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to Councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.
- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.
- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation bookings—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.
- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.

- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the Early Business Closure Grant is as follows:

1.	Applications received:	186
2.	Applications processed:	186
3.	Expenditure to date:	\$1.770 million (110 applications)
4.	Ineligible applications:	76

Applications assessed as ineligible were as a result of applicants that were found to have not been forced to close and were still operating during the flood event, applicants that were not registered for GST or did not meet the \$75,000 income threshold as per the guidelines, and applicants not providing sufficient documentation to complete the application.

LEVEE EMBANKMENTS REMEDIATION AND CONSTRUCTION GRANT

278 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant?
2. How many applications have been processed under the Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Levee Embankment Remediation and Construction Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Levee Embankment Remediation and Construction Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off—Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.

- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.
- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant—up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.
- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.
- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation booking—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.
- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.
- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant is as follows:

1. Applications received: 48
2. Applications processed: 40 (plus 8 under assessment/incomplete)
3. Expenditure to date: \$819,937 (40 applications)
4. Ineligible applications: nil

No applications have been declined to date. Liaison has occurred with applicants, when required, to clarify documentation and support them in providing information to demonstrate eligibility of costs claimed.

GENERATOR GRANT

279 The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16 May 2023). Can the Treasurer advise:

1. How many applications have been received under the Generator Grant?
2. How many applications have been processed under the Generator Grant?
3. What is the total monetary spend to date under the Generator Grant?
4. How many applications have been rejected under the Generator Grant?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

In response to the River Murray flood event, the government has committed \$194.3 million to response, relief and recovery assistance measures.

These measures include:

- Personal hardship assistance—one-off payments of up to \$1,000 per family for those forced to leave their home by the flood event.
- Rental assistance—up to \$2,000 for singles and up to \$5,000 for families displaced from their homes by the flood event and without insurance.
- Power Shut Off—Generator Grants—up to \$500 for households and up to \$4,000 for businesses, who were notified of electricity disconnection or interruption due to the flood event, to purchase a generator.
- Business Early Closure Grant—up to \$20,000 to support businesses that were required to close early or cease trading as a result of the flood event.
- Business Levee Embankments Remediation and Construction Grant—up to \$50,000 provided to businesses on a 50 per cent cost share basis for the remediation or construction of levee embankments.
- Business Levee Embankments Engineering Support Grant—up to \$1,000 to assist businesses in funding engineering service provider's advice on the remediation or construction of levees.
- Primary Producer Irrigation Infrastructure Grants—up to \$25,000 to assist with relocating and re-establishing irrigation infrastructure impacted by the flood event.
- Levee works—funding provided to Councils for levee works to mitigate the impact of the flood event.
- Sandbags—purchase of additional sandbags and other flood defence systems.
- Tourism recovery support—targeted voucher program and campaign to encourage a return to tourism along the River Murray following the flood event.
- Community recovery fund—local preparedness and recovery fund administered by the Community Recovery Coordinator.
- Financial counselling—information, advice, and referrals on cost-of-living and financial matters for those adversely impacted by the flood event.
- Mental health support—multiple programs providing professional counselling and support.
- Fee Waivers for houseboat and tourism operators—waiver of annual licence fees for licence holders unable to access the River Murray.
- Essential services reconnection grants—up to \$5,000 per eligible household to assist with reconnecting electricity, gas, water, septic or sewer services.

- Clean-up and waste program—structural assessments, removal of hazardous waste and debris, kerbside collections, and waste management.
- Small business recovery grant—up to \$50,000 to assist small businesses meet clean-up and reinstatement costs.
- Primary producer recovery grant—up to \$75,000 to assist affected primary producers with essential recovery and reinstatement activities.
- Emergency accommodation bookings—for those displaced from their homes by the floods without alternative accommodation arrangements.
- Travel assistance—payments of \$300 for those on lower income to assist with the cost of travelling longer distances.
- Re-establishment grant—up to \$20,000 for lower income households to assist with flood damage repairs and replacement of essential items.
- Land tax, stamp duty and emergency services levy relief—land tax relief for businesses and rentals damaged by the flood, stamp duty relief for those purchasing a replacement for a flood destroyed home or vehicle, and emergency services levy relief for flood destroyed vehicles.
- Small business industry support grants—up to \$10,000 to support small businesses with operating costs during the flood event.
- Family and business support—a free confidential triage program for primary producers that connects people with family and business mentors.
- Council counter disaster operations—assistance for councils with a variety of flood mitigation, response and remediation activities.
- Fire service false alarm fee waivers—waiver of fees for unwanted fire alarm activations.
- Road repair package—to repair state and council roads damaged by the flood event.
- Legal assistance—to help those affected by the flood with a range of legal issues including insurance, tenancies, employment, and hardship matters.
- Fish clean-up—clean-up of large numbers of dead fish resulting from the flood.

A number of these measures are jointly funded by the commonwealth and the state under the disaster recovery funding arrangements.

The Treasurer has advised that as of 19 May 2023, the requested information for the Power Shut Off—Generator Grant Program is as follows:

1.	Applications received:	429
2.	Applications processed:	428 (plus 1 under assessment)
3.	Expenditure to date:	\$525,957 (320 applications)
4.	Ineligible applications:	108

Applications assessed as ineligible were primarily due to applicants providing insufficient evidence for their application, including applicants not providing evidence of electricity disconnection or interruption and applicants providing insufficient evidence to support their primary place of residence being within the impacted River Murray area.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER INCENTIVES

In reply to **the Hon. F. PANGALLO** (8 February 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Minister for Health and Wellbeing has advised:

Training of doctors and nurses is a matter for the federal government. The South Australian government is advocating national reform to its federal counterparts.

We commend the federal government for tripling the bulk billing incentive for target cohorts including pensioners and kids—this is an important step in the right direction when it comes to fixing the GP access crisis we are currently experiencing.

I met with the RACGP recently to discuss the important issues facing our GPs, and I will continue to listen to frontline GPs and their representatives about how we can best support them.

In South Australia, the Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network (RMCLHN) has established RACE—the Riverland Academy of Clinical Excellence.

RACE aims to boost clinical training and employment across the Riverland Mallee Coorong region and create new opportunities for research and innovation. Through the Academy Pathway, medical graduates are supported to undertake all the required postgraduate training to achieve a Rural Generalist Fellowship based in RMCLHN.

RACE demonstrates the commitment to medical education in the Riverland region, in line with the South Australian (SA) Rural Health Workforce Strategy, SA Rural Medical Workforce Plan and the National Rural Generalist Pathway.

SILICOSIS

In reply to **the Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition)** (22 February 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): I have been advised:

Under the Work Health and Safety Act, the duty for the health monitoring of respirable crystalline silica exposed workers is not on government, but rather sits with persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs). There is no obligation on PCBUs to report the number of screening tests undertaken. It is therefore impossible to advise council exactly how many workers were screened in SA in 2022 from all the medical screening services available to workplaces.

The Minister for Health and Wellbeing has advised in relation to question two: the Royal Adelaide Hospital Thoracic Laboratory has not sent any silicosis X-rays to Queensland for review.

WHYALLA STEELWORKS

In reply to **the Hon. F. PANGALLO** (2 May 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Treasurer has advised:

The government remains committed to providing \$50 million of grant funding to the Whyalla Steelworks for approved projects which contribute to its operational efficiency. The grant funding is subject to a formal assessment and approval process and only projects that meet agreed outcomes for the Whyalla Steelworks and the town of Whyalla will be approved. Grant funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis and subject to a formal assessment process.

In relation to a recent visit by the Premier to Whyalla, GFG Alliance publicly announced the phase-out of coal-based steelmaking on 4 April 2023, with the purchase of an electric arc furnace. The announcement is in line with this government's commitment to lowering CO² emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

It is important to the people of Whyalla to show that this government is committed to supporting the city.

CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

In reply to **the Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO** (4 May 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): The Premier has advised:

There were opportunities for South Australians to come together in celebration of the Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort. These included a special lunch on the lawns of Government House, a state reception hosted by the Governor, and a Government House open day will be held on 21 May 2023, which will include the planting of commemorative wattle trees in the grounds of Government House. Members of the public also have the opportunity to inscribe messages of congratulations to Their Majesties in books provided for this purpose.

In line with other states and territories, iconic buildings and monuments across South Australia were illuminated in royal purple on 6 and 7 May 2023 to acknowledge this historic occasion.

Her Excellency the Governor attended the coronation and presented her respectful congratulations and best wishes to Their Majesties on behalf of South Australia.

KOALA STATE NUMBERPLATES

In reply to **the Hon. T.A. FRANKS** (17 May 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): I have been advised:

The creation of the new koala state numberplate is well underway and it is anticipated that they will be available for sale later this year. Importantly, \$50 from the sale of each koala state numberplate will be used to support the work of the wildlife care sector.

The Department for Environment and Water will undertake a consultation process with wildlife care organisations later this year to investigate the best way for this to occur and what the priorities for funding might be. The consideration of measures to make roads safer for wildlife will be an option within the consultation.

The Department for Infrastructure and Transport also continues to implement strategies and look for innovative ways to deter wildlife from entering our roadways, reducing the chance of injury.

SENTENCING FOR VIOLENT OFFENDERS

In reply to **the Hon. D.G.E. HOOD** (31 May 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): I am advised:

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions have confirmed that this matter was prosecuted by SAPOL. It would not be appropriate for me to speculate on SAPOL's intention to appeal a particular sentence.

FIRST NATIONS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

In reply to **the Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition)** (1 June 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): I am advised:

1. The Commissioner for First Nations Voice is extraordinarily focused on our State Voice and has led a most extensive and thorough consultation process—probably the most comprehensive consultation that has ever been undertaken with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander South Australians. There were two tranches to that consultation.

In the first stage, the commissioner and his team travelled the length and breadth of this state, seeking views on the essential elements to be included in the First Nations Voice in South Australia.

From that research came draft legislation, which was the basis of the second stage of the feedback from the First Nations people in this state. Again, the commissioner travelled extensively through the state and sought views on the draft bill. From the feedback provided there, amendments were made, informing the act that ultimately received royal assent in an historic ceremony on 26 March 2023.

This process has been occurring in tandem with the national conversation shifting towards the creation of the Federal Voice.

2. See above.

3. See above.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS OFFICE

In reply to **the Hon. F. PANGALLO** (1 June 2023).

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector): As Attorney-General, I am grateful to the staff of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) for their important contributions to justice in this state. They, along with other staff across the Attorney-General's Department, should be commended for their vital work.

The work done by staff in the ODPP is critically important, but also highly challenging. Lawyers and other ODPP staff regularly deal with confronting material, sensitive and urgent matters, and high work volumes.

This government is committed to promoting wellbeing and safety in all workplaces, including in the ODPP. There are a number of challenges being faced in that office, and it is for that reason that the Attorney-General's Department engaged an independent consultant, Ms Rosslyn Cox, to undertake a workplace wellbeing survey and provide recommendations. I am informed that this is the first targeted review into ODPP staff wellbeing undertaken since 2017.

I consider it important that ODPP staff feel able to fully and frankly engage in this process. Additionally, any personal information provided by staff must be handled with the appropriate level of confidentiality. It is therefore not my intention to table Ms Cox's report.

The state government has also provided additional resourcing to the ODPP to deal with large and complex matters, noting the resourcing impact of such matters. The 2022-23 state budget provided \$6 million in additional funding for Operation Ironside, as well as a further \$6.4 million in the 2022-23 Mid-Year Budget Review. In addition to Operation Ironside, a further \$2.2 million was provided in the 2022-23 Mid-Year Budget review for other complex legal matters.

The honourable member also asked a number of questions of a statistical nature, on which I have sought advice from the Attorney-General's Department. I have been advised:

6. There is no useful metric of cases being 'pulled' or having 'fallen over'. Charges may be withdrawn if the director forms the view that there is no reasonable prospect of conviction. An alleged victim may decide that they do not want to give evidence and the director may not consider that it is in the public interest to compel them. Defendants may be found not guilty if the jury is not satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that they committed the offences with which they are charged. Such is the operation of an effective criminal justice system.

There were significant changes made to the criminal justice system in March 2018, known as 'major indictable reform'. Those changes significantly altered the way that charges progress through the courts and the points at which the Office of the DPP is involved in assessing the case. That makes comparison of conviction rates prior to 2018 difficult. Accordingly, my response is limited to the three financial years since those changes have been fully operational.

During this period, rates of conviction (post-committal) have remained generally stable:

- 2019-20—80.60%
- 2020-21—79.77%
- 2021-22—78.70%

There are also records of the number of occasions on which a nolle prosequi is entered. That might be a useful figure, because such an outcome may indicate a late assessment that there is no reasonable prospect of conviction. However, even the utility of that metric is limited because there are myriad reasons why this assessment may occur at a late stage (evidence may come to light at the last minute, a victim may decide that they cannot proceed, a crucial witness may die, etc). As with conviction rates, the number of nolle prosequi has also largely remained stable since major indictable reforms were implemented:

- 2019-20—27
- 2020-21—35
- 2021-22—31

7. 170 staff have left the office since 2017. Of those, the following reasons have been given:

- Appointed to judicial office—5
- Retired—6
- Resigned—53
- Transferred elsewhere in the public sector—67
- Contract expired—26 (note that this does not include those employees who remained in the office but in employment of a different type, e.g. those who were in the administrative stream whose ASO classification contracts expired when they became legal officers upon admission to practice)
- Employment terminated—1
- TVSP or ESP—11
- Death of employee—1

8. No ODPP staff have claims for injuries caused by any of these factors.