

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 14 May 2025

The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens) took the chair at 14:16 and read prayers.

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

Parliamentary Committees

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:17): I bring up the 62nd report of the committee, 2022-25.

Report received.

Parliamentary Procedure

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Reports, 2023-24—

- Adelaide Hills Wine Industry Fund
- Apiary Industry Fund
- Barossa Valley Wine Industry Fund
- Cattle Industry Fund
- Citrus Growers Fund
- Clare Valley Wine Industry Fund
- Grains Industry Fund
- Grains Industry Research & Development Fund
- Langhorne Creek Wine Industry Fund
- McLaren Vale Wine Industry Fund
- Pig Industry Fund
- Riverland Wine Industry Fund
- SA Grape Growers Industry Fund
- Sheep Industry Fund

Question Time

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:20): I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to addressing a question to the Minister for Emergency Services regarding the Metropolitan Fire Service travel allowance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: On Monday, Her Honour Deputy President Eaton handed down her judgement in the South Australian Employment Tribunal in the matter of the United Firefighters Union versus the chief executive of the Attorney-General's Department. I quote from her judgement:

The employer here is the Crown. That it has failed over such an extended period to comply with its own legal obligation is disturbing. The South Australian community is entitled to expect its government to adhere to the same standards of conduct that it requires of other employers.

Yesterday in the chamber, the minister gave a personal explanation in which she was, and I quote, 'deeply regretful' about the Metropolitan Fire Service's travel allowance scandal. In a statement issued yesterday, the United Firefighters Union said, and I quote,

Emergency services workers, our fire fighters, deserve better than being ripped off by an employer and a government that apparently could not care less.

So my question to the minister is: will the minister, on behalf of the government, apologise to South Australian firefighters for what has been described by the United Firefighters Union as one of the worst cases of wage theft in South Australian public sector history?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:21): I thank the honourable member for her question. As she has rightfully highlighted, I did give a personal explanation regarding this matter yesterday in this chamber, and I did express that it was deeply regretful that firefighters were delayed in receiving payments for their travel allowance. This situation should not have happened. It took too long to be corrected and it is not good enough. I am advised that the MFS is working to ensure that all orders made by SAET are complied with and have taken active steps to put processes in place to ensure this does not happen again.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22): Supplementary question: will the minister actually apologise to South Australian firefighters?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Yes, because that is what they are asking for. That is absolutely what they are asking for.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Your next question. It is not a supplementary.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order, enough! The Hon. Mr Hunter, the Hon. Ms Girolamo! Leader, your second question.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:22): My question is to the Minister for Emergency Services regarding the Metropolitan Fire Service travel allowance. Does the minister acknowledge that her statement yesterday that the situation was merely an 'administrative error' was a gross understatement and an insult to the hardworking firefighters here in South Australia?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:23): As I highlighted in my previous comments and yesterday, this has been deeply regretful and one where we have appreciated the advocacy of the United Firefighters Union for representing their organisation and their workers. I will highlight again that we are deeply regretful and that this should not have happened.

The Hon. N.J. Centofanti: 'We won't apologise.'

The PRESIDENT: Order!

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (14:23): Supplementary: the minister said she deeply regrets the matter. Will she apologise for it?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:23): I think coming in yesterday and making sure that I was able to update the chamber, putting on the record that this should not have happened and that we are deeply regretful that this is a situation that people have been put into—and we have made sure that the MFS is working to meet the requirements that have been set out by SAET.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:24): I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to asking questions of the Minister for Emergency Services regarding the Metropolitan Fire Service travel allowance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: In a letter dated 13 May from the Secretary of the United Firefighters Union, concerns have been raised that the minister's answers to questions put by the opposition on 29 April in this place, and I quote, 'appear to be capable of misleading parliament'. I seek leave to table that open letter, which outlines five examples of where the United Firefighters Union have alleged the minister has misled the chamber.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: The letter says, regarding comments that the minister has made, that they 'have no basis in reality' and are 'a complete falsehood'. In relation to the minister's comments that constant conversation had occurred with the union, the letter reads, 'I am not aware of the conversations of which you speak.' My question to the minister is: does the minister concede that she misled the parliament in her answers on 29 April this year?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:25): As I have highlighted now in the previous two comments, I did make a statement yesterday in the chamber to update the parliament in regard to this matter. I stepped through the process and I refer to that explanation that was given yesterday, which provides greater detail of the process that was undertaken throughout, leading up to the hearing and post the hearing.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:26): Supplementary: does the minister believe that she corrected the record in the chamber yesterday, or does she believe she simply updated the parliament?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The minister is on her feet.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:26): As I said yesterday, an update was provided to the parliament yesterday to make clear the processes that were undertaken. We are apologetic for the steps that occurred, in the fact that we deeply regret the point that we were able to get to. We have said previously that this should not have happened and we know it should not have happened, but that is why we made that statement yesterday in the parliament as quickly as we could to update the parliament on the processes that were undertaken.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (14:27): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister speak to the chamber about the RDA Leadership Development Program graduation she attended in Mount Gambier last week?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:27): I thank the honourable member for his question. I was delighted to attend the Limestone Coast Emerging Leaders Program graduation for 2024-25. The

Regional Leadership Development Program is an initiative that I am very proud to support through the Department of Primary Industries and Regions.

The 16 graduates of the Limestone Coast RDA Emerging Leaders Program are an impressive and diverse group, hailing from various backgrounds and from various areas of the Limestone Coast. They come from industries, including agriculture, construction, communications, migrant support services, business ownership, law, financial services, health care, local government and transport services. The graduates were Jessica Bilal, Martin Brown, Kelly Burton, Lucy Chant, Leolla Eason, Tara Graetz, Mohammad Hakimi, Dylan Jenkin, Trish Koch, Maceo McNamara, Victoria Milne, Natalie Morris, Leisha Munro, Kelsie Prowse, Jacinta Robinson and Sarah Secker. I congratulate them all.

The graduates presented their community action projects in which they identified key challenges in the Limestone Coast and explored potential solutions. They clearly demonstrated their public speaking skills as they proposed varied and innovative solutions, including an app developed to connect healthcare professionals who had moved to the area from elsewhere to connect with each other to assist in social connection and wellbeing to ultimately encourage them to stay in the region long term; assistance in financial literacy by running budgeting workshops to help people with their finances; a mobile childcare solution for regional workers during harvest; and connecting Limestone Coast tourism operators.

One of the most important things we can do for our regions to underpin future success, economic development and liveability is to continue to build the capabilities and capacities of our communities. Developing regional leaders of tomorrow is a foundation for this success. I often hear from the alumni of the Regional Leadership Development Program across the state that the experience was genuinely life-changing. It is an expression I hear time and time again. That is the impact this project has on individuals. It does more than develop and enhance participants' abilities to be a leader.

I am told by those who have completed the program that it completely changed their confidence and ability to communicate effectively, helped them to develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their skills, traits and values and, importantly, enabled them to build connections and relationships with their peers and the growing leadership alumni in their community. I am so pleased that the 16 graduates in the Limestone Coast have chosen to undertake this transformative program. I know that it not only will be of great personal benefit to the graduates but will also be invaluable to the Limestone Coast to have 16 new leaders entering the community.

Regions are the lifeblood of South Australia and, as minister and a Limestone Coast local, I know the importance of regional development and the Limestone Coast specifically as an economic powerhouse for our state. I know the importance of our wonderful region as a great place to live, to work, to conduct business and to generate and sustain close community and family ties. To maintain and grow these important values, it is vital to harness the leadership potential that is within our community.

I am proud of the partnership between PIRSA and the Regional Development Australia network to deliver the Regional Leadership Development Program. The current program is a \$2 million investment in our state's regional leaders—existing, emerging and even those who consider themselves as accidental leaders. The Regional Leadership Development Program is designed to be place-based, where our regions design, develop and deliver, in region, a leadership program to benefit them and their local needs. Delivering training locally in the regions encourages broader participation and enables accessibility for more diverse sectors of the community to become involved.

I am excited to see the outcomes for each of South Australia's regional programs and the increased local capacity that our communities will gain through the leadership development program. During 2024-25, I am advised that, statewide, more than 460 people participated in a course of some kind delivered through the leadership program in 42 different regional locations, and all of that is an exciting prospect for our regions and our communities.

I note the 2024-25 graduating group is, as I said, once again a diverse one drawn from across the region. I trust that the skills, connections, confidence and self-belief that they have gained will

take them far, be it in their personal lives, workplaces, sectors or, importantly, in supporting and leading their local communities. I look forward in the coming months and years to hearing more about the steps that the leadership alumni take in their individual leadership journeys.

Congratulations to Regional Development Australia—Limestone Coast, the program steering committee and the other generous sponsors of this program for understanding and embracing the leadership needs of the Limestone Coast region. I would also like to acknowledge that the mayor, Lynette Martin, was in attendance, as was the Hon. Ben Hood from this place.

I would particularly like to add my congratulations to the RDA—Limestone Coast for its vision in taking a lead to negotiate the delivery of the acclaimed Company Directors Course offered through the Australian Institute of Company Directors in Mount Gambier this month. In so doing, they have created an enviable place-based opportunity for regional leaders to extend and hone their governance skills. To the graduates, I look forward to seeing them grow as future leaders and continue to connect with each other and their communities as they continue to step into their leadership roles.

SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (14:33): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development on the topic of preparedness for the impact of the algal bloom.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: The impacts of algal blooms are well known, and one such as the *Karenia mikimotoi* currently off the coast of South Australia is foreboding. The impacts are known to include declining fish stocks, closure of fish grounds, decline in tourism visitor numbers and subsequent impacts on local businesses, as well as of course the impact not only on marine health but potentially on human health. The cost of testing, monitoring, cleaning up also must be factored in. We do know that the algal bloom that is currently off our coast is approximately the size of Kangaroo Island and nearly 20 metres deep.

In China in 2012, more than 300 square kilometres of abalone farms were affected by an algal bloom that cost some \$A525 million in lost production. In Tasmania, there was an impact of at least \$23 million to the local economy with regard to the Tasmanian seafood industry in late 2012 from a similar situation. My question to the minister, therefore, is: what is the government doing to prepare for and manage the current algal bloom off our coast? I note the Deputy Premier's words that we have to wait for it to be naturally managed as well, but what supports are being put in place now to minimise the damage and harm?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35): I thank the honourable member for her question. I think we did cover this in a reasonable amount of detail yesterday, but I am happy to add some more information around that.

When I talked yesterday about the round table that had been held several weeks ago hosted by the Deputy Premier and myself, particularly for regional councils, I think I omitted to mention some of the other participants. We also had federal departments involved, including the Bureau of Meteorology, to be able to look at where it is likely to go from here. I won't try to go into that level of detail, partly because I am not a scientist and partly because, of course, this is an evolving situation all the time. The situation of the bloom four weeks ago will be different to the next day, the next week and the next month.

The opportunity to mitigate, from the information that we currently have to hand, is pretty limited. As I mentioned yesterday, it's a reminder that nature is bigger than we are and that we don't have control over everything, and certainly when it comes to our oceans that is very evident through this particular experience of algal bloom. Having said that, what we can do is ensure that we are sharing the information as far as possible between agencies and between experts in these fields, and we will continue to look for opportunities to be able to collaborate with others to see whether there is more information that can be gleaned or more expertise and research that has been occurring, and make sure that we are drawing that together as far as possible.

I am very glad that it has been raised twice within the last two days in this place because it is a significant concern. It's a concern to those who make their economic livelihoods from our oceans and also, of course, to the people who not only live nearby and are experiencing some of the difficulties with their normal lifestyles but more broadly across the state. I think it is something that we would all like to see an easy answer to; unfortunately, there is not such a thing. We need to wait for the weather changes. That, according to our advice, will result in the algal bloom dissipating and moving on. We of course hope that will be sooner rather than later.

YATALA LABOUR PRISON

The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:37): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Correctional Services regarding the influx of illicit drugs and contraband in South Australia's prisons.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.S. LEE: On 12 May 2025, the *Adelaide Advertiser* reported that there is an increasing influx of illicit drugs and contraband in South Australia's prisons. The report highlights ongoing challenges in controlling contraband and drug smuggling within correctional facilities, particularly at Yatala Labour Prison, which has higher numbers of contraband incidents compared to other prisons in South Australia. My questions to the minister are:

1. Given that Yatala Labour Prison has higher numbers of illicit drug incidents compared to the women's prison, what specific challenges does Yatala face and why is the government unable to address these challenges?
2. What additional strategies are being considered or implemented to further combat drug smuggling in correctional facilities?
3. How has the presence of illicit drugs impacted safety and rehabilitation efforts within South Australia's prisons and what measures are being taken to address these issues?
4. How will the government ensure transparency and accountability in reporting the outcomes of these antismuggling measures to the public?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:39): I thank the honourable member for her question and for raising this in the chamber. Safety in our correctional facilities is paramount. Any assaults against correctional officers are unacceptable and police will continue to take action against prisoners who harm frontline workers. Just because you are in prison doesn't mean you are not going to get in trouble for doing something wrong.

Violence in our prisons will not be tolerated and we are stepping up efforts to stamp out offending, including contraband, which can pose a security risk. The Malinauskas Labor government has invested heavily in our prisons to help keep our community and correctional workforce safe. Over \$220 million was invested in the last state budget to increase prison capacity. I believe, since being in government, we have either opened or invested in over 600 beds in our prison system.

More searches are being carried out and contraband seized, I believe, than ever before. I am advised that more than 103 searches were conducted in 2023-24, a 14 per cent increase on the previous year, and a 35 per cent increase from when the Liberal government were in, resulting in nearly 1,600 contraband discoveries, more than double the number of prohibited items seized during 2021-22. The Yatala Labour Prison saw an increase in contraband found, coinciding with nearly 20,000 searches, which is more than the 2021 and 2022 periods combined.

I am advised that since the recent assaults, there have been routine searches at Yatala with numerous prohibited items detected and seized. For operational reasons, I won't go into further detail but in regard to finding more contraband it is because we have increased our searches significantly.

YATALA LABOUR PRISON

The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:41): Supplementary: when the minister answers about an increase in all the measures, what other evaluation processes have been undertaken by the minister to ensure those strategies are done properly?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:41): By working with our correctional services. During visits and during conversations we are able to determine if it's working and we will continue to make sure that our workplaces can be safe. As I said before, we have made sure that we are continuing to have a high number of searches because we know that this is an important part of making sure our prison systems are safe.

Also, in regard to our security systems, when you arrive at the prison itself—for example, the women's prison—you now go through an electronic screening system. It is not just a strip search anymore. The search is being done through an electronic scan so that we can pick up more contraband during those processes as well. We are finding more because we are investing more in regard to when you enter the prison system but also in those searches.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:42): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Emergency Services regarding the Metropolitan Fire Service travel allowance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO: In Deputy President Eaton's court reasons Her Honour states and I quote:

The circumstances of the contraventions are unusual and somewhat surprising for a government agency that one might reasonably assume to have allocated administrative resources equal to the task of paying its employees their legal entitlements as and when they fall due.

My questions to the minister are:

1. How is it even possible that the matter found its way to SAET?
2. Can the minister inform the chamber what the failure of the minister to resolve this matter earlier has cost South Australian taxpayers?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Minister, sit down for a second.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Do you want an answer to your question or not?

The Hon. H.M. Girolamo: Yes.

The PRESIDENT: Right, well stop it!

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:44): I thank the member for her question. As has been highlighted, yesterday I did update the chamber on this very matter. I did take the opportunity to clarify answers that I had given. That was read out in my response yesterday. As I have highlighted today, this wasn't good enough, more had to be done and done earlier, and the government do unreservedly apologise for what has occurred here.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:44): Supplementary: how much did the SAET process cost the South Australian taxpayers?

The PRESIDENT: Did the minister mention the SAET process? Because the answer is no.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Attorney, I will make my rulings, okay? I have made my ruling. I don't need your help.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Hunter!

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Ms Franks has a point of order.

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS: Point of order: the supplementary was addressed to the wrong minister. The minister does not hold the portfolio that contains SAET funding.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Ms Franks, I ruled—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ruled the supplementary question out of order, regardless.

ADELAIDE AQUATIC CENTRE

The Hon. T.T. NGO (14:45): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister tell the council about the progress of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:46): I thank the honourable member for their question and interest in the exciting process of the new Adelaide Aquatic Centre. We are getting closer to delivering a world-class community facility that will serve South Australians for generations to come. The new Adelaide Aquatic Centre, currently under construction, I am advised is on track to open to the public in the summer of 2025-26.

The transformation is well underway, with structural works progressing rapidly, and a fit-out to follow in the coming months. A major milestone has just been reached with the appointment of experienced operator YMCA Aquatic to run the centre. YMCA brings a proven track record, already managing the SA Aquatic and Leisure Centre at Oaklands Park. They will now extend their experience to the Adelaide Aquatic Centre, ensuring the site is professionally run and welcoming to all users.

Importantly, former staff from the previous aquatic centre will be given the first opportunity to express interest in the new roles. Up to 300 jobs will be created once the centre opens, supported by more than 1,500 jobs throughout the construction phase. This is not just a refurbishment, as we know, it is a \$135 million investment in a completely new state-of-the-art aquatic and wellness hub shaped by community consultation. The consultation resulted in 1,200 responses that helped guide the design to meet the needs of families, swimmers, clubs and those seeking health and wellbeing services. When completed, the centre will be a true asset for the community.

The facilities will include a 50-metre 10-lane indoor pool for swimming carnivals, water sports and recreational use; a 25-metre eight-lane outdoor pool; a dedicated warm water rehabilitation pool; a lagoon outdoor pool; an indoor learn-to-swim pool; an indoor leisure pool with splash zones and water slides; a spa, sauna and steam room; diving amenities and outdoor water play zones; barbecue areas and cafe; a gym and fitness centre; inclusive amenities and change rooms; and improved car parking and new pathways linking into the surrounding park and cycling networks.

This is a centre that will bring people together and be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy, ensuring sustainability for the future. We have also worked closely with the Adelaide City Council to return more than what I believe is a thousand square metres of land to the Parklands.

The Adelaide Aquatic Centre has served the people of South Australia for over 50 years. This investment ensures we will have a modern, accessible and inclusive facility that supports community recreation and health outcomes long into the future. The new Adelaide Aquatic Centre is more than a pool, it is a legacy. I look forward to welcoming South Australians through its doors and seeing the positive impact it will have for generations to come.

ADELAIDE AQUATIC CENTRE

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:49): Supplementary as a result of the response from the minister: minister, why has the government awarded the administration of the Aquatic Centre to a Victorian-based YMCA over the South Australian YMCA, and did the Adelaide YMCA tender for the contract?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:49): As you have highlighted, it was a tender process and, as we know, there was an opportunity to provide a unique experience here where we could provide a new operator to oversee both the aquatic centres, so that was what the tender process was: an operator to operate both of those facilities.

It was a process that was followed, with the organisation that was able to, I guess, put the best foot forward. That is what a tender process is there to do and to achieve. We were able to find that YMCA Aquatic was the new operator of both of these new facilities, so now we will have a southern facility and the central facility both managed by the same operator.

We have seen that over 300 local South Australians are employed at the one near Marion—I think it is around 380—and this new facility will have 300 people also employed from South Australia. That is a really important figure because it has actually more than doubled, I understand, what was there previously at this aquatic centre, so my understanding is that more South Australians will be employed through this new operator.

ADELAIDE AQUATIC CENTRE

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (14:50): Why was the South Australian YMCA overlooked and is the minister saying that they were incapable of running the centre? Why was preference given to an interstate company rather than a local one?

The PRESIDENT: You can choose to answer it if you want, but I tend to agree that it wasn't arising from the original answer, minister.

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:51): I think the clue is in the answer: it's a tender process. This is a process that is followed. It's not something that politicians are stepping into. It is a process that is followed and, as I have just said, this is really about 300 South Australians being employed. They are South Australians who live and work here. This is an organisation that is already investing in and backing South Australians and having them based here locally.

ADELAIDE AQUATIC CENTRE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:51): Final supplementary: is the project on track to be completed and the centre opened prior to the upcoming summer?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:51): As I think I mentioned in my comments, I understand the centre is on schedule to be opened in the summer of 2025-26.

Parliamentary Procedure

VISITORS

The PRESIDENT: Before I go to the Hon. Ms Game, can I acknowledge and welcome to the gallery the school leaders from across the seat of Narungga—welcome.

Question Time

ADELAIDE DESALINATION PLANT

The Hon. S.L. GAME (14:52): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, regarding the Adelaide Desalination Plant.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S.L. GAME: The Adelaide Desalination Plant produces fresh water from sea water by forcing sea water through filters. The water which passes through the filters is fresh water. The water that does not pass through the filters is mainly brine, with data showing that the salt concentration is at times twice that of sea water. The brine discharge also contains traces of a large

number of chemicals used in the cleaning of the plant. The chemicals are toxic and include detergents, biocides, chelators, acids and caustics, as well as heavy metals.

AdelaideAqua D&C Consortium operates the desalination plant and is required to monitor some of the chemicals in the brine discharge, while the Environment Protection Authority monitors the brine discharge pumped into the sea from Lonsdale. My questions to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, are:

1. Will the government make public the full list of all chemicals being used to maintain the desalination plant?
2. Are all the chemicals used at the Adelaide Desalination Plant being monitored in the brine discharge?
3. Given the unexplained death of many marine animals reported in the past six months, what is the government doing to rule out long-term brine discharge as the cause of these deaths?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:53): I thank the honourable member for her questions. I will pass them on to the relevant minister in another place. I will just check as I'm not sure if it's Minister Close. I suspect that Minister Champion might have responsibility for the desal plant with SA Water as part of the infrastructure portfolio, but I will check which is the correct minister and make sure a reply is brought back for the honourable member.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (14:54): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services regarding the Metropolitan Fire Service.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK: It was recently reported that the United Firefighters Union has raised concerns with the SA Employment Tribunal regarding carcinogens allegedly contaminating Metropolitan Fire Service uniforms. According to the UFU, personal protective equipment (PPE) at older fire stations has been stored in fire truck engine bays, which has exposed the items to diesel particulate matter (DPM). The UFU stated in documents submitted to the tribunal that exposure to DPM can have 'potentially fatal consequences'.

The union had apparently written to the MFS on multiple occasions over a number of months, imploring it to take action. Although the MFS claims it has conducted an audit of worksites where it was suspected DPM may be present and says the levels were found to be 'well below the relevant industry standards', the UFU SA secretary has said, 'Our members are showing us the equipment visibly coated in exhaust particulate. It's a gross neglect of the state government's work health and safety obligations, as the employer. It's very frustrating that we have to litigate and spend members' money on this.' My questions to the minister are:

1. When was the minister first made aware of the UFU's concerns with DPM contamination of PPE?
2. What actions has the minister taken in response to these concerns?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:55): I thank the honourable member for her question. Supporting the health and welfare of our firefighters is a priority, and the Malinauskas Labor government continues to deliver new equipment and station upgrades to improve safety. It is my understanding works have been completed at the majority of MFS stations, and the MFS continues to action these matters as a priority.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:56): Supplementary: has the minister requested independent testing of those MFS sites storing protective equipment and, if not, why not?

The PRESIDENT: I did not hear any mention of independent testing.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI (14:56): My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General inform the council—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Attorney-General, you are not actually helping your colleague be heard. Please repeat the question.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI: My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General inform the council about this year's National Volunteer Week?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:57): I thank the honourable member for her question. I think I have enough information not to need to take this on notice, so I will attempt to answer the honourable member's question asked in my portfolio area. It is particularly in respect to the work that volunteers do in the justice sector.

National Volunteer Week is held between 19 and 25 May this year, celebrating the remarkable contributions of volunteers across the country. Today, I want to shine a light on a group whose quiet dedication often goes unnoticed: the volunteer justices of the peace (JPs). In South Australia, over 7,000 individuals serve as JPs, offering their time and expertise without any expectation of reward. These volunteers are entrusted with responsibilities that are foundational to our legal and civic processes.

JPs serve in myriad crucial community roles, including witnessing affidavits and statutory declarations, certifying copies of vital documents and providing an independent presence in various legal matters. Their work ensures the integrity and accessibility of justice in our communities. The role of JPs is not merely administrative, it is often very personal. Whether assisting someone in finalising a will, certifying documents for a new job or witnessing declarations during significant life events, JPs are there to support individuals through pivotal moments. Their presence provides reassurance and legitimacy, reinforcing trust in our legal system.

What makes their service even more commendable is that it is entirely voluntary. These individuals balance their JP duties with personal and professional commitments and are driven by a commitment to community service. Having had the privilege of meeting many JPs, I have always been impressed at how effectively they go about what they do. They do not stand on business, but they just get on with the job of serving the community. Their selflessness embodies the spirit of volunteering that we celebrate during National Volunteer Week.

The Royal Association of Justices of South Australia plays a critical role in supporting these volunteers, often providing training and resources to ensure that they are well equipped to serve effectively. This support system is vital in maintaining the high standards and integrity associated with JPs. I would like again to express my deepest gratitude to our volunteer justices of the peace and encourage anyone to consider becoming a volunteer JP. Their volunteer time and integrity could make a real difference in the lives of others.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSIONER'S INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF HARASSMENT IN THE PARLIAMENT WORKPLACE

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:00): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney a question about the fourth progress report of the equal opportunity commissioner's review of harassment in the South Australian parliament workplace, tabled in the House of Assembly on 1 May this year and in the last sitting week of this chamber.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. BONAROS: That progress report notes in its executive summary that 10 of the 16 recommendations arising from the original review of 2021 have been successfully adopted, while a further three are underway. As we know, it has been four years since the recommendations were first made public. Whilst one of the three outstanding recommendations relating to the promotion of internal policies within parties has been noted as being addressed by parties themselves, outstanding recommendations 11 and 15 are earmarked as relating exclusively to the portfolio of the Attorney.

My question to the Attorney is: what, if any, progress has been made towards adopting the outstanding recommendations of the equal opportunity commissioner's review at recommendations 11 and 15?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:01): I thank the honourable member for her question. Again, it is similar to a question that the honourable member asked about the legal profession yesterday. I acknowledge the work that she has done in shining a light on some of the issues in regard to practices and harassment in the parliament workplace.

As the honourable member mentioned, there are a number of recommendations. Most of the recommendations relate to the parliament and the functions of parliament. I acknowledge, sir, yours and the Speaker's third progress report, and it is clear that work against many of the recommendations made is being well progressed. I thank you and your colleague, the Speaker in the other place, for the work that has been put into doing that.

In relation to the two that the honourable member has highlighted, which are recommendations that fall within government and within my portfolio areas, work is progressing on those. Both of those are extraordinarily complicated things for a couple of different reasons. I think recommendation 11 deals with the way that complaints are handled and managed in the context of parliamentary privilege.

Parliamentary privilege, of course, is a concept that is longstanding and important to the functioning of what we do in this chamber and in the other chamber, so any change that would change the context of parliamentary privilege—and, if I remember correctly, our rules apply the concept of parliamentary privilege as it was understood; I can't remember the date, but a certain date in the UK parliamentary system—needs to be very, very carefully thought through, but we are considering that recommendation.

The other recommendation I think is recommendation 15, and this one is being considered. Again, this is a complicated recommendation because it isn't exclusive to the workplace of the parliamentary precincts. It would propose to change obligations in relation to workplaces generally. So we are looking at those two, but for different reasons both of those are involved and complex areas to look at.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:03): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector regarding the legal obligations of government.

Leave granted.

The Hon. B.R. HOOD: The South Australian Employment Tribunal described the government's failure to comply with its legal obligations as disturbing. It found the issue stemmed

from not only a lack of capacity but from poor management, inadequate resourcing and refusal to allocate staff even after the problems were known with the MFS travel allowance issue. My question to the minister is: does the minister accept that his government knowingly failed to meet its legal obligations to public sector employees and what consequences, if any, have followed for those responsible?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:04): I thank the honourable member for his question. I will need to check but I think the judgement sets out some of the factual scenario that led to this occurring, and that included people who used to do this rostering manually leaving the position and it not being picked up when further people started. I think in the judgement it sets out that there was an assumption that the IT system just automatically did it without the new people who came into the position realising it was a manual adjustment that is made.

Without besmirching any people who have tried to perform their duties to the best of their ability, I think it is, as the honourable Minister Bourke said today, regrettable that this has occurred. Certainly, I think there are words in the judgement to the effect that public sector workers and the South Australian community in general are entitled to expect that employers, including the government, are adhering to legal obligations to pay people their allowances on time.

I have spoken in the last couple of days to both the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and the declared employer of public employees about this matter, and I have requested that the decision of the SAET be drawn to leaders in public sector agencies, and that they are reminded of the importance of complying with their legal obligations in relation to all workers' entitlements.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:06): Supplementary: how will the minister ensure that those directions that he has given to the commissioner and others are followed?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:06): I think it is pretty simple and it was in the answer: that I have requested that it be drawn to leaders of public sector agencies and that they are reminded of the importance of ensuring they comply with their legal obligations.

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

The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI: Are you the President?

The PRESIDENT: Supplementary question arising from the answer, the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

An honourable member interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: I will decide if it is going to be the last one.

METROPOLITAN FIRE SERVICE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:07): Why weren't processes in place already to ensure changes in staff did not result in failures of basic procedures?

The PRESIDENT: You did touch on that, Attorney.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:07): I am happy to refer the honourable member to not just the answer I gave but the reasons given in the judgement. I think they explain it pretty thoroughly.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! I hope you are referring to the Attorney and not me.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Stop it. Enough!

SARDI ELECTROFISHING

The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:07): My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Will the minister inform the chamber about SARDI's partnership with the First Nations people in delivering research outcomes for the electrofishing method to collect data?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:08): I thank the honourable member for his question. Most in this council would rightly be aware and I would hope be very proud of the work SARDI does to provide research and knowledge that has driven incredible outcomes across our agriculture and fishing sectors. SARDI also has a proud track record of working closely with First Nations communities across the state, as the first custodians of our fisheries and agriculture industries provide the opportunity to share knowledge and that in turn provides incredible opportunities for us all.

An important collaboration between SARDI, the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) and the River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (RMMAC) funded by the commonwealth Flow Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Program is researching pondi, or Murray cod, and trying to get a better understanding of the health and abundance of the species in the Lower Murray River.

Many years ago, it was reported that pondi was highly abundant along the River Murray and firsthand historical Ngarrindjeri accounts share stories of pondi that were apparently larger than the fishers who caught them. Over the years, though, habitat degradation, introduced species, particularly European carp, and the many other challenges that have faced the river have led to stories such as I mentioned a moment ago sadly no longer reflecting the experiences of fishing along the Murray.

The SARDI, NAC and RMMAC project makes use of boat electrofishing: catching fish in a nonlethal method that involves short 10-second pulses of 500 volts produced by an on-boat generator delivered by two delivery arms, or anodes. The charge has an impact radius of about three metres, with fish in the impact zone temporarily stunned, and they then float to the surface. The project crew collects them swiftly via dab nets, conducts a range of research measurements, then holds them in aerated tanks to recover before placing them back in the water.

I am advised that the process is harmless for both the fish and the fishers, with fish returning to normal function within minutes. Conducting research in this manner provides an efficient and safe way of collecting fish for research purposes. This research is primarily aimed at pondi, but during the process participants often observe other fish species such as golden and silver perch, catfish, bony herring, Australian smelt and, of course, sadly, the invasive carp.

In recent months, a demonstration day was once again held in Loxton to showcase the electrofishing technique. Representatives from SARDI, PIRSA, DEW, NAC and RMMAC, as well as from the commonwealth government, were in attendance with local community members, with groups of 10 people at a time boarding the dedicated electrofishing vessel to observe this fascinating fishing technique up close.

This year's event follows on from events in previous years, and it is fantastic to see SARDI showcasing its important work alongside the NAC and RMMAC. It should go without saying—it probably does—but electrofishing, while efficient, is performed in this instance by researchers with the appropriate equipment and knowledge. It is not something that should be undertaken otherwise. I thank SARDI, the NAC, and RMMAC for their work toward this project to better understand pondi, as well as putting together this event to share their knowledge, highlighting important conservation efforts of one of our iconic river species.

SARDI ELECTROFISHING

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (15:11): Supplementary: is this method the origin of the term 'stunned mullet'?

The PRESIDENT: Boom, boom.

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:11): I am happy to take that on notice and, if possible, bring back a response.

The PRESIDENT: Bring back the response it deserves.

The Hon. K.J. Maher: That was the most sensible thing they have asked.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

GRAIN SHIPPING COSTS

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:12): I look forward to hearing the response to that one, Mr President. 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 the cost of shipping grain interstate.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS: It was reported on the ABC online on 9 May that a West Australian grain exporter, John Orr, claimed it was cheaper and safer to send Australian grain to China than to drought-affected farmers in South Australia due to shipping rules. These rules make interstate shipping risky and expensive, I understand adding \$60 per tonne to the cost compared to shipments made to China. Most domestic freight in Australia is transported via road or rail, and the nation has only nine Australian flagships, with the government aiming to increase the fleet.

Farmers in South Australia are struggling with feed shortages due to ongoing drought, and high freight costs which add \$100 to \$150 per tonne to their expenses. Farmers have been rationing feed and hoping for rain while expressing frustration over the lack of support that is flowing from the state government. I understand the commonwealth government has commissioned a Strategic Fleet Taskforce report to address the decline of the Australian shipping fleet, suggesting tax incentives and financial assistance to make Australian vessels more competitive.

The WA government, meanwhile, has formed a Shipping and Supply Chain Taskforce after floods disrupted railway lines in 2022, recommending collaboration with the commonwealth and other states to stimulate an Australian-flagged fleet. Grain Producers Australia calls for better access to domestic markets and more cost-effective bulk shipping to support growers who are facing tough conditions. My questions to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development therefore are:

1. Given the ongoing drought and the high freight costs faced by farmers in South Australia, what immediate measures is the government considering to provide support and reduce the financial burden faced by these farmers?
2. What steps is the government taking to address the inefficiencies and high costs associated with interstate shipping?
3. How will the recommendations from the Strategic Fleet Taskforce be implemented?

The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:14): I thank the honourable member for his question. I am always concerned when I hear discussions referring to inefficiencies and high costs, when those matters might be due to Australian workers getting paid appropriately and having appropriate conditions. I am sure, of course, that wasn't the intent of the Hon. Mr Simms—at least I would certainly hope it was not—but I think it is something that we need to see within the global context.

There has been, according to my understanding, a decrease in Australian ships, because we obviously expect that there should be appropriate work health and safety standards, and they should be adhered to, and that workers should receive appropriate compensation through wages and other benefits. If, in the interests of becoming more competitive, there is a suggestion from any source that that should be achieved by reducing Australian workers' conditions or pay, I don't think those on this side of the chamber would be supportive of that.

In terms of the overall issue, as the member has referred to, there is some national work occurring. Once that work has been completed, then there will be, I would expect, a number of issues to consider from that point on.

PORT AUGUSTA PRISON

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:15): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Correctional Services regarding the new Port Augusta Prison.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: I was quite surprised to learn that a new section of the Port Augusta Prison had barriers constructed at a width where prisoners could potentially actually slip through and allow unauthorised access into a secure staff area. The Blue Bush Unit, as it's known at the prison, was set to receive its first high-security prisoners from Yatala Labour Prison just last month, but staff had raised safety concerns with the design flaw prior to this proceeding and prisoners being moved. According to the Public Service Association, workers requested that prison management acknowledge the hazard. However, correspondence sent to all staff stated the Department for Correctional Services, and I quote, 'didn't agree that the issue identified poses an imminent risk of serious harm to staff by the meaning of the WHS legislation'.

The department ultimately agreed to rectify the barriers, despite their initial disagreement, after the PSA launched a case in the South Australian Employment Tribunal. The PSA general secretary stated, and I quote directly:

Prisons are dangerous environments at the best of times. That's why it's so critical that the department is doing everything possible to reduce any potential risks and provide the safety environment and the safest systems possible.

So my questions to the minister with respect to the situation are:

1. Is the minister aware that her department originally dismissed these concerns and, if so, did she agree with that original decision by the department to dismiss them?
2. Was the Minister for Correctional Services informed of the safety concerns prior to the matter being lodged in the South Australian Employment Tribunal?

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:17): As I have said previously, the safety of our workers is paramount. The Malinauskas government has made substantial investments, particularly in this prison. I believe \$29.9 million has been invested into upgrading the Blue Bush and the Green Bush units at Port Augusta from the 2023-24 budget.

The Blue Bush and the Green Bush accommodation blocks were built in 1969. No major works, I understand, have been completed since then, with the exception of the Green Bush ground floor refurbishments in 2018. These upgrades contribute to increased prisoner safety, and we appreciate that we have been able to proceed with these upgrades. Prisoners are engaged in construction, providing opportunities for prisoners to achieve a Certificate II in Construction Pathways, enhancing prisoner rehabilitation. Blue Bush is completed, and the Green Bush is due to be completed in November.

In regard to the process, my understanding is a matter was raised in March with the department and steps were taken at a rapid rate before the prison was opened. A direction was given on 23 March in terms of the process that was taken in regard to those reaction times. More meetings were undertaken on 24 March. I believe that on 25 March there were further discussions with the work health and safety reps and safety work inspectors. On 27 March, my understanding is that the matter was heard by SAET, and on 28 March the Blue Bush was able to open because those issues had been addressed.

We continue to work towards making sure that this can be a safe environment for people to be working in because we want to make sure that when we are investing—as I said, this is a prison that hadn't been invested in since 1969, and we have been able to make an investment that is quite substantial. We also take on the feedback, and I appreciate the union's advocacy in this space to make sure that those steps could be taken and followed to put safer measures in place. We

appreciate that we were able to put the \$29.9 million from the last budget into ensuring this upgrade could be completed.

Matters of Interest

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:20): The world is diving into the fascinating phenomenon of artificial intelligence (AI), a term coined back in 1956 by the American computer scientist John McCarthy, one of the founding fathers in early AI research. Today, AI is firmly part of our lives as it reshapes how we live, study and work. Everything shifted when ChatGPT, the AI-powered language model developed by OpenAI, became accessible to us all in November 2022. Within two months it reached over 100 million users, making it one of the fastest growing technologies in history.

Models like ChatGPT handle text and are part of a wider wave of generative AI tools. Other models create images, logos and full design layouts, enabling workers in the creative industries to provide informed prompts to AI so they can finish several projects in a day instead of just one or two. While experts acknowledge that AI will inevitably cause some job losses, they tend to be optimistic and see AI as a positive force for creating better jobs, boosting productivity and strengthening the economy.

Our experts and professionals offer something AI cannot match, and that is a depth of specialist experience that can steer AI tools with precision. Chatbots can give quick medical advice, robots help in surgery, and AI can detect patterns in X-rays that humans might miss; however, turning those insights into safe personalised care depends on a doctor's hands-on experience, judgement and empathy. Viewed in this way, AI becomes less about replacing talent and more about allowing many professionals to work in new ways and unlock new possibilities.

In fact, AI is becoming a quiet but powerful partner in almost every part of daily life, and it is for this reason the Malinauskas government had the foresight to appoint a dedicated AI and digital economy minister, Mr Michael Brown MP. His mission is to help keep South Australia ahead of the AI curve so that we use this technology ethically, strategically and for the benefit of everyone.

We need to remember that in 2017, we set up the country's first artificial intelligence institute at the old Royal Adelaide Hospital site. Adelaide's Lot Fourteen will house the groundbreaking new \$20 million Responsible AI Research Centre announced in December 2024. This will enable us to tackle the challenges of AI and support the federal government's efforts to create safe and responsible AI practices.

Recently, the Malinauskas Labor government launched a six-month trial using AI to reduce the approval times for straightforward development applications. Applicants can submit computer-aided design drawings, which AI evaluates against predefined planning criteria. The AI system then generates detailed reports outlining compliance with its relevant planning provision, reducing the average assessment time from approximately 9.5 business days to a matter of minutes.

The introduction of new smart traffic cameras is another AI initiative. The AI-powered cameras are currently operating on the Heaslip Road exit from the Northern Expressway, another is located at the Paradise Interchange and two more are operating at different locations along Main South Road. The pilot program is enabling real-time monitoring and automatic adjustment of traffic signals and alleviates congestion and improves road safety.

These initiatives illustrate only a fraction of our agenda, yet they make one thing clear: the Labor government is positioning South Australia at the forefront of Australia's AI-powered future, driving world-class research that will keep our state competitive, innovative and resilient.

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:25): This week, for next week, federal parliament will welcome the largest cohort of women in Australian history. It is a significant milestone. It is a testament to the efforts of many women before them who have fought for equal representation and to the relentless efforts of trailblazing women and supportive allies who have worked tirelessly to break down barriers and pave the way for greater gender equality in our political institutions.

Programs like Pathways to Politics for Women, which I am proud to be associated with and support, play a crucial role in this progress by equipping aspiring female leaders with the skills, knowledge and confidence to pursue public office. These initiatives are vital in fostering a more inclusive and representative democracy. But alongside celebrations must come reflection. What does it mean to bring more women into political life if we fail to make our workplaces safe for them?

It has been more than four years now since the Equal Opportunity Commissioner handed down recommendations to address harassment within the parliamentary workplace. The review, as we know, made 16 comprehensive recommendations aimed at creating a safer and more respectful workplace. According to the fourth progress report in respect of that review, 10 of the 16 recommendations have been implemented, another three are currently underway and some remain outstanding.

Last week, by way of comparison, we saw a very swift response to recommendations arising from complaints inside the Consumer and Business Services department. Sadly, we have not seen that same urgency when it comes to a legislative response in this place. It raises a very simple question: why not, when it comes to parliament itself, when it comes to protecting the very people in this building, which, of course, we know extends well beyond members of parliament?

We all acknowledge that these issues are complex, but that does not mean we drag our feet in terms of getting those issues sorted, and it raises the question of what message we send to young women in terms of encouraging them to stand for office or to enter public service, or to even apply for a job here. What message does that send to every other workplace that looks to us to lead by example?

As we welcome more women into our parliaments, it is absolutely imperative that we ensure that our institutions are safe, respectful and supportive workplaces for all, because if we are serious about equality, if we are proud of the increasing number of women in parliament, then it is absolutely critical that we take the reforms on our own desks seriously, and that includes addressing recommendations that suggest looking at legislative reforms and referring issues off to SALRI for consideration to address the issues that have been already identified as outstanding in this profession, as they have in other professions, including the legal profession.

Once again, I acknowledge, as others do, that these are complex areas of the law, but that does not mean that we drag our feet or leave them unresolved. Let us match our celebrations of progress with concrete actions that uphold the principles of equality, respect and justice within our halls of power, just as we would expect every other workplace to do.

SKILLED MIGRATION TALENT AND INDUSTRY CONNECTION PROGRAM

The Hon. J.S. LEE (15:29): I rise today to speak about six very encouraging pilot programs recently launched under the Skilled Migration Talent and Industry Connection Program. South Australia is proud to have so many professional skilled migrants choosing our state to call home. Throughout my 15 years in parliament, I have taken every opportunity to engage with our multicultural communities and they share with me that one of the most important reasons for our migrants to stay here in the long term is having the opportunity to find meaningful jobs so that they can build a new life for themselves and their families.

The Benchmarking Adelaide Report, released by the Committee for Adelaide last month, emphasised the need for Adelaide to improve its global reputation and connectivity. It is important to recognise that job-related initiatives are crucial in connecting skilled migrants to opportunities both in Adelaide metropolitan areas and regional areas. There is an untapped skilled migrant labour force already in South Australia; however, many individuals are not working in their chosen careers.

With a lack of local knowledge and networks, navigating Australia's complicated immigration system and finding employment opportunities without local contacts or experience can be incredibly challenging for new migrants. As a result, we have many skilled migrants finding work in the gig economy despite having qualifications that align with industries in dire need of their expertise. To address these challenges, I am pleased to highlight today the six unique and customised initiatives that are currently available in South Australia.

The first of these initiatives is the Master Builders SA BuildConnect program, which I spoke about at length recently. It commenced in January 2025 and has been embraced by the building and construction industry. Following BuildConnect, I congratulate the Australian Migrant Resource Centre for launching the Connect, Thrive and Contribute program. This initiative helps skilled migrants secure employment in the priority industries by providing networking events, personalised career guidance, one-on-one case management, and résumé and interview coaching. AMRC connect skilled workers to job vacancies and mentors and assists with relocation and community integration.

The third program is called Adelaide Connected, developed by the Committee for Adelaide, and aims to ease the transition for new residents. It highlights opportunities in the priority industries, specialising in high-tech industries like space and defence. This program also promotes the state globally by highlighting lifestyle and work opportunities that can be found, and seeks to grow South Australia's economy and promote diversity and inclusion.

The fourth program is a South Australian Business Chamber program called the Skilled Migration Talent and Industry Connection Program. It focuses on connecting member organisations with skilled workers either already based in South Australia or looking to relocate. Key features of the program include employer-focused events designed to educate on the benefits of employing international talent, and employee workshops. Additionally, the regional outreach initiative targets workforce shortages in regional areas, providing skilled migrants with access to job opportunities outside metropolitan Adelaide and educating employees about the advantages of hiring skilled migrants.

The fifth program I would like to talk about today, which was developed by SkillSmart careers, is called the Engineering Futures program, which will address the shortage of engineers on Eyre Peninsula and in the Far North of South Australia. This special 10-week program allows migrants to experience life in the region, building confidence in applying for roles and relocating to these regional centres, culminating in a four-day tour of Eyre Peninsula and Far North visiting employers in Port Augusta, Whyalla, Tumby Bay and Port Lincoln.

Finally, I would like to talk about the Community Corporate program that was recently launched. It is called the South Australian Skilled Migrant Job Support Centre. This centre provides local employers with comprehensive recruitment and placement services, cultural advisory assistance, industry engagement and networking events. The unique aspect of this program is the Cultural Confidence, Safety and Inclusion Training, which aims to dispel myths and foster welcoming workplaces that celebrate cultural diversity.

NAKBA DAY

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI (15:35): Tomorrow, the Palestinian diaspora will be commemorating the anniversary of the Nakba. May 15 is an annual day of mourning for Palestinians who commemorate the anniversary of the 1948 Nakba. In Arabic, Al Nakba means 'the catastrophe'. It refers to the intentional destruction of Palestinian society and the violent expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland for the purposes of expanding the state of Israel. Entire villages were destroyed, families separated and those forced to flee have continually been denied their right to return.

Last year, I spoke about the history of this day. I spoke about how the Nakba is not an isolated event but rather a systematic pattern of behaviour. It is a pattern that continues to this day. It has been a year since I gave that speech in parliament and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has only continued to worsen. Since 7 October, nearly 60,000 Palestinians have been killed and over two million people are trapped under an illegal blockade, cut off from food, clean water, electricity, medical care and the basic materials they need to survive.

I know that many Australians feel hopeless about this conflict, who feel outraged but do not know what to do to help. Today, I would like to draw attention to the organisations and people that have devoted themselves to providing aid to the people of Gaza. Organisations like Human Appeal Australia have boots on the ground in Gaza, providing direct help to the injured and the displaced. Their Gaza emergency campaign has provided paramedics, medical supplies and hygiene packs to the largest hospitals in the region and worked on the renovation of hospitals. Thousands of food

parcels, hot meals, bread portions, baby milk tins, vegetable hampers and over 45 million litres of clean desalinated water have been distributed to displaced families by their team in Gaza. They have raised over \$1 million in Adelaide alone.

Despite the danger and the challenges, UNRRA, UNICEF, Oxfam International, Save the Children, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Palestine Red Crescent Society have continued to deliver vital assistance. Australian doctors and healthcare workers have been volunteering their skills to the people of Gaza with the Palestinian Australian New Zealand Medical Association, Medecins Sans Frontieres or other organisations. They have described the situation on the ground as 'catastrophic', 'a prison' and 'hell on earth'. They share horrifying stories of surgeries performed without pain relief in crumbling hospitals with little to no resources.

We should remember that those doctors and healthcare workers, as well as other aid workers, are risking their lives by being there, by providing help. Israeli forces have deliberately targeted hospitals during their offensive and in April destroyed the last fully functioning hospital in Gaza. More than 400 aid workers and over 1,300 health workers have been reported killed in Gaza since October 2023, despite the requirement under international humanitarian law for humanitarian workers to be protected.

The recent killing of 15 Palestinian paramedics and rescue workers whose bodies were found buried in a mass grave triggered global outrage, but many violations and attacks go unreported. We cannot forget the charity organisation World Central Kitchen. Seven of its international aid workers killed by an Israeli strike, including Australian aid worker Zomi Frankcom, were helping to deliver food and other supplies to northern Gaza.

This year, Israeli authorities took a deliberate decision to block all aid. This month, they announced plans to move thousands of hungry Palestinians from the north of Gaza and confine them in six encampments where aid and food can be distributed by private security. This is not a true aid plan. Providing aid to the suffering is one of the best parts of human nature. It is not a bargaining chip, a pressure tactic or a means of control. It is plans like this that lead us to say that the Nakba never ended.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank everyone who risked their life to help the people in Gaza and those who contributed to aid efforts, and I say once again that I stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine and their struggle for self-determination.

DROUGHT

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:40): I rise today to give voice to the thousands of South Australians who are being suffocated by drought. While this Labor government has been busy announcing packages and chasing headlines, on the ground nothing has changed. The drought continues, relentless and unforgiving, and the so-called relief remains tied up in bureaucracy, red tape and photo opportunities. This week, I received a letter addressed to the Premier. With the permission of the scribe, I want to read it out to the chamber because it speaks to the heart of what regional South Australians are experiencing:

Dear Peter, I'm not writing to ask for a handout. I'm writing to ask for something far more important—acknowledgement. We are in a drought. A real, painful, exhausting drought. And while the land is dry, it's the emotional toll that's breaking people.

This week, we lost a dear friend to suicide. He wasn't just a farmer, he was one of Australia's finest agronomists. He had off-farm income, yes, but that didn't shield him from the weight of farming life. It's a pressure that's invisible to most, but unbearable for many.

My husband and I have off-farm income too. But we are not hobby farmers. We run 2,000 sheep and 200 cattle. That income doesn't make things easier, it simply allows us to put food on the table, send our kids on school excursions, and give them the chance to represent their region at SAPSASA...

In my work as an accountant, I see the cost of this drought up close. My days are spent less on numbers and more on people. Clients walk through my door not to finalise their tax returns, but because they need a safe space to cry, to exhale, to be heard. And I sit with them, because if I don't, who will?

Now, we accountants are under immense pressure from the ATO to meet the 85% lodgement deadline to keep our tax agent registrations. But how can we possibly do that, when we are spending our hours helping others hold themselves together—emotionally, mentally, financially?

And still, South Australia hasn't been officially declared in drought. So we can't even request an extension...

And when the lodgement deadlines are missed, who pays the price?

This drought is touching every link in the rural chain. The accountants. The psychologists. The agronomists. The vets. The truck drivers. Everyone who holds up rural life.

And we are breaking.

We are now five days out from our 2024 ATO deadline. Our lodgements are at just 68%. We are staring down penalties, fines, and the heavy burden of knowing we simply cannot get through the work. 'Lack of staff' isn't an acceptable excuse. But tell me, am I supposed to miss my children's cross-country? Miss another fleeting moment of their childhood just to meet an arbitrary number?

We are doing our best.

I don't need to tell you how much rain we've had or haven't. You already have access to more data than I could ever get my hands on. But what the numbers don't show is the reality: we're spending \$250 per paddock every other day just to keep our ewes going so they can lamb, and so we can survive. The fodder bill doesn't wait. Neither does the interest bill. And still, we show up.

I leave work emotionally exhausted. The car ride home is my only quiet moment. But as I pull into the driveway, the weight returns. I see the toll it's taking on my husband, his shoulders heavier, his smile more forced. This is a man who always looks for the silver lining, and even he is struggling to see one. Still, I walk through the door at 6:45pm, put a sub par dinner on the table, and smile when my kids ask, 'How was your day, Mum?' I say, 'Great,' because that's what parents do.

We would love to take up your On-Farm Drought Rebate, but right now, we are spending every spare cent keeping animals alive. That rainwater tank, that fencing, that fodder shed—they'll have to wait. Survival doesn't leave room for investment.

We are in a unique position—we are on both sides of the story. We are the farmers living the reality. And we are the support, holding space for others as they try to survive it too. We see the hardship from both sides. And I can tell you it's hurting, everywhere.

As I sit here watching the Showdown, Adelaide vs Port, I glance out the window and I'm reminded: South Australia is more than just sport. There are industries quietly struggling, industries that need to be seen too.

All I'm asking is this: please, acknowledge us. Acknowledge that we are in drought. That this crisis is not confined to paddocks, it reaches every corner of our rural communities. Please, see us.

If that does not drive home the reality of this drought, I do not know what will. The Labor Party must stop governing by headlines and start delivering real practical relief. These are not faceless statistics, they are our neighbours, our volunteers, our small business owners and our mates. Premier and minister, it is time to stop ignoring them. It is time to step up and it is time to act.

STATE ECONOMY

The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:45): I rise to speak on the ongoing financial and economic pressures impacting South Australian workers, families and businesses and the urgent need for the government to act on the advice of stakeholders and experts to prevent our great state from falling into economic despair. In a cost-of-living crisis, the survival of households and business is dependent upon financially responsible decisions, and yet governments, both national and state, are free to spend billions of taxpayer dollars without restraint or accountability.

One Nation will always stand against reckless government spending and, as a truly independent minor party, we will never be afraid to challenge the flagrant waste of taxpayers' money to prop up bloated billion-dollar bureaucracies and fund ideological bandwagons. These wasted funds and resources could be allocated to provide some much-needed, targeted and meaningful economic reform that would reduce the cost of doing business in this state, as well as improving housing affordability and investing in the future provision of reliable and cheaper energy sources.

Instead, governments continue to borrow more money to subsidise unprofitable industries, burdening our children with crippling debt and plummeting standards of living. Without immediate and major economic reform, future generations may never buy a new home, run their own business or experience the financial security and freedom of previous generations. While the state government continues to highlight the state's economic growth in comparison to other states, these much-touted figures can be largely attributed to increasing government subsidies and expanding public

institutions, with 72 per cent of new jobs created in the state existing within the public sector, according to the Institute of Public Affairs.

The South Australian Productivity Commission has also concluded that more South Australians have gone economically backward than forward in the past three years. It is clear that the benefits of any economic growth have not extended to all South Australians, with limited progress being made to stimulate broad export and value growth in our economy. To achieve widespread economic growth that benefits all South Australians, One Nation has plans to reduce excessive government spending and waste—\$90 billion a year nationwide, in fact—eliminate red and green tape, and increase investment in business research and development backed by technological innovation and quality workplace training.

According to the South Australian Business Chamber's March quarter survey, almost 80 per cent of businesses in this state listed the cost of doing business as a major issue of concern, the highest percentage recorded. Other issues impacting on the cost of doing business were government policies, legislation, compliance demands, in particular, the mandatory climate reporting that was introduced at the beginning of 2025, with 31 per cent of businesses still yet to integrate those requirements into their operations.

One Nation will continue to develop and support measures that remove bureaucratic barriers to improve business efficiency and profitability, as well as continuing our support of nuclear energy to reduce energy costs for businesses and households. While federal and state Labor continue to celebrate their election win, the cost of energy in this state keeps rising, with the Australian Energy Regulator and market operator announcing a 17 per cent increase in the first quarter of 2025.

In addition, the market operator was also forced to intervene to maintain the stability of the grid more than 60 per cent of the time between January and March this year, adding an estimated \$21.5 million to the wholesale price. However, given the opposition leader's sudden withdrawal of support for nuclear energy, the South Australian Liberal Party is left with no solution to our state's energy crisis.

Only One Nation will offer South Australian householders, farmers and businesses the possibility of cheaper and more reliable energy through the supply of abundant baseload nuclear power. One Nation's policies include changing the National Electricity Market rules to enable and incentivise cheaper coal and gas-fired baseload power, while supporting nuclear energy in the medium term. This would slash electricity bills by up to 20 per cent immediately.

South Australia has approximately 25 per cent of the world's uranium resources and is home to the world's largest uranium deposit at Olympic Dam, containing more than two million tonnes of uranium oxide. However, all of the uranium oxide we produce is exported for the generation of electricity in nuclear reactors in the United Kingdom, France, China, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Canada, the United States and Spain, and yet the cost of our own electricity in this state remains amongst the highest in the world. The answer to many of our economic and financial problems in this state could very well be sitting right under our feet. All we need is the common sense and courage to act.

SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM

The Hon. T.A. FRANKS (15:49): 'After almost 100 years on the planet, I now understand the most important place on Earth is not on land, but at sea.' So said Sir David Attenborough recently. The algal bloom of *Karenia mikimotoi*, which persists in waters off South Australia's coast, has now been with us for over two months. Indeed, many South Australians will have lamented its impact on their recent school holidays. These too fell during a period of warmer than usual weather, one which continues to this day, an unmistakable impact of climate change.

This algal bloom is with us because of climate change. Reports of something being not quite right in the waters off our coast first began to appear in early March. Since then, we have seen so many reports of the death of aquatic wildlife off our coast. Human health has also been hit, with reports of irritated skin and eyes and flu-like symptoms. Unlike other animal species, though, we have been able to avoid, reduce or minimise our exposure to the algal bloom. Aquatic species in particular, of course, are less fortunate.

The breadth of aquatic species impacted is astounding. Some of the earliest to be found dead on our beaches in unusually high numbers were leafy sea dragons, our state's marine emblem. The leafy sea dragon is listed as near threatened. By late March, the cause had been identified by a lab at UTS and has now been confirmed, with the diagnosis being made by multiple other labs. Dead octopi were next to be reported, in this instance on Basham Beach at the beginning of April. They were followed by seals and thousands of pipis at Goolwa. Early May saw sharks and rays dead along the beaches of the Yorke Peninsula and a great white shark dead on the foreshore of Henley Beach in metropolitan Adelaide just a few weeks ago.

This is only what we are seeing on our beaches. Chances are that there are much higher numbers of dead aquatic animals littering the sea floor. It is not unreasonable to expect that species of all sorts will have been impacted and that recovery is a long-term proposition, with a quick bounce back highly unlikely. We now know the algal bloom is approximately the size of Kangaroo Island and nearly 20 metres deep. For those of you trying to do the mental gymnastics and work that out, Kangaroo Island is some 4,374 square kilometres. Algal blooms such as this are brought on by increased temperature, rainfall, or lack thereof, reduced water quality and elevated levels of pollutants.

While I cannot comment on the levels of pollution in the waters off our coast, we have had warmer than usual temperatures and we have certainly had decreased rainfall. One of the impacts of climate change is of course warmer ocean temperatures, and while we see elevated temperatures on land and suffer their impacts, it is our oceans, mostly out of sight to us, that will bear the brunt of climate change. They absorb, as the Deputy Premier recently reminded us in the other place, 90 per cent of the global warming that has occurred in recent times. Warmer oceans are more acidic and carry less oxygen. One of the flow-on effects of this is a reduced mix of oxygenated water at the surface with the waters which naturally contain less oxygen.

The vast majority of the species impacted by the algal bloom are species which live in seagrass beds or shallow sandy areas. These are the least able to move away from conditions such as this and, when we take into account the size of the bloom, have little or no chance of moving the kind of distance they would need to to escape the bloom, even if their gills were not impacted as they are by the bloom itself. The scientific studies proved conclusively that after 3½ hours of exposure to *Karenia mikimotoi*, more than 80 per cent of fish gill cells had died. It is hard to see how any species with severely reduced lung capacity in water with lower than usual oxygen levels could survive for long, let alone travel the large distances they would need to do to recover.

So where to from here? Whilst we are told there is nothing we can do except wait, in this particular circumstance, for weather conditions to change and disperse this bloom, it is obvious we need to throw everything we have at climate change, and that part includes better resourcing of our departments such as DEW and PIRSA so they can respond quickly to identify the causes of outbreaks such as this.

Governments do not have to go it alone, of course, and citizen scientists and professional scientists are ready, willing and able to assist, as they always have been, but we could amplify their contribution if better access was available to the data and the testing results in a more transparent and timely way. With that, community trust will be bolstered if we have the transparency that we need for the scientists to get on and do their jobs.

Parliamentary Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON 2022-23 RIVER MURRAY FLOOD EVENT

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:50): I move:

That the report of the select committee be noted.

I rise today to speak to the final report of the Select Committee on 2022-23 River Murray Flood Event. This inquiry was one of the most significant of recent times, not just because of the physical damage caused by the floodwaters but because it laid bare the strengths, weaknesses and blind spots in our state's emergency preparedness and response frameworks.

Let me begin by acknowledging the extraordinary resilience of River Murray communities. They lived through an event of historic proportions: the largest flood the River Murray has seen in South Australia since 1956. Three successive flood peaks moved through the system, driven by months of heavy rainfall in the Eastern States. The scale and duration of the emergency were unprecedented for many in our state's emergency services, but alongside the devastation we witnessed incredible acts of leadership, generosity and determination from local council, volunteers, service providers and community members. That spirit deserves to be recognised in this chamber.

The select committee was established to review what happened during this flood and, more importantly, to chart a better way forward. We received 37 written submissions, held regional hearings in Murray Bridge, the Riverland and Adelaide, and heard from over 75 witnesses, including local councils, government departments, farmers, businesses and non-government organisations. I would like to acknowledge our committee secretary, Mr Anthony Beasley, and our committee research officer, Dr Merry Brown. I would also like to acknowledge the other members of the Legislative Council who formed part of the select committee: the Hon. Reggie Martin, the Hon. Russell Wortley, the Hon. Frank Pangallo and the Hon. Jing Lee. Hopefully, I have not forgotten anyone.

The committee has made 23 recommendations and I wish to use my time today to walk through the most critical issues raised. One of the clearest findings was that our current emergency management framework is not suited to a slow-moving, long-duration event like this. It became abundantly clear that the system, which is built largely for bushfires, storms and other short, sharp incidents, lacked the capability to manage the protracted, complex and often evolving nature of this flood.

Roles and responsibilities were blurred. Agencies often operated in isolation and communities were confused about who was responsible for what, particularly when it came to flood modelling, levee maintenance, river restrictions and grant processes. This lack of clarity led to delays, duplication of effort and, in some cases, decisions that put communities at greater risk. One of our key recommendations is for the state government to seriously consider an alternative governance model for such long-duration hazard events, one that enables better cross-agency coordination and puts community needs at the centre of decision-making from the outset.

Another significant concern was communication or, in many cases, the lack thereof. While there were some positive examples of collaboration, too often communication was top down, one directional and difficult for locals to interpret. For instance, flood forecasts were delivered in gigalitres per day, when what communities really needed was a clear understanding of potential inundation levels in metres. This caused real confusion. People could not plan, protect their properties or even decide whether to evacuate.

The committee also heard of missed opportunities to engage with local knowledge holders. In one case, a caravan park operator found out about a closure order affecting his business through the media, rather than from the authorities. In another, irrigators were told by one agency to dismantle infrastructure unnecessarily, only to find out later that the advice was incorrect, costing them time and money that they simply could not afford.

We need a system that listens as well as talks. That is why we have recommended the early appointment of a dedicated flood coordinator role during such an emergency, someone tasked specifically with cross-agency communication and community engagement. We have also recommended the development of a live, cross-agency information sharing platform to provide consistent and up-to-date communication across departments and with the public.

I now would like to turn to infrastructure and, specifically, the levee network. The committee heard grave concerns about the condition of state-owned levees and the lack of clarity over who is responsible for their maintenance. Many levees, particularly in the Lower Murray Reclaimed Irrigation Area, were not engineered to withstand the kinds of flows that we saw, which were over 200 gigalitres per day at the peak. Worse still, many had not been inspected or maintained for years. The result was in effect an ad hoc, crisis-driven response to levee reinforcement during the floods, with inconsistent outcomes.

We cannot continue to rely on good luck. The government must invest in regular engineering assessments, maintenance schedules and clear ownership arrangements for levees. We recommend dedicated annual funding for levee repair and maintenance and greater use of portable levee technology where appropriate.

Another area that generated considerable frustration was the grants and financial assistance process. While the committee acknowledges the efforts of state and federal governments in providing support, it became clear that many grant schemes were not fit for purpose. The eligibility criteria were often too narrow, the application processes too complex, and the timeframes misaligned with the needs of the community still in crisis.

One submission pointed out that certain councils were ineligible for key funding streams, even though they had played a critical role in the response. Many small businesses and flood-affected residents found themselves navigating red tape while also dealing with physical loss and trauma. We have recommended a full independent review of the grant system to ensure it is fair, timely and accessible during future emergencies. Importantly, we have also recommended that recovery funding be more flexible and locally targeted, because a one-size-fits-all model simply does not work in a flood zone that spans hundreds of kilometres.

One of the most disturbing findings of this inquiry was the mishandling of the procurement processes during the recovery phase, particularly by Green Industries SA, which was tasked with delivering the waste clean-up and demolition services in the aftermath of the flood. What we found was a process riddled with confusion, a lack of transparency and poor governance. Local contractors, many of whom were willing, ready and qualified to assist in the recovery, were sidelined. In some cases, businesses spent time and money responding to tender invitations that were later withdrawn or quietly abandoned. Others told the committee that they were led to believe that they had a role to play, only to be excluded without explanation when the contracts were awarded to a large interstate tier 1 firm.

Instead of a process that valued fairness, local content and value for money, we saw a government agency rely heavily on a cost-plus model, a procurement arrangement that lacks the most basic safeguards for taxpayers. Under cost-plus, contractors are paid for their actual expenses plus a guaranteed profit margin, regardless of performance or efficiency. It creates a perverse incentive to inflate costs and drag out timelines. It is the exact opposite of what we should be doing in an emergency, when public money must go further, not disappear faster.

The committee heard evidence that there was little to no documentation explaining why certain contractors were chosen over others and that key meetings and decisions were not properly recorded—a blatant breach of government procurement principles. These are not minor technicalities. This is public money. These are disaster recovery funds meant to help communities rebuild, not boost the profits of big companies through vague, uncompetitive processes. A review by an independent external contractor appointed by the Procurement Review Committee found that the tender process did not meet the usual standards of the South Australian Government Procurement Framework.

This is more than administrative sloppiness; it is a failure of integrity and a failure of stewardship. The very least that South Australians expect from their government, especially in times of crisis, is that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely, transparently and with local communities in mind. Instead, what we saw was a top-down, poorly managed recovery effort that actively excluded local businesses that could have delivered the work faster, cheaper and with stronger community benefit. In doing so, this government, I think, really squandered an opportunity not only to rebuild flood-impacted communities but to support their local economies at the same time.

The committee has rightly recommended that the Auditor-General investigate the procurement and tendering processes surrounding the flood recovery, but let me be clear: South Australians should not have to wait for another inquiry to demand basic transparency from their government. This should be the norm. The fact that we are even having to recommend something so fundamental speaks volumes about how broken that process was.

There is ample evidence. The committee heard from a man who was still homeless on his block of land two years after what has been described as essentially a bungled demolition and

remediation job by the government's preferred provider. We heard from businesses that are still unable to fully reopen at pre-flood capacity due to lengthy delays in repairs and insurance processes. A two-year broken recovery is not the sign of a well-executed disaster mitigation and recovery effort.

Let us not forget that effective recovery requires continuity, not just during the emergency but well beyond it. Our local governments bore the brunt of the flood response and recovery. Councils reported enormous pressure on staff, with many teams stretched thin and working long hours with little external support. Once the waters receded, the burden of long-term recovery was largely left to local government. This cannot be allowed to happen again. We have called for more robust, longer term support for councils in recovery planning because they are the ones on the frontline, including funding for staff, access to engineering and community wellbeing services, and recognition of the unique role councils play in maintaining community cohesion and resilience during prolonged disasters.

Lastly, but certainly not least, this report is not just about looking back, it is about preparing for what lies ahead. This means the lessons of this flood must inform future planning. What we need is a River Murray action plan: a coordinated, forward-looking strategy for managing flood risk across the basin in South Australia with input from local communities, businesses, irrigators and emergency services. We also need to do more to reduce risk before disaster strikes. This means funding for flood mitigation infrastructure, public education campaigns, updated digital elevation maps and better data sharing between agencies. The aim must not be to just survive the next flood but to weather it with less disruption, less damage and more confidence.

This was a disaster that changed lives. People lost homes, they lost businesses and in some cases they lost hope, but they also showed us the best of what South Australia can be: united and fiercely determined to recover. This report gives the government a clear and detailed road map of how to do better, to govern with foresight, to prepare with integrity and to respond with compassion. The recommendations, in my opinion, are not optional. They are absolutely urgent, they are practical and they reflect the lived experience of communities that bore the brunt of government delays and systemic failures.

The next flood will not wait for this government to get its act together. The time to act is not in months and it is not in years, it is now. I urge the government to take the recommendations seriously and to act quickly. The next flood will not wait for us to catch up.

Let me be clear: this select committee did important work, but it is a committee that should never have needed to be formed. In the wake of a disaster of this scale, the largest River Murray flood since 1956, the government of the day should have immediately initiated its own independent review.

That is not unusual; it is not radical. It is absolutely standard practice, common sense and good governance. We have seen this routinely across Australia following other disasters such as major bushfires, floods and cyclones where independent reviews are launched promptly, conducted transparently and used to guide policy reform and investment. Yet in South Australia, our government chose to do nothing of the sort: no independent review, no public process, no transparent examination of what worked, what failed and what needed to change and needs to change into the future. The Minister for Emergency Services stated publicly in June 2023, and I quote:

I can advise that there is no imminent intention of the government to institute an independent inquiry. This flooding event has been to every extent, both possible and in a planned way, managed in a considered, appropriate way and in a way that has been responsive to community concerns, notwithstanding the fact that this has been one of the most significant natural disasters in our state's history.

That is not the sentiment of dozens of witnesses that we interviewed and it is not the sentiment of many of the submissions during the committee process. The government's failure to commit to an independent review left this parliament no choice but to step in. Again, I acknowledge the work of my honourable colleagues in helping to step in.

What is extremely interesting is that it has recently come to my attention, in the days post the tabling of this important report, that some stakeholders have now been contacted by the Premier's department seeking them to provide evidence for an evaluation of the 2022-23 River Murray flooding recovery. A consultant has apparently been engaged to undertake this review. I think the timing of

this so-called independent review launched, mind you, only after the select committee's comprehensive report had been tabled, feels like no coincidence but rather a belated attempt by the government to cover ground that has already been thoroughly examined. While I welcome any effort to properly evaluate the recovery, the timing I think raises serious questions.

For the past three years, many others and I in affected communities have consistently called for an independent review, and to begin this process now, after so much time has passed, could not be more poorly timed. Communities are already under immense pressure at the moment, facing multiple challenges, not least the current drought. Asking communities to once again revisit their flood experiences after doing so extensively with our parliamentary committee, some may argue, could be seen as a bit of an insensitive burden.

We already have an excellent multipartisan report before the parliament. It includes clear recommendations and reflects input from members of all political persuasions. I would encourage the minister, as well as the government, to read through not just the report but all of the submissions as well as seriously consider the sensible recommendations we have put forward.

This committee was established because community voices were going unheard, because councils, businesses and residents were raising serious concerns, and because the government was not asking those difficult but necessary questions of itself. The fact that we had to form this committee at all is a failure of leadership and a failure of accountability. The fact that the government has only now recognised that they, too, need to independently look at themselves throughout this process, I would argue, is another failure of leadership.

Let me say, it should not be up to this chamber to do the job of executive after every disaster. This was not just any disaster. This was a slow onset, complex emergency that unfolded over months, requiring coordination across dozens of agencies, local government and service providers. It required detailed planning, timely communication and long-term recovery coordination. The stakes could not have been higher.

What governments do and how they react during a crisis matters, and how they honestly and openly evaluate their response matters. When governments do not look back with honesty, they cannot move forward with credibility. South Australians deserve better than a government that closes the books on a crisis and hopes no-one notices. They deserve transparency, they deserve learning and they deserve leadership that does not wait to be forced into scrutiny.

This report now stands as a record of what went right, what went wrong, and what must change. But let us never forget that it only exists because the government refused to act when the community was screaming for them to act, and that is not good enough. With that, I commend the report to the chamber.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. M. El Dannawi.

Motions

FARM DAM POLICY

The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:15): I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that certain South Australian districts remain in a drought that is among the worst in recent times, and that this drought continues to place devastating mental and financial pressures on these communities, including and in particular farmers;
2. Acknowledges that this drought has severely impacted the production capacity of many farmers and food producers, notwithstanding the state government's recently announced assistance packages;
3. Recognises that small dams on farmers' properties can represent an economic lifeline for farmers, enabling them to water their livestock and irrigate their crops; and
4. Urges the Malinauskas government to review its farm dam policy to allow SA farmers to have one dam—up to five megalitres in volume, and a wall height of no more than three metres—for every 100 acres of land they own, without needing a permit through the Landscape Board of South Australia.

Today, I rise to speak to this motion on behalf of the many drought-hit South Australian farmers who are trying to survive one of the worst droughts on record for certain areas of our state. As we know, these farmers have not seen decent rain for many months and some have conceded that even substantial rainfall events immediately would do little to address their current dire financial circumstances.

Preventing farmers from freely and rapidly constructing dams on their dry properties represents an unnecessary self-harm for this state. Under the current conditions outlined in the Landscape Act of South Australia, anyone wishing to construct or modify a dam smaller than five megalitres, with wall heights of three metres or less, requires a permit for something known as a WAA (water affecting activity). This WAA must be obtained from the landscape board, while anything larger than five megalitres or greater than three metres in height requires development approval from the local council.

Most of us are aware of the delays typically involved with gaining development approvals from local government, but this motion is focused on approvals from the landscape board, which is run by the Department for Environment and Water. One of the conditions for applying to the landscape board is that the application must be received at least two months in advance of scheduled construction works.

Given the unpredictable nature of weather and farming, this two-month condition can be problematic. More importantly, after consulting with stakeholders it has become clear that this permit process with the landscape board must be eliminated altogether. It is lengthy and exhausting. Farmers need to be able to construct small dams to those dimensions—five megalitres or less in volume, wall heights of three metres or less—so they can literally get on with business, and that is the business of growing and producing food for the people of this state. It does not get any more important than that.

Allowing this controlled construction condition could and would allow a number of farmers to continue pursuing their livelihoods at no cost to South Australian taxpayers and at no cost to the state's environment. Indeed, dams also act as wetlands, with their own ecosystems, flood mitigation ponds and even emergency water sources in times of fire, helping to protect lives, properties, livestock, implements and more. Dams of this size are environmentally friendly because wildlife come to drink out of them. We have all heard the awful stories about starving wildlife in this current drought.

One farmer estimated to our office that dams in this state would currently be collecting no more than 1 per cent of our total rainfall. Bypassing the landscape board system and allowing farmers to make decisions like this on their own land makes sense and has no downside. We must protect our state's food bowl, especially at this incredibly challenging time for our farmers and food producers. The government has already taken action to recognise and address their struggles. This change would not cost taxpayers an extra cent, but it would save jobs, livelihoods and potentially more.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. D.G.E. Hood.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH

The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (16:18): I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that the month of May is Domestic Violence Prevention Month, and the urgent need to raise awareness, stand with survivors, and take meaningful action to prevent domestic and family violence in all its forms.
2. Recognises that domestic violence is not a private matter, it is a pervasive social crisis that affects individuals across every community, regardless of age, culture, or social and economic status and that it is a time to remember those who have lost their lives, support those who are rebuilding theirs, and recommit to creating a future where every person feels safe in their home and relationships.
3. Reflects on the role that individuals, especially men, must play in challenging the cultural and systemic norms that allow violence to continue. Domestic violence is not just a 'women's issue', it is a societal issue, and it is every man's responsibility to speak out against it, call out abusive behaviour, and contribute to a culture of respect and accountability; and with this in mind that the council:

- (a) condemns in the strongest possible terms all forms of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse, and recognises that such violence disproportionately affects women and children;
- (b) acknowledges the profound and long-lasting harm that domestic violence causes to individuals, families, and communities, and the urgent need for systemic action to prevent it;
- (c) affirms that violence against women and children is never acceptable, never excusable, and must be treated as a matter of urgent national and social concern;
- (d) recognises that ending violence against women requires a whole-of-society effort, and calls on all men, as brothers, fathers, partners, friends, and bystanders, to actively challenge sexist attitudes, call out abusive behaviour, and speak up when they witness or become aware of violence or the threat of violence against women;
- (e) condemns the persistent societal tendency to disbelieve, discredit, or subject women's reports of domestic or sexual violence to disproportionate scrutiny compared to reports of other crimes;
- (f) commits to supporting survivors of domestic violence through robust legal protections, accessible support services, and public education campaigns aimed at prevention and accountability;
- (g) calls upon the government, institutions, communities, and leaders to foster a culture where women and children can live free from fear, and where silence in the face of violence is no longer tolerated.

Domestic and family violence remains disturbingly prevalent in our state and in our nation. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, one in six women in Australia has experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former partner. Just over one in four women have experienced some form of partner violence or abuse in their lifetime. These numbers reflect hundreds of thousands of South Australians who live in fear or experience the insidious effects of coercive control. Alarming figures indicate that two in five South Australian women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, a rate which I understand is higher than the national average. We also know that Aboriginal women face disproportionately higher rates of violence, and this is immensely disturbing.

We also need to remember when reporting statistics that domestic violence often goes unreported. An overwhelming 92 per cent of women nationally who experience sexual assault by a male did not report the most recent incident to police. On average in Australia, one woman is killed by an intimate partner every 11 days, although I think the Counting Dead Women data through Destroy the Joint has reported that as every four days. On any metric, that is unacceptable.

In South Australia, we did see that, over a recent 12-month period, 22 murders were reported, which was a 69 per cent increase from the year before, with domestic violence cited as a major factor. Recent police figures show that family and domestic violence related offences continue to increase, with more than 6½ thousand domestic violence related proceedings recorded in South Australia in the 2023-24 reporting year.

The severity of this crisis cannot be overstated. Domestic and family violence causes serious and long-term harm, physical injuries, psychological trauma, emotional suffering and financial insecurity, which does not just affect individuals but their families and communities for generations. Children who are exposed to violence in the home are also deeply impacted and the trauma they experience can carry forward across generations and reinforce cycles of violence and disadvantage.

We know that preventing domestic violence requires a whole-of-society effort and it calls for the active involvement of men in challenging the norms that enable it. Research shows a clear link between rigid gender stereotypes and high rates of violence. Organisations such as Our Watch have outlined that changing society's attitudes about gender and promoting respectful relationships are critical to ending violence. Men can recognise their critical role not just by rejecting violence themselves but by challenging sexist attitudes, calling out disrespectful behaviour and standing in solidarity with survivors to help make the change we need.

Education also plays a pivotal role, with long-term, evidence-based respectful relationship education in all schools being essential to shift attitudes and teach young people about respect,

consent and healthy relationships. We know through the five-yearly surveys that are conducted by agencies at federal government level that there are disturbing attitudes among young people, particularly in relation to controlling behaviour in relationships, that such controlling behaviour is merely a way to show that someone cares, rather than recognising it for what it is, which is coercive control.

We can never begin too early teaching young people particularly that violence is never acceptable and that healthy relationships are built on mutual respect and equality. Cultural change takes time, but it is essential. While prevention is critical, we must also ensure that legal protections and support systems for survivors are robust and accessible. I acknowledge recent steps this parliament has made, such as changes to strangulation and a range of other measures, monitoring and the like; however, more needs to be done to ensure victims have access to safe housing, financial support, mental health services and effective legal support. Survivors need to be believed, supported and empowered to rebuild their lives free from violence and fear.

To meet growing demand, we must continue to fund frontline services at the levels they need to provide safer homes, counselling, legal support and crisis response staff. We must listen to the voices of survivors and organisations that work in this field, ensuring that those with lived experience and frontline experience inform policy and legislation.

We are all waiting eagerly for the reporting from the DV royal commission. I commend the commissioner, Natasha Stott Despoja AO, for her commitment in holding that position. We all know that she has a great deal of experience, both nationally as Chair of Our Watch and also in a number of global roles that she has held to support women and girls overseas. She has a very deep understanding of these issues, and I know that she will look at all of the issues across the spectrum, from prevention through to crisis services. She is going to have a particularly significant focus on Aboriginal women, who, as I said, experience violence at very disproportionate levels.

I am often reluctant to politicise these issues, but we do know it was the sector which, in August 2023, had spoken to the government about a royal commission. A number of us stood with them to also call for a royal commission into violence. It was not really until we had a spate of deaths in South Australia that shocked everyone that the government agreed to the royal commission, and even then it did not commence operation until the following July, nearly 12 months after the sector had asked for it.

I am calling on the government to ensure that there is a commitment to funding for domestic violence services in this upcoming budget. I do not think it is going to be an excuse for them to say that they can wait for the royal commission. I suspect that the recommendations are going to be significant. It would be glib, given the seriousness of these issues, for this government to say that it can move things off into the following budget, which will not be until after the election. Even the Mid-Year Budget Review is likely to be inadequate. I am hopeful that there will be some contingency funding.

It is acknowledged widely in the women's sector and in the domestic and family violence sector that the government that I served in had a strong commitment to stamping out domestic and family violence and, indeed, to providing a range of services, some very innovative services. We provided record funding to specific domestic and family violence services. Some of that was provided from the commonwealth government through COVID measures. I would just like to outline some of the things that we were able to do.

We expanded the definition of 'abuse' and increased penalties for repeat violent breaches of intervention orders; allowed for body-worn cameras to collect evidence, which could then be used in court; and introduced the standalone criminal offence of non-fatal strangulation. I note that, given that has been in operation for several years, this government has made some changes to ensure that perpetrators can be called to account.

We amended the Sentencing Act to lower the available discount for various serious offences against the person that are often experienced in domestic violence situations. We removed the requirement for all victims, including victims of domestic and family violence, to have any contact with perpetrators when assessing compensation through the Victims of Crime Act. We abolished the defence of provocation.

We provided a range of new programs, including the early intervention impacts of violence on children program, which provides one-on-one intensive and assertive engagement for young people between the ages of 12 to 25 who are pregnant or parenting and at risk of experiencing domestic violence. We commenced South Australia's first Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, which enables a person or a friend or relative of theirs to seek information from South Australia Police about a current or former partner's violent offending history. I note that that scheme has been under immense pressure lately and the government has had to increase funding to it.

We provided funding to keep victims of domestic and family violence informed about a perpetrator's custody status and parole. We provided funding for Relationships Australia to provide counselling and funding for the Commissioner for Victims' Rights to take on additional responsibilities, including helping victims through the court process and in preparing victim impact statements. The Family Safety Framework, through the Department of Human Services, was to allow sharing and safety planning for high-risk victims of domestic and family violence.

We expanded funding for the Domestic Violence Crisis Line because that had not been operating 24 hours a day, and clearly that was inadequate. We provided additional funding to Yarrow Place to provide specialist counselling and health responses to those impacted by rape and sexual assault. We provided funding for the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service to assist women, particularly in relation to interim orders.

We provided funding for 40 new crisis accommodation beds, nine of which were to be allocated to perpetrators so that they could be the ones who actually leave the family home. That left 31 emergency beds that the frontline services could immediately use to assist someone or families who were at immediate risk. We funded for the first time the Coalition of Women's Domestic Violence Services as a peak body. They are now known as Embolden, but their advocacy work is immensely important. For the people who are in that peak body to be expected to do that work in their spare time is unacceptable.

We funded a new domestic violence app, which enabled people to contact services very quickly. We opened nine safety hubs in regional areas, which was to enable people not just to access services but to understand whether what they were experiencing was in fact domestic and family violence. We funded a prevention program, Stop it at the Start, which is one of many of the different programs that have been funded in South Australia or nationally, which does assist with some of that community understanding.

We provided a \$5 million interest-free loan to develop a new domestic violence support housing initiative, which clearly shows how long these things can take to come into fruition. That was provided by the YWCA and the first sod turning took place within the last few months on Hutt Street. We also provided a range of new services, Safe and Well Kids, which I am told by the sector has been extremely useful and has been evaluated. It provides wraparound support to children and adolescents who have experienced domestic and family violence.

We provided funding for an Aboriginal children's therapeutic service to trial a trauma responsive therapeutic model specifically for Aboriginal children and adolescents. We provided new funding for safe and secure housing to help women and children move out of temporary crisis accommodation and into safe long-term accommodation. We provided individual support packages for at-risk South Australian women. Hundreds of South Australian women were financially supported to assist them with a range of things they might need, whether it was paying bills or renewing their driver's licence.

We provided a statewide 24-hour perpetrator response service. We know that often services for perpetrators have been inadequately funded, so the 24-hour Men's Referral Service hotline and wraparound services have been incredibly helpful for men who use violence to help them make changes. The Break the Cycle campaign was another important advertising campaign. The new KIND program was again targeted to young men who have been violent to their families.

Those are a range of the things that our government did of which I remain very proud and I look forward to a rollout of similar services. Quite frankly, I do not think we actually have seen a great deal from this government. When you line up end to end what the Marshall government did in four years with what this particular government has done, it is not a great deal. So we mark domestic

violence prevention this month. It provides us an opportunity to recognise what is taking place, to say to survivors that we see them and we support them. I commend the motion.

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

ABBNEYFIELD MARION

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (16:35): Due to the government's welcome intervention, I seek leave to move the motion standing in my name in an amended form.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises the community housing residential rights of all the disabled residents at Abbeyfield Marion;
2. Notes that the residents have lived together since 2010 and should be entitled to reside at the home without disruption and distress to their peaceful and stable lives;
3. Congratulates the state government for its intervention to prevent any proposed sale and requests that it make new legal arrangements to maintain its current use and occupancy;
4. Calls on the City of Marion to offer support to the South Australian government in transitioning the property's ownership;
5. Acknowledges the petition on Change.org, which contains more than 15,000 signatures demanding that Abbeyfield Marion is not sold by the City of Marion; and
6. Congratulates the parents and residents of Abbeyfield in their successful efforts to retain Abbeyfield as their home.

Yesterday, it was distressing and disappointing that I was compelled to file this motion in this chamber, seeking to protect the lives and interests of a group of very special residents with special needs living in a communal housing project at Edwardstown known as Abbeyfield Marion. Today, I am elated that there has been a significant development overnight following a rousing rally on the steps of Parliament House and the enormous public and media interest this has generated. The Premier, the Hon. Peter Malinauskas, and the Minister for Human Services, the Hon. Natalie Cook, have now intervened and have given rock-solid assurances that life at Abbeyfield will not be disrupted. To quote the Premier:

What I want to be able to do is provide long term certainty to those residents so they know they can continue to call their place home which is what matters to anybody in any set of circumstances—let alone if you're diagnosed with an intellectual disability.

I thank the Premier for being that type of person who listens and cares. Minister Cook does too and I pay tribute to her and her Chief of Staff, Michael Hicks, who have been actively involved with me, along with my Chief of Staff, Sean Whittington, staffers Hugh Salter, Adrienne Gillam and Kim York in the delicate mediation process dealing with Marion council and the families of residents of Abbeyfield to try to achieve a satisfactory outcome. It has taken two years to where we are today, and it is thanks to decisive and swift action overnight by the Premier that today the comfort and security of the residents of Abbeyfield is no longer under threat.

The house at St Lawrence Avenue in Edwardstown was built through commonwealth funding as a community housing project for senior citizens and gifted to the Marion council in 1991. In 2010, when it became empty, Abbeyfield Australia, a Victorian charity, approached the South Australian Down Syndrome Society to establish a home for people with disabilities. For the past 15 years, eight to 10 male and female residents with intellectual disabilities have lived peacefully and happily together as a family in a beautiful and tranquil setting, and with the caring and loving support of their parents and disability providers.

The home, run by care providers Abbeyfield, gets commonwealth funding, but all the residents pay their way via their NDIS funding packages. They do many things together, like going out shopping and attending events, such is their close bond. These residents need our support and protection to maintain the happy and functional home they have created, and they have not been

getting much of that, unfortunately. It has been upsetting for them and their families who have watched all this unfold.

Life had been peaceful and uncomplicated until two years ago when Abbeyfield shifted control of the house from the local branch—which has a legal relationship with its lease with the Marion council and overseen by the families—to the Melbourne-based charity Abbeyfield Australia. It pays a peppercorn lease of around \$10 a year to Marion council. That is when things became more complicated than they should have because of a complex lease agreement with Marion council, the custodians of the home, which has not been updated to reflect the changing requirements under NDIS models.

Instead of working with the residents and their families to maintain the functions of Abbeyfield and keep the roof over their heads, the council set about on a course to rid itself of the property and any burden it perceived it might have had. The residents faced an uncertain future and, quite frankly, the council, its chief executive, Tony Harrison, and its mayor, Kris Hanna, demonstrated little sympathy or desire to fix and support them for the impending crisis that would have resulted from the sale of a property that required government approval and a planning change before that could occur.

Making matters worse was the appalling behaviour of bullying and intimidation of Abbeyfield Victoria, the community housing provider which held the council lease. They set about dismantling the smooth practices that had worked previously in the best interests of the residents. The families were told their children were too disabled to live there. Then, they tried to jack up charges from residents. Food money was temporarily held back. They tried to force NDIS service staff to sign agreements to provide personal information on residents to Abbeyfield Australia which, fortunately, was rejected.

When approaches to Marion council and the government went nowhere, the upset families and residents then reached out to me for support. Their fury and frustration received national attention on the Nine Network's top-rated *A Current Affair*. Vindictive Abbeyfield then monstereed one of the mothers who appeared on the program with legal threats, adding to the distress. Let me give you another example of how nasty Abbeyfield have been. After providing NDIS-approved night-time passive support—where a care worker was able to sleep over for six years—in March this year Abbeyfield marched in with police by their side to remove access keys from NDIS workers and changed the locks to three empty rooms they could have used to sleep in. It was an act that put the residents at serious harm—a callous act.

Jan McConchie, the mother of Eddie, who has been such a tireless campaigner for their rights, along with the other parents, said the council did nothing to support them. She said the families took this total lack of action on behalf of the council as a sign it was going to be easier to sell an empty house—eviction by stealth, as a couple of lawyers involved in the saga described it. The families have been in constant contact with the council and its mayor and have been furnished with all the correspondence with Abbeyfield Australia. Marion council has been indifferent to their plight—and that is being kind.

Over a year ago, my staff and I had meeting with Mayor Hanna and his chief executive, Tony Harrison, to see if an acceptable outcome could be reached. I thought it was quite an amicable discussion; however, the best way to describe the reception we got was frigid disinterest. At one point, while I was speaking, Mayor Hanna just upped off his chair and, without excusing himself and to my amazement, started to walk out. I called him back, and he heard me out.

This morning on FIVEaa's breakfast program with Will Goodings and David Penberthy, who have been great supporters of the disabled housemates, backpedalling Mayor Hanna made flippant accusations seemingly directed at my involvement, labelling the serious concerns that have been raised as a beat-up and inferring that I and others have been whipping the parents into a frenzy for nothing. That is so patently false. The parents only reached out to me for support when it seemed all else they had tried with the council and Abbeyfield failed. Perhaps the mayor should produce all the correspondence his councillors received on this matter.

Mayor Hanna went on to say there was never any threat the residents would lose the home and that he had worked out a deal with the Housing Trust to take over and guarantee accommodation

and care under a new provider. That also came as a bit of a shock and news to the families, who were not informed about that development. The council administration always planned to sell Abbeyfield. Despite what Mayor Hanna claims, you could not trust a new purchaser to make and stick to any guarantees given by a third party.

Sure, the council is not in the care provider business. Well, they are not now. They are merely the landlords, the custodians of the property. They can make the decision on which care organisation the property is leased to, but this must include consultation with the residents and their families and their carers.

Councillors were also misinformed by the administration in the consultation document, which wrongly stated that the sale of the home to a registered disability provider would be subject to NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission care and oversight.

Mayor Hanna says Marion council is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive city based on fairness and respect while also providing a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. Mr Hanna, you failed on every count with Abbeyfield, which is why 15,000 people from around Australia have signed a petition on Change.org demanding any sale not proceed. I seek leave to table those documents containing the names listed on Change.org. While the petition does not conform with the SA parliament's petition format, 15,000 signatures is still enormous.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: I point out that I am tabling it as a document, not as an official petition. The people have well and truly spoken on this matter. Abbeyfield is a vital haven for its disabled residents, providing them with not just shelter but a supportive community that promotes dignity, independence and wellbeing.

The decision to allow these residents to remain in their home is essential for several compelling reasons. Firstly, stability is crucial for individuals with disabilities. The Abbeyfield home offers a stable, familiar environment where residents have formed relationships and connections that enhance their quality of life. Moving them would disrupt these relationships and could lead to feelings of anxiety and abandonment. Moreover, the Abbeyfield home is designed specifically to cater to the needs of disabled individuals, providing appropriate facilities and care that fosters independence. Selling the property would not only displace residents but would also eliminate a vital resource in the community tailored for their unique requirements.

The Marion community benefits from having Abbeyfield as part of its social fabric. The home promotes inclusivity and awareness regarding disability issues, fostering a community spirit that serves as an example for others. Displacing the residents would diminish this positive influence and could reduce community engagement and support for disabled individuals. The Marion council must prioritise the wellbeing of its residents over potential financial gains from selling the property. The long-term social costs of moving vulnerable individuals can far outweigh short-term fiscal benefits.

The community thrives when it invests in the care and support of its most vulnerable members, and Abbeyfield is integral to achieving this. In addition, by retaining the Abbeyfield home the Marion council affirms its commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility, reinforcing the message that individuals with disabilities deserve respect, stability and a home where they can flourish. Allowing disabled residents to remain at Abbeyfield is not simply an investment in property but a profound commitment to the dignity and rights of all community members. The Marion council should prioritise preserving this essential resource for a brighter, more inclusive future.

In closing, I would like to welcome Abbeyfield residents and their parents in the gallery today: we have Ann Lee, who is here with her son Stuart; Mark Williams, the father of Cara Williams; Natalie Byrne, the sister of Sarah Byrne; Peter Jenkinson and his partner Mardi Barry, and Peter is the father of Eddie Jenkinson; and Eddie's mum, Jan McConchie, is here as well.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr Pangallo, of course it is not appropriate to refer to people in the gallery, but you have, so we will know that for next time.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO: Thank you, Mr President. In short, this is a victory for all of them and a victory for the power of people's voices in being heard. I commend the motion to the chamber.

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

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (16:52): I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises the role the South Australian justice system plays in upholding law and order in this state by providing a system whereby those that break the law are suitably punished by legislation/laws set by this parliament;
2. Acknowledges the South Australian justice system has failings and injustices have, and continue, to occur;
3. Recognises the nature of our justice system enshrines a burden of proof on the prosecution of either beyond reasonable doubt or on the balance of probabilities that has the potential to result in miscarriages of justice;
4. Acknowledges there have been cases where these thresholds were thought to be satisfied, but later found to have been doubtful at best and unsound at worst; and
5. Calls on the establishment of an Independent Criminal Case Commissioner, to be appointed by the state government, where individuals who believe they have been victims of an injustice within the South Australian justice system can request their case be reviewed (or where a miscarriage of justice is demonstrated by a reasonable doubt of a sound verdict being delivered in the case).

I seek leave to conclude my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICES

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:53): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that access to emergency ambulance services is a critical health service;
2. Notes that the cost of an emergency ambulance service is \$1,171, plus a per kilometre fee of \$6.70;
3. Recognises that the cost of an emergency ambulance service is more than the fortnightly rate for a single full age pension;
4. Acknowledges that South Australia is the only jurisdiction in the nation that does not provide free emergency ambulance services to people on the full age pension;
5. Notes that emergency ambulance services are free for all residents in Queensland and Tasmania;
6. Notes that COTA SA is calling on the state government to provide free emergency ambulance services for all older South Australians on a full age pension; and
7. Calls on the Malinauskas government to waive the cost of emergency ambulance services for all full age pensioners in their upcoming budget.

As we age, our goal is to live well and maintain good health and independence but, unfortunately for some, declining health and chronic conditions can impact on wellbeing and quality of life. Emergency visits to hospital have become a regular occurrence for a significant proportion of older people as they manage chronic illness and declining health. The statistics clearly show the demand. Australians aged 65 and over made up 43 per cent of the 11.6 million hospitalisations and 21 per cent of the 8.8 million emergency department presentations in the 2021-22 financial year in Australia.

Emergency transportation to hospital via ambulance with the state's highly regarded paramedic service delivering treatment, has become an integral component of our public healthcare system and a lifeline for many older South Australians managing chronic and urgent medical conditions.

While emergency treatment in our public hospitals is free, funded through Medicare, and indeed going to be enhanced further following the re-election of the Albanese government, the unexpected and unplanned urgent journey to an emergency department is not free in South Australia. No other state or territory across the nation charges full age pensioners for emergency ambulance services, and Queensland and Tasmania do not make their residents pay at all for this critical service.

In South Australia, the SA Ambulance Service is a user-pays service, with emergency transportation costing \$1,171 plus a per kilometre fee of \$6.70. The SA Ambulance Service advises that pensioners may be eligible for concession of these fees. Ambulance insurance is available from SAAS or from private health providers. However, for many pensioners, private health insurance is already out of reach, let alone the traditional cost of ambulance cover. A recent national survey indicated that 45 per cent of full age pensioners responding did not have private health insurance and 53 per cent of respondents with cover indicated they would need to cut costs just to maintain it.

The Greens believe that every South Australian should be entitled to the best healthcare system possible and this includes access to an ambulance when you need it. We believe that ambulance cover should be free for all South Australians, but at least providing a free ambulance service for pensioners is critically important, particularly as our state continues to grapple with the cost-of-living crisis, and we know that many older South Australians are really struggling at the moment.

South Australians should not have to feel like they need to have private health insurance or ambulance cover to be able to access services or to get top quality care. We know, after much consultation with older South Australians, that cost of living is the issue most impacting on them currently, followed closely by health services.

Research from the SA Council of Social Service (SACOSS) suggests that many people are not calling an ambulance when they need one because they fear the cost. The cost of an emergency ambulance service is more than the fortnightly rate for a single full age pension. So we are asking people who might be in trouble, who find themselves in the unfortunate position of needing to call an ambulance, to pay more than the fortnightly payment they would receive for a pension if they do not have cover. That is outrageous. Whilst the Malinauskas government has done some good work during this term in terms of addressing the cost-of-living pressures faced by South Australians, this is something they should do.

Rising energy costs over the last decade, the latest cost-of-living burden and escalating insurance premiums for home and car insurance leave age pensioners on fixed incomes with very little leftover in their household budgets. Older South Australians are making hard decisions about whether they heat or cool their home, whether they put food on their table or whether they fuel their car. Many live on low and fixed incomes with little room for unexpected bills. This financial hit, whether it be payment for ambulance insurance or payment for the ambulance service, is a burden that older people living in other states and territories simply do not have to bear.

This means that a number of older South Australians will make the difficult decision not to call an ambulance when they are in need of emergency medical help. Anecdotal evidence shows that some pensioners are preferring to call cabs or are putting off seeking emergency medical help rather than footing the expense of an ambulance call-out.

It has been suggested that free ambulances for full age pensioners will lead to escalating demand for the service and compound ramping across public hospitals. I find that a ridiculous proposition. The idea that someone would call an ambulance just for the fun of it is really ludicrous. Let's keep in mind that every other state and territory provides free ambulance services for full age pensioners, and there is no evidence that this has made ramping worse in those jurisdictions. Research in both Queensland and Victoria did not find a sustained spike in call-outs linked to free ambulances for older people. The experience of other jurisdictions should be reassuring for the state government.

Currently, the SA Ambulance Service is forced to spend money chasing down people who do not pay their bill, and it writes off many millions of dollars of debt every year due to unpaid ambulance fees. Many of these bills would be in the name of older South Australians who just cannot afford to pay. Again, there are potential savings to be made for the SA Ambulance Service. It is time for South Australia to catch up with the rest of the country and ensure that no full age pensioner has to ride it out and be forced to choose between financial stability and their health.

The Greens are calling on the Malinauskas government to fund this in their upcoming state budget. I want to let members know that I plan to bring this motion to a vote during our next sitting

period so that we can send the Malinauskas government a very clear message as they craft their budget.

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

GUITARS FOR VETERANS

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:01): I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises the unique challenges faced by South Australian veterans, particularly those experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder and difficulties transitioning back to civilian life;
2. Acknowledges the vital role of early intervention, creative-based therapies in improving mental health outcomes for veterans; and
3. Commends the work of Guitars for Veterans, a not-for-profit organisation currently supporting approximately 140 South Australian veterans through music-based recovery programs.

I rise today to bring the attention of this council to a life-changing and quite literally life-saving initiative known as Guitars for Veterans. This mission strikes a deeply emotional note, with this not-for-profit remedying one of the most pressing challenges facing our veterans: the high rate of PTSD and suicide among our returned service men and women.

PTSD remains one of the most debilitating and isolating conditions faced by our ex-service personnel and will continue to be unless something changes. In fact, around 31 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women currently serving in the military will develop PTSD. Guitars for Veterans Australia has been operating for four years and is currently run by just three dedicated volunteers. These individuals do everything, from identifying veterans who are experiencing trauma to enrolling them into the program, coordinating coaches, and performing music themselves to raise funds.

Through a simple but powerful formula, a donated guitar and five hours of free music lessons, Guitars for Veterans has created a safe outlet for expression, emotional regulation and human connection. Veterans are gifted a brand-new or near-new guitar and receive either five one-hour lessons or 10 30-minute sessions. After completing their lessons, they are invited to join a guitar club, providing them with ongoing community and creative expression.

The impact of this program is both profound and practical. Each participant costs \$100 to support and the program coaches five veterans at a time, meaning the organisation must raise \$500 up-front for each round of lessons. Funds are raised predominantly through public speaking engagements, performances at RSLs, local hotels and other community-based events.

I have had the privilege of meeting with the South Australian ambassador for the program, Mr Jim Mavromatis, on several occasions. Jim is a Vietnam veteran who is now helping other veterans discover the joy and healing power of music in the form of a guitar. Through Jim's advocacy, I have come to understand the deep and measurable impact this program has had on veterans across our state.

I want to share a brief story that has stayed with me since I last spoke with Jim, a story that captures the powerful change his program is making in real life. Jim told me about a veteran he worked with, a man who, like so many, returned home carrying the invisible wounds of service. For years, in moments of anxiety or emotional distress, this man instinctively reached for alcohol. It was a pattern like muscle memory, and it was slowly consuming him. Then came the guitar, and after just a few lessons through Guitars for Veterans something changed. He began resting his guitar in front of his bar fridge, and that guitar stood between him and the bottle. When the hard moments came—and they did—he no longer reached for a drink; he reached for music.

That one story represents hundreds and, with proper support, it could represent even more. Veterans who participate in this program come from all backgrounds, services and conflict zones. They may be young or old, recent returnees or veterans of past decades, but they all have one thing in common: they carry trauma and they are seeking peace. Guitars for Veterans gives them a new tool not just for healing but for hope. This is precisely the kind of grassroots, community-led mental health support we should be promoting.

With greater awareness, Guitars for Veterans could extend its reach and impact many more lives across South Australia and the research backs this up. Music therapy can reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder by as much as 38 per cent. That is significant and measurable, and that is precisely why this council must take notice. I urge the council to consider the role music and connection can play in recovery and to give serious thought to how we might continue to support this remarkable organisation. I commend the motion to the council.

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

GENDER

The Hon. S.L. GAME (17:05): I move:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that males have a biological advantage over biological females in physical activity, and that biological males should not be allowed to compete against biological females in female-only designated sporting competitions;
2. Calls for the government to recognise it has a duty of care to SA schoolgirls, and their parents, to ensure these girls are not forced to compete against biological males;
3. Acknowledges that allowing biological males to compete against biological females acts as a disincentive for females to remain in, or become involved with, organised sport; and
4. Recognises that creating these extra barriers to females exercising and playing organised sport is counterproductive to a range of government policies aimed at fostering female participation in sport, leading to happier and healthier (both physically and mentally) South Australian girls and women.

I rise today to call for some reassurance and peace of mind for South Australian parents whose daughters may be forced, either now or in the future, to compete against biological males in organised sport in competitions at school. I was recently made aware of a primary school-age boy breaking girls' sports day records at a South Australian Catholic school. These records included eclipsing the javelin mark by over three metres.

Parents were unhappy about this situation and my office spoke to one of them who was worried about the impact the situation could have on their daughter and other girls attending the school. This parent was also concerned about what message it sent to young girls at the school. I have provided comment to news.com about this incident. The story has been made public via the media in recent days and I note that the South Australian education minister, the Hon. Blair Boyer, has expressed his support of the decision of the school that allowed this boy to compete against girls.

I do not support the school's decision. Males have a biological advantage over females, so that should be recognised. Parents and carers should be able to send their daughters to school without fearing they could be forced to compete against boys, who have an unfair physiological advantage. As mentioned in the media stories, I am currently finalising legislation with parliamentary counsel that would make this practice illegal. Under my legislation, schools would be prevented from allowing this to occur or from tacitly condoning it, as we have seen is currently happening.

The Advertiser was running a poll on the following question: do you support education minister Blair Boyer's stance on transgender students? At last check, the no vote was running at well over 90 per cent and that is because when we make laws feelings cannot trump facts. What happened recently at this South Australian school is another example of this gender dysphoria minefield. The idea that you can change your biological sex with a piece of paper or even by surgery is demonstrably absurd. It seems only One Nation is prepared to stand up for Australian families and common sense by taking action, including advocating for a national ban on puberty blockers, banning biological males from competing in girls' and women's sport, and banning biological males from accessing spaces dedicated to biological females.

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

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. N.J. Centofanti:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges that the value of South Australia's primary industry and agribusiness is of significant value, an estimated \$18.5 billion in 2022-23;
2. Recognises that the current drought is, for many districts, the worst in living memory and is causing significant financial and mental stress across rural and regional communities in South Australia;
3. Agrees that the Malinauskas Labor government's \$8.1 million 'new' funding in response to this drought is grossly inadequate considering the magnitude of hardship and suffering currently being endured by the sector;
4. Urges the Malinauskas government to explore all possible measures to ensure water and fodder supply to farming communities that desperately need it around the state;
5. Calls on the Malinauskas government to urgently provide meaningful assistance to South Australia's farming sector to underpin its ongoing viability for the benefit of all South Australians; and
6. Recognises that failure to provide meaningful assistance immediately will result in terrible human and animal welfare outcomes.

(Continued from 2 April 2025.)

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (17:08): I rise to speak in strong support of the Hon. Nicola Centofanti's motion urging the council to acknowledge that South Australia's primary industry and agribusiness is of significant value; recognise that the current drought is for many districts the worst in living memory, if not worse than that even, and is causing significant financial and mental stress; agree that the state Labor government's funding in response to this drought is inaccurate; call on the Malinauskas government to urgently provide meaningful assistance for South Australia's farming sector to underpin its ongoing viability for the benefit of all South Australians; and recognise that failure to provide meaningful assistance immediately will result in terrible human and animal welfare outcomes.

It is estimated that Adelaide has only received around 300 millimetres of rain since February last year, rendering the last 15 or so months as being our city's driest 15-month spell. I found this astonishing—our driest 15-month spell since records began in 1839. Similar shortfalls have unfortunately extended across the whole of agricultural South Australia, severely affecting our primary industries and agribusiness sector, which delivered an estimated \$18.5 billion to our economy in the year 2022-23. As the Hon. Ms Centofanti has pointed out, that is close to one-fifth of the state's entire economic output.

The health of South Australia's grains, livestock, horticulture, wine, seafood, forestry and dairy sectors is therefore vital to our state, and it has been devastating to learn of the extent to which our farmers have been forced to endure this difficult situation. The Hon. Ms Centofanti, in her capacity as shadow minister for primary industries, has been diligently advocating on behalf of farmers for many months, consistently calling on the government to implement practical evidence-based solutions to relieve some of the pressure this drought is causing.

Of course, we would all recall that in absolute desperation South Australian farmers descended on the steps of Parliament House in March, just a couple of months ago, pleading for the government to act as they struggled to contend with the driest conditions our state has experienced, as I said, going back many years—according to some estimations, back to the 1830s. Standing alongside members of the opposition, farmers from across the state highlighted the stark reality of the drought, asking for a lifeline, drawing attention to the fact that assistance had been grossly inadequate due to the magnitude of what they are up against. Waiting months for a \$5,000 grant simply does not suffice.

The common perspective is that the current state government's inaction reveals that it does not at all comprehend the severity of this drought and the seriousness of the situation. One farmer, who has been fielding calls from his neighbours, has reported back to the opposition, stating that they are extremely frustrated as even the government's very modest assistance package will be out of reach for many. Linking vehicle registration and emergency services levy relief to the Farm Household Allowance makes the rebate scheme inaccessible to most of them. Those who are ineligible to receive it rightly regard it as a travesty that a multimillion-dollar assistance package is being promoted but they simply cannot access it.

We must be cognisant of the fact that our agricultural sector is a huge economic driver for South Australia, as I have just outlined. Unless it is provided adequate financial aid to navigate this drought period, there will be lasting economic and human consequences not only for the regions but also for our entire state as they produce so much of the food we eat and the produce we rely on for our economy. Not only are our farmers being affected but all the rural businesses associated with them. With lower food production and less money in our economy, the impact will likely be felt by consumers right across South Australia and, indeed, probably beyond. With the cost-of-living crisis, further increasing grocery prices is not something South Australian households should have to bear.

The overriding sentiment in the farming community is that the state Labor government does not understand the full impact this drought is having on their farms and their communities. Instead of providing genuine relief such as low or no-interest loans or assistance to meet cashflow commitments in the short term, the government seems more focused on appearing to help rather than actually doing so. This is evident in the way the government has counted pre-existing funding already in the budget as part of its response package and also in the long waiting periods farmers have to endure before finding out if their grant applications have been successful in their individual cases.

This is a really serious matter that deserves significant focus and immediate attention. The opposition believes the relief previously announced by Labor is plainly inadequate and implores the government to make drought assistance the highest of priorities in the best interests of our great state. I fully support the motion.

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

INTERNATIONAL DAY TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. M. El Dannawi:

That this council—

1. Recognises 15 March as International Day to Combat Islamophobia.
2. Notes that 15 March was adopted as International Day to Combat Islamophobia by the UN General Assembly, in order to commemorate the Christchurch Mosque attacks.
3. Acknowledges the concerning rise in Islamophobic rhetoric, actions and sentiment in Australia.
4. Acknowledges that Islamophobia:
 - (a) isolates, endangers and dehumanises Muslim people;
 - (b) creates barriers to full and equal participation; and
 - (c) undermines social cohesion.
5. Affirms that Islamophobia, racism and discrimination have no place in Australian society.

(Continued from 2 April 2025.)

The Hon. J.S. LEE (17:13): I rise today to support the motion recognising International Day to Combat Islamophobia and thank the Hon. Mira El Dannawi for moving this motion. The United Nations designates 15 March as International Day to Combat Islamophobia. It calls for the promotion of a culture of tolerance and respect for religious diversity. It recognises the need to combat Islamophobia and address rising intolerance, discrimination and violence against Muslims.

The United Nations defines Islamophobia as a fear, prejudice and hatred of Muslims that leads to provocation, hostility and intolerance by means of threatening, harassment, abuse, incitement and intimidation of Muslims and non-Muslims in both the online and offline worlds. As other honourable members have noted, the date of 15 March was intentionally chosen for this day of observance to commemorate the horrific Christchurch mosque attack, which occurred on that date in 2019. Those attacks were an act of pure evil that starkly highlighted the tragic consequences of unchecked hatred and underlined the urgent need to combat Islamophobia in all its forms.

At the time of the Christchurch attacks, both houses of parliament in South Australia spoke in bipartisan support to express our deepest condolences to the families, friends and communities who were deeply affected and devastated by that atrocity. I clearly recall that honourable members

in both houses stood shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim community to pledge our support in their grief and suffering.

This parliament reaffirmed our commitment to an inclusive and harmonious multicultural society, as we have done on many occasions before and since. However, sadly, we continue to see an unacceptable and unprecedented rise in anti-Muslim sentiment across Australia, with the recent report from the Islamophobia Register Australia finding a 250 per cent increase in reported online incidents and a 150 per cent increase in reported in-person incidents.

Overwhelmingly, Muslim women and girls were the target of these incidents, making up 75 per cent of all victims, including 79 per cent of verbal abuse cases, 60 per cent of physical assaults, and they were the victims in 100 per cent of spitting incidents. Most of the perpetrators were men. Ninety-two per cent of victims reported ongoing psychological impacts, including anxiety, depression and social isolation.

In South Australia, we pride ourselves on our diversity and the success of a harmonious multicultural society. However, we cannot deny that Islamophobia, like all forms of racism and discrimination, undermines the fabric of social cohesion and threatens the foundation of our open, generous and respectful society. In South Australia, we have an incredibly diverse, proud, compassionate and generous Muslim community, and we have been enriched by their social, cultural and economic contributions in all aspects of our society. Today, we show support and solidarity for the Muslim communities in our state.

I want to take a moment to remind honourable members of the parliamentary declaration contained in the South Australian Multicultural Act 2021. It was legislation that I championed under the Marshall Liberal government, and I want to take a moment to remind members that in that landmark piece of legislation the Parliament of South Australia acknowledged:

- (c) that all people have a right to express and celebrate their cultural, linguistic and religious diversity...
- (e) that all South Australians should be able to participate in the cultural, economic, political and social life of South Australia to the maximum extent possible...
- (g) that all people are entitled to mutual respect and understanding regardless of their background;

We also made a commitment to promote South Australia as a unified, harmonious and inclusive society. Today, I remind honourable members of these powerful statements because Islamophobia is incredibly isolating and dehumanising and creates very real barriers for Australians to fully participate in our society and achieve their aspirations. How can we as members of parliament commit to supporting all South Australians to participate in the cultural, economic, political and social life of our state without also addressing the obstacles that prevent some members of our community from doing just that?

I note that the opposition has indicated they will be moving amendments to this motion, which I believe will be seen as insensitive and lacking compassion by many Australians. The proposed amendments by the Liberal opposition completely changes the tone and intent of this motion and undermines the conversation about a very real problem that affects the lives of thousands of South Australian community members.

Tacking on amendments about the radical philosophies and extremist actions of some foreign regimes to this motion only fuels anti-Muslim sentiment by associating the policies and actions of foreign actors with innocent and peace-loving individuals in our society. We have spoken on motions before in this place that condemn human rights violations and oppression of minorities by foreign regimes, such as, for example, when we stood in solidarity with the women's rights movement in Iran and its calls for democracy and freedom.

We have also passed motions in this place to acknowledge and speak out against rising antisemitism in our society and to call for the better protection of Jewish people and communities. It is fitting that we do the same, with the same level of respect and sensitivity, to call out Islamophobia and to show our support for our Muslim brothers and sisters. While there is broad agreement that both antisemitism and Islamophobia are on the rise, we should avoid a tendency to debate which form of prejudice represents the biggest problem.

In the interests of addressing the rising hate in Australia, rather than attempting to resolve the political tensions overseas, many peace-loving Australian people are asking their political leaders to shift the focus away from an 'us versus them' implication because this competitive or adversarial approach risks exacerbating the issue and diverting attention from addressing the shared underlying causes of those forms of hatred. It should not be a competition between antisemitism and Islamophobia or any form of discrimination or prejudice.

It should be seen as a common problem that requires us to find new ways to address underlying causes of prejudice and hatred. This motion reaffirms that Islamophobia, racism and discrimination have no place in Australian society and I want to show my solidarity with our Muslim community in South Australia. We are stronger and better as an inclusive and harmonious multicultural society, and we should all defend that right. I wholeheartedly support the motion in its original form.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (17:20): I rise briefly as the lead speaker on behalf of the opposition in support of the Hon. Mira El Dannawi's motion. The date of 15 March is significant as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. This particular date was chosen to honour and remember the victims of the tragic Christchurch mosque attacks on 15 March 2019.

The decision to recognise 15 March worldwide was made with the intention of raising awareness about the dangers of fear, prejudice and hatred towards Muslim people. By acknowledging this day annually, we not only condemn acts of hatred and discrimination but also strive to foster understanding, tolerance and respect for all people of all backgrounds and beliefs. By doing this, we work towards a world where everyone can practise their faith freely and without fear of persecution.

While the Liberal Party fully supports efforts to uphold religious freedom, tolerance and social cohesion, there is a strong case for respectfully amending the motion. Our amendments not only recognise and condemn Islamophobia but also broaden the discussion to uphold universal human rights and condemn the harm caused by radical Islamism, both to Muslims and non-Muslims globally. In light of this, I move the following amendment as previously circulated:

Paragraph 5:

After 'Islamophobia' and before 'racism' insert 'antisemitism'.

After paragraph 5, insert new paragraphs as follows:

6. Condemns radical Islam for the deaths of countless Muslims by Muslims in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Nigeria, and Somalia;
7. Condemns the treatment of women and homosexuals under radical Islamic regimes and ideologies, including violations of basic human rights and dignity;
8. Condemns radical Islam's calls for the destruction of the State of Israel and supports the right of all nations, including Israel, to exist peacefully and securely.

The amended motion will retain full recognition of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia and the importance of fighting religious discrimination. However, it takes a broader, principled stand by also condemning the human rights abuses perpetrated under radical Islamic ideologies. This provides a more complete defence of human rights and dignity, consistent with Liberal Party values.

The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (17:23): I rise to speak in favour of the motion moved by the Hon. Mira El Dannawi. In so doing, I do not have a great deal to add to the speech the Hon. Jing Lee gave. I think that was a very well-considered speech and articulated many of the reasons why this motion is so important. I agree with the Hon. Jing Lee that these sorts of motions should be considered as standalone matters. They are opportunities for us to express solidarity with the Islamic community in Australia and, in particular, to stand up against Islamophobia and racism in our community. As the honourable member remarked, that conduct is abhorrent and it should be stamped out.

The motion acknowledges the impact that Islamophobia can have in terms of isolating, endangering and dehumanising people, creating barriers to full and equal participation in our society and undermining social cohesion. Indeed, a number of studies over the last few years have

demonstrated that there has been an alarming spike of Islamophobia in Australia, and so I think these sorts of statements from the parliament are impactful.

I will just take a moment to reflect on my disappointment that the opposition has chosen to insert other material into the motion. Rather than, as the Hon. Jing Lee reflected, simply leaving this as a powerful standalone statement, they have sought to add in some other wording that I consider could be inflammatory and, indeed, other wording that seems to suggest that the Liberals have not learned the lesson of the federal election that was just two weeks ago.

I think the Australian people sent a very clear message that they do not want Dutton's duds. They do not want this sort of ugly culture wars permeating through our politics. They do not want politicians fanning the flames of division and disunity in our parliaments, whether here in South Australia or in Canberra. I think that is why a record number of people voted for political parties that rejected that style of politics in our state.

I would urge the Liberal Party to reflect, heed the lessons of the recent federal election and leave this culture war politics at the door, because I think people are really sick and tired of it. With that, I indicate that I will be supporting the substantive motion but opposing the Liberal amendments.

The Hon. M. EL DANNAWI (17:26): I thank the members for their contribution to the debate: the Hon. Tammy Franks, the Hon. Sarah Game, the Hon. Jing Lee, the Hon. Robert Simms and the Hon. Nicola Centofanti. In particular, I echo the sentiments of the Hon. Tammy Franks that there is no hierarchy in which one type of discrimination is worse than others, and that they all should be given the same level of reporting and the same level of action.

Equally, I echo the sentiment of the Hon. Sarah Game in acknowledging everyone's right to exist peacefully and cohesively, regardless of religion or background. The Hon. Jing Lee: thank you for highlighting the shocking data, the rich contribution to our Muslim community, and the right to be seen and to be heard in our society.

I am sure it will come as no surprise to the Hon. Nicola Centofanti to hear that the government will not be supporting the amendments to this motion. The reason is simple: this is not a motion about radical Islam. This motion is to offer support and recognition of the difficulties that Muslim Australians are facing. It is to recognise a day that commemorates a racially and ideologically motivated attack against them that occurred in our corner of the world.

This motion is about the millions of Muslims in Australia and around the world who lead normal lives just like you and me. We should not have to offer countless disclaimers before we extend solidarity and support to peaceful members of our community. The Australian people are not interested in getting into the sort of culture wars that are fuelled by the amendment proposed by the opposition. The recent election proved that. This government is not interested in those culture wars either.

I want to take this opportunity to remind the chamber of some of the shocking data that came out of the Islamophobia Register's report: a 250 per cent increase in reported online incidents and a 150 per cent increase in reported in-person incidents. Women and girls are the target of these incidents by an overwhelming 75 per cent. I remind honourable members that, in the face of the divisive political narratives and negative media portrayals globally and nationally, we have the utmost responsibility to uphold the fundamental values of justice and equality and to role-model tolerance and acceptance. I commend the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The first question I am going to put is that the word proposed to be inserted in paragraph 5 by the Hon. N.J. Centofanti be so inserted.

Question resolved in the negative.

The PRESIDENT: The next question I am going to put is that new paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 as proposed to be inserted by the Hon. N.J. Centofanti be so inserted.

Question resolved in the negative; motion carried.

BENE AGED CARE

The Hon. J.S. LEE (17:30): I move:

That this council—

1. Congratulates the Italian Benevolent Foundation (SA) and Bene Aged Care for celebrating the special milestone of the 50th anniversary of its incorporation in 2025;
2. Notes that Bene Aged Care was founded by a passionate group of local doctors, business owners and community leaders within South Australia's Italian community and has evolved to expand its quality aged-care services to the wider community;
3. Acknowledges the founding members, current and past chairpersons, board members, executive management team, staff, sponsors and volunteers of Bene Aged Care for their dedication and contribution to serving ageing and retired individuals with multicultural backgrounds in South Australia;
4. Recognises the foundation continues to celebrate its heritage and remains committed to the notion that there is no greater privilege than being able to bring joy and a holistic approach to wellness to older people in South Australian communities through independence and wellbeing so that everyone can enjoy life to the fullest across home care, residential care and retirement villages; and
5. Commends Bene Aged Care for its strong commitment to supporting and enriching multicultural South Australia and the ageing community through wellbeing support that encompasses the physical, mental, social and spiritual concerns of each individual.

It is a great honour today to move this motion to congratulate the Italian Benevolent Foundation (SA) and Bene Aged Care on reaching the remarkable milestone of the 50th anniversary of their incorporation in December 1974. This milestone is a testament not only to the organisation's longevity and community service but also to its unwavering commitment to the community.

Bene Aged Care had humble beginnings. It began in 1935 as the Italian Village Incorporated, later known as the Adelaide Senior Citizen Village Incorporated, later known as the Adelaide Senior Citizen Village Incorporated and, more recently, the Italian Benevolent Foundation (SA), trading as Bene Aged Care.

The need for this service was identified by a passionate group of local doctors, business owners and community leaders from within the South Australian Italian community. At that time, culturally appropriate nursing homes did not exist. The journey to create this organisation was a long and arduous one that called on all founding members to push forward against many obstacles and barriers.

I was privileged to attend the Governor's reception and the gala dinner to honour Bene and the team at their 50th anniversary this year. Both events certainly highlighted the incredible contributions by Bene and the level of hard work, fundraising effort and commitment the founding members put into the very first aged-care facility for South Australia's Italian community, which opened in March 1982. Many dug deep into their own pockets, committed to the vision of culturally appropriate care for Italian Australians.

There were many people who influenced this journey, but I would like to highlight Dr Carmine De Pasquale, who migrated to Adelaide in August 1962 with very limited English. Despite the language barrier, he completed a medical course in 1969 and continued his learning, commencing psychiatric training in 1971. Eventually, Dr De Pasquale became the Director of Psychiatry at the Beaufort community clinic in Woodville. At Beaufort Clinic he introduced the innovative and groundbreaking concept of 'hospital at home' for Italians with severe psychiatric disorders. This concept of providing culturally sensitive care in a familiar environment greatly benefited the Italian community.

Dr De Pasquale's vision extended beyond his medical practice. In the years between the foundation being incorporated and the opening of the first centre, Dr Carmine De Pasquale worked with other Italo-Australian doctors, galvanising overwhelming support for an Italian aged-care facility. This commitment by all the founding members to provide culturally appropriate care has been a cornerstone of Bene's philosophy ever since. I would like to note that during the Government House reception hosted by Her Excellency Frances Adamson, Dr De Pasquale was presented with an outstanding community service award.

Bene, for those who do not know Italian, means 'good' or 'well'. Bene is built upon the values of honesty, respect, integrity, family, trust and time. Whether someone is in need of the security of

regular care, a little assistance here and there, or other lifestyle requirements—whether it is lifestyle, wellbeing, social activities, home care for independent living, residential care or respite care—Bene provides a way for individuals to live in a very respectful way.

The first Italian village in St Agnes has been joined over the years by more centres in Campbelltown, St Clair, Woodville North and, more recently, Hahndorf. The services provided by Bene continue to expand, with Bene now offering short stay day care as well as in-home care. Employing over 700 people, Bene services 500 residential aged-care residents each year, provides over 900 individuals with community care and, more recently, has acquired 70 independent retirement units, providing a cohesive and connected village for over 80 residents.

They are also proud of their financial stability. I note that at the gala dinner it was highlighted that seven in 10 nursing homes in South Australia operate in the red; however, Bene does not. It stands out as a shining light because of its very stable board and competent management team. Bene's impact extends beyond providing essential services. It has fostered a sense of community and belonging amongst residents and their families. These services are a testament to the organisation's ongoing commitment to serving the cultural, spiritual and lifestyle needs of their community.

As we celebrate this significant 50th anniversary milestone, it is important to acknowledge the contributions of all those who have been a part of Bene's journey. From the founding members to the current staff and volunteers, each person has played a crucial role in shaping the organisation into what it is today.

Under the current and very strong stewardship of Chairman Cavaliere Dr Antonio Cocchiario AM and Vice Chairman Mr Silvio Iadarola, along with Chief Executive Officer Andrew McFarlane, Bene Aged Care continues to thrive and expand its services, ensuring the highest quality of care for the community. Dr Cocchiario has led Bene as the Chair, along with the board, for almost three years. He is a well known, well regarded and highly respected community leader. He still works full-time as a GP at the medical practice that he and his brother set up over 40 years ago in Adelaide's west, and he brings solid life experience and expertise to Bene.

In 2004, Dr Cocchiario received an Order of Australia medal for his service to the development of multiculturalism in South Australia through community organisations and his work to support the social and cultural interests of the Italian community. Dr Cocchiario is also an honorary life member of the Multicultural Communities Council and served as the president of Radio Italiana from 2012 to 2019, among many other roles he has played within the state, advocating for not only the Italian community but all multicultural communities.

Tony Cocchiario and his wife, Toni Cocchiario—the husband and wife team have almost identical names and sometimes people do confuse them—are both beautiful people who are passionate about cultural diversity and fostering communities where people of cultural and linguistic diversity feel very well connected and valued in the South Australian community.

The Italian Benevolent Foundation's 50th anniversary is a testament to the vision, dedication and hard work of everyone involved. It would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the board, staff and volunteers, whose leadership has helped guide this organisation over the past five decades.

Looking ahead, the Italian Benevolent Foundation remains committed to its mission of providing exceptional care and support to the Italian South Australian community through Bene Aged Care. The organisation continues to evolve, adapting to the changing needs of its residents and embracing new opportunities to enhance its services. It is a great honour to be able to move this motion today to recognise the Italian Benevolent Foundation and Bene Aged Care. We wish them a very happy 50th anniversary and another 50 successful years ahead. With those remarks, I commend the motion.

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

THE HEADSTONE PROJECT

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. N.J. Centofanti:

That this council—

1. Acknowledges the importance of providing due recognition to those who served in World War I, and that The Headstone Project gives that recognition, respect and a sense of closure to World War I veterans' families;
2. Calls on the Malinauskas Labor government to support our fallen soldiers and provide funding to The Headstone Project at the requested amount of \$75,000 guaranteed for three years; and
3. Calls on the Malinauskas Labor government to petition the Albanese federal government to reverse its previous decision and agree to grant The Headstone Project SA 'Deductible Gift Recipient' status.

(Continued from 19 February 2025.)

The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (17:40): I rise today to speak in full support of this motion brought forward by my colleague the Hon. Dr Nicola Centofanti recognising the invaluable work of The Headstone Project and its dedicated volunteers. This is a project driven by respect for the service and sacrifice of our World War I veterans, many of whom have lain in unmarked graves for far too long.

What began in Tasmania through the tireless efforts of researchers and volunteers has grown to be a remarkable movement of remembrance in South Australia. The South Australian chapter has made significant progress since 2016. They have installed 107 headstones, facilitated 20 additional installations through the Office of Australian War Graves, arranged 13 Centennial Park plaques and identified over 400 veterans still resting in unmarked graves. This is not just about stones, it is about honouring those who gave so much for our nation, providing closure to family and ensuring that history does not forget them.

Despite these efforts, funding challenges persist. The group's modest request for \$75,000 per year to continue marking around 50 graves annually has not been fully met. The state government's partial funding of \$20,000 per year, while a small step forward, falls short of what is needed to properly support this important work.

We are talking about righting a historical wrong. Many of these diggers were buried during the Great Depression when families simply could not afford to mark graves. The Headstone Project brings dignity and recognition back to these men and serves as a powerful reminder to future generations of the sacrifices made for our freedom. With that, I note my full support for this motion.

The Hon. F. PANGALLO (17:42): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to endorse this motion and to wholeheartedly endorse the incredible work of The Headstone Project in ensuring that the service of unknown soldiers is not only recognised but their names are enshrined on previously unmarked graves. There are thousands of them, tucked away in distant corners of cemeteries around the nation, without anything to identify the remains that lay there.

Only through the determination of The Headstone Project and its band of volunteers and meticulous researchers have we been able to learn about them, their military histories and their family circumstances. It is the most rewarding and fascinating work in that it can turn up previously unknown information about their service in the World Wars. There could be hundreds, if not thousands, of still unmarked pauper graves containing remains that could be turned over and reused with living descendants being unaware of the situation.

The reasons for being unmarked can be a reflection of the financial circumstances of their loved one's family. Many had died during the tough economic times of the Great Depression and the Spanish Influenza epidemic, leaving their families with little choice on the modest type of burial with no headstone or even a modest wooden cross.

The Headstone Project is such a unique and invaluable program run by volunteers, which is of historic significance to our community, and it is done with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The research that goes into finding the person's history is so detailed and they have unearthed interesting backstories of those forgotten heroes.

Another fabulous outcome of this research is that not only does it go into finding a person's history in such a detailed form and unearthing their backstories but it also connects the remains with living descendants here and overseas. Sometimes they cannot be located. On many occasions,

families only learn about their distant relatives for the first time as a result of the work done by The Headstone Project.

The Headstone Project in South Australia has dedicated hundreds of graves as a result of their search, and it is done in a solemn manner at moving ceremonies befitting the commemoration of our service men and women. Their work is done, as I said, voluntarily, and the average cost of dedicating one of these graves is only about \$1,500.

I was honoured to be invited by John Brownlie and his team to a large dedication in Renmark last year, where 18 graves were identified. It was a rainy day and the poignancy seemed quite appropriate, the heavens sending tears of appreciation, even joy, for the recognition that was about to take place. At the ceremony, I met descendants of the service personnel who were there. Some came with medals that they had discovered. The dedication is quite moving in itself: a person dressed in a uniform standing to attention. The families are in attendance. An ode is delivered, and then the headstone is unfurled.

I dedicated one of them. Sadly, there was no family there for Frank Norman, who was born in Kristinestad, Finland, in 1890. On enlistment, he gave his occupation as a sailor. Between 1915 and 1916, he was a crew member of HMT Armidale. At the end of his naval engagement in 1916, he enlisted in the AIF. He did not marry nor had children. It cannot be established whether Frank was his real Christian name or whether he had anglicised his name (or names), although this is highly possible given the lack of information on genealogical sites.

Sadly, numerous inquiries have failed to find any records of family, but there are two South Australia Police Gazette entries for Frank Norman, which described him as a gardener and a native of Finland, such is the level of detail covered in the research. Frank's military service saw him enlist in the AIF at Broken Hill on 6 July 1916. He gave his occupation as sailor, with his sister Meri Norman of Kristinestad, Finland, as his next of kin. He was given service number 2131 and originally attached to the 43rd Battalion. The battalion embarked at Adelaide on 28 August 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth, England, on 11 October 1916, where he was transferred to the 37th Battalion.

The battalion moved to France on 22 November 1916. On 4 February 1917, Private Norman was transferred to the 3rd Division Salvage Company. On 30 April 1917, Private Norman badly fractured his left ankle whilst on salvage duties and, as a result, he was evacuated to England and admitted to the Ampton Hall Red Cross Hospital. He was invalided to Australia, arriving in Adelaide on 10 December 1917, and was discharged from the AIF as medically unfit.

Frank Norman died of pulmonary tuberculosis at Renmark on 12 October 1949 at the age of 59 years. His death certificate has no details of any family. It shows he lived in Australia for some 40 years. He was receiving a pension at the time of his death. Although he gave his religion as Church of England, he was buried in the Roman Catholic section of the Renmark cemetery.

As I said, the dedication was quite a moving experience for myself and the others who were there. What I am taking from it now is that Frank Norman, like all the others who have been dedicated, has not been forgotten. Now, not only does Frank Norman's name live on in a headstone in a distant corner of the Renmark cemetery but his service record and his life are acknowledged in this place in *Hansard*. I think this is a rewarding feature of just what The Headstone Project do.

They also do amazing work with schools. The project and what they do has led to the creation of a fascinating school project where students of St Mary's on West Terrace are now assisting in identifying unmarked graves. They are currently looking at nurses who served in the wars.

The lack of funding that this organisation receives is disappointing, and that has been pointed out by members in here. I wrote to Minister Joe Szakacs; the Treasurer, the Hon. Stephen Mullighan; and the Premier, the Hon. Peter Malinauskas, urging them to give ongoing financial support to The Headstone Project to the tune of about \$75,000 a year over five years to enable them to identify 50 unmarked graves each year. It is about \$1,500 per grave, which is an extremely small amount to pay to honour these heroes.

I urged the Premier and the ministers to allocate this grant as part of the 2024 state budget. The minister wrote back to me and indicated that the government would give funding to The

Headstone Project, but it only amounted to a paltry \$20,000. Quite frankly, I really do not think that that is good enough.

I think the other issue that The Headstone Project are trying to pursue is the commonwealth government's deductible gift recipient status, which is quite important. They have made numerous applications and have been rejected. What the deductible gift recipient status does is enable The Headstone Project to get donations that are tax deductible. It actually assists them in their work and would also reduce the burden—if you can call it a burden; I would not call it a burden, it reduces the outlay—on the state government in giving them funding.

I am at a loss to explain why the commonwealth continues to knock this back. I see there are a couple of hundred charities who have this status—of course, it is given to many worthwhile charities as well, but there are some in there that do not deserve it as much as The Headstone Project does in getting this.

I note that the Hon. Tung Ngo will move an amendment to the motion, where he says that the council:

3. Supports The Headstone Project's efforts to apply to the commonwealth government for 'Deductible Gift Recipient' status.

That is not good enough. 'Let's encourage them to keep applying and get knocked back.' That is not what it needs to be. Actually, the government needs to endorse The Headstone Project's efforts to get deductible gift recipient status, not just say, 'Okay, keep applying for it and getting nowhere.' I cannot say I am going to support that element of the motion, unfortunately.

I just cannot emphasise enough the worth of this project and what it does. I have seen the expressions on the faces of the families at these dedications, where they suddenly have been able to recognise that they had family members who served their country in so many theatres of war and did so gallantly. It is really such a noble project and it deserves far more recognition.

I am hoping that in the coming state budget we may see a further allocation given to The Headstone Project to enable their great work to continue. I make this point: we should not allow Remembrance Day ceremonies on 25 April and 11 November to be just token gestures. Let us really remember them all and not consign them to being unknown soldiers in desolate corners of a cemetery, whose remains may one day be unceremoniously dug up and disposed of in a dump—because that is what is likely to happen.

When I attend the ceremonies and I see members from this place—ministers and others—rightfully there and acknowledging the service of servicemen, I just want them to take a moment and reflect on those who have been forgotten and who, if it had not been for The Headstone Project, probably would have been forgotten forever. That is how important this is. I wholeheartedly support the motion by the honourable member, and I look forward to the day that this project gets the recognition that it rightfully deserves in terms of getting financial backing to enable them to do this great work.

The Hon. T.T. NGO (17:57): I rise to speak on this motion. Before I do that, I move to amend the motion as follows:

Leave out paragraphs 2 and 3 and insert new paragraphs as follows—

2. Supports our fallen soldiers and recognises that the Malinauskas Labor government has committed to provide more than \$70,000 in funding to The Headstone Project over three years; and
3. Supports The Headstone Project's efforts to apply to the commonwealth government for 'Deductible Gift Recipient' status.

I rise to speak on the honourable member's motion and to stand in support of honouring a generation that answered history's most difficult call. That call came more than a century ago, when Australian men and women served in World War I, far from home and in unimaginable hardship. When those who survived returned, they did their best to slip quietly back into civilian life, while so many others never made it home at all. Too often, their resting places were left without a headstone, without a story and without the gratitude they so richly earned and rightly deserved.

This is why The Headstone Project matters. The Malinauskas Labor government has committed more than \$70,000 over the next three years to support this project. That funding will help to pay for stone inscriptions and ceremonies, ensuring each veteran is honoured with the respect owed to them. It is a tangible sign that South Australia does not forget its heroes and that we value action over words.

This is a government that wants to honour our war heroes. One headstone at a time, we can help to restore dignity to World War I service men and women whose graves have previously been, tragically, unmarked or forgotten. The Headstone Project offers their descendants, sometimes four or five generations on, the comfort of knowing that their ancestor's name, rank and service are now carved in stone and recognised by the nation they made the ultimate sacrifice to protect.

More importantly, the project will give families a place to gather, to lay flowers and to feel that final sense of closure. However, funding alone is not enough. To keep pace with the growing demand, The Headstone Project is seeking deductible gift recipient status from the commonwealth government. The Malinauskas Labor government supports efforts to secure DGR status because it allows everyday Australians to make tax-deductible donations. This can help to unlock and encourage a broader stream of support.

I take this opportunity to thank the volunteers who meticulously research service records, the stonemasons who craft each marker and the families who keep memories alive. You all have our deepest gratitude. Your work completes the circle of remembrance that started on distant battlefields and ends here in our cemeteries. We want no veteran's story to fade into anonymity and we want our future generations to walk past those headstones, read the names and understand the price of their own freedom.

The Hon. B.R. HOOD (18:02): It is my honour to rise in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Nicola Centofanti. This motion recognises the vital work of The Headstone Project South Australia, a grassroots initiative that ensures those who served our nation in World War I, many of whom lie in unmarked graves, are given the dignity that they deserve.

These were Australian veterans. They were men and women who answered the call when their country needed them most, who returned home often scarred and often silent and were buried with no recognition, no marker and no public memory of their service. The Headstone Project is changing that. It is not a government agency. It is not a department. It is a group of volunteers of researchers, historians and community members driven by respect and not recognition.

They search cemeteries across South Australia, more than 900 of them, locating unmarked graves of World War I veterans. They dive into war records, death notices and family histories to confirm the identities of the deceased, then they prepare detailed reports and arrange for official military headstones to be placed at these long-forgotten sites. These markers are not just granite and bronze, they are restored dignity, they are public acknowledgement, they are small long-overdue thank-yous.

According to The Headstone Project, there are more than 2,500 unmarked World War I graves in our state, that is 2,500 stories untold, 2,500 names without honour, 2,500 families without closure. In my hometown of Naracoorte, several of these stories are now being honoured: Edward Bannon, John Bennett, Roy Bourne and William Cother. Their graves now carry the recognition they earned but never received until now.

In Robe, in March last year, the grave of an Aboriginal World War I soldier, Frank Owen, was finally dedicated. In Mount Gambier, at the Lake Terrace Cemetery, two Aboriginal servicemen, John Brett and John Westbury, were honoured by Aboriginal Veterans South Australia. These were deeply moving moments. They are a testament to the quiet power of remembrance, but this work does not happen for free.

The Headstone Project relies entirely on grants and donations—no flashy campaigns, no billboards, just volunteers doing the work governments should have done decades ago. They have asked for \$75,000 per year over three years. That is \$225,000 in total. For context, that is less than the price of a government advertising campaign or one ministerial overseas travel itinerary. For that amount, we could be giving hundreds of veterans their names back, their place and their honour.

If we are serious about respecting our ANZAC legacy, we must be serious about supporting those who are preserving it. This motion calls on the Malinauskas government to commit that modest but meaningful funding request, and to go one small step further by petitioning the Albanese government to grant The Headstone Project deductible gift recipient (DGR) status. This DGR status would open the door to a more sustainable funding model through philanthropic donations and community support. It is a small ask, but it means a great deal.

'Lest we forget' is a promise, not a platitude, but a promise means nothing without action. The Headstone Project keeps their promise. It is now time for governments, state and federal, to do the same. I commend the motion.

The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (18:05): In summary, I want to thank members who have contributed to the motion not just today but previously: the Hon. Dennis Hood, the Hon. Frank Pangallo, the Hon. Sarah Game, the Hon. Heidi Girolamo, the Hon. Ben Hood and the Hon. Tung Ngo. Whilst I do note the state government's funding commitment, and I also obviously note the amendments put forward by the Hon. Tung Ngo, this is not what the organisation has asked for, which was funding to the tune of \$75,000 per year for three years, which is going to go an incredibly long way to assist with making significant headway on this important project.

There is a significant funding difference between \$70,000 over three years and \$75,000 per year for three years, or \$225,000 over three years. The latter amount, obviously, is the amount that we, the Liberal opposition, have committed if elected in the 2026 state election. That equates to 50 graves per year for the funding period. That is 150 veterans given proper and respectful burials. So we will not be supporting the amendments put forward by the Hon. Tung Ngo to this motion. I do feel for the honourable member, who always seems to get rolled out when substandard amendments are pushed by this government.

As noted in my second reading contribution, and noting also the words from the Hon. Frank Pangallo, deductible gift recipient status through the federal ACNC is absolutely something that would prove incredibly helpful to The Headstone Project. I note that the second amendment put forward by the Hon. Tung Ngo does not provide any action from this state Labor government to help make this happen. It simply says that The Headstone Project can go ahead and do what they wish. Of course they can, and they have been, and they keep getting knocked back, but they can do that without the verbal grace from those opposite. It is typical: all talk but no meaningful action from the Malinauskas Labor government.

The Headstone Project does absolutely incredible work in honouring Australia's veterans by ensuring that every single service person's grave is properly marked and remembered. That is their task; that is what they have set themselves to do in South Australia. Their mission is to locate the unmarked graves of veterans who served for our nation, for our country—many of whom have been forgotten over time—and provide them with the dignity of a headstone and a place of reflection.

Through meticulous research, dedicated volunteers and community support, The Headstone Project preserves the legacy of those who wore the uniform, ensuring their sacrifice and service are never lost to history. I think their efforts are a powerful act of remembrance, respect and gratitude. With that, I want to note one final time the excellent efforts of Mr John Brownlie, and all the volunteers at The Headstone Project, who bring respect and closure to many families of fallen soldiers. I commend the motion in its original form to this chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The first question I am going to put is that paragraphs 2 and 3 as proposed to be struck out by the Hon. T.T. Ngo stand as part of the motion. If you are supporting the Hon. Mr Ngo, you are going to vote no.

The council divided on the question:

Ayes	6
Noes	9
Majority	3

AYES

Centofanti, N.J. (teller)
Hood, D.G.E.

Game, S.L.
Lee, J.S.

Hood, B.R.
Pangallo, F.

NOES

El Dannawi, M.
Hunter, I.K.
Scriven, C.M.

Franks, T.A.
Maher, K.J.
Simms, R.A.

Hanson, J.E.
Ngo, T.T. (teller)
Wortley, R.P.

PAIRS

Girolamo, H.M.
Martin, R.B.

Bourke, E.S.
Lensink, J.M.A.

Henderson, L.A.
Bonaros, C.

Question thus resolved in the negative.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that new paragraphs 2 and 3, as proposed to be inserted by the Hon. T.T. Ngo, be so inserted.

The council divided on the question:

Ayes9

Noes6

Majority3

AYES

El Dannawi, M.
Hunter, I.K.
Scriven, C.M.

Franks, T.A.
Maher, K.J.
Simms, R.A.

Hanson, J.E.
Ngo, T.T. (teller)
Wortley, R.P.

NOES

Centofanti, N.J. (teller)
Hood, D.G.E.

Game, S.L.
Lee, J.S.

Hood, B.R.
Pangallo, F.

PAIRS

Bourke, E.S.
Lensink, J.M.A.

Girolamo, H.M.
Martin, R.B.

Bonaros, C.
Henderson, L.A.

Question thus agreed to; motion as amended carried.

Bills

**SUMMARY OFFENCES (HUMILIATING, DEGRADING OR INVASIVE DEPICTIONS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

Final Stages

The House of Assembly agreed to the bill without any amendment.

STATE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION AND FACILITATION BILL

Final Stages

The House of Assembly agreed to amendments Nos 1 to 3 and 5 made by the Legislative Council without any amendment; disagreed to amendment No. 4; and made an alternative amendment as indicated in the following schedule in lieu thereof:

Schedule of the Amendment made by the Legislative Council to which the House of Assembly has disagreed and an alternative Amendment made in lieu thereof

Legislative Council's Amendment

No. 4. Clause 38, page 28, after line 29—Insert:

- (9a) For the purposes of this section (including in legal proceedings)-
 - (a) a statement in a claim that an owner of land suffered loss or damage as a result of a person entering or temporarily occupying land under this section; and
 - (b) a statement in a claim specifying the amount of the loss or damage,will, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be accepted as proof of the matter so stated.

House of Assembly's Alternative Amendment in lieu thereof

Clause 38, page 28, after line 29—Insert:

- (9a) If an owner of land suffers loss or damage as a result of a person entering or temporarily occupying land under this section, the Minister must pay the reasonable costs incurred by the owner for either or both of the following:
 - (a) the owner obtaining an assessment by a qualified valuer of the loss or damage suffered;
 - (b) the owner obtaining legal advice for the purposes of making a claim under this section for compensation.
- (9b) In subsection (9a)—

qualified valuer means—

 - (a) a qualified valuer under the *Land Valuers Act 1994*; or
 - (b) a valuer with qualifications or experience of a kind prescribed by the regulations.

At 18:21 the council adjourned until Thursday 15 May 2025 at 14:15.