

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 20 August 2025

**The PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens)** took the chair at 14:18 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. R.B. MARTIN (14:20):** I bring up the 67<sup>th</sup> report of the committee, 2022-25.

Report received.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

### ANSWERS TABLED

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

*Question Time*

### SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:23):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries on the topic of the algal bloom.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** Yesterday in this place the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development stated on several occasions that we on this side of the chamber are not interested in attending the government's algal bloom forums, which is odd since we have had a representative at every forum thus far. The minister said, and I quote, 'I would encourage members to perhaps attend some of the public forums that are being run.' I have, Mr President. In fact, I attended the government's forum in Minlaton, where the minister herself was noticeably absent.

On the South Australian government's own website, under the section outlining what to expect at the algal bloom community forums, it is explicitly stated that attendees will, and I quote, 'hear from government leaders, including Premier Peter Malinauskas and Deputy Premier Susan Close'. My questions to the minister are:

1. Can the minister confirm whether the Premier and the Deputy Premier attended either of the algal bloom community forums held in Minlaton, obviously on the Yorke Peninsula, and Port Lincoln on Eyre Peninsula?

2. As the minister responsible for the fishing sector in our state, why didn't the minister herself attend the government's own community forum in Minlaton to listen to the concerns of local fishers, because there were many of them?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:25):** I thank the honourable member for her question. The government team is attending all of the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** If the opposition is interested in having an answer to their question, they might want to listen to it. The government team is attending all of the government public forums.

*The Hon. H.M. Girolamo interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Girolamo!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I think key ministers include the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the other portfolios that are impacted by the bloom, such as tourism and my own portfolio, obviously. I would have liked to have attended the Minlaton forum and, whilst I wouldn't have thought it was usual to talk about personal medical issues in this place, I was having intravenous antibiotics three days a week last week because I had a serious infection.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** The Hon. Ms Girolamo, you will cease. Attorney-General! The honourable Leader of the Opposition, ask your second question, please.

### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:27):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing questions to the Minister for Primary Industries and the minister responsible for SARDI a question about scientific investigations into the algal bloom.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** It has been widely published by the state government that they have contracted an international marine expert, Dr Donald Anderson, a senior scientist and the Director of the US National Office for Harmful Algal Blooms at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, to assist with the investigations into the algal bloom. My questions to the minister are:

1. Where is Dr Anderson going in South Australia, and are his investigations being supported by SARDI?
2. What is the value of Mr Anderson's contract, and does this remuneration come out of the state government's \$14 million package?
3. Was Dr Anderson asked at any time by government to refrain from speaking to media or to retract comments made to media?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:28):** I thank the honourable member for her question. We have been very pleased to be able to host Dr Anderson here in South Australia this week. He is recognised as having a large amount of expertise in regard to harmful algal blooms, in particular in the United States, and the discussions with people here in South Australia were that it would be particularly helpful to have him attend our state.

I am not familiar with whether there is a contract as such, or whatever else, but I believe that the cost of his flights were covered either in full or in part—I am not quite sure. He has a very busy schedule: he is meeting with SARDI, he is meeting with PIRSA, he is meeting with all of those who might be relevant that he is able to fit in. He will be providing an update at tomorrow's task force meeting on the harmful algal bloom. I know that the Premier was asked a similar question yesterday, of whether Dr Anderson had been asked not to speak to media, and he responded that, given he has been speaking to media, obviously not.

### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:29):** Supplementary: will the minister take the question regarding Dr Anderson's costs on notice, including reimbursement of flights, and bring back a response to the chamber?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:29):** I am happy to do that, although I do find it quite surprising that those opposite seem to be suggesting that this is not a good investment of funds. The harmful algal bloom is of deep concern to people across South Australia—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** —both in our coastal communities as well as in terms of our fishing and aquaculture industries, so I would have thought that any additional expertise, in this case for someone to come and actually attend in person to discuss the sorts of measures that he has been involved in trialling or investigating, would be an excellent use of funds.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:30):** Final supplementary: has anyone from the government asked Dr Anderson to refrain from continuing to speak to the media since the original media reports in *The Advertiser*?

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, answer it if you want.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:31):** Yes, I think we have already answered that question. Certainly not to my knowledge.

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** So would all your colleagues be sorry that you are wasting their question time. The honourable Leader of the Opposition, your third question.

#### **REGIONAL INVESTMENT CORPORATION LOANS**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:31):** I seek leave before asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries on the topic of algal bloom and RIC loans.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI:** The Prime Minister today announced that he would be extending the RIC loans that are available to farmers to our fishing and aquaculture industries. Given what farmers are telling us—and in fact the Pastoralists and Graziers Association have been quoted as saying, 'At these rates, RIC loans are no different to walking into commercial banks'—my question to the minister is: does she believe that RIC loans at their current variable interest rate are sufficient to adequately support our fishers during these unprecedented times? Also, I am interested to hear as to whether or not she believes that these RIC loans are also sufficient to adequately continue to support our farmers during the drought.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:33):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I think we have discussed here, on a number of occasions in the past, advocacy to the federal government in regard to the RIC loans. I have certainly had multiple discussions with my federal counterpart in regard to them and have put the case that the interest rate should be lower than the current 5.18 per cent. The state government will continue to advocate in that regard.

I was pleased to see the Prime Minister today announcing the establishment of a significant ecological event assistance program to support communities through types of events such as the harmful algal bloom. That will be delivered by the extended and enhanced Regional Investment Corporation. We look forward to continuing to work with the federal government, and I understand we will have the opportunity to provide further input into how that program develops.

#### **REGIONAL INVESTMENT CORPORATION LOANS**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:34):** Supplementary: will the minister continue to implore her federal colleagues going forward to ensure that the interest rates for those RIC loans are actually true no and low concessional rates?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:34):** I just answered that question.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (14:34):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Can the minister tell the chamber about the state government's support for commercial fishers and aquaculture operators who have been impacted by the algal bloom?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:35):** I thank the honourable member for his question. The scale of impacts from the algal bloom has varied widely, even within some of the individual fishing sectors, with some very, very heavily impacted, others to a lesser degree, depending on a wide range of factors. For this reason, it has been necessary to facilitate a coordinated response with industry bodies such as the Marine Fishers Association, Seafood Industry South Australia, the South Australian Professional Fishers Association and others to understand the varying impacts, and to implement targeted relief to ensure those who need help are able to receive it.

While direct financial assistance to those impacted is crucial at this time, it has also been a major focus to get up-to-date and factual information to the public, to affected industries and to the community through a wide range of forums—online, in the media and in public forums—so they are aware of what support is available and that they can support the industry by buying local seafood that is still absolutely safe to eat and, of course, still delicious.

I am advised that a number of those within industry are very keen that fearmongering is not a characteristic of the public debate, and I am advised that some within industry feel that unfortunately those opposite have taken that role of fearmongering rather than a constructive addition to the debate.

Since the beginning of the bloom, this government has been working with the industry bodies and many others, listening to the needs of industry, which have evolved as the algal bloom itself has evolved to where we are today, which is the availability of a significant support package that will deliver real relief to those who have been most impacted. The government's \$28 million Algal Bloom Support Package, jointly funded by the federal government and the state government, has a strong focus on supporting impacted industries and businesses to provide support and relief through a range of programs, from financial assistance to business support and advice.

There is also a strong mental health focus, with an additional \$160,000 allocated to the dedicated program for mental health within the seafood industry, the Stay Afloat program, which has done some amazing work over many years, and is playing such an important role as we speak. That particular program was mentioned specifically at the Port Lincoln forum, which I attended on Saturday night.

Key components of support for impacted industries include fee relief for commercial fishing licence holders and aquaculture licence holders; the \$10,000 small business support grants; and the fisheries and aquaculture assistance grants of up to \$100,000. As a result of our ongoing industry consultation, on Monday the government made some important changes to eligibility requirements to grant criteria, to ensure support can flow to more impacted businesses.

The key changes include, for the small business support grant, the closing date being extended from September to 30 November, with businesses eligible if they can demonstrate a decline in business turnover in any consecutive three-month period from 1 April to 31 October this year. The closing date for the fisheries and aquaculture assistance grant has also been extended from 12 September to 30 November, with the requirement to demonstrate a decline in catch or harvest, or business turnover, extended to any consecutive three-month period from 1 April to 31 October.

Where a commercial fishery or aquaculture licence holder can demonstrate a turnover of \$75,000 in financial year 2023-24 or 2024-25, and has had its licence fee waived by PIRSA, it is entitled to the immediate one-off tier 1 \$25,000 grant. There has also been a number of other reductions in the requirements to access the various tiers of support. I encourage all impacted commercial fishers and aquaculture licence holders to visit the various government assistance websites, such as the Office for Small and Family Business—Algal Bloom Support Package website to find information and assistance about completing applications.

Importantly, the state government will continue to monitor the rollout of the grant programs, working closely with industry to make any further adjustments, as necessary. I think the algal bloom has put our reliance on those marine resources as a state in full view and encouraged many to reflect on just how important they are to our way of life as South Australians. That is why we will continue to support those impacted, so that they can get back to doing what they do best: providing South Australians and people all over the globe with some of the world's best seafood.

**SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:39):** Supplementary: why did it take over four months for the government to put in these support programs?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:40):** I might perhaps ask the question of why it took four months for those opposite to bother to be interested in the harmful algal bloom. I outlined yesterday—

*Members interjecting:*

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, your attempt at fishing was very successful.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** That is an excellent line, sir.

**The PRESIDENT:** But if you could just answer the substance of the question, it would be good.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** I outlined in this place yesterday the timeline of action from this government, which started far earlier than anything we heard from those opposite. It started back when the first reports came in, in March. We talked about the cross-agency working group that had been established and all of the engagement that we have had with industry throughout that time. I think it's quite remarkable that those opposite, coming late to the situation, then suddenly—I think they must be staring in a mirror when they talk about delays.

**HOMOPHOBIA IN AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:41):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question without notice to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing on the topic of homophobia in sport.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS:** The AFL's integrity unit is currently looking into an alleged incident involving Adelaide Crows star Izak Rankine's use of a homophobic slur during the Adelaide Crows game against Collingwood on Saturday. If found guilty, Rankine could be at risk of missing the rest of the AFL season. Mr Rankine is one of a number of players in recent years to have faced disciplinary action from the AFL for his use of homophobic language. When asked about the investigation by the media, Premier Peter Malinauskas stated:

The AFL will go through its process but as a footy fan I hope that Izak Rankine and the best footy players in the competition can play particularly during the finals.

My question to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing is: what is the state government doing to eliminate homophobia in sport, in particular in football, and does the minister agree with the comment made by the Premier regarding Izak Rankine, or does she believe that the AFL should demonstrate a zero tolerance approach to homophobia?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:42):** I thank the member for his question and appreciate his comments that were made on radio; I think that was yesterday. I agree that there is no space on or off the field in our community for homophobic comments. As I have said before in this chamber, sport enables an opportunity for people to belong and feel that this is a safe space for them.

I know, as has been reported, that Izak did take that first step of apologising, which is an important first step, but there is a long way to go in regard to what we would see as a safe space both on and off the field for players at either a local level or an elite level. As you have highlighted, and as I have been advised as well, the AFL is working through the integrity unit at the moment. That is an appropriate way for this matter to be investigated, and we look forward to finding out what those results will be.

**HOMOPHOBIA IN AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:43):** Supplementary: is the minister concerned about the rising prevalence of homophobia within the AFL, and has she had any discussions with the AFL about this matter?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:43):** I have been in contact with the Crows and asked the steps that they are taking and have been advised, again, that those appropriate steps will be followed. They will be actioned and we will find out what that process will look like very soon.

#### **HOMOPHOBIA IN AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (14:44):** Supplementary: given penalties don't appear to be working effectively at the moment, does the minister have any views on further action that could be taken within the AFL, for instance, increased representation of LGBTI voices within the sport or increased training or education for players?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:44):** I am always happy to take on ideas and feedback. I know Rainbow Crows, for example, is a really active group and I have had the privilege of discussing with them how we can make it a more inclusive environment not just on the field but also at the training facilities and how we can make this a community for all. Just like we are in our broader community, it needs to be reflective in our sporting community as well.

#### **YOUTH JUSTICE REFORMS**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:45):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General regarding youth justice reforms.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** The *National Indigenous Times* reports that proposed reforms to South Australia's justice system's treatment of young offenders have drawn the condemnation of Indigenous justice advocates concerned that their implementation would criminalise children, reduce community safety and disproportionately harm Aboriginal children.

Quoted in the article is ALRM Chief Executive Klynton Wanganeen, who warns the proposed legislation risks criminalising children, undermining fundamental legal protections like the presumption of innocence, and allowing police control orders for children as young as 10 based on clothing or unproven associations—something that is also in line with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure's proposals around barring orders on public transport. Mr Wanganeen has labelled the laws a free pass for our kids to be racially profiled that will lead to more Aboriginal children being thrown into jail.

Meantime, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services General Manager Melissa Clarke suggests our state has entered a race to the bottom by joining other states and territories in practising harmful lawmaking that ignores both evidence and the voice of Indigenous communities. My questions to the Attorney are:

1. Can the minister explain what its proposal around restorative justice will be into the future to guard against overreach and racial profiling, especially of our vulnerable First Nations children?
2. What independent oversight mechanisms or culturally safe complaint processes does this government intend to establish to ensure control orders or policing orders are applied as a last resort?
3. What steps will be taken to involve and empower Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and legal advocacy groups like the ALRM and NATSILS in both policy design and real world implementation?
4. Lastly, will any new funding or programs be introduced to bolster diversion programs, cultural mentoring or trauma-informed care as alternatives to detention, noting, of course, the good work that has been done in that space by the minister to date?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (14:47):** I thank the honourable member for her questions. In relation to legislation that follows on and comes out of our youth offender strategy and the round tables that we have had over recent months, in the coming weeks there will be legislation presented to parliament. I will not foreshadow exactly how that legislation will

look. Draft legislation has gone out for consultation. A number of groups and organisations, including the State First Nations Voice, who I met with a couple of weeks ago, have put forward their thoughts and some suggestions in relation to legislation, which we are taking into account and we will see something in the coming weeks before parliament.

In relation to restorative justice and justice reinvestment, we have a couple of new trial sites in South Australia in Port Augusta and Murray Bridge as part of the joint work between the federal government and the state government in justice reinvestment, particularly in Aboriginal communities.

In relation to making sure that we have a strong sector to give us the views of particularly Aboriginal justice organisations, I am very pleased that in the latest national Legal Services funding agreement we have seen a very, very significant increase to ALRM's budget in South Australia that will not just allow for the advocacy and policy work that is so valuable that the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement in South Australia do but will also increase their coverage around the state in terms of representation for Aboriginal people.

I think the final question touched on diversionary and other programs to try to make sure that people, particularly young people, have less contact with the criminal justice system. We announced a number of months ago, when we released our Young Offender Plan, that there would be a \$3 million new investment—new money in terms of programs particularly aimed at those young people who find themselves in significant contact with the criminal justice system.

I think a statistic that the police had was something like just 20 young people were responsible for 11 per cent of the matters before the Youth Court, so the extra \$3 million in funding is particularly aimed at providing those intervention programs for those young people who find themselves in very significant contact with the youth justice system.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (14:50):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development regarding the harmful algal bloom support package.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD:** Late last month, after hearing from businesses and fishers that the eligibility requirement for the announced support package was far too narrow, the opposition called for the Labor government to urgently review and change its eligibility criteria. In the wake of a planned rally of fishers at Parliament House yesterday, the government announced that they had changed the eligibility criteria to improve take-up and effectiveness. This was less than 24 hours before the industry's planned rally.

On the ABC's *Drive* on Monday night, the minister assured listeners that a 15-day turnaround for grant applications will be met. In reply to the opposition's question on air, the minister stated: 'Yes, it will. That has been met already and will continue to be met.' Given the application eligibility has increased and the number of businesses and fishers is likely to increase, my questions to the minister are:

1. Does the minister stand by her comments that she made on radio regarding a 15-day turnaround between the initial application for support and funds hitting the bank accounts of our fishers and affected businesses?
2. Can the minister advise the chamber if current resources within the department are sufficient to ensure the 15-day turnaround timeline for applications will be met and, if not, will the government provide additional resourcing to ensure those timelines are met?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:51):** I thank the honourable member for his question. I have heard, I think from the Hon. Nicola Centofanti maybe on that radio program and the Hon. Mr Ben Hood, about this rally. I do not think anyone heard from any of the organisers of the rally—unless that was perhaps the Hon. Ms Centofanti—advising government of this rally. They keep talking about it in a very big way, but there was no particular advice to government about it, as far as I am aware.

In regard to the question of the 15 days, my advice is that that is being met. The only clarification that I think everyone should be aware of is that when all the information is provided, sometimes with any grant program, perhaps an applicant has not provided all the required information, so the department will need to go back to the applicant. Once that information is provided, then the 15-day timeline kicks in. My advice is that all of that is being met at this stage and that resources have not been a problem in terms of meeting that.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (14:53):** Can the minister advise the chamber if the government will provide additional resourcing, given that one could assume that there will be more businesses and fishers likely to provide an application now that the eligibility criteria has been expanded?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:53):** As I said, we have made a commitment to meet that timeframe of 15 days, and I see no reason why that would not be met. At this stage, there are no additional resources required, according to my advice. That 15-day turnaround is being met.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:53):** Supplementary: can the minister also confirm that there is no cap on the number of applications for a grant that has been imposed by the government in relation to either of the grants that are available?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:54):** That is my understanding. I think I heard the Premier talking about that, answering that very question, in the press conference that we had earlier in the week.

#### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (14:54):** Supplementary: can the minister also confirm that in reality, and the reason why the threshold was actually reduced was because, in the not too distant future, we expect most of the sorts of businesses referred to to actually meet the current thresholds and limits that apply to the grant?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (14:54):** I must say, the question was a little bit unclear. I am not sure if the honourable member was saying: do we expect that with the reduced thresholds most businesses in South Australia in the seafood sector would be eligible? Is that what the question was?

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** No, that businesses are going to reach the threshold regardless. It's just a matter of time.

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN:** The situation with the algal bloom obviously is evolving on a daily basis. We are all doing our best to be able to anticipate how it may behave and therefore what the impacts will be. As I have mentioned in a number of fora in recent weeks, there are three things that could occur. The first, and the one which I am sure we would all agree would be the best, would be if the weather conditions do result in the bloom dissipating. Each day it continues in its scale is obviously lessening the likelihood of that being the outcome.

The second is that the bloom may reduce or maybe even go away, but then return perhaps in the summer months or at some time in the future; and the third is that it will continue throughout and into the summer period. Obviously, the number of grants that would be applied for and paid will depend on which of those scenarios eventuates.

#### **RECREATION, SPORT AND RACING STRATEGIC PLAN**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (14:56):** My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Will the minister inform the council on how the Recreation, Sport and Racing strategic plan will benefit all South Australians?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (14:56):** I thank the honourable member for their question and interest in recreation, sport and racing. The launch of the 2025-30 strategic plan marks a pivotal moment for sport, recreation and racing in South Australia. This plan

sets a bold and ambitious direction, one that unites clubs, organisations, volunteers and government under a shared vision for the future.

At its heart, it is about people ensuring that sport and active recreation continues to play a vital role in shaping a healthier, more connected and thriving South Australia. The plan was shaped through 12 months of consultation, listening closely to the voices of grassroots clubs, volunteers, state sporting organisations, local government and national bodies.

In March, I had the opportunity to host a state sporting organisation round table at the South Australian Sports Institute, bringing together leaders from across the sector. This forum provided invaluable feedback, ensuring that the plan reflects the priorities, challenges and aspirations of those delivering sport and recreation in our state every day.

We know that sport and active recreation sport are more than just weekend activities. They create social connections, improve health and wellbeing, build inclusion, and provide valuable life skills such as leadership, teamwork and resilience. They also help drive better academic outcomes for young people, boost local economies through events and infrastructure, and create jobs.

The plan is an investment also from this government. State government infrastructure funding programs have supported local clubs and that support will continue to help open new clubrooms, ovals and courts, which are vital to the communities across the state. Major projects are already underway, like the construction of the new Adelaide Aquatic Centre, which is being delivered by our government, ensuring South Australians have access to world-class aquatic facilities.

In the Mile End Sports Precinct, works are set to begin on the SA Netball centre redevelopment, delivering more courts, better seating and a greatly enhanced experience for the half a million people who visit this site every year. We have also invested in the South Australian Sports Institute building, which, in less than a year, has had a remarkable impact on high-performance sport, providing world-class facilities and a centre of excellence for a wide range of sports.

We are also the first state to contribute \$1 million over four years to the LA 2028 Olympic and Paralympic team appeal, providing a pathway for our athletes to reach the games, and have established a 2032 Brisbane games legacy committee. At the grassroots, we have doubled the Sports Vouchers program, offering two \$100 vouchers per child per year, helping to eliminate barriers to participate for children and young people, helping them move from the screens and onto the fields.

This plan belongs to the sector. It belongs to the thousands of volunteers, to the coaches and to the families and, most of all, to the players. I look forward to seeing this plan come to life over the next five years.

#### **AMBULANCE RAMPING**

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (14:59):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking a question of the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Health, regarding ambulance ramping.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. J.S. LEE:** SA Health data shows that our metropolitan emergency departments, with a combined capacity of 333 beds, are consistently operating well above safe occupancy levels, often exceeding 125 per cent. This overcrowding contributes directly to ambulance ramping and delays in patient care. A significant contributing factor is the number of hospital beds occupied by patients who are medically ready for discharge but are awaiting placement in residential aged care. As of 11 August 2025, 280 patients across metropolitan hospitals were in this category.

On the same day, it was reported that SA Health will double the capacity of its transitional hotel health service at the Pullman Hotel, Adelaide, from 24 to 48 beds in an effort to alleviate pressures on hospitals. While this initiative may offer short-term relief, the Australian Medical Association has noted that it is not a sustainable or comprehensive solution for South Australia's healthcare system. My questions to the minister are:

1. Considering the Minister for Health's own admission that 20 out of 200 patients who have used a 48-bed service have not yet been discharged, what specific plan is in place to ensure these patients and future ones can transition into appropriate long-term care, rather than creating a new bottleneck?

2. What is the government's response to the AMA about their concerns that SA Health is not offering sustainable or comprehensive solutions for South Australia's healthcare system?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:02):** I thank the honourable member for her question. I will refer it to the minister in another place and bring back a reply.

### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:02):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking questions of the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing regarding junior and senior surf sports in South Australia.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD:** There have recently been reports in the media of parents being reluctant to allow their children who are involved in the Nippers program at the various surf lifesaving centres across South Australia to swim in the ocean due to the state's algal bloom problem. The president of the West Beach Surf Life Saving Club, Graeme Cunningham, has said publicly in the last week or so in relation to this matter, and I quote, 'We monitor the beach, and we'll be looking at the EPA and surf lifesaving website to give us updates on how the water quality is.'

Yesterday in the other place when referencing the state government's plans to monitor water safety, the Premier said, and again I quote:

One of the things we want to do is make sure we are providing as much information as we reasonably can to the community around the algal bloom, the location of the algal bloom and the testing analysis that's done around the algal bloom. But one of the challenges that members in this place should be cognisant of is the ever-changing and evolving nature of the algal bloom.

You can test a body of water in the morning and it might be all clear, and then by the afternoon it might not be, and vice versa.

My questions to the minister are:

1. Given the unpredictable nature of the algal bloom, is the minister confident that accurate advice pertaining to water safety can be conveyed in a timely manner to ensure children, especially participating in surf sports this summer, will not be at risk of harmful algae exposure?

2. What support is the minister providing surf lifesaving clubs in areas affected by the algal bloom to provide contingency plans for junior and senior surf sports should the algal bloom render their beaches unsafe?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:03):** I thank the honourable member for his question, and congratulations on your new portfolio area. It's a really good question and one that I was pondering as well. As we have heard many times in this chamber, this is obviously unprecedented and it is something we haven't been through before. I know that the Premier and the ministers involved in this have done incredible work in providing the package as it stands at the moment at \$28 million.

In regard to recreational activities, especially our aquatic activities, early on I reached out to Surf Life Saving and asked, considering their experience and knowledge of the ocean not only as rescuers but also as protectors of our ocean and our beach line, for them to be involved in the industry reference group that is part of government and to bring that knowledge to the table so that it can be shared with government bodies, government ministers and other relevant agencies. They have been there for that very point: to be able to make sure that what would be seen as appropriate, how we should be utilising our beaches as we progress through this, is how we should be keeping our communities safe.

So they are that voice at that table, and it is an important voice to have there and one that is very well respected. Also in partnership with Surf Life Saving, I think for 10 September—I will correct that if that is incorrect—an invitation is coming your way in regard to bringing the sporting groups together as appropriate. For aquatic sporting groups an invitation will be made available so that our aquatics groups can come together, making sure we are having that one voice of truth, and that information is either coming from a government website or the Surf Life Saving website.

**SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD (15:05):** Supplementary: I thank the minister for her answer. Is it simply the case that the safety of the water cannot be guaranteed at this time for swimmers?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:06):** That is not the advice I have received.

**NAIDOC WEEK**

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:06):** My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the topic of NAIDOC celebrations in Port Augusta and Whyalla. Will the Minister inform the council on this year's NAIDOC events in Port Augusta and Whyalla?

**The PRESIDENT:** The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:06):** Thank you, sir. I note your strong interest in events occurring in Whyalla, and I thank the Hon. Russell Wortley for his question and his strong interest in events during NAIDOC Week. NAIDOC Week is always filled with many events and activities right around South Australia and greater metropolitan Adelaide. While many of these events are in metropolitan Adelaide, it is always good to try to attend events across remote and regional South Australia.

This year, I was fortunate enough to attend events in both Port Augusta and Whyalla. Port Augusta NAIDOC celebrations kicked off in earnest on the Monday of NAIDOC Week, 7 July, with a smoking ceremony and a corporate breakfast, followed by an opening ceremony and a flag raising. Tuesday's calendar began with the hugely successful CultureFest, which was hosted at the barracks in the centre of Port Augusta this year.

It was great to spend time with many locals and community members, to have a chat and listen to a pretty awesome line-up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists at Culture Day, MC'd by Elaine Crombie, who is a fantastic local MC and is almost everywhere during NAIDOC Week. Artists at Culture Day included Uncle Eddie Peters, Scott Rathman Jnr, BOUSTA, Makiri Inma Group and Of Desert and Sea. There were plenty of activities for family and kids, such as weaving, face painting, boomerang painting and a caricature design wall.

Later that evening, the famous Port Augusta NAIDOC Week quiz was held at West Augusta Football Club. This event was a little different from other events, including the Port Augusta NAIDOC Week quiz night that I have attended in the past, due to the fact that the winning table from the year before has the responsibility for running the quiz night. I was unfortunate enough to be on a table with some very knowledgeable local Aboriginal people last year, so our table had to run the quiz night this year, so it was a different sort of enjoyment of the quiz night, having to front up and ask questions rather than sit on a table answering questions.

With collaboration and support from Umeewarra Media, we pulled together a very enjoyable quiz night that attracted close to 200 people, such was the interest from the community in the NAIDOC Week Port Augusta quiz. On Wednesday, I had the privilege of attending the Centacare NAIDOC community event at Norton Park in Whyalla, which I was also able to attend last year. It is always a popular event and it is fantastic to see so many community organisations present, and particularly children's events and also having a proper roo tail cookout, with many kangaroo tails being cooked in the ground, as has happened in previous years.

Both the Port Augusta and Whyalla NAIDOC Week events provide numerous opportunities for community members to engage with and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. I have only touched on a couple of the events in just a couple of cities around South Australia, but the diverse range of activities ensures that there is something for everyone, from children to elders, fostering a sense of community and achievement during NAIDOC Week. I congratulate all those who put on such successful events for our communities, and I look forward to informing the chamber of NAIDOC Week events right around South Australia in the future.

### COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (15:10):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, regarding recent recommendations from Australia's national regulatory authority for therapeutic goods, namely, the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. S.L. GAME:** On 3 June of this year, the TGA inserted the following recommendation as part of its digital Australian Immunisation Handbook, and I quote the exact words:

COVID-19 vaccine is not recommended for healthy infants, children or adolescents who do not have medical conditions that increase their risk of severe illness. This is because the risk of severe illness was extremely low in this cohort over the course of the pandemic, and benefits of vaccination are not considered to outweigh the potential harms.

This advice clearly contradicts SA Health's strong promotion and encouragement to South Australian parents to get their children double vaccinated with either the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccinations. This advice also contradicts the strong recommendations made by South Australia's Chief Public Health Officer, Nicola Spurrier, who stated:

As a paediatrician, I encourage all parents and caregivers to make sure their young ones are vaccinated against this disease.

As a result of advice from SA Health and Nicola Spurrier, thousands of parents got their children vaccinated. But now the TGA claims that this vaccination was more likely to cause harm than to protect children against COVID-19. My questions to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, are:

1. Will SA Health and South Australia's Chief Public Health Officer, Nicola Spurrier, publicly acknowledge the 3 June advice from the TGA and declare that the COVID-19 vaccine is no longer recommended for healthy infants, children or adolescents?
2. Will SA Health and Nicola Spurrier also publicly acknowledge that the benefits of vaccination are not considered to outweigh the potential harms in accordance with current TGA recommendations?
3. Given the extremely low risk of severe illness for children, as well as limited benefit and potential harm, will SA Health and Nicola Spurrier issue a public apology for actively campaigning for children to be vaccinated despite legitimate parental concerns?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:12):** I will be happy to pass those questions on to the minister in another place and bring back a reply. I might just add, and I think I have mentioned this before when questions about vaccinations have arisen in this chamber: I think many health professionals, including the World Health Organization, have talked about vaccinations as the single most effective public health measure ever introduced in terms of keeping populations safe. I think it is a very great risk when we talk about vaccinations as something people ought not undertake.

In relation to vaccinations during COVID, COVID was an unprecedented event, a very fast-moving event, where no doubt COVID vaccinations saved many, many lives right around the globe. As to the substance of the questions and anything that the TGA has recommended, I will be happy to pass that on to the Minister for Health and bring back a reply.

### ADELAIDE BEACH MANAGEMENT REVIEW

**The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:13):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to addressing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries regarding fish mortalities at the SA Aquatic Sciences Centre.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO:** The fish deaths emerged almost immediately after the dredging trial conducted under the Beach Management Review undertaken in close proximity to the water intake pipes servicing the facility. Yet, when questioned in this place on 4 February, the minister

repeatedly insisted that there was no evidence to suggest any connection between the dredging activities and the mortalities observed at this site. In documents recovered under an FOI request, a minute to the minister, dated 18 February 2025, notes that:

SARDI contacted the Department for Environment and Water and the South Australian Environment Protection Authority immediately following the discovery of the mortalities and continues to meet regularly with representatives from these agencies regarding the investigation into mortalities. The most recent meeting occurred on 13 February 2025.

Noting that the dredging trial was conducted under the supervision of DEW and under the licence of the EPA, neither DEW nor the EPA has any role in managing the West Beach facility but were heavily involved in the management of the dredging trial. My question to the minister is: why was it necessary for SARDI to meet with DEW and the EPA, the parties responsible for the dredging trial, immediately following the discovery of the mortalities if dredging was not suspected to be the cause of the deaths, as she has previously informed this house?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:15):** I thank the honourable member for her question. When there is any kind of, in this case, fish mortality, I would have thought it was exceptionally obvious that PIRSA would liaise with the EPA and with the Department for Environment and Water. It's called being thorough and robust. I do not understand how those opposite can somehow find yet another conspiracy in the fact that three government departments would be thorough and robust in investigating an occurrence such as the fish mortalities.

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN YOUNG RURAL AMBASSADOR AWARD**

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (15:16):** My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development. Can the minister tell the council about the South Australian Young Rural Ambassador Award presentation dinner held last month?

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries) (15:16):** I thank the honourable member for his question. It was my great pleasure to attend the presentation dinner for the announcement of the South Australian Young Rural Ambassador Award and to celebrate the hard work, achievements and contributions of the finalists. This award is open to people aged between 16 and 20, and it honours emerging leaders deeply committed to agricultural industries and the agricultural show movement.

The award also reflects the shared commitment of everyone involved to help foster young talent and leadership within the South Australian agricultural community and creates a sustainable future for country shows. The government of South Australia, through the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, has been a proud sponsor of the Rural and Young Rural Ambassador program, as well as the Young Judges competition, for more than 20 years.

The program offers a wonderful platform and network to the young people of our state to build on their involvement with their local agricultural shows and to amplify their contributions to rural and regional South Australia. Providing personal and professional development opportunities through the program is important to keep young people engaged and to support them to reach their highest potential. It was wonderful to hear from Elsie, the 2024 Young Rural Ambassador, about her experiences over the past 12 months. I commend Elsie for making the most of the opportunity and using it to progress her own development and learning as a young leader.

Local shows bring people together, and young people play a big role in making shows vibrant and exciting places by volunteering, participating in competitions and organising events. The energy which young people bring to country shows strengthens local pride and community bonds, which are even more needed now in times of drought. The close involvement of young people cannot be underestimated for keeping country shows relevant, evolving and, importantly, fun. In turn, engagement in the organisation and running of country shows helps young people to further develop their critical skills, such as leadership, responsibility, teamwork and problem solving. These skills are valuable to the future of local, regional and rural communities, and to our state as a whole.

Country shows hold a cherished position in the hearts of country and city folk alike across South Australia, and intergenerational exchange is critical to ensuring much-loved country show traditions are preserved where needed, which is why it's so fantastic to see country show volunteers of all ages here supporting and cheering on the next generation.

The seven finalists in the running for the Young Rural Ambassador Award were all impressive individuals. Among the seven finalists there were show stewards and judges, secretaries and presidents of show societies and, of course, show entrants and competitors. On top of their show commitments, the finalists are also pursuing education and careers in pharmacy, veterinary medicine, sports and recreation, and agriculture.

Angus Schiller, Maddie Zoanetti, Belinda Jaeger, Shayla Lapse, Ellie Oster, Lacey Cains and Tilly Keller should all be extremely proud of their dedication to their communities and their commitment to agricultural shows. Their contributions to the ag show movement deserve recognition, and I am delighted they put themselves forward to take advantage of the platform offered by this award program.

The runner-up this year was Ellie Oster from the Yorke Peninsula. Ellie was recognised for her contribution as a convener of the children's section of the Maitland Show and a member of the show committee. Ellie also works at her local early learning centre and supports children with special needs.

The winner, the Young Rural Ambassador 2025, is Shayla Lapse. Shayla is currently employed as a station hand at Konetta Station in the South-East. Shayla was not born and raised in a regional area. She in fact developed her love for agriculture at school, attending Urrbrae Agricultural High School in Adelaide, and had to move away from her family to work in the South-East. It was lovely to meet her parents there on the night.

Both Shayla and Ellie are very deserving winners and I look forward to seeing how they make the most of this fantastic opportunity over the next 12 months. To the other finalists, I encourage them to keep up their fantastic work in their communities and to continue their learning and development, and I commend them for their commitment to agricultural shows.

#### **ABORIGINAL EDUCATION STRATEGY**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (15:20):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, representing the Minister for Education, a question regarding the Auditor-General's Report findings, the audit of stage 2 of the Aboriginal Education Strategy, tabled in this place yesterday.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** The said report was tabled in this place yesterday and examined whether the Department for Education is effectively managing implementation, planning, performance measurement and evaluation under stage 2 of the AES 2022-26 period. Such elements are considered critical to ensuring the decade-long commitment we made as a state to deliver improved educational outcomes for Aboriginal South Australians is fulfilled. The Auditor-General has raised serious concerns regarding gaps in performance measurements, including within the report's conclusion, stating:

Given these gaps, DE is not able to effectively demonstrate the impact of the AES and most initiatives and how they are progressing towards achieving their goals and objectives.

My questions to the minister are:

1. What are the immediate corrective steps the Department for Education will take to address the findings of the report?
2. How will it allocate resources to ensure planned initiatives, particularly those targeting early years and engagement in regional areas, are fully delivered?
3. Can the minister specify which key performance indicators under stage 2 are not being tracked or reported effectively and what the government intends to do to restore transparency, including definite milestones and timelines?

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing) (15:22):** I thank the honourable member for her question, and I will seek a response from the relevant minister.

**ADELAIDE BEACH MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO (15:22):** I seek leave to make a brief explanation before addressing a question to the Attorney as the minister responsible for the dredging trial conducted as part of the Adelaide Beach Management Review.

Leave granted.

**The Hon. F. PANGALLO:** In the water quality monitoring plan, found in appendix 1 of the Dredge Management Plan as part of the dredging trial, there is a commitment to continuous water monitoring and it reads as follows:

The 15-day and 6-day rolling median turbidity values will be compared to the 'Alarm' and 'Hold' criteria in Eagle.io and alerts sent out to key project personnel if they are exceeded.

This means that data should be automatically analysed on a rolling six-day average, with an automatic alarm in place for abnormal water quality values that would lead either to a manual check or a halt to dredging operations. However, in the SARDI report, the record of water monitoring data collected by sonde number 433 in figures 7 to 12 inclusive, there is data missing from 28 September to 18 November 2024. This is the critical period immediately prior to the first fish mortality event at the South Australian Aquatic Sciences Centre.

It is claimed in the report that the cause for the missing data was depletion of the battery. This would mean that the required data collection and alarms were not functional for 22 days without the fault being noticed. My questions to the minister responsible for the trial are:

1. Given the requirement under EPA guidelines and the commitment under the dredging plan for constant water quality monitoring, how can a data logger remain out of action for 22 days without being detected?
2. Why was dredging allowed to continue without the required alarms working?
3. Is the Attorney concerned that this failure occurred at the critical period before the first fish mortality event?

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (15:25):** I am advised that during the dredging operation, water quality monitoring was undertaken by the EPA and DEW in accordance with approved dredge management plans. I am also advised that at no time during the operation did this monitoring identify any anomalies in the water based on EPA benchmarks.

*Matters of Interest*

**INTERNATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY**

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (15:26):** A cause very close to my heart is being recognised by the United Nations on 18 September. That is the date of International Equal Pay Day. I will say that we are not in a position to celebrate it just yet because too many people are not receiving equal pay for equal work. I understand that seniority brings greater pay, but even in Australia we are seeing equally qualified people with equal tenure receiving different levels of pay for doing the same job. More often than not that applies to women who are still on average receiving wages well below that of their male counterparts. We do not want tokenism; we just want a fair go.

Australia has a strong recent history in fighting for equal pay. The concept was first acknowledged in 1969, but it was not adopted. It was during the first month of that great era of the Whitlam Labor government that equal pay for equal work was legislated. The private sector, it seems, is a long way behind the public sector in providing equal pay. For instance, even in Australia, private companies are paying 31 per cent less to women. In the public sector, the figure is 5 per cent, which is still not acceptable, but they are a lot closer to achieving the objective.

Where Australia stands on the global index also shows that we have some work to do. We are ranked only 26<sup>th</sup> in the world for equal pay, well behind the likes of Iceland, Norway, Finland, New Zealand and the UK. The index shows women are making only 70 per cent of the wages men make for the same work, and that is just not good enough.

But it is a lot worse still for our First Nations people. They earn around \$300 per week less than non-Indigenous Australians. Under-representation is part of the problem. When it comes time

to negotiate a wage for casual or occasional work, employers have a history of taking advantage of the situation.

In 1969, the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission established a minimum female wage at 85 per cent of the male wage. The belief at the time was that the supposed major breadwinner, men, should make more. We no longer have women earning less than men as a matter of statute, yet women are still making less. Too many women are forced to take poor wages by unscrupulous employers just for the opportunity to work.

In many countries, usually Second and Third World countries, women have struggled to make enough money for any type of independence. In addition to Second and Third World countries, regressive political ideologies are undoing a lot of the good work done over the past century. In the US, for example, women earn about 80 per cent of what men earn for the same work. Black, Native American and Latina women are even worse off, earning about 60 per cent of the male wage. That is not likely to improve anytime soon while extreme conservative politics are in play. The US example just shows that every nation is only one extreme government away from setting their standards back many years.

Whenever reactionary governments take power, the first casualty is fairness and equality. It is usually the hardworking minorities that suffer. For these reasons, we need to remain vigilant in Australia and continue to strive for fairness and equality. There is no reason we cannot match our Kiwi neighbours across the Tasman and pay more fairly. Hopefully, those countries that are straight-out abusing women and minorities will right themselves sooner rather than later. In the meantime, let us try to make this nation fair and properly recognise the contribution made by women and other unfairly paid Australians.

#### INCOLINK

**The Hon. B.R. HOOD (15:30):** I rise today on a matter that cuts to the core of accountability and transparency in South Australia. It is something that I have spoken about previously in this place, and it concerns this Labor government's dealing with the CFMEU-linked redundancy fund, Incolink. This is not a minor industrial issue: it is a scheme already operating in South Australia, one that is funnelling millions across the border to Victoria directly into the hands of the CFMEU.

The facts are alarming. As reported in *The Australian* recently, since 2020 Incolink has received more than \$78 million in commissions from insurance brokers. Every insurance policy signed up for provides a clip to Incolink, which then flows back to the CFMEU under the guise of training. When the Victorian CFMEU took over the SA branch, one of the first moves they made was to shift all their insurance work out of Adelaide and into a firm called Windsor Management, whose head office just happens to be right next door to the Incolink building in Carlton.

In 2024 alone, \$21 million was transferred from Incolink to the Victorian CFMEU. Let me say that again: a Victorian redundancy fund, now operating in SA, has transferred \$21 million to the Victorian CFMEU. How much money was from this state? These are staggering figures, and they are not subject to meaningful regulation. No real public scrutiny, just tens of millions of dollars being funnelled from workers and employees into the union coffers. That is no coincidence: it is part of a deliberate strategy to embed this model into South Australia.

What makes this situation even more concerning is who is behind it. Incolink's CEO, Erik Locke, is no stranger to controversy. He is a former Labor staffer and Labor Party state secretary who was forced to resign as Chief of Staff to the Western Australian Deputy Premier after an appalling bullying scandal. Locke sent degrading messages to a female colleague suggesting that she undergo liposuction. With a stench like this, it is no wonder Incolink have now employed former Dan Andrews spin doctor Christian Bombig to try to improve their image.

Now, Erik Locke is lobbying the Premier of South Australia, and lobby he has. Documents released under freedom of information show Locke personally contacted Premier Malinauskas, praising South Australia's industrial settings and pushing for the Victorian redundancy model to be adopted here. Let us be clear what this model means. In Victoria, the CFMEU wields enormous control over worker entitlements, employee contributions and taxpayer-backed projects through this scheme. It has become part of the CFMEU's machinery of power, a way to lock in influence and expand reach, and under this government's watch it is being imported, and has been imported, into South Australia.

South Australians are entitled to straight answers. How much money has already gone over the border through this arrangement? What oversight exists to stop redundancy or training funds being siphoned into union-run schemes? Why has the government been silent while an unregulated pipeline of money is being established under its watch? The public is being told that this government will stand up to union influence, but the reality is starkly different. While saying one thing in public, behind closed doors the Premier has entertained a scheme run by a former Labor colleague who left politics in disgrace, now heading up an unregulated billion-dollar fund that directly enriches the Victorian CFMEU.

Incolink are not in South Australia because they want to benefit the state or its workers: they want the cash. The Premier talked tough in June last year about standing up to the CFMEU, but nothing has changed. The union still runs South Australia from Victoria, still pushes Incolink and still siphons millions unchecked. The truth is the Premier has done nothing. He has let this problem fester, and by doing nothing, he is not defending South Australians: he is abandoning them. That is unacceptable.

### VACANT LAND LEGISLATION

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (15:35):** I rise to speak on the vacant land bill which passed the upper house (this chamber) just before the winter break. They say never let the truth get in the way of a good story. That is certainly the case for the SA Liberal Party, who have been running a misinformation campaign against this bill during the winter break. I note the Hon. David Pisoni has written to electors in his seat of Unley:

...warning of a radical Greens proposal that would allow the seizure of privately owned land without compensation or consent.

In his letter, the honourable member warns that:

...underutilised land could be taken over by the state for an undefined public purpose without any right to appeal or compensation.

The member also warns that 'the bill includes no certainty or protection for landowners'. These claims are incorrect. The bill makes clear that a council or the minister will only acquire a compulsory lease if the designated entity has taken reasonable steps to negotiate the acquisition of an interest in the prescribed land on reasonable terms so that they may be used for a public purpose. In other words, the minister or the local council needs to have tried to acquire an interest in the land and the owner has not been amenable.

The bill also makes clear that a compulsory lease will only be applied when it is appropriate for the land to be used for a public purpose, and the bill provides some guidance around this—i.e. to be used for a public park or temporary housing. As is the case with other administrative decisions, the landowner can appeal against a determination made under section 243A of the act to the Supreme Court. Section 243 makes clear that nothing in the act prevents the owner from being reimbursed for rates, taxes or levies.

When I introduced this bill back in 2022, I made it clear that the purpose of the legislation would be to focus on long-term vacant land. I noted that sometimes lands sits vacant because financing has fallen through and a developer has to abandon a project, but sometimes it is because a landowner is land banking, which is the practice of using unused land to gain a return on investment with very few overheads or outlays. There is also, of course, the example of the old Le Cornu site I noted, which sat vacant for nearly 30 years. It is of concern when you see prime land like this remaining vacant and government not taking any action.

It is a complete nonsense to suggest that the Greens are coming after your backyard. Does anyone in their wildest dreams think that a local council or a minister would go after some small vacant pocket of residential land? How exactly would they be able to demonstrate such land would be used for a public purpose?

I was profoundly disappointed to hear the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Josh Teague, has been doing the rounds of aged-care homes in his area, whipping up fear and anxiety about this. How shameful. Might I say, I saw the absurd video that he posted on his social media, which was also misleading. Indeed, I intend to refer this and other material from the Hon. David Pisoni to the Electoral Commission for their consideration.

I recognise in response to this misinformation campaign that the government has now voted against the bill and it is no longer on the legislative agenda. Indeed, the government have been consistent that they did not support the bill in its current form, but were happy to not oppose the bill in this chamber. It passed the upper house without division. If the Liberal Party felt so strongly about the issue, why did they not call a division?

It is regrettable that this has become the focus of a fear campaign. I indicate now that I will not be pursuing this bill in the next term of parliament and it will not be part of the Greens' platform for the state election. I will, however, continue to advocate for the activation of vacant land. We are in a housing crisis; we need to consider all available levers. It is not right that people sleep on the street while some developers land bank.

What is telling about this whole episode is that we have a planning minister who is open to having an intelligent discussion about all of the options that we have for dealing with the housing crisis. This sits in stark contrast to the Liberals, who have once again demonstrated themselves to be visionless naysayers—no agenda, no plan for dealing with the housing crisis.

Might I say, I had the opportunity to listen to the debate in the other place earlier this morning and it was utterly ridiculous. I was mightily offended to hear myself being likened to someone coming from communist China. I have heard myself referred to as 'Red Rob' in the past, but I encourage members who have an interest to listen to the ridiculous, hysterical claims made by the opposition in the other place. This takes clutching at straws to a whole new level—desperation writ large from the opposition, who have no ideas, no housing policy and no plan to get the housing crisis back on track.

I am happy to indicate that I will not be pursuing this bill because I am concerned it will become a distraction from the broader issues facing the housing crisis. But shame on the Liberal opposition for whipping up a smoke and mirrors campaign and using this bill as a fig leaf to disguise their own lack of vision for this state and plan to deal with the housing crisis.

#### **QANTAS**

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON (15:39):** There is a widely known, modern philosopher-poet by the name of Justin Bieber, and he asked somewhat recently, 'Is it too late now to say sorry?'

**The Hon. I.K. Hunter:** Never heard of him.

**The Hon. J.E. HANSON:** As the Hon. Mr Hunter points out, he has never heard of him. It might be too late to say sorry, but we will get to that. As observed by another slightly earlier philosopher-poet that I am sure the Hon. Mr Hunter will be aware of, Sir Elton John, 'Sorry seems to be the hardest word to say.'

What am I talking about? I am glad you asked, the Hon. Mr Hunter. This week we saw something pretty huge, record breaking actually, a national first of sorts, if you care about those sorts of things. We saw the biggest breach of workplace law ever in the 120 years of us bothering to keep such laws—\$90 million, a record penalty against one employer.

Last year, we also saw compensation awarded to 1,800 employees sacked illegally by that same employer—a hefty sum of \$120 million. You add the two together and it is close to a quarter of a billion dollars in penalty against the company that for most our childhoods, certainly mine, had a pretty special place in our hearts and in our nation, a source of pride for many. I trust most members right now would have clocked that I am talking about Qantas.

With a penalty like a quarter of a billion dollars, it is not a question really of asking what someone did wrong, but rather whether they did a single thing right. In a Federal Court judgement given recently by Justice Lee that is frankly laden with quotable quotes, I really have to take us to a couple here:

We are still looking through a glass darkly... leaves me with a sense of disquiet and uncertainty as to precisely what went on within the upper echelons of Qantas leading up to the outsourcing decision.

Further:

It is one thing for the 'Qantas News Room' to issue press releases by a CEO saying sorry; it is quite another for written assertions of contrition, recognition of wrong and cultural change to be tested in a Court room...

And:

If any further evidence was needed as to the unrelenting and aggressive litigation strategy adopted in this case by Qantas, it is provided by this effort directed to denying any compensation whatsoever to those in respect of whom Qantas was publicly professing regret for their misfortune...

'Disquiet', 'uncertainty', 'unrelenting', 'aggressive'—not my words, these are the words of the Federal Court.

I have said before in this place that unlawful workplace behaviour is not a business model; it is just unlawful, for a government, for companies, for the individual. Financial motives are no defence against breaking the law. It seems here that, after a quarter of a billion dollars in penalty has been handed down by a judge who questions the motives and the sincerity of a company that he was penalising, what left is there to say?

Firstly, let's give a shout-out to the mighty Transport Workers' Union. What a victory for that union and its members! Once the dust is settled on what it all means, it is worth asking the question that Mr Bieber, Sir Elton John and Justice Lee all occupied themselves with. In this nation where we have seen some of our largest employers engaging in wage theft, in this nation where legislation has been required to step in to help no less than one in three Australian workers subject to insecure work, and in a nation where 39 per cent of Australians—that is about 5.7 million workers—report being burnt out at work in a national poll conducted by the ACTU not less than four weeks ago, when will corporate Australia stop paying fines and start paying attention?

When will they start paying attention to the effect that they are having on our nation? Why is it that sorry, an actual genuine sorry, seems to be the hardest word to say? If breaking the law really is cheaper than adhering to the law, as we have seen reported in this case, which, just quietly, is an absolutely extraordinary proposition, then how high do the penalties have to be before that is no longer the case?

#### DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDS

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (15:44):** No government can control the weather, no government can stop the tides, change the seasons, or prevent every biosecurity incursion from reaching our shores. What a government can control, and what South Australians should expect, is the quality of its response when disaster strikes. Sadly, this state Labor government's response to crisis after crisis has been slow, reactive and too often driven by public perception rather than genuine care for the people affected.

Take the drought: farmers warned for months that conditions were deteriorating, stock water was running low, feed was vanishing and urgent support was needed. Instead of acting early and decisively, the government waited and waited and waited, and when a package finally came it was buried in red tape, with restrictive eligibility criteria excluding many of those it was meant to help. Even now, the government cannot provide a clear breakdown of where promised funds have gone. For too many producers, that so-called support has been nothing more than a press release.

The drought is far from over and significant challenges remain. Farmers, supported by the minister's own drought commissioner, continue to call for urgent cashflow relief. Yet, the government has failed to deliver no and low-interest concessional loans or rate rebates—practical measures that would provide a genuine hand up rather than a handout to the primary producers who sustain our state and our nation.

Then there is the algal bloom, devastating our oceans and coastal communities since March. From the outset, the government's approach was defined by buck passing and delay. Correspondence was shuffled between departments, with no clear lead agency stepping forward. Early concerns from affected communities were largely ignored, and the buck passing between the Premier, the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Primary Industries was akin to an episode of *Utopia*, but without the humour, as these are people's lives and livelihoods.

This lack of accountability wasted precious time, worsened impacts and left fishers, coastal businesses and regional communities without the clarity or support they needed. The eventual support package mirrored the drought package: all spin and no substance. Some fisheries have been closed, but many others remain technically open, despite suffering a total loss of catch and facing years of resource depletion.

The government's initial narrow eligibility criteria excluded many who are hurting the most. There is no real plan to protect or restore the resource, and it wasn't until public outrage grew, fuelled

by fishers, by councils, by communities and by the opposition, that the Premier and his ministers even pretended to take notice. This is not a one-off failure. Successive Labor governments have progressively reduced long-term water quality monitoring in our oceans. Without consistent long-term data we are left guessing about the health of our marine environment and unable to pinpoint the causes of disasters like the current algal bloom.

Baseline data is not a luxury, it is a foundation of sound environmental management, allowing us to detect changes, respond quickly and hold decision-makers to account. Labor loves to brand themselves as the party of the environment, but when it comes to actually delivering real environmental protection, they are missing in action.

Beyond their crises failures, this government has imposed a statewide bow hunting ban without consultation, supported compulsory leasing powers over vacant land in this place and pushed new restrictions on landholders' rights and landowners' rights, all without genuine community debate. These are top-down decisions, made in Adelaide boardrooms with little regard for the people's lives and livelihoods affected.

The message must be clear: these decisions do not just hurt our regions. When fishers and farmers struggle, prices rise for everyone. When freedoms are eroded, every South Australian is at risk. We are all connected, and we must stand up for one another. Enough is enough. We need a government that works for the whole state, not just its political favourites, a government that listens, a government that acts and a government that respects the contributions of every South Australian, from the heart of the city to the farthest reaches of the outback, one that is proactive, not reactive, one that values action over optics, and one that always has its ear to the ground, standing shoulder to shoulder with the people it serves. We need a change and we need it now.

#### **VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTIQA+ AUSTRALIANS**

**The Hon. I.K. HUNTER (15:49):** I am concerned about reports of rising violence directed at LGBTI Australians. It is unfortunate that I must raise this issue today because I would rather be speaking about the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the South Australian parliament's decriminalisation of homosexuality. It was a landmark decision that ended the criminalisation of homosexual men, even as brutal gay bashings and targeted murders of gay men in our country continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

In the 2020s, that same hatred has risen again, but it has taken on some new forms. Across the country, gay, bisexual and same-sex attracted men are being lured into orchestrated attacks through fake dating profiles. The perpetrators are often teenagers. They are setting traps and planning assaults, systematically, on these men.

In Perth, one man was beaten, tasered, stripped and forced at knifepoint to make a false confession on video. His naked photographs were then circulated on social media. In Melbourne, another man who was attacked wondered if he would actually make it out alive after losing so much blood that he was facing intensive care treatment. Other victims describe being chased into traffic, beaten unconscious and left with broken bones. Victoria Police have arrested more than 35 people in connection with these crimes. In Western Australia, five teenagers were sentenced after a series of attacks that saw men stripped, tasered and beaten with metal bars. These prosecutions show that the problem is real and growing.

What troubles me most is the number of victims who never come forward. New South Wales Police say that many of these crimes go unreported. This silence is not a reflection of weakness in victims, it is a symptom of the system that still does not feel safe for them to utilise. According to Victorian Pride Lobby, 37 per cent of LGBTIQA+ Victorians experienced street harassment in 2021, highlighting how persistent hostility continues to discourage our community from coming forward with complaints.

That fear is further justified when prejudice bursts out into the open, as it did in Adelaide last weekend. Adelaide Crows player Izak Rankine is expected to be sanctioned for using a homophobic slur against another player during an AFL match last Saturday. Incidents like this matter because football holds a very powerful place in Australian culture, shaping attitudes well beyond the Oval. Players are not just athletes, they are young men in privileged positions, well paid and celebrated as role models in our community. With that comes a greater obligation to lead by example.

When discrimination is voiced on such a stage, it sends a dangerous message to fans, particularly young fans, that prejudice is acceptable. Those who are seen as leaders must set a higher standard because the reach of their words and actions carries influence across the community. Is it any wonder that young teenagers are committing egregious acts of violence against gay men in this country when elite footballers engage in verbal homophobic assaults in prime time? It is time for the AFL to act decisively. This is a stain on the reputation of our most elite and privileged sporting code, and it has to accept responsibility for the actions of their players.

Fifty years after decriminalisation, progress cannot be measured by laws alone but by whether queer Australians feel safe in their homes, in their communities and in their relationships. Too many still do not, and we owe it to those who have been attacked, those who have been silenced, those who are fearful of speaking out and those who are still hesitant to live openly to act. Governments, law enforcement, sporting codes and the wider community must do more to stop this wave of hatred. No Australian should live in fear simply for being themselves.

**FEEGRADE, MR R.**

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (15:53):** I rise today to honour the life of Rohan Feegrade and to pay tribute to the legacy of a truly remarkable South Australian. Mr Rohan Feegrade, as honourable members know, was the Chief Executive Officer of Lutheran Care. He sadly passed away at the age of only 47 after a courageous battle with cancer.

His memorial service was held on 1 July 2025. I recall that it was one of the coldest mornings in Adelaide, with a temperature of 2.6°C. Despite it being a freezing cold day, a large crowd of Rohan's family members, friends, colleagues and community members gathered at the Adelaide Oval to honour the loving memory of Rohan. On the invitation, guests were asked to wear bright colours or floral clothing to show their love and affection, because the family wanted the room to be full of colour and full of warmth, love and joy, just like Rohan.

Rohan was an exceptional leader with integrity, vision and compassion. His passing is a great loss, not only to his family and friends but to the South Australian community. Rohan was a devoted husband to Julia, a loving father to Sophie and Maya, a cherished son to Dee and Errol, and a precious friend and brother to many who have had the pleasure to know him and work with him. So many moving speeches were made and video clips on the day displaying Rohan's signature big smile, showing his passion for life, his love for his family and his community was evident in everything he did.

Under Rohan's outstanding leadership, Lutheran Care did not just grow, it transformed. The organisation quadrupled in size, not for the sake of growth but to reach more people, to do more good, to make a greater impact in the lives of those experiencing hardship, homelessness, domestic violence and other forms of disadvantage. Rohan believed that every person deserves dignity. He understood that behind every statistic was a story, a family and a future.

Rohan's tenacious leadership was not confined to strategy documents or boardroom tables. He lived the values he championed. He was fully committed and fully engaged at roundtable discussions, community events, at staff gatherings and on the frontlines of service delivery. He knew the names and stories of those he worked with and for. His trusted colleague and close friend, Percy Henry, who served as the chief operations officer at Lutheran Care, spoke at Rohan's memorial service and described him not just as a leader but as a brother. He was the young bull, as Percy affectionately described him, fearless, driven and full of energy, but he also knew when to listen, when to reflect and when to walk alongside others.

Listening to the reflections during the memorial service, it was clear that Rohan built a team that was more than a leadership group; it was a tribe, a family driven by common values and purpose. Even in the remaining months and days of his life, Rohan continued to lead with courage and humility. His battle with cancer was met with the same strength, resilience and grace that defined his approach to life. His tenacity to face adversity with dignity and give hope to those he loved was an inspiration to all who knew him. Deepest condolences to Julia, Sophie, Maya and the entire Feegrade family.

Please know that Rohan's legacy lives on, not only in the profound programs that he built or the policies that he shaped but in the lives that he touched and the significant impact he made to our community. As Percy Henry so beautifully said at Rohan's memorial:

We didn't just build a human services organisation—we built a movement. A family. And Rohan was the heartbeat of it all.

With deep gratitude for his contribution, it is an honour today to acknowledge a passionate leader in our community and the distinguished service of Rohan. May his loving memory and profound legacy continue to guide us in our efforts to support those in need and build a more compassionate, inclusive society. Vale Rohan. Farewell my friend. Forever in our hearts.

### *Motions*

#### **FAST FASHION**

**The Hon. C. BONAROS (16:00):** I move:

1. That a select committee be established to inquire into and report on the environmental, economic and social impact of fast fashion in South Australia, with particular reference to:
  - (a) the volume and nature of fast fashion items being imported into South Australia;
  - (b) the environmental impact of fast fashion, including its production, transport, and disposal;
  - (c) the sustainability of current fast fashion consumption and waste practices;
  - (d) the impact on South Australian retailers, including local and ethical fashion businesses;
  - (e) the financial and operational burden on charities, particularly in relation to the disposal costs of donated clothing and textile goods that cannot be resold or reused;
  - (f) legislative and policy responses in other jurisdictions, both nationally and internationally;
  - (g) potential legislative, regulatory, or policy measures that could be implemented in South Australia to mitigate the negative impacts of fast fashion and promote more sustainable practices; and
  - (h) any other related matters.
2. That this council permits the select committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it sees fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being presented to the council.

Textile waste is piling up at an alarming rate. Ultrafast fashion is flooding our market with low-quality, short-lived clothing that ends up in landfill far too quickly. It is an environmental crisis that is accelerating climate change, damaging ecosystems and placing an unfair burden on future generations, let alone those countries around the world that have been left to pick up the mess.

As members of parliament, it is incumbent upon us to make moves to address the single biggest issue of our time, as well as the human cost borne by exploited workers far from our shores. That is why I am proposing a select committee into the environmental, economic and social impacts of fast fashion in this state.

South Australia has a proud history of environmental leadership. Our container deposit scheme showed that smart policy can change behaviour, drive industry innovation and reduce waste at scale. Only this year, the state government supported, to the tune of \$100,000, the Circular Fashion Initiative, a new program launched by the South Australian fashion industry to provide local fashion businesses with vital resources, education and practical support to transition towards sustainable and circular operations.

It is essential that we encourage circular fashion models, where materials are reused, recycled and repurposed. We need to support sustainable and ethical brands and make consumers aware of the far-reaching impacts that buying a cheap and disposable garment can have. According to Recycle Right, an estimated 6,000 kilos of textiles and clothing are dumped in landfill in Australia every 10 minutes.

Charities are overwhelmed. Only 1 per cent of total collected disposed garments are actually recycled; 100 billion garments are produced globally each year, with 33 per cent going to landfill within the first year of purchase. Each item we buy, we wear on average six to seven times. Over 200,000 tonnes of clothing end up in landfills around Australia every year, where textiles can take hundreds of years to decompose.

The UN Environment Programme states that the fast fashion industry is the second biggest consumer of water and is responsible for about 10 per cent of global carbon emissions, more than

all international flights and maritime shipping combined. A single cotton shirt, just like the one I am wearing today, requires around 700 gallons of water to produce—a single cotton shirt—and a staggering 2,000 gallons of water are required to make a pair of jeans.

Dyeing and finishing processes in textile manufacturing generate large amounts of wastewater, with chemicals and pollutants contaminating and drying up local water sources, impacting ecosystems and human health. And here we are, talking about a desal plant and algal bloom.

Seamless, an Australian government-backed initiative aimed at creating a circular clothing economy, estimates 1.5 billion new items of clothing were sold in Australia last year. Seamless is on a mission to achieve a circular clothing economy in Australia by 2030, whereby materials are reused, recycled and repurposed.

Then there is the appalling human story. Fast fashion, we know, is built on speed and volume. Garments are designed to be bought on impulse, worn a handful of times and discarded. That model pressures suppliers to cut corners. In too many factories, wages are depressed, hours are excessive, and health and safety remains precarious. When the fashion cycle resets every few weeks, risks and volatility cascade down the supply chain to the most vulnerable: young women, migrant workers and informal subcontractors. The industry overseas is rife with reports of abuse against textile workers and we wear those brands each and every day.

The Australian Human Rights Institute notes that in labour markets throughout Asia, where large corporations manufacture their products, such as Bangladesh and China, exploitative working conditions, discrimination, harassment, child labour, forced labour and unsafe workplaces are not uncommon; in fact, they are quite the opposite. In Asia alone, the textile export industry employs more than 60 million workers, where the risk of human rights abuse is high.

In 2013 in Bangladesh, more than 1,100 textile workers were killed in a factory building collapse. In Asia, considered the garment factory of the world, female employees are over-represented among the sector's lowest paid workers. While many brands have improved their codes of conduct, opaque subcontracting and limited traceability continue to mask exploitation.

As consumers and indeed as legislators, we cannot pretend that a bargain at the check-out is unrelated to conditions in the cutting room, and I say that as a fashion victim. I love clothes and I love shoes, way more than I should, but I know how much I am contributing to this problem and I am in the process of educating myself because every time I see those rivers washing up with tonnes of clothes I feel guilty. I actually feel guilty and my staff know that for the past six months I have bombarded them with rivers washing up with clothes in countries and saying this is what we are doing. The fact that I have just said that fashion creates more carbon emissions than all international flights across the globe and maritime shipping combined should jolt all of us.

South Australia may host these factories, but it is our markets—it is people like me—that fuel them. Our public contracts can influence them and our reputation is tied to the standards we enable. According to the Australian Human Rights Institute, the fast fashion market in this country is valued at—get ready, Mr President—\$2.3 billion, with the average Australian buying 56 items of clothing per year. I reckon I buy a few more than that. I am being perfectly honest here. I think this is the time for honesty.

**The Hon. E.S. Bourke:** Well, you can't mislead the parliament.

**The Hon. C. BONAROS:** No, I cannot mislead the parliament. While fast fashion offers consumers trendy new clothes at lower prices and rapidly changing options, there are severe impacts on human rights and the environment driven by cheap and rapid manufacturing in overseas factories.

Here in South Australia, we can and must do better, if only for the sake of our charities that are actually bearing the brunt of this problem. Supporting local industries is one step, but there is a much bigger issue and that is effectively why I have sought to establish this committee. I am open to any ideas that anyone has about how else we can address this issue—I thought the Hon. Rob Simms would be listening with such interest today—looking at the true cost of fast fashion, including the environmental damage, textile waste and the impact of quick and cheap overseas manufacturing that undercuts local jobs and businesses.

The French government this year voted to pass legislation taxing ultrafast fashion brands and banning ultrafast fashion advertising, largely aimed at Chinese-based retailers such as Shein and Temu, and there are two reasons why they did that. As soon as that debate started—and I followed the French debate with much interest—I came back and asked if we could do the same here. Obviously, we have issues with competition and constitutional validity issues, which is why at a state level it is more difficult to do what France has done.

Regardless of whether the French government had its own vested interests—and it very much does, because if you think of our designer brands that cost an arm and a leg and have very lucrative markets, they are replicated within seconds of hitting runways. Every time a new handbag, a new dress, a new skirt or a new pair of shorts hits the runway, you can bet your bottom dollar that it has already been replicated and is available on these sorts of online cheap outlets.

It is not about telling people what they can wear; I certainly do not let anyone tell me what to wear, and I would not expect that we would want that to occur anywhere. It is about ensuring that our clothes, the clothes on our backs, are not woven with exploitation, excessive waste and avoidable pollution. It is about fiscal prudence. Every truckload of disposable garments that reaches landfill is a bill that someone must pay. I really urge members to go and look at those pictures. Those pictures alone should, as I said, jolt all of us, because we are all contributing to this problem.

As I said at the outset, we produce 100 billion garments each year, and 33 per cent of that is going to landfill each year. One per cent of what we provide to our charities is actually what will be repurposed and recycled. The rest is going to the dump, and it is ending up on the shores of countries that are already struggling with their own issues in terms of climate change and environmental damage but also the clothing that ends up on their shores because we do not know what to do with it. The facts again: just one cotton T-shirt requires 700 gallons of water, and it is 2,000 gallons for a pair of jeans. Go and count all the jeans in your wardrobe and then look at how much we are actually contributing to climate emissions in this country.

This is a global phenomenon. It is not something that is limited to South Australia, but I am deadset certain there are small things that we could be doing in SA, just like we did when we introduced the container deposit scheme, just like we did when we banned plastics, just like we did with the little soy sauce fish. We know what the impacts of all those things are on our environment, but it would appear they pale into insignificance compared to the impact that fashion is having, fast fashion in particular.

I am not suggesting we ban brands or clothing or tell people what to wear, but I am urging us all to reconsider the decisions we make around clothing, and I am urging this parliament to consider what other options are available to it in terms of repurposing, recycling and reusing and ensuring that less of that clothing ends up in landfill. They are staggering statistics. The next time I hear anyone talk about climate change and the impacts of things on the climate in this place or elsewhere and they do not mention fast fashion, they will get a curt reminder from me about the impact that we each are having on the environment each and every day just by virtue of getting up and getting dressed and buying into the consumer world of fast fashion.

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

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ALGAL BLOOMS**

**The Hon. R.A. SIMMS (16:14):** I move:

1. That, in the opinion of this council, a joint committee be appointed to inquire into and report on the harmful algal blooms in South Australian marine and coastal environments, with particular reference to:
  - (a) contributing environmental, land management or water quality factors;
  - (b) ecological, economic, cultural and social impacts of algal blooms including impact on community health and wellbeing;
  - (c) the cultural and economic impacts on Indigenous communities, including any loss of access to cultural practices;
  - (d) the coordination of state government responses, including agency responsibility, industry engagement, scientific advice, and public communications;
  - (e) the current support and recovery arrangements for impacted industries and communities;

- (f) the adequacy of long-term monitoring, forecasting and prevention strategies;
  - (g) the adequacy of research funding, rehabilitation and recovery planning;
  - (h) any other related matters.
2. That, in the event of a joint committee being appointed, the Legislative Council be represented thereon by three members, of whom two shall form a quorum of council members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.
  3. That members of the committee may participate in the proceedings by way of telephone or videoconference or other electronic means and shall be deemed to be present and counted for purposes of a quorum, subject to such means of participation remaining effective and not disadvantaging any member.
  4. That this council permits the joint committee to authorise the disclosure or publication, as it thinks fit, of any evidence or documents presented to the committee prior to such evidence being reported to the council.
  5. That a message be sent to the House of Assembly transmitting the foregoing resolution and requesting its concurrence thereto.

This motion is to establish a joint committee to inquire into and report on the harmful algal blooms in South Australian marine and coastal environments, and it lists a series of areas for the committee to inquire into. On 15 March this year, dozens of surfers and beachgoers on the southern coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula fell ill after visiting local beaches. Indeed, I remember ABC News reports around this—I think it was the ABC that first broke that something unusual was happening—but of course at that time no-one really understood what was going on.

The next day, a brown foam and dead sea life were found on the beach. The cause was soon identified as the microalgae toxic *Karenia mikimotoi*, which was a microalgae toxic to fish and vertebrates and this had bloomed due to an ongoing marine heatwave. Over the last few months, we have watched as algae has rapidly spread from the Fleurieu Peninsula across to the Spencer Gulf. It has grown in size to 4,500 square kilometres, almost double the size of the ACT, and it has reached as deep as 20 metres below the water.

We have all witnessed the horrifying scenes along our beaches as this underwater devastation has washed up on our shores. The bloom has killed at least 15,000 animals from over 450 species, according to observations on the citizen science site Naturalist—although the number is likely much more significant. These include fiddler rays, worm eels, Port Jackson sharks, crabs, pufferfish and leafy sea dragons. It has been devastating to see those images of those animals washing up on our beaches. I think as South Australians we have been brought up to view the sea as being restorative and a place for relaxation and restoration, and so it is devastating to see these beaches becoming graveyards.

Of particular concern is the algae's entry into the Coorong, which is delicately balanced, an ecosystem that has been dealing with multiple environmental pressures for decades now. Dr Jonathan Sobels, chair of the Coorong Environmental Trust, told the ABC last month that what we are looking at here is an ecological collapse. He further warned that the degradation caused by the bloom could put the Coorong's listing as a wetland of international importance under the 1970 Ramsar Convention in jeopardy. SA Health has also advised that contact with the algae can cause flu-like symptoms, including skin rashes and respiratory symptoms.

The impacts of this harmful algal bloom on the fishing, aquaculture and tourism industries, and the coastal communities that rely on them, has been utterly devastating. Indeed, I had the opportunity to travel recently to Whyalla and Port Lincoln. While I was in Whyalla, I met with a local cuttlefish tourism operator and he told me that their operations have been reduced by 50 per cent over the last few months, and that is despite the fact that the algal bloom had not even reached those waters at that stage, but there is a perception that the algal bloom has impacted on the cuttlefish. There is a serious risk, of course, that this may well happen in the future and that would be devastating for that sector as well as the environment.

The commercial fishing industry has been very hard hit. Some fishers are reporting that they have been left with nothing to catch at all due to fish kills. Oyster growers in and around the gulf were forced to close sales for months on end. Fishing and tackle shops have had their sales collapsed by what I understand to be up to 70 per cent.

A survey by the Tourism Industry Council of SA found that 40 per cent of South Australian businesses being impacted by the algal bloom have experienced a downturn in trade. The average year-on-year loss for a business in July was \$52,000, with 14 per cent of respondents saying they had lost more than \$100,000. This has caused significant anxiety for people living along the coast and further economic hardship at a time when our state is already grappling with a cost-of-living crisis.

Last month, a report by the Biodiversity Council, an independent expert group founded by 11 universities, called the harmful algal bloom 'one of the worst marine disasters in living memory' that requires rapid investigation by federal and state governments to identify any at-risk species and to fund emergency interventions if necessary. They warned that the impact of the marine heatwave that has driven the algal bloom is likely to be the equivalent of the impact of the Black Summer bushfires and demanded a similar response from governments. They urged governments to commit to seven actions to respond for the 'foreseeable and even predicted' event and to prepare for 'an increasingly dangerous and unstable future'.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has noted that there has been a documented increase in frequency and intensity of harmful algal blooms. Indeed, this is happening over many places around the world. The IPCC states with regard to climate change:

Overall, the occurrence of HABs [harmful algal blooms], their toxicity and risk on natural and human systems are projected to continue to increase with warming and rising CO<sub>2</sub> in the 21st century...The increasing likelihood of occurrences of HABs under climate change also elevates their risks on ecosystem services such as fisheries, aquaculture and tourism as well as public health.

Flinders University Associate Professor of Natural Sciences Jochen Kaempf has developed a computer model to predict where the algae will spread next. In preliminary research now undergoing peer review, Professor Kaempf predicts that the bloom will ease over winter but worsen next summer, with potentially devastating results for the environment and for the seafood, aquaculture and tourism industries.

There can be no question that we are facing the biggest ecological catastrophe in our state's modern history, and this parliament has a responsibility to investigate. I know that my Greens colleagues in Canberra have initiated a national Senate inquiry that is considering the national implications of this and, of course, the role for the federal government.

The inquiry that I am moving for today will consider the environmental, land management and water quality factors that caused the harmful algal bloom and enabled them to spread so rapidly and to devastate our coastline. It will investigate the ecological, environmental, cultural and social impacts of the algal bloom, including the impact on community health and wellbeing. This will include the cultural and economic impacts on Indigenous communities and any loss of access to cultural practices.

We have the federal inquiry, but, as we know, algae actually falls under the remit of the state government to primarily manage, so I think it is appropriate that we investigate the response to date, identify what is being done and what can be done in the future to prevent this bloom from spreading.

In any natural disaster, it is the government's role to protect our community and to ensure communities bearing the brunt are provided with the resources they need to make a recovery. This inquiry will therefore examine the coordination of the state government's response to the crisis, including key agency responsibility, industry engagement, scientific advice and public communications. It will consider the current support and recovery arrangements for impacted industries and communities that rely directly on healthy marine ecosystems to survive. We know that these are desperate for help and for this algal bloom to end.

Critically, the inquiry will consider long-term monitoring, forecasting and prevention strategies so that we can plan for managing the impacts of this harmful bloom and take all necessary measures to protect our community, our economy and our environment through this crisis. We must determine what steps we may take to prevent a catastrophe like this from occurring in the future.

I am proposing this inquiry in a multipartisan spirit. It is my hope that all political parties will support this. It is a joint inquiry, which means that there is, of course, the capacity to bring in the expertise of our colleagues in the other place, particularly those members who have an interest because they represent coastal communities. It is my hope that all parties will get on board and

support this. I indicate to the chamber that I will bring this to a vote in our next sitting period so that we can get moving on this. I recognise this is going to be potentially a key issue heading into the next state election and there is significant community interest in this, so we need to get cracking before parliament winds up. With that, I conclude my remarks.

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

### *Bills*

## **PREVENTIVE HEALTH SA (COUNCIL GOVERNANCE) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Introduction and First Reading*

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:24):** Obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Preventive Health Act 2024.

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:25):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I rise to speak on the Preventive Health SA (Council Governance) Amendment Bill 2025, an bill to amend the Preventive Health SA Act 2024. Ninety-six per cent of funding for Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (the TGA) comes from the pharmaceutical industry. That is straight from former Australian of the Year, Dr James Muecke, who also told the recent 2025 Australian Medical Conference that, 'Money from big pharma compromises medical advice, compromises medical research and compromises medical guidelines.' His keynote address also warned that doctors who take money from pharmaceutical companies are more likely to publish research findings favourable to those companies.

In reviewing the government's bill, which embeds preventive health within the SA health system, then crafting our amendment bill, which bolsters the credibility and effectiveness of the new Preventive Health SA Council, we uncovered a recurring theme: compromised experts and conflicted people with no place on so-called independent advisory boards. Dr Muecke, the renowned Australian ophthalmologist, has led the charge in exposing the dangers of this phenomenon. While speaking to us, and during his AMA address in Adelaide, he outlined the compromised goals of many who sit on such advisory boards and the life-threatening consequences of these conflicts.

Still in the shadow of COVID, it will surprise no-one who is prepared to acknowledge the disgracefully heavy-handed approach to Australia's virus response that those influenced by big pharma appear on that list of compromised experts. Big pharma has generated many local examples of self-interest, and not just the safe and effective and efficacy propaganda we were force fed by the government, the medical sector and virtually all mainstream media just a few years ago. Dr Muecke cites an example of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners leadership team being riddled with conflicted doctors, and of the college deliberately downplaying one of just three possible approaches to achieving remission of type 2 diabetes, and I will explain how that happened.

The use of low-calorie diets, using ultraprocessed meal replacements, was prominent in the college's management of type 2 diabetes handbook, as was bariatric surgery. But there is no mention of what Dr Muecke termed arguably the most powerful option, that of therapeutic carbohydrate reduction, using real food. It turns out that 10 of the 11 authors of the handbook have financial ties to big pharma, while nine of the 11 are tied up with Novo Nordisk, promoters of Ozempic, a weight loss medication that has enjoyed a tremendous recent surge in popularity.

Dr Muecke also speaks about the many transgressions of big food and big soda. Among them was a review highlighting that, of 34 studies not sponsored by big soda, 33 showed sugar-loaded beverages are associated with diabetes and type 2 diabetes. However, of the 26 industry-sponsored studies, none showed that same obvious link.

Our amendment bill is an important step towards ensuring the new Preventive Health SA Council restores public faith in the medical industry, faith that for many people was all but destroyed during the COVID era. People lost confidence in the medical industry and, given what we know in 2025, they had every right to do so. Facilitated, boosted and championed by politicians, power hungry bureaucrats and obsequious, biased and shamefully unquestioning media, the medical industry was given a free pass and gifted unblinking but ultimately undeserved public faith. Legitimate questions

and lived experience concerns were dismissed as misinformation, including right here in South Australia. These upstarts simply did not fit the narrative, and they still have not received an apology.

Anyone brave enough to poke their head above the parapet was swiftly labelled as an anti-vaxxer and derided, and they saw their credibility eroded quicker than you could say 'flatten the curve'. This tactic was tried on world-renowned cardiologist Dr Aseem Malhotra, who I met in 2023. Initially supportive of the coronavirus vaccines, Dr Malhotra's turning point was the untimely death of his father, combined with the growing body of evidence suggesting that certain COVID vaccines were contributing to an alarming rise in disability and excess deaths.

When he visited South Australia that year, the *Adelaide Advertiser* called him an anti-vaxxer and even criticised individuals for attending his presentation. He subsequently warned that such personal attacks, which ignored the data, would inevitably lead to public distrust and a downturn in overall vaccine uptake. He was right, but, just weeks ago, Dr Malhotra opined that eroding trust in health care was a good thing, for patients at least. He argued that a decline in trust in health systems across Australia, the US and the UK had opened up wider thinking about how individuals can improve their health. He said that people are now asking more questions—questions they were reluctant to pose before the great COVID con.

Dr Malhotra told *The Australian* newspaper that health care has been over-medicalised and lacks transparency. He also believes lifestyle changes should be first-line treatments for low-risk people, rather than reflexively reaching for medications such as cholesterol-lowering statins.

These examples and many others propelled one of our crucial amendments, which is to ensure that those sitting on this new body, flagged by the government as an independent agency, are never compromised and are indeed independent rather than merely labelled so—in short, safeguarding the new council's credibility. Why is this so important? It is because hand-in-glove aspirations of independence and transparency are critical if the government wants the council to be fit for purpose.

Dr Muecke, along with South Australian based clinical nutritionist Tim Jaeger, both warned us of the difficulties of attempting to manage a compromised member. In short, it just does not work, because they will always be compromised and even subconsciously always be predisposed to having their views and actions influenced by money and/or a favour. So let's make it more difficult to put them there in the first place. Why? Because independence and transparency are mandatory prerequisites for the council to achieve its well-intentioned goals and to gain public trust. Without the latter, the former is impossible.

The council will focus on factors that contribute to the burden of non-communicable health conditions and injuries, such as tobacco and vaping, alcohol and other drugs, obesity, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and poor mental health.

In our view, the existing act fails to provide adequate protections to guarantee that the best possible members sit on this council. By 'the best' we do not necessarily mean those with the most impressive sounding track record of previous advisory role positions. Our definition of 'the best' is those who can deliver the best results, unburdened by any outside influences, and it includes, via our amendments, those with experience in delivering health interventions and measuring outcomes.

Through our amendment to add another important detail to the act, we wish to ensure the council must include those with hands-on experience in health outcomes, those with clinical translation and implementation. Clinical translation and implementation simply means clinical experts with practical experience in the field, experience in implementing health interventions and experience in measuring outcomes of these health interventions.

It is alarming to think that compulsory representation from this group was missing from the original legislation. Yet the legislation says that the council must have people with experience in finance, economics or business, for example, and people with experience in cultural leadership for healing and improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, and so on. So we think including people with clinical expertise is very important. Indeed, it was the missing link in the existing legislation—the link between the council and those South Australians whose health we are striving to improve.

I believe this council must be established squeaky clean, above any suspicion and equipped with clinical experts who have experience in implementing preventive actions and measuring their success. Our amendments go to those important objectives.

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

### *Motions*

## **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. S.L. GAME (16:34):** I move:

That this council—

1. Calls on the government to immediately establish an independent inquiry to determine the causal factors and full extent of the devastation impacting marine life and industries along the South Australian coast with particular reference to:
  - (a) the association between desalination discharge from the Lonsdale desalination plant and harmful algal blooms given the significant increase in discharge from January to the end of March this year as well as international research indicating a clear connection between brine discharge and the growth of harmful algal blooms;
  - (b) the level of independent oversight and monitoring of discharge from the Lonsdale desalination plant and the adequacy of licensing safeguards under the Environment Protection Act;
  - (c) the data and research the government is relying on to inform the public of the species, cause and impact of this algal bloom;
  - (d) inquiry members being selected from a broad range of marine biologists, oceanographers, researchers and professionals to objectively determine potential causes and future actions necessary to diminish the current algal bloom and prevent further outbreaks; and
  - (e) any other related matters.
2. Calls on the Minister for Environment and Water to table a report from the inquiry in this council within three months of the inquiry being established.

The motion I am moving today is intended to address growing community distress about the devastating impact of the toxic algal bloom, as well as increasing frustration with the government's reluctance to fully and candidly inform the public about the potential causes, impact, and likely duration of what can only be described as the worst marine disaster ever to hit this state.

In addition to this, the government has stonewalled and dismissed any discussion about possible links between the significant increase of desalination discharge from the Lonsdale plant during the early months of this year and the growth of harmful algal blooms. This type of dismissive response has been described by Global Marine Resource Management as inconsistent with desalination plants around the world.

In my questions to the Attorney-General, representing the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, on 14 May this year, I asked what the government was doing to rule out long-term brine discharge as a cause of marine animal deaths. The Attorney-General's brief written response cited that under licensing conditions, the desalination plant must comply with environmental standards and performance requirements under the Environment Protection Authority. Unfortunately, such an inadequate response only serves to raise further questions, not only about the cause behind the algal bloom but also about the independent oversight of the Lonsdale desalination plant.

Given the unprecedented disaster unfolding on our coastline, South Australians expect their government to at the very least express a commitment to engage in some kind of investigative process that will objectively examine all possible causes. Instead, the Attorney-General issues a nothing-to-see-here response, effectively stonewalling any questioning about the role of the desalination plant in the unexplained deaths of thousands of marine animals, despite the plant's location in Gulf St Vincent, and despite the international research indicating a connection between plant discharge and the growth of toxic algal bloom, especially when discharge occurs within the confines of a gulf.

Surely scientific protocol requires appropriate research to eliminate possible causal factors; otherwise we run the risk of misdiagnosing the problem and never finding the right solution. It makes no sense to dismiss the desalination discharge as a causal factor without first seeing the science

and listening to a broad range of experts. That is why I am calling on the government to establish an independent inquiry, so there is an opportunity to look at all the science, and we can work together to resolve this crisis rather than accepting convenient narratives that might have merit but do not tell us the full story or get to the source of the problem.

The environmental concerns with desalination discharge have been around since the plant's inception, and will continue until these concerns are openly and objectively addressed. The coordinated stonewalling and dismissal only generates further speculation about the plant's operations, and raises questions about cover-ups and the adequate implementation of appropriate oversights. It is not enough for the Attorney-General to merely refer to legislative safeguards governing the plant's operations, especially given the current marine disaster and the fact that no independent review of the plant has been conducted since 2014.

Without an independent inquiry into these matters, combined with an objective assessment of all relevant data and research, we may never know the cause of this toxic algal bloom and, consequently, we may never find the solution we so desperately need. Without appropriate action, this marine disaster could stretch into the summer and beyond to become one of the greatest ecological disasters the state has ever seen.

South Australians deserve a government committed to resolving this crisis as soon as possible, even if it requires immediate examination of inconvenient facts and data. On behalf of all South Australians, I am calling on the government to immediately establish an independent inquiry consisting of a range of experts, so we can establish the real cause of the algal bloom before it is too late.

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

### **SOUTH COAST ALGAL BLOOM**

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16:38):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes with concern the scale and duration of the harmful algal bloom affecting Gulf St Vincent, Spencer Gulf and other South Australian waters.
2. Recognises the significant ecological damage caused, including the depletion of fish stocks, impacts on marine biodiversity, and potential long-term effects on the health of our coastal ecosystems.
3. Acknowledges the severe economic consequences for South Australia's commercial fishing industry, aquaculture operators, recreational fishing sector, and associated coastal businesses.
4. Expresses its sympathy and support to fishing families, coastal communities, and small businesses suffering loss of income, employment, and wellbeing as a result of the bloom.
5. Condemns the state and federal Labor governments' delayed, inadequate, and narrowly targeted response, which has left many of those most severely impacted without access to meaningful support.
6. Calls on both state and federal governments to work collaboratively to:
  - (a) support fishers, aquaculture operators, and affected coastal businesses throughout the bloom;
  - (b) release up-to-date and historical water quality, fish stock, and scientific monitoring data to the public in real time;
  - (c) establish a coordinated, whole-of-government rapid-response framework for future environmental and industry crises; and
  - (d) institute a royal commission to investigate the causes of the bloom, examine the adequacy and timeliness of the government's response, and make binding recommendations to prevent or mitigate similar events in the future.
7. Affirms the need for transparency, accountability, and genuine engagement with industry and communities in responding to marine environmental crises.

I think it is clear that whilst we are all calling for slightly different things, what is clear, and what we can all agree on, is that this government needs to do more. This is the most significant marine environmental crisis South Australia has faced in living memory. For several months now, Gulf St Vincent, Spencer Gulf and other parts of our coastline have been plagued by a persistent and

destructive algal bloom, and this is not a passing natural occurrence. This is not a minor environmental nuisance. It is a harmful event, a prolonged harmful event, that has devastated ecosystems. It has decimated fish stocks, and it has shattered the livelihoods of families, of businesses, right up and down our coast.

The scale and duration of this bloom is certainly something out of the ordinary. Fishers reported empty nets where once there were healthy catches. Recreational anglers, who contribute millions of dollars to regional economies, have watched as fishing grounds have collapsed. Aquaculture operators have lost stock and endured restrictions, and coastal businesses, from motels and cafes to service providers and tackle shops, have seen bookings dry up and income disappear.

Let us first reflect on the ecological damage. The bloom has robbed the water of oxygen, causing widespread fish kills and the collapse of marine habitats, and scientists warn that the long-term impact on marine biodiversity could be profound. Once a fishery is depleted to this extent, recovery can take years—many years, even decades—and some species may never fully return.

South Australia prides itself on its pristine coastal environment, its clean waters and its world-class fisheries, yet I think this bloom has exposed the fragility of these ecosystems. It has reminded us that we cannot take the health of our waters for granted, nor can we ignore the role of effective monitoring, of data sharing and of rapid intervention when warning signs emerge.

The economic consequences are nothing short of devastating. Our state's commercial fishing industry is worth over \$500 million a year and supports thousands of jobs right across regional South Australia, and the aquacultural sector adds hundreds of millions more. The recreational fishing sector is not just a cultural cornerstone of our state. It injects an estimated \$1 billion annually into the economy. Yet, right now these industries are on their knees.

Families who have fished our gulfs for five generations are tied up at the wharf with no catch, no income and no clarity about the future. Aquaculture operators are facing mounting costs and lost production. Small businesses along the coast—the motels, cafes and service stations that rely on visitor traffic—are seeing trade vanish.

The financial hardship is immense, but so, too, is the toll on mental health. I have spoken to fishers who tell me that they do not know how they will pay their licence fees, their boat repayments or even their household bills. One fisher on the Yorke Peninsula said to me:

You know, we are proud, resilient people. We have survived storms, quotas and regulations, but this bloom is different. It feels like we are drowning and no-one in government is throwing us a lifeline.

This council must acknowledge and extend its deepest sympathies and support to these families and communities. Fishing is not just an industry; it is a way of life. It is an identity passed from parent to child, tied intimately to the health of our waters and the resilience of our coastal towns. When fishers hurt, their communities hurt. Right now, whole communities are hurting and yet where has the government been?

The response from both the state and federal Labor governments has been woefully delayed, narrow and inadequate. Unfortunately, instead of acting swiftly and decisively when the bloom first appeared, ministers dithered. Freedom of information documents uncovered by my office reveal a game of bureaucratic pass the parcel, letters from desperate fishers shuffled between departments, ministers declining referrals, and weeks turning into months before any action was taken.

Even when support finally arrived, it was, certainly initially, riddled with very narrow eligibility criteria that locked out many of the very people most in need. In fact, it was pretty clear early on, after the Premier announced the package, that the criteria were too narrow, because, like the farmers with the drought package, the vast majority of fishers and small businesses could not actually access the grant or any relief.

Whilst we have seen changes to some of the eligibility criteria, particularly around fishers and the aquaculture businesses, which we welcome and we have been calling for alongside the coastal communities and fishers and, indeed, businesses, we still have concerns, because coastal businesses like hotels and other hospitality venues are still excluded.

There have been concerns raised directly with the opposition around the amended business grants already publicly. I have had a number of conversations with a number of businesses that still, unfortunately, are not eligible and cannot access any support but that are doing it extremely tough.

Our recreational fishers, who contribute so heavily to the regional economy, have also still been largely ignored. It is no wonder that one industry leader described the response as 'a bandaid on a bullet wound'.

So this motion sets out what must happen now. Firstly, both the federal and state governments must work collaboratively to support fishers, to support aquaculture operators and to support coastal businesses throughout the entire bloom. This means real support, not hollow announcements, not red tape, but practical, accessible measures that deliver cashflow and certainty, and for that support to continue for as long as these communities need it.

Secondly, we need transparency. For months, industry has pleaded for access to water quality, fish stock and monitoring data, and this information must be made available to the public in real time. If the government has nothing to hide, why not release that data? Transparency builds trust. As we all know, concealment breeds suspicion.

Thirdly, we need a coordinated whole-of-government rapid response framework for future environmental and industry crises. We cannot afford to stumble into the next disaster, whether it be a bloom, a drought or a biosecurity incursion, without a clear plan and without clear leadership and clear accountability. Certainly, amendments passed in this place yesterday to the Emergency Management Act we hope will improve some of this going forward.

Finally, we on this side of the chamber have been calling for a royal commission. We need a royal commission because only a royal commission has the independence, the investigative power and the authority to uncover the true causes of this bloom, to test the adequacy and timeliness of the government's response and to make binding recommendations to ensure that such a disaster never happens again. Royal commissions are independent of politics and independent of parliament, and that is why we are calling for one. The scale of the ecological and economic damage demands nothing less.

This motion also affirms the broader principle at stake: transparency, accountability, and genuine engagement with industry and communities. For too long, independent scientists, fishers and coastal communities have been treated as an afterthought, consulted only when the decisions are already made, left in the dark about the data and science that shape their livelihoods and dismissed when they raise the alarm, and that must change. If we want resilient fisheries, thriving coastal towns and sustainable marine environments then the government must work with industry and with these communities and not against them.

This algal bloom has been a catastrophe—an ecological, economic and social catastrophe. It has tested the resilience of our marine environments, our industries and our communities and it has revealed the failure of government to act with urgency, transparency and the leadership that this crisis demands.

But it is not too late to learn these lessons. It is not too late to stand with our fishers, our aquacultural operators, our coastal businesses and our communities. It is not too late to commit to transparency, to accountability and to reform. This council has the opportunity to send a clear message that we recognise the scale of this crisis, that we stand with those affected and that we will not rest until there is a full investigation, real support and a framework to prevent such a disaster in the future because if we fail to act now then we fail not only this generation of fishers but every generation that follows and the future of South Australia's proud marine environment itself. I commend the motion.

Debate adjourned on motion of Hon. J.E. Hanson.

**BAKER, MR J.**

**The Hon. R.P. WORTLEY (16:49):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes with great sadness the sudden passing of Mr John Baker AM ESM, President of Surf Life Saving Australia, and extends condolences to his wife Jo, family, friends, and the surf lifesaving community;
2. Acknowledges his more than 40 years of dedicated service to surf lifesaving, beginning in 1977 with Brighton Surf Life Saving Club, where he was a life member and active patrolling volunteer;

3. Recognises his leadership as President of Surf Life Saving South Australia for 10 years and Surf Life Saving Australia for five years, alongside long service on both state and national boards;
4. Commends his operational contribution as one of the longest serving crew members of the South Australian Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service since 1994, and the honours awarded to him, including the Emergency Services Medal, International Life Saving Citation of Merit, and appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia; and
5. Honours his legacy as a leader, mentor, and passionate advocate for water safety whose work has saved lives and will continue to inspire future generations.

When we celebrate the life of Mr John Baker AM ESM, we are reminded to celebrate the lives of those South Australians who may not be alive today if not for his tireless efforts in surf lifesaving. As President of Surf Life Saving Australia, John built on a lifelong commitment to ensuring the ongoing safety of swimmers and beachgoers all around the country. His sudden passing earlier this month is a loss felt not just in South Australia but across the nation.

He was President of Surf Life Saving South Australia for 10 years before taking on the national role in 2021. A respected businessman who was executive director of advertising company KWP and Partners, John always made the time to support his community and his love for surf lifesaving. John was also deeply committed on the frontline. He was an active patrolling volunteer at his home base in Brighton and served for three decades as a volunteer crew member of the South Australian Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service. He took part in countless rescues and patrols to protect our coastline.

His exceptional service was rightly well recognised. He received the Emergency Services Medal in 2017, the International Life Saving Federation's Citation of Merit in 2018, was inducted into the Surf Life Saving SA Hall of Fame in 2021 and was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2024. John Baker inspired younger members, supported his peers and worked tirelessly to advocate for water safety across Australia and internationally as Vice-President of Asia-Pacific for the International Life Saving Federation. We have lost a true leader, a mentor and a friend. His legacy will live on in the lives saved, the skills shared and the movement strengthened by his vision. I commend the motion to the council.

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

### CASHFLOW IN DROUGHT

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (16:52):** I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that access to cashflow remains a critical issue for regional businesses during this prolonged drought, as identified by the opposition, industry and the drought commissioner;
2. Agrees with South Australian farmers that the current Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) loan rate of 5.18 per cent is not 'low interest' as is the organisation's primary function;
3. Calls out the RIC for not fulfilling its obligated vision and purpose of supporting a strong and sustainable agricultural sector in Australia—which includes South Australian farmers doing it tough; and
4. Urges the state government to ensure that our farmers and regional businesses have access to genuine low and no-interest concessional loans during this continued period of hardship.

As I have said before in this place, no government can control the weather, but every government is responsible for the quality of its response when disaster strikes. It is true that some parts of our state have received good rainfall over the winter months. Those rains have brought a degree of short-term relief and, in some districts, a little optimism. But let us be clear: much more is still needed. This drought is far from over, and farmers right around the state remain deeply anxious about the season ahead.

In other regions, most notably the Riverland and the Mallee where I come from, rainfall has been minimal even through the winter period. In these areas, the hardship has only deepened. Crops have struggled to germinate, livestock feed is scarce and businesses that rely on agriculture are finding it increasingly difficult to stay afloat. ABARES has warned that in South Australia broadacre farm incomes are expected to fall by more than 40 per cent this year due to the drought and low yields.

Grain Producers SA has described the situation as 'critical and worsening by the day'. I have spoken with farmers who wake up every morning wondering how they will pay their staff, put fuel in their machinery or keep the lights on at home. One Riverland farmer told me: 'We are not asking for handouts. We just need a fair chance to get through this season so there's still a farm left for our kids.' This is not just about paddocks and livestock, this is about people. It is about their livelihoods, their communities and their mental health.

It is about the very future of regional South Australia, and at the heart of this crisis lies one simple, devastating issue: cashflow. Farmers and regional businesses can survive a dry year if they have cashflow. They can plan, they can adapt, and they can recover, but when the cash dries up, everything grinds to a halt, bills mount, creditors call and despair sets in.

Industry groups and the opposition have all consistently identified cashflow as the number one issue facing farmers today; in fact, the government's own drought commissioner has also identified cashflow as the number one issue facing farmers today and that without access to affordable finance, many simply will not make it through.

AgriFutures recently reported that more than 60 per cent of farmers surveyed ranked cashflow pressures as their top concern in 2025. That statistic alone should ring alarm bells for every single member in this chamber. This is why concessional loans are so vital. They are not a handout, they are not charity, they are sensible, practical tools to bridge the gap until better seasons return.

But let us be clear: the Regional Investment Corporation is failing in its purpose. Its very mission is to provide low-interest loans to support a strong and sustainable agricultural sector, yet the current RIC loan rate stands at 5.18 per cent. I ask: what farmer struggling to keep their business afloat in the middle of a drought would call 5.18 per cent low interest? The pastoralists and graziers association put it pretty bluntly when they said, and I quote:

At these rates, RIC loans are no different to walking into a commercial bank. They are simply not serving the purpose for which the organisation was created.

I note also that today the Prime Minister has announced widening the eligibility of the RIC funding to include significant environmental events, such as the algal bloom that is currently devastating South Australia. Clearly, both the state and federal governments have not been listening to what our farmers have been saying for some time now, that current RIC loans do little to assist them.

This is how out of touch with our primary industry sector these Labor governments are. At a time when families are desperate for relief, the RIC is offering little more than a standard commercial rate. It is not living up to its vision, it is not delivering for farmers, and in doing so it is undermining the resilience of our agricultural sector.

It is simply not good enough for the state government to stand back and say, 'Well, the RIC is a commercial body. It is out of our hands.' South Australian farmers do not care what level of government is responsible, they care about survival. The state government has a responsibility, indeed a moral duty, to step in where others are failing, and that means ensuring genuine, low and no-interest concessional loans are available to farmers and regional businesses in South Australia.

We know this can be done. Other states have acted. Queensland and New South Wales have both provided significant concessional finance during times of drought and natural disasters; yet in South Australia, we are told to wait, to wait for another announcement, another press release, another working group. Meanwhile, farmers are waiting too, but they are waiting for rain that may not come.

This is not only a regional issue, this is an issue for every South Australian because when farmers go broke, when regional businesses close their doors, the consequences ripple across the entire state, and in fact the entire nation and the entire economy. Our food supply is threatened, prices at the supermarkets rise, regional towns wither, young people leave and the economic backbone of this state is weakened. The South Australian Dairyfarmers' Association has warned that, and I quote, 'farm exits caused by financial stress during this drought will have generational consequences'.

Once farms are gone, they rarely return. Agriculture is one of South Australia's most vital industries. It underpins our exports, sustains our regions and feeds our families. To let it falter through inaction would be nothing short of negligence. What we need and what this motion calls for is

leadership, leadership that recognises the reality of this drought, leadership that listens to farmers and industry groups, and leadership that provides practical solutions, not just spin and announcements. That solution must include genuine concessional loans, low and no-interest finance that gives farmers and regional businesses the lifeline they need to survive until better seasons return.

The drought is testing the resilience of our farmers, our regional businesses and our communities. They are doing everything in their power to adapt, to survive and to keep going, but they cannot do it alone. The RIC has failed to live up to its mission. The state government has the power to act and we in this chamber have the responsibility to stand with our farmers. This is not about politics, this is about people. This is about livelihoods, communities and the future of South Australia.

I urge members to support this motion to send a clear message that the parliament stands with our farmers and our farming communities, that we will fight for genuine concessional finance in their hour of need because if we fail them now, we do not just fail farmers, we fail South Australia. I commend the motion.

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

### HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (17:00):** I move:

That this council—

1. Notes that the South Australian hotel and hospitality sector has been burdened by the growing impact of crime and antisocial behaviour.
2. Recognises the following issues as evidence of longstanding policy failure in addressing a complex societal challenge:
  - (a) the increasing frequency and violence of organised and repeat offenders targeting bottle shops and licensed venues;
  - (b) the displacement, not the resolution, of criminal activity due to regional liquor restrictions; and
  - (c) the exposure of hospitality staff to abuse and unsafe working conditions.
3. Affirms the need for a fairer, more responsive system that supports both decent wages for workers and the sustainability of small businesses across South Australia.
4. Acknowledges the Australian Hotels Association SA (AHA SA) for its sustained and extensive engagement with authorities and significant investment in crime prevention.
5. Notes that other jurisdictions have partnered with industry to co-fund crime prevention initiatives.
6. Calls on the state government to work collaboratively with the hotel and hospitality sector, and to give due consideration to the AHA SA's proposals to develop practical, effective responses to rising crime and antisocial behaviour, and to ensure venues and staff are adequately supported and protected.

South Australia's hospitality sector is facing an escalating challenge, not from economic downturns or changing consumer habits but from a rise in crime and antisocial behaviour. Our parks, hotels and bottle shops, once places of community and celebration, are now on the frontlines of a crisis that has not been adequately addressed. This is not just a law and order issue; it is a test of whether we are willing to stand with the workers, small business owners and communities who are bearing the brunt of a broken system.

Today, I rise not just to highlight the problem but to demand action. The scale of this challenge can no longer be ignored. Every day, hospitality workers and business owners have been impacted by this crisis. As reported in *Hotel SA* magazine:

Our members continue to be victims in the fight against crime—but I am not convinced the high level of cooperation provided by pubs is understood, nor is it fully recognised.

This is not a problem confined to one industry. It reflects broader societal issues, generations of policy failure, rising organised crime and increasing strain on frontline workers. The hospitality sector is simply where these failures are most visible. Repeat and organised offenders are targeting bottle

shops and licensed venues with alarming regularity. These are not petty thefts. As AHA SA chair David Basheer puts it, and I quote:

... is not an isolated person pilfering a sixpack. These are organised groups using intimidation and violence in a repeated and sustained manner.

Liquor restrictions, while well-intentioned, have not solved the problem. They have merely shifted it. The evidence is clear: displacement is not resolution.

Hospitality staff are now on the frontline, being abused, threatened and, in some cases, physically endangered. They face hostility when enforcing regulations and, in some instances, well-meaning patrons have had to intervene. Despite this, AHA SA and its members have not stood still. They have engaged extensively with SAPOL, CBS, the Department of Human Services and other stakeholders. They have invested heavily in crime prevention, retrofitting fridges, installing glass-fronted spirit cabinets, hiring security and deploying technology to identify offenders.

But they cannot do this alone. The AHA SA is calling for five key areas of support from government:

1. Stronger legal consequences for repeat and violent offenders, recognising these are sustained criminal acts, not minor infractions.
2. Legal tools such as exclusion orders to prevent known offenders from re-entering licensed venues.
3. Financial support for crime prevention infrastructure, because the cost of public safety should not all fall solely on private operators.
4. Consistent police resourcing across the state, not just during major events but all year round.
5. Formal recognition of the hospitality sector's role in supporting public safety and compliance.

These are not unreasonable demands: they are practical, targeted and grounded in the lived experience of those on the ground. Other jurisdictions have recognised the value of co-funded crime prevention. For example, in New South Wales the government has partnered with industry to deliver enhanced RSA training, focused on sexual violence prevention, a model that improves safety for both staff and patrons. In Victoria, grants of up to \$300,000 are available through the Crime Prevention Innovation Fund to support collaborative safety initiatives. This example showed that practical, effective responses are possible when government and industry work together, and South Australia's hospitality sector is ready to do its part.

The AHA SA and its members are actively seeking collaboration with the state government. Together they would like to co-design solutions that protect venues, support workers and strengthen community safety. This is not just about protecting businesses or the industry; it is about protecting our community, the workers, patrons and the broader community members. It is about safeguarding a vital part of our economy, including protecting the reputation of South Australia as a safe tourism destination.

The most comprehensive economic analysis of South Australia's hotel sector was conducted in 2016 by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies. Even then, the figures were striking: over \$4 billion contributed to gross state product, more than 33,000 full-time equivalent jobs supported and nearly a billion dollars in wages paid annually. This data is nearly a decade old. Since then, the sector has only grown in importance, especially as a driver for tourism, regional development, and for community cohesion.

During major events like the 2025 AFL Gather Round the hospitality sector helped deliver record-breaking results: 93 per cent hotel occupancy; \$4.3 million in nightly revenue; and over 269,000 fans attending matches across the state. These figures underscore that protecting the sector from rising crime is not just a safety issue; it is an economic imperative and a reputational consideration.

It is encouraging to see that government has taken some steps in the right direction. The introduction of mandatory bystander intervention training is a welcome step, but it addresses only one aspect of the safety challenges faced by hospitality workers, namely, harassment. It does not

address the more persistent threat posed by organised crime, repeat offenders or the enforcement of liquor restrictions—issues that require coordinated legal and policy reform. Otherwise, we risk placing the burden of public safety on the shoulders of those least equipped and least empowered to carry the responsibility.

This government is quick to celebrate the success of events like LIV Golf, the Adelaide 500 and the Gather Round, each promoted as a major win for South Australia, but let's be clear: these events do not succeed because of government press releases or announcements. They succeed because of the hospitality and hotel sector backing them in. It is our hotels, pubs, restaurants and staff that carry the weight, serving the crowds, hosting the visitors and keeping our city vibrant, firing up the engine rooms of our economy. Yet, when it comes to supporting this important hotel and hospitality sector with the tools and protections it needs, the response is far less enthusiastic.

It is as if the government is happy to take the victory lap, waving the flag in the air, but not so keen to run the race and do the hard yards. Hospitality venues should be safe places for workers and patrons. Workers and community members need to be protected, respected and supported. In summary, the hospitality sector is stepping up, investing in safety, engaging with authorities and proposing practical reforms. Now it is time for the state government to meet them halfway.

I call on the Malinauskas Labor government to allocate resources to support the hotel and hospitality sector. It is not just good policy and it is not just good safety measures; it makes sense for our whole community. We must work together to ensure our venues are safe, our workers protected and our economy supported. It is time for the state government to work collaboratively with the hotel and hospitality sector and to give due consideration to AHA SA's proposal to develop practical, effective responses to rising crime and antisocial behaviour and to ensure venues and staff are adequately supported and protected. With those remarks, I commend the motion.

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

#### **CAMPANIA SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB**

**The Hon. J.S. LEE (17:10):** I move:

That this council—

1. Congratulates the Campania Sports and Social Club Sons of Italy Community Centre for celebrating the special milestone of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025;
2. Acknowledges the founding members, current and past presidents, committee members, staff and volunteers of Campania Club for their dedication and contribution to serving the Italian community and for preserving the cultural traditions of the Campania region;
3. Notes that the Campania Club serves as a meeting place for Italian migrants from the Campania region, and as a centre to promote Italian culture, food and language;
4. Recognises that the Campania Club is actively involved in philanthropic and charitable activities as a significant community hub for fundraising activities; and
5. Commends the Campania Club for its dedication and contributions to supporting the Italian community, fostering awareness of their culture and for enriching a vibrant and diverse multicultural South Australia.

It is a great honour to rise today to congratulate the Campania Sports and Social Club Sons of Italy Community Centre on this special occasion of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. I recall that, back in 2015, I spoke in this place to congratulate the Campania Club on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and now, 10 years later, I am able to take this opportunity to congratulate the Campania Club on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

This milestone is not only a celebration of longevity but a powerful testament to the enduring spirit, dedication and cultural pride of South Australia's Italian community. For half a century the Campania Club has stood as a beacon of unity, tradition and service, enriching our multicultural society and strengthening the social fabric of our state.

I would like to firstly acknowledge the incredible leadership team, whose dedication and hard work maintains and builds on the legacy of the founding members. A special thankyou goes to the current president, Mr Ross De Ieso, and the passionate committee members, life members, volunteers and supporters who are the backbone of this iconic organisation. The tireless work and contributions of all involved have ensured that the Campania Club remains a vibrant and welcoming place for generations of Italian South Australians.

Since its founding in 1975, the Campania Club has served as a meeting place for Italian migrants from the Campania region, preserving and sharing their unique cultural traditions with the younger generations of the community. The Campania Club is arguably the largest Italian club in Adelaide, with over 500 members, and is fondly known as a centre for Italian culture, food and language that is warm and welcoming to all visitors.

Some honourable members may recall that I spoke about the Campania Club in this place 10 years ago. To know that they have actually achieved another significant milestone and are able to carry on their traditions is truly amazing. The vision of the founding members is still going strong five decades later, with many of those well-known community leaders still active in the club to this day.

I would like to once again place the names of those 15 founders on the public record. I acknowledge Cavaliere Giovanni Di Fede (John Di Fede), Ezio Spina, Pompeo Ranaldo, Clemente Maione, Giovanni Di Matteo, Mario Mignone, Sabatino Ranaldo, Michele Luongo, Raffaele Barone, Feliciano Zirillo, Liberantonio Limongelli, Michele Carofano, Erminio Ranaldo, Antonio Rotolo and Nicola Minicozzi.

A special mention must go to Cavaliere John Di Fede, whom I mentioned before. He is affectionately known as a well-recognised and respected voice on the airwaves of Radio Italiana and as the immediate past president of the Campania Club. John was the first president of the Campania Club in 1975, and was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in 1992 in recognition of his outstanding service to the Italian community of South Australia. John was further awarded the Centenary Medal in 2001 for his significant community contributions.

Alongside project manager Ranaldo Pompeo, John played a significant role in the extensive renovations the Campania Club undertook in 2017 and 2018, which included alterations to the Napoli Hall, and additions including kitchens, bar, store and verandas. I would like to acknowledge and thank the generous support and the many volunteers and tradespeople who have lent their time and expertise to the Napoli Hall renovations, especially Mario Romaldi and Romaldi Constructions, Marcello Caiazza, Danny Caiazza, the Caiazza family, Caiazza Constructions, and Salvatore Rinaldi and Rinaldi Extensions.

This significant project expanded on the works undertaken in 2011 to build the new Benevento Hall, bocce dome, cultural room, library and playhouse. These additions are literally built on the foundations laid by the visionary founders, who worked tirelessly over many years to fundraise, purchase land, and literally build the club brick by brick, wall to wall.

Beyond its cultural significance, the Campania Club has also played a vital role in philanthropic and charitable activities. Its members and sponsors have generously supported many local and international causes, whether in response to natural disasters or supporting community welfare programs. In recent years, the Campania Club has hosted events to bring the community together to support important initiatives such as the Benevento Flood Relief and Italian Earthquake Appeal in 2016, the SA Bushfire Appeal, the relaunch of the Adelaide Italian Festival, and also support for many worthy charitable causes.

It was wonderful to celebrate these many achievements and milestones at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala celebration held at the heart of the Campania Club on 26 July 2025. It was a spectacular evening filled with stories, laughter and a few tears as the proud legacy and ongoing contributions of the club and its many supporters were recognised and celebrated. It was attended by many members of Parliament, including the Premier, as well as Her Excellency the Governor of South Australia. Congratulations to Ross De Ieso and the dedicated organising committee for the many hours of work and preparation behind the scenes that went into the special occasion. The hall was beautifully decorated in gold, honouring the five decades of Italian heritage, community and tradition.

Over the years, the Campania Club has become the cornerstone of South Australia's multicultural landscape, serving not only as a home for migrants and descendants from the Campania region but as a hub for multicultural festivals and intercultural connections. It will always be known as a place of warmth, hospitality and Italian community spirit, and I commend the Campania Club for its outstanding contributions and service to the South Australian Italian community and the broader multicultural society.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Campania Sports and Social Club Sons of Italy Community Centre on this significant 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and I wish the Campania Club every success and a very bright future ahead. Bravo, grazie mille. With those remarks, I commend the motion.

Adjourned debate on motion of Hon. I.K. Hunter.

### VIETNAMESE SETTLEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

**The Hon. T.T. NGO (17:19):** I apologise: my speech goes for about 23 or so minutes. It is longer than usual, but it is important that I get some of these facts on *Hansard*. I move:

That this council—

1. Recognises that:
  - (a) this year, 2025, marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of successful Vietnamese settlement in Australia; and
  - (b) this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary also marks the significant contributions Vietnamese Australians have made to modern Australian multicultural society, especially the introduction of Vietnamese culture such as food, art, music and the sharing of traditional celebrations.
2. Acknowledges that 2025 also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the communist North Vietnam invasion of South Vietnam.
3. Acknowledges the economic disparities that persist in Vietnam, with a significant portion of the population still living in poverty despite economic growth.
4. Encourages the Vietnamese government to uphold international human rights standards, and work towards greater freedom of religion, speech and political freedom.
5. Calls on the Vietnamese government to continue to address the issues of corruption, injustice, and economic reforms to improve the lives of its citizens.

Members would be aware of the important anniversary we mark this year. Fifty years ago, on 30 April 1975, the city of Saigon fell when the North Vietnamese army invaded the city and captured the presidential palace. In the months and years that followed, it is difficult to describe in simple terms the perilous conditions that South Vietnamese people endured.

People's lives were turned completely upside down. Tens of thousands of professionals, government officials and army officers were sent to re-education camps, where they endured horrific conditions and were often tortured. Many of them never returned home. Homes were confiscated and families displaced. Students were thrown out of colleges. Businesses were closed down. Many people living in cities were forced to relocate to remote rural areas, where there was no way for them to support themselves and their families.

Young men were being conscripted into the army, and it was this that drove my parents to make a very hard decision. Like so many South Vietnamese families, the kindest and most loving choice they could make for their children was to find a way to help us leave. Sometimes, as was the case for my family, this meant that we could not stay together. So many families just like ours had the same story.

The first group of Vietnamese refugees to Australia arrived in Brisbane on 9 August 1975, just over 50 years ago. Over the next 20 years, more than 90,000 Vietnamese people were resettled in Australia. Many people have stood in this chamber and in the other place to speak about the experiences, both during the war and in the years after it ended, of Australian people as well as Vietnamese people who found a future here and became Vietnamese Australians. I am glad they have done so, because it is important to reflect upon those experiences and the ways in which they changed our nation, our ideas and our culture.

It is a very important story to tell, and for so many people it is also a very deeply personal story. The truth is that I strongly prefer not to look to the past. I prefer to focus on the future, but today, out of respect for this important motion and everything it represents, I am choosing to make an exception to speak a little bit about my own personal experience. I do this because it is the human stories that truly breathe life into the narrative of history.

Each person's story is their own, and no two stories are the same, but there are so many Vietnamese Australians whose experiences and journeys were very similar to mine. My own

experiences weave into the broader story of how Vietnamese settlement in Australia changed the nation and its people, and how it has gone on to influence the Australian identity and culture that we now share in this modern nation that we have built together.

Vietnamese people were the first non-European wave of migrants to arrive after the White Australia policy was ended by the Whitlam government in 1973. It was the first test of how European-descended Australians would receive new migrants from other regions of the world. I feel confident to speak for my fellow Vietnamese Australian migrants when I say that settling here, where we could be safe and have a future, meant everything to us, but I cannot say that it was easy.

When I arrived in Adelaide with my sister and her family in the early eighties, the Vietnamese community in South Australia was still very small. It was uncomfortable to be so different, so we typically stayed amongst ourselves and we did not go out and about very much. As best as I can recall in my own experience, we kept largely to ourselves for about 10 years.

This first test of multicultural Australia was a learning experience for both sides. Systems for supporting new arrivals and new communities were not set up like they are today. These days, while our system still may not be perfect, I am confident that new migrants have a different experience than we had, which is a great thing. Looking back, I can say that this initial isolation had a significant impact, especially on young people like myself. In particular, it impacted our language learning and our opportunities to be socially included.

We faced a lot of racism at school. I personally endured a lot of name-calling, harassment and racial abuse. While I cannot excuse such behaviour, I can imagine that for the European Australian students it must have been like seeing an alien. This was another factor in my early experience that led me to be isolated and impacted on my ability to grow into a member of the broader South Australian community.

In my earliest days in Adelaide, although I spoke no English, I quickly became very independent. I was catching two buses on my own at age 10, getting around the city like an adult, and I saw many young Vietnamese kids having similar experiences. There were a lot of kids just like me who got out of the country without their family and arrived on their own or with their siblings. Being separated from your family was not at all unusual. It was very hard, but I believe it helped us build resilience.

Initially, we were accommodated in Nissen huts at Pennington, and if Australians found Vietnamese food challenging at first I can tell you it definitely went the other way too. At Pennington, they were feeding us Australian food from a mess-style kitchen—it was nothing like the Blue Room here—which was probably not the best introduction to local cuisine, but for most of us it was our first encounter with Western food. While we were grateful to be fed, it was quite strange for us, especially as young kids, but this, too, contributed to our resilience.

Resilience is an essential part of the Vietnamese culture. This meant that we were determined not just to survive in Australia but to succeed, and no matter what we faced in our nation we knew that we were very lucky to be here. We were lucky to be safe and lucky to have a future. We were grateful that Australia was willing to let us in and, despite many challenges, that sense of gratitude was always our main focus.

That positive mindset helped me and I know it helped all Vietnamese Australians to get through those difficult early years. Our positive attitude and our resilience not only helped us find our way in our new country, I believe it also helped the nation adjust to a new multicultural reality. Without that mindset amongst early Vietnamese migrants, I am confident that multiculturalism in Australia would not have developed as successfully as it has.

After about two decades of the Vietnamese community continuing to grow in South Australia, I think it happened almost by accident when in the late nineties South Australians of European heritage really began to appreciate and enjoy Vietnamese cultural offerings, especially Vietnamese food but also our arts, our music and our cultural traditions. This led to a deepening of the friendship between South Australians and Vietnamese South Australians. It also led to an explosion of Vietnamese culture blossoming across South Australia.

Of course, with this deepening cross-cultural acceptance, social inclusion for Vietnamese people also grew. We began to feel that we were truly part of this community, retaining a strong Vietnamese identity but also gaining a sense of identity as true Australians. That is the beauty of

coming from a migrant background in a multicultural nation: you can have the freedom and the opportunity to feel comfortable walking in two worlds and you can feel truly proud of both identities.

I think most Vietnamese Australians, especially those like me who were born in Vietnam, think a lot about the place that we left behind. We reflect upon everything that has happened over the past 50 years since the Communist Party of Vietnam seized control over the entire country. For me, I think especially about the value of freedom, the freedom that we are so fortunate to have here in Australia, while people living in Vietnam are denied many essential freedoms.

In Vietnam today, freedom of association, freedom of speech and freedom of the press are severely restricted. Citizens who criticise the government or who speak out about topics that are considered unacceptable by the government are often subjected to police intimidation, harassment, restricted movement, arbitrary arrest and detention and even imprisonment after unfair trials. In Vietnam, elections are held but they are not genuine.

Economic opportunity and economic mobility have improved relative to past decades but are still limited for many people. If you do not like the way things are, as a citizen you have no freedom to speak out and advocate for change. The opportunity to live in a democracy where your voice can be heard and your vote has the potential to influence the future is very precious. Nobody who has experienced oppression or suppression can possibly take these freedoms for granted.

I want those freedoms and those opportunities to be possible for the people of Vietnam not only because it is right and just for individuals to have freedom and access to opportunity; I want these things for Vietnam because I know that countries where people are allowed to have the opportunity to express opinions and to have their say in free elections are the countries that thrive in the long term. Democracy and all of the rights and freedoms that come along with it are not just important for citizens, they are healthy for nations.

The free practice of religion is another essential freedom we enjoy in Australia that I can never take for granted, a freedom that is denied to people living in Vietnam. Faith of every kind offers the opportunity to believe in something larger than yourself. It helps people overcome many kinds of personal hardships. It also provides a valuable sense of structure and purpose in life as well as values to guide your decisions and your choices.

Freedom of religion, for these reasons, is especially important in places where faith has the potential to play such a strong role in helping people to survive and thrive. When you live in poverty, for example, or in a place where your opportunities in life are limited, it can be very difficult to live well. The opportunity to ask God for strength and guidance on your own terms, in the way that you choose, provides a tremendous amount of support for people who face difficulty in life. I know from a variety of personal experiences that when you are down, you have to find a way to focus on tomorrow. Faith can offer a guiding light through even the darkest moments.

The opportunity for each person to choose the path in life that is the best one for them is fundamental to the human experience. Faith not only supports the individual, it also helps to build communities and to hold communities together. Religion should not be used as a tool to curb dissent: it should be celebrated as a way for each person to find the truth that speaks most clearly to their hearts. For the people of Vietnam, I wish for the opportunity to find the faith that best helps them navigate life's challenges.

Another opportunity that I want for the people of Vietnam is the opportunity to feel trust in public institutions. In Australia, it is a foregone conclusion that government should be undertaken in the public interest, to serve the public good. A government that is not affected by corruption changes the entire experience of being a member of a society.

From this perspective, the experience of living in Australia is enormously different from living in Vietnam. This is yet another freedom that we enjoy in Australia that I and others will never take for granted. I am grateful for the integrity of our institutions and the strengths of our democracy, and grateful just for the opportunity to stand in this place and express these ideas freely and without fear.

I call on the Vietnamese government to work towards positive change for Vietnam and its people, to embrace freedom and the opportunities that freedom can bring, to uphold and promote human rights for all, to permit and support freedom in political thoughts, in speeches and in practice of religion, to stamp out corruption, to address injustice and to work to expand economic opportunities for all Vietnamese people.

The nation is ready for change; I know it is possible. I want to feel proud of the freedom of my home country of Australia and also to feel hopeful about a future of freedom for my former country of Vietnam. I want both of our societies to have the greatest possible opportunity to prosper and thrive.

The last 50 years have seen great change in both nations. In that time, more than 330,000 Australians of Vietnamese heritage have settled or been born here in this nation that welcomed them and gradually embraced their culture. Our shared story, Vietnam and Australia, has grown to be so much more than a painful history of war and human suffering; it has become a beautiful example of the power of multiculturalism, to open hearts and minds and to change the future.

I thank the people of Australia for the opportunities that we have had to build this modern nation together. I thank my fellow Vietnamese Australians for joining me on this journey, and for your endless determination to build successful lives and bright futures here. As one person who holds two nations and two identities in his heart, it is so meaningful to stand in this place, to mark this important milestone anniversary, and to have the opportunity to speak about both of my cultures with pride, love and gratitude, and to look back with joy at how far we have come together. I am proud to commend this motion to the chamber and I hope all members will support it.

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

#### **ROACH, MR A.**

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

That this council expresses its sincere regret at the death of singer songwriter Archie Roach and notes his profound contribution to our cultural and community life.

(Continued from 7 September 2022.)

**The Hon. J.M.A. LENSINK (17:37):** I rise to support the condolence motion of the Hon. Tammy Franks in honour of the late Archie Roach. Archibald William Roach, as is his proper name, was a Gunditjmara and Bundjalung man who became very well known in Australia and South Australia as a singer-songwriter. He used this medium incredibly effectively to tell stories which would transcend the boundaries of music.

Born on 8 January 1956 in Mooroopna, Victoria, Archie's life journey was marked by both triumph and adversity. Some time as a preschooler, he was removed from his family as part of the stolen generation by government agencies. Following some difficult experiences in foster care, Archie was taken in by Alex and Dulcie Cox, a family of Scottish immigrants residing in Melbourne.

Archie's passion for music was influenced by the Scottish tunes in that household. The family's oldest daughter, Mary, who sang church hymns, taught Roach how to play the guitar and keyboard. At the age of 15, Archie connected with his biological sister, Myrtle, who informed him that their mother had recently passed away. Following that, he spent time living on the streets. He was to encounter his future wife, Ruby Hunter, who was also well-known for her music, at the Salvation Army drop-in centre on Pirie Street here in Adelaide, which would lead to a creative partnership that would influence the Australian music scene.

Archie rose to prominence with his song *Took the Children Away*, which he first performed in 1988 and was recorded on his debut album *Charcoal Lane* in 1990. This song brought national attention to the experiences of the stolen generations and earned both critical and public acclaim. Over a career spanning more than three decades, he released 10 studio albums, toured internationally and became a leading voice for truth-telling and reconciliation through music. His contributions to the arts were recognised through numerous accolades, including winning multiple ARIA Awards and being inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame. He also won the Red Ochre Award and the Human Rights Achievement Award.

In 2014, demonstrating his commitment to nurturing future generations of artists, Archie established the Archie Roach Foundation, dedicated to supporting emerging Aboriginal artists. He passed away in Warrnambool, Victoria, on 30 July 2022, leaving behind a rich legacy. His life and work serve as a testament to the profound impact he had on our society and the artistic landscape of Australia. Vale Archie Roach.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (17:41):** I rise to speak on behalf of the government with deep respect and heartfelt support of the Hon. Tammy Franks' motion on Uncle Archie Roach, a man whose voice has helped shape the soul of this country. Born in 1955, Archie's family lived on the Framlingham Aboriginal mission near Warrnambool. He was one of the stolen generations, taken as a child from his mother, Nellie, a Gunditjmara woman, and father, Archie, a Bundjalung man from New South Wales.

Uncle Archie was more than a musician. He was an advocate, a storyteller and a national treasure. Over a career that spanned more than three decades, Archie released more than 10 albums, beginning with the groundbreaking debut *Charcoal Lane* in 1990. It was from that album that the world first heard *Took the Children Away*, a powerful and deeply personal ballad that would go on to shape Australia's general understanding of the stolen generations. It is a song, which in my and many people's view, opened the eyes, hearts and minds of the broader nation in a way that had not been achieved at that time. It is amazing to hear stories from Aboriginal people about the first time they heard that song and the effect it had on them. Their experiences had not yet been reflected or told.

Across his career, Uncle Archie received nine ARIA Awards, eight Deadly Awards, four National Indigenous Music Awards and many other honours. He was inducted into the National Indigenous Music Hall of Fame, the Music Victoria Hall of Fame and was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2015.

In South Australia in 1973, while living on the streets, Archie met his life partner, Ngarrindjeri woman Ruby Hunter. After a long history of alcoholism, he had credited her as his saviour. Ruby was also of the stolen generations and a talented musician in her own right. The two soulmates embarked on a journey of healing through music.

Beyond accolades of music, Uncle Archie's legacy is felt in the lives he touched. He helped Aboriginal people feel seen. He opened hearts and created space for truth and healing. As is shown in the many years that Archie and Ruby opened their house to disadvantaged young people in need of support that they themselves had found in each other, Archie later recalled that he had not tallied it up but he estimated he and Ruby fostered more than 20 children over their lives.

In April 2022, and I think at my first official function as a minister after the 2022 election, we came together to unveil the Ruby Hunter and Archie Roach monuments on the Lake Bonney waterfront at Barmera on the lands of the River Murray and Mallee peoples, who were represented at that ceremony by Aunty Ena Turner, who provided the Welcome to Country. It was an honour, at the unveiling of those monuments, to be alongside members of Aunty Ruby's and Uncle Archie's family, including Uncle Wally Richards and Uncle Jeffrey Hunter.

It was also the first time I think I met the late Rhonda Centofanti, who at the time was a Berri Barmera councillor and a key driver of delivering these monuments. The monuments contain artworks depicting Aunty Ruby's totem, the pelican (nori) and Uncle Archie's totem, the eagle (wuldi). The monuments are symbols of resilience, cultural pride and the strength that comes from telling the truth. Uncle Archie gave us more than music: he gave us language for our pain, hope for our healing. His voice may be gone but his songs live in the hearts and minds of generations yet to come.

Motion carried.

### *Bills*

## **APPROPRIATION BILL 2025**

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (17:47):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

Mr President,

I present to the Chamber, the 2025-26 State Budget, the fourth budget of the Malinauskas Government.

Three years ago, this government came to office with a clear mandate.

We set out a plan to reinvigorate our state, to restore a clear sense of direction and leadership for our community.

We committed to rebuilding our health system, building more beds and stopping the cuts to frontline staff, and to tackle ramping at our emergency departments.

We committed to reform our education system, ensuring it can give our kids the best start to life and to give them the skills to succeed in the future economy.

To tackle the crisis in housing supply and affordability, and to get more young South Australians into their own homes.

And we committed to supporting families and small businesses through cost of living pressures caused by spiking inflation and interest rates.

From day one we have set out to be a government that would deliver nation leading reforms, so once again our state could be leading the nation.

We set out to use the authority of government, the power of the parliament, and the capacity of the state's finances to deliver the reforms and make the investments necessary to succeed in these ambitions.

And in just three short years, look at the progress we have made.

Our economy has gone from laggard to leader.

We have the lowest unemployment rate in the state's history.

We are ranked the best place in the nation to do business.

We have the best planning system, the best-performing housing market and increasing numbers of first home buyers moving into their own homes.

We have expanded capacity in our hospitals.

We have increased the number of doctors, nurses and ambulance officers to record levels.

We are introducing preschool for 3-year-olds.

We have reintroduced technical colleges into our high schools.

We are supporting the merger of the state's two largest universities.

We are delivering a historic boost to skills and training funding.

We are finally finishing the North-South Corridor.

We are building a new Women's and Children's hospital that's actually big enough for future generations.

We returned the Adelaide 500, introduced Gather Round and brought LIV Golf to Australia.

We have proven to the country that no one does major events better than South Australia.

We have led the nation in reforming social media laws, demanding and achieving a ban on social media accounts for children under 16.

We have led the nation—if not the world—in banning political donations.

We are the lowest taxing state on the mainland.

And we have kept our promise not to introduce new taxes or increase existing ones.

We've done all this while returning the budget to surplus and improving the state's credit rating outlook.

Mr President, the 2025-26 State Budget proudly builds on the progress we have made.

It is a budget that once again supports our economy, stepping in to protect steelmaking in Whyalla, and supporting our farmers during drought.

It is a budget that puts more police back on our streets, invests in our prisons and in our criminal justice system.

It is a budget that boosts our health system, and supports families and businesses with cost of living pressures.

It is a budget that accelerates our reform to deliver preschool for 3-year-olds.

It is a budget that will help South Australians buy their own home sooner.

It is a budget of sound financial management that forecasts the delivery of another surplus and ensures debt levels remain sustainable.

Mr President, we have consistently shown this is a government that responds quickly to challenges.

Over the past 12 months, we became increasingly alarmed at the reports that the steelworks in Whyalla were under threat.

Reports of businesses not being paid. Of workers being laid off.

Maintenance work not being done. Safety being put at risk.

Investments being delayed.

Enough was enough.

Our unprecedented intervention to place the Whyalla steelworks into administration has protected thousands of jobs, hundreds of businesses and ensured Australia remains a country that manufactures critical steel products.

Under this government, South Australians will not be taken for fools by fast-talking businessmen that continually break their promises to our state.

That is why, together with the Commonwealth, we financed a \$2.4 billion rescue package, not only to save Whyalla and its steelworks, but to rebuild it, remake it and to give it a future.

The budget outlines how South Australia's contribution of \$650 million over six years is accommodated.

The funding is for administration costs, investment in the plant to support the sale, and for a comprehensive rescue package that safeguards the Whyalla community.

The budget still forecasts a surplus for the current 2024-25 financial year even after the impact of the Whyalla rescue package.

In addition, the government has limited the impact of the rescue package on the state's debt position by deferring the Hydrogen Jobs Plan.

Not only has the government's intervention restored confidence in Whyalla and the steelworks, we have already financially supported more than 100 businesses in Whyalla who were so badly let down by GFG.

The government has taken the same approach to the unprecedented drought conditions afflicting our state.

We are stepping up to assist farmers and regional communities when they need help the most.

The budget provides a further \$55.4 million in a comprehensive drought support package, on top of the \$18 million already committed in November last year.

We didn't wait until today to announce this funding, instead it is already being rolled out to farmers and across communities.

And it follows the example set in previous budgets when the government supported regional communities through the River Murray flood event.

While the nature of primary production is that there will be good seasons and bad, when nature intervenes so harshly, as it has over the last 12 months, then it is imperative governments lend a hand.

To make sure that when it does rain again, the farmers are still there to grow their crops, raise their livestock and continue as the heartbeat of regional communities.

That is why the budget also provides a \$3 million fund to help the state's dairy farmers who have been left stranded by the collapse of Beston Global Food group.

In the same way, this government is helping South Australian families with further cost of living relief.

Thankfully, some of the pressures faced by South Australian families are beginning to ease as the rate of inflation returns to the target band, allowing the Reserve Bank to twice cut interest rates this year.

Most economists are now predicting there will be more cuts before the end of this year.

But it does not mean the financial pain felt by many over the last three years has disappeared.

We know that many families, many businesses, are still trying to recover.

Which is why the government is providing additional cost of living assistance in this budget.

While the federal government is delivering its energy bill rebate and introducing its \$1,000 instant tax deduction for workers, the budget is complementing this with relief for families, and small and medium businesses.

The budget extends the \$200 reduction of the government school materials and services charge for another four years, saving the parents of more than 120 000 school children \$96 million over this period.

We are also slashing the cost of public transport for students.

Parents of school age children well understand the daily pressure of organising the school drop-off and pick-up, and the interruption it causes to the work day and other commitments.

To further support families, the budget introduces a new low cost public transport ticket for school students, costing only \$10 for a 28-day pass from 1 July.

This will give four full school weeks of public transport for an equivalent of only 25 cents per trip.

By dropping the price of public transport for school students, we hope to encourage more children to catch public transport to and from school.

It will also make it far easier for parents and caregivers to get to work and stay at work rather than be interrupted by the school run.

And even better, the ticket can be used for unlimited trips, including on weekends and public holidays.

At the same time, the government is spending \$9.6 million to improve security on public transport, including upgrading CCTV at key interchanges.

Together, the extension of the government school materials and services charge and the \$10 28-day pass will save a family with two school-age children up to \$884 a year.

This brings the total cost of living assistance delivered by this government to almost \$1 billion over our four budgets.

Mr President, protecting the community is a government's primary responsibility.

While crime rates have fallen over the course of this government, we continue to toughen laws, expand our prisons and equip our police and criminal justice system with the resources needed to combat crime.

This budget provides the largest boost to police funding in the state's history.

More than \$170 million will be spent over the next six years to build South Australia's largest-ever police force.

The budget funds an increase in sworn police officers of 243 full-time equivalents by 2028-29 and a further 83 by 2030-31.

The additional 326 sworn officers will give our state a record total of 5000 police, reaffirming South Australia as having the highest number of sworn police per capita of any state.

The budget also continues the government's efforts to get more sworn officers out of support roles and back onto the front line.

A further \$29.6 million will enable 98 police security officers to be recruited by 2028-29, building on the 189 extra officers funded in the 2023-24 Budget.

The police security officers will be deployed to regional areas, meaning there will be more sworn police out on the beat in regional communities.

The budget also funds a further \$9.7 million to continue the civilianisation of administrative roles, releasing a further 20 sworn officers back to operational duties.

Together these measures will see a significant increase to the number of police on the frontline bolstered by a total of more than 630 by 2030-31.

People like to see police in our streets and in the community. It makes them feel safer, and it deters criminals from acting.

We have the best police force in the nation; highly respected, capable and successfully combating crime in our community.

I want to thank the Police Commissioner for advocating for these measures and working with the government to develop this record funding package.

Keeping the community safe also means keeping criminals off our streets.

Over the next five years, the state government will spend \$72.4 million to increase prison capacity by 116 beds across the system.

This brings the total number of extra beds to 468 funded over the last two budgets.

There will also be \$6.8 million allocated to boost security in our prisons to make it more difficult to smuggle contraband, including drugs and weapons, into prisons.

But we also believe it is important to invest in places where people can turn their lives around if they choose.

The budget provides \$8.1 million to establish an additional 30-bed bail accommodation support program to create a remand to bail pathway and help support Closing the Gap targets.

The government is also committed to a more efficient and well-resourced criminal justice system.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions will receive an extra \$9.4 million, while a further \$5.5 million for forensic science will improve the capacity for those charged to be brought before the courts more quickly.

There will be \$20 million invested in critical upgrades of court infrastructure, and \$4.8 million to enhance security at courts across the state.

Improving community safety also extends to our roads.

It is shocking how one moment on our roads can end a life, and change others' so profoundly.

The impact on families is crippling; the distress for emergency services, police and our health system just as powerful.

Before the Easter long weekend, I stood with Sargeant John Hong to plead with motorists and road users to be safe on our roads.

Sargeant Hong has not only lost a loved one from road trauma, he has spent most of his policing career with the task of informing families their loved one has lost their life on the road.

None of us can imagine the gravity of that task.

This budget again invests to improve safety on our roads, in the hope those knocks on the front door become less frequent.

A \$17.8 million investment will see the number of motorcycle police patrolling our roads double, with a further 33 officers to be recruited.

The budget also provides \$46.8 million to install new mobile phone detection, red light and a point-to-point camera at high-risk locations.

Revenue raised through these new cameras will be ploughed back into improving road safety across the state, with an extra \$7.5 million for regional road safety infrastructure and \$20 million for road safety maintenance.

And to reinforce the message that the road toll must come down, there will be \$4.5 million dedicated to new targeted road safety campaigns.

The budget also invests heavily to improve our road infrastructure.

This budget commits \$125 million to match the Commonwealth's \$525 million on an 80:20 basis to build the High Productivity Vehicle Network, together funding a \$650 million project to improve freight efficiency and reduce trucks on the South Eastern Freeway and already busy suburban arterial roads.

Curtis Road will be upgraded with \$125 million to match the Commonwealth's \$125 million commitment to remove the level crossing, improving travel times for 21 000 vehicles each day and to support future housing development.

On Main South Road between Myponga and Yankalilla, \$80 million will be directed to build overtaking lanes and widen bridges, also co-funded by the Commonwealth.

Mr President, our health system will once again receive a major boost in this budget, with a further \$1.9 billion to meet increasing demand.

This brings our total extra investment in health to \$9 billion over four budgets.

The investment to date has allowed us to recruit record numbers of doctors, nurses, ambulance officers and allied health workers and we will have built an extra 330 beds by the end of the year.

The government's investment has drastically improved ambulance response times, so sick people receive the critical care they need as soon as possible.

But there is still much more work to be done.

There will be \$117 million of new investment in mental health services, with more than 130 new mental health beds brought online.

\$13.9 million is allocated to expand the Mental Health—SA Police co-responder program to manage mental health crises outside of hospital emergency departments.

\$2.2 million over three years is provided to expand the scope of services pharmacists can provide, helping keep South Australians out of emergency departments.

The budget also builds on the government's efforts to tackle the housing supply and affordability crisis confronting our nation.

We've been alarmed that for many South Australians, the dream of home ownership has never felt more out of reach.

We are committed to putting it back within their grasp.

Since coming to government, we have committed almost \$3.2 billion to boost public and social housing, release land, build infrastructure and cut taxes—all with the aim of increasing supply and improving affordability.

Through the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan, we have identified where 315 000 new homes will be built over the next 30 years.

The government's Housing Roadmap will speed up the development and approval process to ensure more houses can be built more quickly.

South Australia is now ranked the best performing state for housing by the Housing Industry Association.

This budget ensures we continue the progress we have already made, with a further \$552 million to build more homes for South Australians including:

- \$270.1 million to increase development of new housing at Playford Alive East at Munno Para
- \$104.7 million to deliver the Southwark Master Plan, on the site of the former West End brewery
- \$30.5 million towards preparing the Onkaparinga Heights site for new homes.

Together, these developments will support the construction of at least 2935 homes.

This budget also introduces the Rent-To-Buy Affordable Housing Initiative which will allow long-term renters to buy one of 100 homes currently under construction by the South Australian Housing Trust.

Mr President, while our housing policies have meant a huge boost to the construction industry, we have also ensured the conditions to allow other sectors of the state's economy to flourish.

It is why we have kept our promise to not increase or introduce any new taxes.

Our payroll tax system has been recognised as the most competitive in Australia.

We are also the lowest taxing state on the mainland.

But this government knows there are times local businesses need an extra boost.

In this budget, we are announcing the new \$20 million Powering Business Grants program.

Grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$75,000 will be offered to encourage small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organisations, including community and sporting clubs, to invest in energy efficient equipment.

This will help businesses cut power bills not just as a once-off, but on an ongoing basis.

Our government will also contribute \$50 million towards a new Venture Capital Fund to encourage our best and brightest entrepreneurs to take their business ideas to the world.

This budget also includes a new \$5 million program over two years to help guide exporters through the current global trade uncertainty and new tariff environment.

The budget supports our reputation as the defence state, investing another \$13.5 million in the Defence Innovation Partnership and \$3.3 million in the Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Uplift program.

The Defence Teaming Centre is funded to help more South Australian companies become involved in critical supply chains as we commence the construction of the most complex machines ever made, nuclear-powered, conventionally armed submarines at Osborne.

The budget includes funding for the Department of Energy and Mining and the Copper taskforce, assisting BHP develop its expansion of the state's copper deposits and cementing South Australia's critical role in the decarbonisation and electrification of global industry.

Mr President, when the government was elected in 2022, Gather Round didn't exist, LIV Golf wasn't an event in our country and the Adelaide 500 had been scrapped.

Now all three are among the biggest events across Australia, drawing tens of thousands of people to our state.

Gather Round alone creates around \$100 million in economic activity.

These events fill hotel rooms, pack flights, add energy to our bars and restaurants and signal to the rest of the nation that South Australia is open for business.

To build on this success, the budget also includes \$10.9 million in additional funding for Business Events Adelaide to attract more events and conventions.

The funding arrives just as the Adelaide Airport welcomes further international routes, with Qantas, Cathay Pacific and United Airlines introducing direct international flights to Adelaide in the coming months.

Mr President, the last three years has seen remarkable progress in our state's employment figures.

We have added almost 65 000 jobs since the 2022 election, most of them full-time, and we have recorded record low rates of unemployment.

The challenge now is to increase the number of higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs across our economy and to make sure workers have the skills to perform them.

To achieve this, the government is investing in every stage of education from preschool to trade schools to universities.

Last budget, the government set out our \$1.9 billion commitment to introduce preschool for 3-year-olds.

This year, in response to overwhelming demand from the long day care sector, the government is spending \$27.7 million to accelerate the roll out of preschool for 3-year-olds.

This will provide an extra 2000 places for South Australian families from January 2026.

We also continue to expand our schools; in addition to the two new schools announced as part of last year's budget, today's budget also provides \$70 million for a new Birth to Year 6 primary school in the northern suburbs.

Treasury will work with the Education department to put these three schools to market through a public private partnership, given how successful the last round of PPPs for schools has been.

The budget also continues the government's commitment to the environment.

It includes \$109.7 million funded by the Commonwealth for a range of measures to support and improve the health of the River Murray, and \$8.3 million to begin the planning and preparations for the 31<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties, the largest environmental and climate change conference in the world.

As recent storms have eroded beaches along the metropolitan coast, the budget commits a further \$14 million to sand replenishment.

With the emergence of the toxic microalgae along South Australia's waters, the budget provides \$44.4 million to replace the coastal research vessel, and a further \$45 million is provided to continue the fight against fruit fly.

Mr President, on coming to government we committed to return the budget to surplus, to end the run of deficits recorded under the previous government.

Running budget surpluses means the government has the capacity to respond to community needs such as cost of living support, flood and drought response, and economic issues like Whyalla.

Surpluses are also vital to ensure we have the capacity to take on additional debt to build the South Road tunnels and new Women's and Children's Hospital.

Today the government is forecast to deliver its third consecutive surplus.

A surplus of \$18 million is forecast in the 2024-25 financial year, increasing to \$179 million in 2025-26.

The budget also forecasts surpluses over the next four years.

While debt rises over the forward estimates, it will fund productive infrastructure that will benefit successive generations of South Australians.

More than \$27 billion will be spent on infrastructure over the next four years, including the new Women's and Children's Hospital and the South Road tunnels project, the two largest projects in the state's history.

Our debt projections remain manageable and South Australia compares favourably against other states and territories in our budget settings.

Indeed, the budget's strong position means that in the current financial year, net debt is \$2 billion lower than forecast in the last budget of the previous Liberal government and the key debt to revenue ratio is improved by 30 percentage points.

Among all states, South Australia has the second-strongest credit rating and outlook, trailing only a Western Australian economy fuelled by an unfair GST distribution.

The state's credit rating outlook has improved under this government, moving to a stable outlook from the negative outlook under the previous government.

Before I finish, I would like to thank those who have been instrumental in delivering this year's budget and to those that have supported me through the process.

First, to my wife Antonia, and our children Ben, Isaac and Olivia—it's a great privilege for me to be a Member of Parliament, and to be a minister and Treasurer.

But it's a privilege that all too often compromises a far greater privilege of being a father and a husband.

Thank you so much for all your support, your love and your patience, allowing me to do this work, I am so grateful to you all.

To the Premier and his office, and my ministerial colleagues, I'm grateful for the input and collaboration throughout the budget process, and I also thank my caucus colleagues for their ongoing support.

Under Treasurer Tammie Pribanic is one of the finest public servants in this state, and her sound advice, work ethic and unfailing commitment have been vital in putting together this budget.

As to her exceptional team at the Department of Treasury and Finance including Sandy Burness, Phoung Chau, Scott Bayliss, Greg Raymond, Ben Ryan, Mark Beveridge and many others, thank you for your tireless efforts.

And to my ministerial staff, including chief of staff John Atkinson, Tara Yoon, Michael McGuire, Grace Nankivell, Emma De Favari, Sam Chapman, Kate Wheeler, Elicea Tomlinson—and Jack Berketa who has done an outstanding job stepping in for Andrea Nicolas while she takes maternity leave, thank you all for your hard work and dedication.

Mr President,

In a global environment of increasing volatility, this budget further demonstrates what a strong, united, experienced government can deliver.

It's a budget that responds to the economic challenges of Whyalla and drought.

It's a budget that backs the people who keep our community safe, with record investments in police, in prisons and the criminal justice system.

It builds on the capacity we have built in our health system, and delivers more housing for South Australians.

It's a budget that continues our proud record of providing cost of living relief, while backing South Australian businesses.

It keeps our taxes low and our budget in surplus.

It's also a budget that recognises the business of government is never complete.

Mr President, there is a sense of energy and optimism about our state that we haven't seen for a long time.

This budget builds on the foundations of the last three years and sets our state on the path to a more prosperous, productive and inclusive future.

I commend the budget to the Chamber.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### 1—Short title

This clause is formal.

##### 2—Commencement

This clause provides for the Bill to operate retrospectively to 1 July 2025. Until the Bill is passed, expenditure is financed from appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act*.

##### 3—Interpretation

This clause provides relevant definitions.

##### 4—Issue and application of money

This clause provides for the issue and application of the sums shown in Schedule 1 to the Bill. Subclause (2) makes it clear that the appropriation authority provided by the *Supply Act* is superseded by this Bill.

##### 5—Application of money if functions or duties of agency are transferred

This clause is designed to ensure that where Parliament has appropriated funds to an agency to enable it to carry out particular functions or duties and those functions or duties become the responsibility of another agency, the funds may be used by the responsible agency in accordance with Parliament's original intentions without further appropriation.

##### 6—Expenditure from Hospitals Fund

This clause provides authority for the Treasurer to issue and apply money from the Hospitals Fund for the provision of facilities in public hospitals.

##### 7—Additional appropriation under other Acts

This clause makes it clear that appropriation authority provided by this Bill is additional to authority provided in other Acts of Parliament, except, of course, in the *Supply Act*.

##### 8—Overdraft limit

This clause sets a limit of \$150 million on the amount which the Government may borrow by way of overdraft.

Schedule 1—Amounts proposed to be expended from the Consolidated Account during the financial year ending 30 June 2026

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

## **MENTAL HEALTH (COMMUNITY VISITOR SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector, Special Minister of State) (17:47):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation and explanation of clauses inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

The *Mental Health Act 2009* relates to the treatment, care and rehabilitation of persons with severe mental illness with the goal of bringing about their recovery as far as is possible.

The legislation aims to safeguard the rights of persons interacting with mental health services.

One of the ways the Act does this is through the Community Visitor Scheme. The Scheme plays an essential role in promoting the wellbeing, dignity, safety and rights of people living with a mental health condition receiving care from a mental health service.

A volunteer scheme, the Community Visitor Scheme visits, inspects and advocates for improvement to services.

The Principal Community Visitor and Community Visitors are independent statutory appointments established under the *Mental Health Act 2009*. Their independence is vital to the Scheme.

This Bill seeks to amend the *Mental Health Act 2009* to offer the Community Visitor Scheme a more practical and greater flexibility to conduct visitations by authorising the Minister for Health and Wellbeing to appoint, remove or suspend a community visitor, enable the Principal Community Visitor to delegate powers and functions and allow for visits and inspections of residential community mental health facilities to occur at least once in every 4-month period, unless specified by regulation, and at least once in every 6-month period for outpatient authorised community mental health facilities.

Currently the frequency of visitations is set out under the Act as 'at least once in every 2-month period' for treatment centres and for authorised community mental health facilities.

For some services, particularly community mental health services, and those in regional areas, bi-monthly visits are not fully effective as community mental health services often do not have consumers present.

A more targeted approach to visit a clinic or group meeting day is more effective to meet with consumers. The scheme has finite resources, and this requires visitation schedules to be prioritised on a risk-assessment basis.

In 2017 the *Mental Health Act 2009* was amended to allow the gazettal of community mental health services. In 2022, the Chief Psychiatrist took a staged approach to gazetting additional community sites that were not gazetted at the time of the amendment, in particular in rural areas. This has led to more sites being gazetted and therefore requiring visitations by the Community Visitor Scheme.

It is important to note that these proposed changes will not affect the current legislative requirement to visit and inspect treatment centres at least once every 2-month period.

Targeted consultation on the earlier version of the draft Bill took place between November 2023 and February 2024. Detailed information was provided to targeted consumer groups, including lived experience and professional bodies via the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist.

The Principal Community Visitor also discussed the changes at meetings with the Lived Experience Advisory Group and the Human Rights Coercion Reduction Committee, and at regular meetings with various local health network mental health directors.

In total, 13 written submissions were received and overall there was strong support for the proposed amendments.

I would like to thank the many people who provided feedback to the consultation on this Bill.

The Principal Community Visitor has also developed a supporting policy position outlining the implementation of announced visits and inspections, with focused strategies for increasing client participation and client engagement, working in conjunction with services.

I would like to acknowledge the Principal Community Visitor Anne Gale, as well as Chief Psychiatrist Dr John Brayley and his team for their work in preparing this Bill.

This Bill is a positive change which will allow for greater flexibility in undertaking visits within the capacity of community visitors, alongside visits to disability accommodation by the Community Visitor Scheme under the *Disability Services (Community Visitor Scheme) Regulations 2023*.

I commend the Bill to the Chamber.

#### Explanation of Clauses

##### Part 1—Preliminary

###### 1—Short title

###### 2—Commencement

These clauses are formal.

##### Part 2—Amendment of *Mental Health Act 2009*

###### 3—Substitution of section 50

Section 50 of the Act is substituted by sections 50 and 50A:

###### 50—Principal Community Visitor

Proposed section 50 provides for the appointment of a Principal Community Visitor. The Principal Community Visitor is to be appointed on conditions determined by the Governor for a term not exceeding 5 years and will be eligible for reappointment. The Governor may suspend the Principal Community Visitor, but the Principal Community Visitor must be restored to their position if an address from both Houses of Parliament seeking their removal is not presented to the Governor within a specified timeframe. The Governor may, on the presentation of an address from both Houses of Parliament seeking the Principal Community Visitor's removal, remove the Principal Community Visitor.

###### 50A—Community Visitors

Proposed section 50A provides for the appointment of Community Visitors. Community Visitors are to be appointed on conditions determined by the Minister for a term not exceeding 3 years and will be eligible for reappointment. The Minister may, on application by the Principal Community Visitor, or on the Minister's own initiative after consultation with the Principal Community Visitor, suspend or remove a Community Visitor.

###### 4—Amendment of section 51A—Delegation by Principal Community Visitor

This clause amends section 51A to provide additional categories of persons to whom the Principal Community Visitor may delegate their powers and functions under the Act.

###### 5—Amendment of section 52—Visits to and inspections of treatment centres

This clause amends section 52 to make changes to the requirements imposed on community visitors for the periodic visiting and inspection of treatment centres.

###### 6—Amendment of section 52A—Visits to and inspection of authorised community mental health facilities

This clause amends section 52A to make changes to the requirements imposed on community visitors for the periodic visiting and inspection of authorised community mental health facilities.

##### Schedule 1—Transitional provision

###### 1—Continuation of appointments of Community Visitors

This clause is a transitional provision which provides for the continuation of appointments of Community Visitors in force immediately before the commencement of this clause.

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

### **CRIMINAL LAW (FORENSIC PROCEDURES) (BLOOD TESTING) AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Final Stages*

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

At 17:49 the council adjourned until Thursday 21 August 2025 at 14:15.

#### *Answers to Questions*

#### **PRISONERS ON REMAND**

In reply to the Hon. H.M. GIROLAMO (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6 March 2025).

The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I can now advise:

The approved capacity for 2025-26 is 3,663.

#### EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR BOYS

In reply to **the Hon. S.L. GAME** (3 April 2025).

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** I have been advised by the Minister for Education, Training and Skills that:

The state government established the Office for Early Childhood Development to deliver a range of early childhood reforms to reduce the rate of South Australian children entering school developmentally vulnerable.

These reforms provide a universal service offering for all children, with targeted intervention for children identified as being at risk of developmental vulnerability, including boys.

Under the reforms, all families will have improved access to child health and development checks to help identify children's developmental needs and connect families to additional supports where needed. Expanded early childhood parenting groups through the Child and Family Health Service will provide parents with expert advice and resources to support children with additional needs and developmental vulnerabilities.

The provision of 15 hours a week of universal high-quality, play-based three-year-old preschool will support children's learning and development, regardless of gender, and provide additional supports for children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage. The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) demonstrates that a higher percentage of boys are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains than girls. As such, more boys will receive additional supports through these reforms.

Preschool Boost will support early childhood education services to do more to address developmental vulnerability aligned with the AEDC domains. Partner preschool services can use Preschool Boost funding to purchase allied health services and other quality programs from the Preschool Boost menu. It is tailored to meet the needs of three- and four-year-old children, their families and communities. □

Integrated hubs will also provide more community outreach and family support in locations of high developmental vulnerability.

With regard to the early childhood education and care workforce, the South Australian Early Childhood Workforce Strategy outlines the state government's investment of \$96.6 million over four years to grow and support South Australia's early childhood workforce. This also includes support for quality teaching and learning in preparation for universal three-year-old preschool delivery.

The early childhood workforce will have increased access to high-quality professional development, contributing to the quality of educator practice and children's learning experiences to support their development.

Other initiatives prioritise the representation of diverse cultural, linguistic and social identities among educators and teachers in the early childhood education and care workforce. For example, the Flying Start Pathways Program aims to ensure early childhood workforce training programs deliver integrated career progression and wraparound support services targeting under-represented cohorts, including men.

This work builds on the focus we have had on increasing the number of male primary school teachers through \$2 million in teaching scholarships, which is an election commitment being delivered by the Deputy Premier, Hon. Susan Close MP.

#### KANGAROO DEATHS, TUNKALILLA

In reply to **the Hon. T.A. FRANKS** (30 April 2025).

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries):** I am advised:

Yes, the animals were showing neurological clinical signs (staggers) prior to euthanasia.

#### KANGAROO DEATHS, TUNKALILLA

In reply to **the Hon. T.A. FRANKS** (30 April 2025).

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries):** I am advised:

An onsite investigation was undertaken by animal biosecurity staff. Samples were taken and further animals were anaesthetised and euthanised and brought to the laboratory for full investigation by the state pathologist. This is consistent with animal biosecurity's standard protocols and legislative responsibilities for investigating significant disease events in animals.

#### KANGAROO DEATHS, TUNKALILLA

In reply to **the Hon. T.A. FRANKS** (30 April 2025).

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries):** I am advised:

The full veterinary investigation report including all the laboratory findings have been released to the Department for Environment and Water and they are now managing this case.

### REGIONAL HOUSING

In reply to **the Hon. R.A. SIMMS** (30 April 2025).

**The Hon. C.M. SCRIVEN (Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries):** The Minister for Housing has advised:

1. The Malinauskas government has scheduled to build 184 'Housing Trust' public rental homes in regional SA; 99 have been completed.

In addition to this, Renewal SA has delivered 19 new homes through the Office for Regional Housing's Regional Key Worker Housing Scheme pilot project, with a further 11 homes under construction for completion in the third quarter of 2025. These houses are used to attract, retain and accommodate key service workers in the regions.

2. There are 85 new public rental homes under construction in the regions, which are expected to be completed prior to March 2026.

The remainder of houses delivered under the Regional Key Worker Housing Scheme pilot project are scheduled for completion in the third quarter of 2025.

A further 14 projects to be delivered or part funded by the Office for Regional Housing will target the delivery of over 400 housing outcomes (a mixture of serviced allotments, rental housing (both market priced and affordable) and short stay accommodation). These projects will deliver outcomes over the next 12-24 months.

The 2024-25 state budget allocated an additional \$20 million to deliver further regional housing projects through the Office for Regional Housing. Initiatives to be delivered using this funding will be announced as they are approved.

3. This government is concerned about housing affordability for all South Australians, in particular for moderate and lower income South Australians. The HomeSeeker SA affordable homes program and the government-backed home loan lender, HomeStart Finance, are two effective and popular government initiatives that are helping thousands of South Australians, who would have normally been unable to purchase a home and realise their dream of home-ownership. Whilst housing in regional South Australia is generally available at lower market prices than metropolitan Adelaide, there remains a shortage of housing supply, and housing can still be unaffordable due to lower average incomes.

By increasing housing supply across a spectrum of typologies and uses, the Malinauskas government is increasing housing availability more broadly, including at an affordable price point.

4. The Malinauskas Labor government recently reviewed South Australia's rental laws in order to better meet the needs of today's rental housing market, improve protections for renters and ensure landlords can manage properties effectively.

As part of this 2023 review, the Minister for Consumer Affairs hosted a Residential Tenancies Forum for key stakeholders in relation to a range of issues affecting the residential tenancies sector. The issue of rent increases was discussed at the forum with representatives on behalf of both tenants and landlords.

It was apparent from the discussion at the forum that a rent freeze or rent capping measures may cause unintended hardship for renters. While a rent freeze could provide some relief for tenants, there are also concerns that a rent freeze may cause an upsurge in rental prices prior to commencement of any such measures. Further, imposing a rent freeze may result in some landlords electing to exit the market, which may in turn worsen current availability issues. I will not be advocating for a rent freeze, due to the adverse effects that a rent freeze could bring.

### EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

In reply to **the Hon. S.L. GAME** (4 June 2025).

**The Hon. E.S. BOURKE (Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Minister for Autism, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** The Minister for Education, Training and Skills has advised:

Since 2022, the Malinauskas Labor government has driven bold reforms to the education, training and skills system. The very intent of these reforms is to increase economic opportunities for all South Australians and to break the cycle of disadvantage many South Australians experience.

We are supporting all young South Australians to participate in education, learn and succeed, and find an educational and career pathway suited to their skills and interests, while also helping employers secure the skilled workforce they need. The government's reform efforts address the critical early years which set young people up for life, through their schooling, into supporting adults to change careers or re-enter the workforce.

These reforms include:

- Universal three-year old preschool, commencing from 2026 and 2027 in regional and rural areas, the Greater Adelaide area in 2028 and metropolitan Adelaide in 2029 and 2030. Research tells us that investing in the early years pays the biggest dividends for children and society. More than 90 per cent

of a child's brain development occurs before the age of five. There is broad evidence that three- and four-year-olds who attend preschool tend to have better life outcomes.

- The introduction of five technical colleges across South Australia, including in Port Augusta and Mt Gambier, supporting young people in our regions. The technical colleges are unique to South Australia, offering hands-on, immersive vocational pathways that lead to guaranteed jobs in in-demand industries such as defence, early childhood education, construction, health, aeroskills, energy and cookery. This is a clear demonstration of the government's commitment to giving pathways to more South Australians, with many students attending who were otherwise at risk of leaving school.
- A \$2.3 billion National Skills Agreement with investment focused on more training places, improving completions, Closing the Gap, and rebuilding TAFE SA at the centre of the VET system where many students from disadvantaged backgrounds access training. Investment includes a stronger focus on learner wellbeing and completions, rather than focusing solely on commencements, ensuring we can support more South Australians to gain secure, well-paid jobs.
- Fee Free TAFE to break down financial barriers that have prevented many South Australians from being able to access training. Over 17,000 South Australians have already accessed Fee Free TAFE. The most recent data shows that the students right across the state are benefitting from the life-changing initiative, particularly those in lower socio-economic areas including Adelaide's northern suburbs. Notably, postcode 5114 (Smithfield, Blakeview, Andrews Farm and Craigmore) is the top area for Fee Free TAFE enrolments, targeting the students we need to reach.
- The new Tailored Learning Program, replacing FLO, is delivering major reform focused on supporting disengaged students to re-engage and stay in school. The Malinauskas Labor government is investing \$48m to rollout this program, which has seen positive outcomes at schools across South Australia since its introduction.
- A refreshed Country Education Strategy, with continued investment supporting more equitable educational opportunities for country students that are not only comparable to those of their metropolitan counterparts, but exemplary in their own right.
- Cost-of-living initiatives which support students from lower socio-economic backgrounds fully participate and engage in education. This includes a \$200 rebate on the materials and services charge for government school students, free laptops for year 7 and 10 students on School Card, and ensuring that all government schools have access to a breakfast program, with a focus on schools in lower socio-economic communities.
- A historic agreement reached for full and fair funding for public education. Announced in January, the agreement will see an increase in state and Australian government public school funding—taking the total increase in funding to \$1.25 billion over the next 10 years. The new agreement means more money, more resources and more support will be provided to public schools over the next decade to ensure every child, in every school, has a fair go and a great education.

Since 2022, the government has seen positive signs that outcomes are improving for young people facing disadvantage. These include:

- More students in public education are completing their SACE, with results improving year on year. The number of Aboriginal students in government schools completing the SACE has increased from 46 per cent of students in 2022 to 63 per cent of students in 2024. Completion rates for students with disability have also increased over the same period.
- Student attendance and engagement are crucial in our system. Our attendance rate improved to 87.2 per cent in 2024, up from 84.8 per cent in 2022.
- The mobile phone ban, introduced in early 2023, is positively impacting schools. Data from 2024 shows a:
  - 57.3 per cent decrease in the number of incidents reported about social media issues in 2024 (90) compared to 2023 (211).
  - 37.9 per cent decrease in the number of incidents reported about behaviour issues involving a device in 2024 (103) compared to 2023 (166).
  - 34 per cent decrease in the number of incidents reported about policy compliance issues in 2024 (33) compared to 2023 (50).

There is more to do, but our government is strongly focused on taking the long-term actions to improve the lives of all South Australians.