

**Tuesday 12 June 2018**

The Speaker, **Ms Hickey**, took the Chair at 10 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

## **QUESTIONS**

### **Budget 2018-19 - GST Distribution**

**Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.02 a.m.]

On 16 May the federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, said there would be a clear transition plan to any new system of GST distribution and that state treasurers would be consulted. On Sunday, almost a month later, you admitted that you had not been briefed by Mr Morrison on the Productivity Commission review into Australia's system of horizontal fiscal equalisation. You admitted that you have not even see the review.

Why have you not been standing up for Tasmania, making sure that you know what is going on with the GST distribution and being honest about what we stand to lose in the immediate future?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I want to make the point that we are framing this budget with more clarity than we have framed previous budgets. We have not had a guarantee from a prime minister or a finance minister in terms of GST before.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I wonder whether Ms White has a similar guarantee from Bill Shorten, or whether the shadow finance minister -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. It is very unparliamentary to be yelling across the Chamber. Please conduct all discussions through the Chair.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I wonder whether they have a similar guarantee and whether that might be the reason - the absence of one - why they will not bring down an alternative budget.

I am in regular contact with Scott Morrison. They are currently considering the report. The point that needs to be made is that the PC report is a report to government. They will respond as they have said they would. I fully expect there will be more clarity on this over coming weeks.

I want to make the point that we have a guarantee on this side and we have clarity. On that side, they have nothing. I wonder whether the shadow treasurer has spoken to Chris Bowen. How

did that go? I imagine it went a bit like this: 'Chris, it's Scott here.' 'Who?' 'Scott Bacon.' 'That's right, the failed former finance minister from Tasmania.'

The budget I bring down on Thursday will build Tasmania's future. It will take Tasmania to the next level. What we need to see from the Opposition is a response, an alternative budget, something that explains what they stand for, what they agree with, and what they disagree with. They cannot continue to be the constant vacuum they are.

### **Budget 2018-19 - GST Revenue in 2021-22**

**Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.06 a.m.]

Considering 40 per cent of the state budget is dependent on GST, how much GST revenue will Tasmania receive in 2021-22?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question and the opportunity to provide an answer: wait until Thursday; you will get the Budget then. They will get the budget on Thursday. I can understand their interest in this Budget because it will be a fantastic budget for Tasmania. It will deliver all our commitments; it will build Tasmania's future and it will take Tasmania to the next level.

It appears there will be the absence of a response from the Opposition. They will whinge; they will carp; they will complain. Whingeing is not policy. Complaining is not a platform. They need to stand for something and their opportunity is in their response to the Budget. Surely they can put together an alternative budget, something that explains what they stand for and what policies they will be continuing with. It appears they are preparing to walk away from all their policies at the election. They are starting to retreat.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I am trying to follow the debate. It is very disorderly conduct. The Treasurer will continue without interruption.

---

### **Recognition of Visitors**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I welcome the Community Access Class from the Hobart College.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

---

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker and welcome to the Community Access Class. I am sure they probably know more about finances than the lot on that side.

Coming back to the member's question, wait until Thursday; there will be a fantastic budget brought down. It will be a budget that will deliver our commitments; it will build Tasmania's future and it will take this state to the next level.

### **Budget 2018-19 - Tasmanian Economy**

#### **Mr SHELTON question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.08 a.m.]

Can the Premier please update the House on the majority Hodgman Liberal Government's plan to build your future and the benefits this is having on the Tasmanian economy right across the state?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I very much look forward to the release this week of the 2018-19 Budget, the fifth budget of a majority Liberal government. It continues the strong work that was undertaken during the first term of a majority Liberal government. It is a budget that contains the commitments we took to the March election at which the people elected a majority Liberal government for a second term. It is a budget to take Tasmania to the next level. At its heart will be an ongoing commitment to manage our finances well as it will be to ensure that the positive momentum in our economy, which is now very strong, one of the strongest in the nation, continues.

The latest national accounts data, released last week, confirmed the strength of our economic performance. State final demand grew by 4 per cent over the last year, including an all time record of \$8.2 billion for the March quarter. The year-on-year growth in state final demand was the second strongest of any state or territory and, importantly, it is occurring primarily in the private sector through increased household consumption and private investment.

This is quite a contrast to what life was like under Labor and the Greens when state final demand went backwards by 1.4 per cent between March 2010 and March 2014. It is a dramatic turnaround and there has also been a dramatic turnaround in the change of sentiment in Tasmanian businesses. They are now much more confident and as a result they are investing more. As the national accounts show, private investment grew by more than 11 per cent over the last year, which is the highest growth rate of investment in the country.

The independent experts, the economic experts, are confirming positive growth in our economy and the very high levels of confidence. Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook Report for March 2018 says Tasmania is surging ahead. The Sensis Business Index Survey ranks Tasmania's small and medium businesses as the most confident, equal strongest in the country, 12 points above the national average. It also reports that regional small businesses are the strongest in terms of confidence of any state or territory, and Hobart is the most confident capital city in the country. At the risk of sounding immodest, the Government is rated by far as the most popular in the nation for the third quarter in a row. The NAB Business Survey found that Tasmania was ranked the highest of all states for business confidence. The ComSec State of the State Report confirms strong business investment and population growth that is the highest in seven years. The recent ANZ Stateometer report confirmed that Tasmania's economy is growing above trend rates. Those are the views of the independent experts.

If there was a stateometer for whingeing, carping, negativity and talking our state down we know who would be top of that list. It would be the Labor-Greens coalition. That is all they do. They talk our state down and they do not welcome the strong growth in our economy or the strong financial management, which is why we are better able to invest into essential services, as we will with this budget.

It is also great to note that the strength of our economy is showing right across the state, including, for example, in the north-west and on the west coast. The unemployment rate for the north-west coast is now at 6.2 per cent. It hit 9 per cent under Labor and the Greens. There is significant economic activity underway, supported by the Government: construction of Australia's biggest plantation hardwood mill, an investment of \$190 million, creating 221 direct long-term jobs; the development of a new iron ore mine, which has been approved, will significantly boost employment; our partnership with the Commonwealth Government and strongly supported by Liberal candidate for Braddon, Brett Whiteley; the state building and nation-leading Battery of the Nation project has the support of both state and Commonwealth governments and the capacity to attract investment of over \$5 billion and create 3000 jobs in regional Tasmania over the next 10 years or so; and the investment at Cradle Mountain is another example of the state and Commonwealth governments working together to invest in important infrastructure to keep our state's economy strong.

These are all indicators not only of a region, but also of a state that has a strong economy and very high levels of confidence. Our plan is to keep it this way. A majority Liberal Government and the fifth budget that we will release this week goes exactly to doing just that.

### **Lake Malbena - Reserve Activity Assessment**

#### **Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for PARKS, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.14 a.m.]

To date under your Government's rolling expressions of interest process for development in protected areas, a process without end, 30 development proposals, including 20 luxury huts, lodges and permanent standing camps, as well as frequent helicopter flights are set for approval in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. All of these were prohibited under the previous World Heritage Management Plan.

While Tasmanians are kept in the dark about this unprecedented assault on wilderness values, we have here a leaked copy of the Reserve Activity Assessment for the Lake Malbena proposal. As you know RAAs are not made public. This document was never meant to see the light of day. It confirms the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan was changed to facilitate this development, that it involves three permanent luxury huts on Halls Island, and regular helicopter flights.

Over the past fortnight angry anglers have packed public meetings across the state about your EOI process. What do you have to say to furious anglers who attended these meetings, who rightly believe they have been shut out and their enjoyment of Tasmania's wilderness is under threat from a corrupted process?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Yes, it is a policy platform that is very different from that of the former Labor-Greens government. We are ensuring that not only are our

precious wilderness areas well-protected, including with additional resources as you will see in this week's budget, but also utilised to ensure that Tasmania's visitor economy and the businesses within it and the people who work for them are able to access opportunities in our wilderness areas, including in the World Heritage area and national parks, through an expressions of interest process that was designed to open our state for sensible and sustainable ecotourism business to make Tasmania an ecotourism capital of the world and to allow other people, including our visitors -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I have asked the Premier what he has to say to anglers who believe this process has been corrupted.

**Mr Barnett** - You are repeating the question.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - The Speaker does not need your assistance, Mr Barnett.

**Madam SPEAKER** - As you would be aware, I am not privileged to what is in the Premier's mind so I am yet to hear his argument.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was making the point that we did embark on what was a bold and innovative policy to allow access to our natural areas, which is one of the reasons why we live here but also why so many people want to visit them and see for themselves our world class natural and cultural heritage. It is something that has been done sensitively to support appropriate developments in those areas.

With respect to the issue raised by the member for Denison, our proposal has been undertaken in a way that provides an ability for proponents to have their proposals assessed, very sensitive to the importance of our wilderness areas and their natural values, but also to ensure that they are able to do so preserving their commercial rights. This is a foreign concept to all Greens and probably most Labor members, but in the private sector and in commercial operations it is important that proponents be able to have their matters considered through an EOI process that is assessed by the office of the Coordinator-General. It must go through a strict process and if recommended to progress, then it must be subject to the normal approval processes of government.

In relation to this particular proposal which is under attack by the Greens, and perhaps also Labor, this is one that has been put before the national regulators through an EPBC assessment as well. It is ensuring that we have national and state approvals processes adhered to and responded to by the proponents to address and ensure it meets a very high standard. Subject to obtaining all the necessary state and Commonwealth approvals, the proposal is allowed for under the 2016 Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan and this plan was approved by the Australian Government and also accepted by the World Heritage Committee. The proposal involves using an existing heritage hut and standing camps to provide guest accommodation within Lake Malbena. Helicopters are proposed to transport guests to and from the lake edge adjacent to the island and the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service has been working closely with the proponent to mitigate any impacts on the island and surrounding environment.

A reserve activity assessment has been completed for the project. I am sure all those businesses that have an interest in having their proposals progressed in such a fashion will note with interest the reckless display of the Greens leader who would now like to up-end all that for pure political purposes. We take seriously the commercial integrity not only of the proponents, but also of this process. More importantly, or as important, we so do to ensure all proposals are properly assessed by state and commonwealth laws to the highest level -

**Ms O'Connor** - They're not.

**Mr HODGMAN** - so that we can see more ability for people to not only operate sensible and sensitive developments in these areas but for more people to visit them. The elitist Greens would love to lock it up and only make it available for some people to access, but there are more people wanting to come to our state to see what our wilderness areas have to offer.

Tasmania does this better than anywhere else. We are talking about nation-leading proponents who are coming forward with ideas, adopting what was an innovative policy approach by this Government, which is in striking contrast to what life was like under Labor and the Greens when our state's economy had stalled.

### **Budget 2018-19 - GST Revenue in 2021-22**

**Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.21 a.m.]

Considering you have not been briefed by Scott Morrison on any new method of GST distribution, you have not seen the Productivity Commission Review and Tasmania stands to lose \$367 million in three years' time - and considering you failed to answer this question only moments ago - as 40 per cent of the State Budget is dependent on GST, how much GST revenue will Tasmania receive in 2021-22?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the shadow finance minister is talking about forecasts, but he did not pick the recession he took us into.

In answer to the question: wait until Thursday. All will be revealed on Thursday, as it is in the normal course of things.

Whilst I am on my feet, it gives me an opportunity to talk about the response we might see from the Opposition in terms of the Budget. Are they going to bring down an alternative budget? It is a perfectly reasonable question that Tasmanians want answered - whether the Opposition is going to provide an alternative budget, or once again set the world record, the gold medal standard, for whingeing. That is what Tasmanians want to know. Are you going to bring down an alternative budget that will explain what you stand for, how you will pay for it, and importantly, what you agree with or disagree with in terms of our Budget? That is the challenge.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I only have two ears and they are being strained. Please resume, minister.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The point I was making was that Tasmanians want to know what that side stands for. Western Australia is regularly begging because it has not been able to manage its own budget. We have. We have made that point over and over again. We are in a very strong financial position. I come back to the question that Tasmanians want to know: will the Opposition be bringing down an alternative budget? Will they explain to Tasmanians what

policies they took to the election, do they still stand and, importantly, how will they pay for them? They also need to explain -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. This is very unruly.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I can understand them trying to shut me down. We will bring down our Budget on Thursday. Our Budget will deliver on our commitments. It will build Tasmania's future and, importantly, it will take Tasmania to the next level.

I want to know how they are going to respond to it. Are they simply going to do as they have done in the past - whinge and complain? I have made the point this morning that whingeing is not a policy. Complaining is not a platform. They need to do better than that and Tasmanians expect it.

### **Budget 2018-19 - Spending in Non-core Areas**

**Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.25 a.m.]

From 2010 to 2014, average annual budget expenditure growth was 2.7 per cent. From 2014 to 2018, average actual expenditure growth will be closer to 4.5 per cent. Do you accept that you have lost control of spending in non-core areas, leading to a failure to deliver increased services despite a huge surge in revenue?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. On this side of the House, we deliver surpluses. On that side of the House, they deliver deficits. We will maintain our spending within the envelope of the revenue we receive; that is what we have done. Importantly, we have been able to make record investments into health, education, protecting the most vulnerable, and infrastructure.

On that side of the House, they deliver deficits; that is what they have done. I have with me the projected budget surplus or deficits for 2013-14, 2012-13 and 2011-12. I do not go back to 2010; I wish I had brought that with me as well. What they were forecasting in 2011-12 was a net operating deficit of \$113 million. They were not able to maintain their spending within their revenue envelope. In 2012-13, they were forecasting a \$283 million deficit and in 2013-14, to top it off, a \$266 million deficit again.

This side of the House delivers surpluses. We deliver confidence and the Budget on Thursday once again will demonstrate not only can we meet all our commitments and invest in the infrastructure for the twenty-first century, but it will take Tasmania to the next level and demonstrate that this state is in good financial shape.

## **Budget 2018-19 - Moody's Credit Rating**

### **Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

On the back of your 2016-17 budget, Moody's noted that your Government would have:

... difficulty in achieving the very low rises in spending, 0.6 per cent on average annually over the four years through financial year 2019-20, which relies on virtually no growth in health care costs over four years and represents a risk to budget outcomes. [TBC]

Given total government expenditure increased by 5.6 per cent in 2016-17 and will be up to 4.5 per cent in 2017-18, will you now accept that you cannot and have not met your expenditure targets and that has had an unbearable negative impact on Tasmania's credit rating? Can you also today give a guarantee Moody's will restore Tasmania's AA1 credit rating this year?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, it is time for a budget 101 lesson. On this side of the House we work hard to grow the economy and increase our revenues. Then when we spend those revenues we make sure we do not spend too much, like they did on that side to take us back into deficit. That increased spending demonstrates that we have been putting increased record expenditure into health, education, and police and, importantly, into infrastructure, which helps us to grow the economy even more and generate more revenues.

When we talk about credit ratings, what happened to you in 2012? It took you only weeks when you first became finance minister; you had the credit rating downgraded.

**Mr BACON** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. What the Treasurer says is true but then, in 2016, he took it to the next level.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Every now and then you hold up a spear and you throw yourselves on to it.

Our state is in very good financial shape. Our state is in a position that on that side of the House they could only have dreamed about.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to relevance, standing order 45. The Treasurer was asked 'Can you guarantee that Moodys will return the state to a AA1 credit rating this year?'

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, the state's finances are in a very strong financial position. We are putting our best foot forward and we will continue to do so. Thursday's Budget will demonstrate that we have met all our commitments but we will build the infrastructure for the future and, importantly, take Tasmania to the next level.



## **Budget 2018-19 - Budget Management Strategies**

### **Mr BROOKS question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.31 a.m.]

Can the Treasurer update the House on the importance of fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets? Is the Treasurer aware of any alternative budget management strategies?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his interest in this very important matter.

On this side of the House we understand the importance of financial responsibility. On that side of the House, I think they are still a little fuzzy - still trying to work it out. A government, such as theirs, that cannot live within its means, sustainably fund frontline services and infrastructure, will reap what it sows as recent history showed us in the 2010 to 2014 period. When we were first elected the results of the experiments of Labor and the Greens were plain for all to see. Four years of dysfunction, and spending out of control. Tasmanians were left with a fiscal train wreck with projected cumulative deficits of over \$1.1 billion over the forward estimates. The net debt forecast was to rise to more than \$400 million. Business confidence was in tatters. It is no wonder they sit there with their heads down. I would be ashamed of this as well. Two out of every three businesses felt that Labor and the Greens were working against them. We saw unemployment rise - we hit 8 per cent at its peak; 10 000 jobs were lost through that period and, as a result, Tasmanians were leaving the state in droves.

In the last four years, we have acted decisively and put Tasmania's finances back onto a sustainable footing. We took responsible but necessary decisions to get the budget back on track. Last time, Treasury said that the settings that we had inherited were unsustainable. Those opposite still have not learnt their lesson. It appears that they will not be bringing down an alternative budget. They will not be demonstrating fiscal responsibility on that side of the House. They will not be explaining to Tasmanians what they stand for, how they will fund it and, importantly, what they agree and disagree with in the Budget. They are lazy and incompetent when it comes to the state's finances.

An alternative budget would set out how they would have paid for their election promise. Importantly, it would explain what they stand for going forward. Without an alternative budget that explains what you stand for, what policies you are keeping and what you agree or disagree with, you stand for nothing. I have already made the point that whingeing is not a policy; complaining is not platform. You are starting to get the message.

What we will see through this period is gold medal standard whingeing and complaining from that side of the House. That should be no surprise. The Tasmanian people would expect more but I do not think they are going to get it. They have a leader keen for them to forget what they took to the election - the third worst in their history. It is no wonder they want to avoid scrutiny. Without an alternative budget to show how they would pay for their promises, what they stand for, they will have no credibility when it comes to budget management.

Ms White, the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party, went to the election with no long-term plan and a confused narrative, pretending to be an agenda. It is no surprise that Tasmanians comprehensively rejected what Labor took. The professional whingers opposite will demonstrate

that all they can do is whinge. The fact is, without an alternative budget they have nothing. They have no credibility, they have no plans and they have no solutions.

### **Lake Malbena - Anglers Alliance Tasmania's Concerns**

#### **Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for PARKS, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.36 a.m.]

In your previous answer you effectively dismissed the concerns of the Anglers Alliance Tasmania in relation to your Government's push to degrade wilderness values in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, the only world heritage property with the word 'wilderness' in its name. They were appalled to hear at recent statewide meetings that your Government's Coordinator-General had recommended approval of the Lake Malbena project in September 2015, two and half years ago, despite it being prohibited under the 1999 management plan. The Coordinator-General's advice to the then minister, Matthew Groom, was to give the then prohibited project the tick while a new development plan was finalised, as it was in 2016 after your Government's failed attempts to remove the wilderness zoning to facilitate commercial development.

Do you understand why anglers believe you are overseeing a corrupted process that prioritises exploitation over protection?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question which points to the fact that this process is a long, complicated and robust assessment for a proposal of this type. Rightly so because it does concern a precious part of our state.

As the member said, and I indicated initially, the proposal that is the subject of the question has been publicly advertised on the Office of the Coordinator-General's website since 2015. It has been in the planning and assessment phase for a number of years. It has to gain all the necessary state and Commonwealth approvals. The proposal is allowed for under the 2016 Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area management plan. The plan was approved by the Australian Government. It has been accepted by the World Heritage Committee. The proponent is also having this matter assessed through the EPBC process. It is providing additional information in relation to that when, I am advised, it may not be necessary, including a second period of allowing for public comment. The Parks and Wildlife Service is awaiting advice from the Australian Government on any further assessment or conditions that may need to be considered before the RAA can be finalised.

That is a snapshot and some of the elements of the process that is being undertaken by the proponents. We have ensured the TWWHA plan is contemporary and that it protects and appropriately conserves the outstanding universal value of the area while providing opportunities for tourism developments. The zone boundaries within the TWWHA plan were developed following extensive consultation and public input to say they have been approved. Wilderness values are managed primarily through the wilderness zone, which applies to the vast majority of the TWWHA, equating to around 82 per cent, and within this zone built infrastructure and mechanised access is prohibited.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is not.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I want to ask rhetorically the member who asked the question, because she has asked me whether I have an interest in the concerns of anglers and others who attended the public meeting. I hope that if they are apprised of all the facts they would be comforted by the level of scrutiny and assessment that is being required.

**Ms O'Connor** - The anglers are not.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I note the Labor member for Braddon nodding in agreement with the Greens here, clearly not supporting the proponent, not supporting sensitive development in our World Heritage and wilderness areas.

If the member who asked the question is so concerned about people flying in and out of this area by helicopter and if she is so worried about those who have expressed concerns at this public forum, what does she say to the fact that earlier this month Bob Brown, no less, sought approval for a helicopter ride across the Tarkine to showcase the coast to an international visitor? It is all right for Bob Brown to take an international mate and fly across the Tarkine and then complain about everyone else who might like to do so. I ask the member who raised this matter, what does Bob Brown say, or what do you say about Bob Brown degrading the environmental values? Can you please explain? This is classic Greens hypocrisy.

**Ms O'Connor** - I am very happy to explain if the Premier would like to give me an opportunity. That was a single flight by Mr Brown and he sought approval from Parks -

**Mr HODGMAN** - Just one flight.

**Ms O'Connor** - and you are opening this area up to helicopter flights aplenty, every day.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Member for Denison, it is not appropriate for you to be giving information at the moment. Please resume your seat.

**Mr HODGMAN** - That is the hypocrisy of them. They ask me a question but not ask that same question of the Greens' spiritual leader, Bob Brown. It is fine for him to fly across the Tarkine but not allowed for anyone else. It is classic Greens hypocrisy.

**Ms O'Connor** - What a load of crap!

**Madam SPEAKER** - I ask the member for Denison to please use more temperate language.

---

### **Recognition of Visitors**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I introduce the legal studies students from Elizabeth College. Welcome to parliament.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

---

**Madam SPEAKER** - Premier, you have about half a minute left.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, but I do not need any more time to point to the gross hypocrisy of the Greens. It is not okay for them to attack anyone else who would like to progress a sensible, sustainable development that allows access to these areas that Bob Brown has wanted to access in a helicopter with an international mate. It is classic Greens hypocrisy. It is one rule for them and one rule for everyone else.

The rules that are being applied to this particular proposal are extremely robust. I know the Greens will do everything to undermine them, but we will support sensible and sustainable development in our Wilderness World Heritage Area and our national parks. It will support the growth in Tasmania's visitor economy, keep businesses active, employ more Tasmanians and take our state to the next level.

### **Child Protection - Increasing Demand**

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for HUMAN SERVICES, Mr JAENSCH**

[10.44 a.m.]

Unfortunately we continue to see increasing demand on child protection systems across Australia. Can the minister please advise the House on how Tasmania is managing this increasing demand?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I know he agrees with me that nothing is more important than the safety and wellbeing of our most vulnerable children. When we came to government we set about immediately fixing Tasmania's broken child protection system to better protect our most vulnerable children. This Government recognised immediately it was time to take a different approach to child safety; that was imperative. In order to better protect children we must better support families.

That is why we developed a whole-of-government comprehensive redesign of the child safety system called Strong Families - Safe Kids. A key component of Strong Families - Safe Kids is to better support families before they get into crisis. By giving earlier support, children are less likely to be removed from their families and relationship breakdowns can be prevented. This Government is committed to this redesign and our investment of \$51.2 million over our first term in government was to close the gap and better support families and children at risk. This reform recognises the need to get the right help to children, young people and their families at the earliest opportunity, to deliver intense support to families to avoid the need to remove children or young people from their home and family, to provide more support for child safety officers so we get the best outcomes for children and their families, and to collaborate with all parts of the service system to deliver an integrated system that can respond innovatively and effectively to support families, communities and child safety professionals. We also invested funding to include recruitment of over 40 more staff to work in or directly support the front line.

Child protection is one of the most complex and challenging areas of government service delivery, with all jurisdictions across Australia facing similar challenges. Our child protection workers rarely get thanks for the work they do if they take on the challenge of working with some of the most vulnerable members of our community. There are good, passionate, dedicated people

working across our child protection system. I thank them for their work, despite having been let down by poor systems in the past.

That is why we have announced an additional \$24 million over the next four years to employ additional child safety officers and other frontline staff to support them. It will also be used to continue to support the implementation phase of our child protection redesign and support vulnerable children with very complex needs in out-of-home care. More child safety officers and support for the front line will increase our ability to ensure that vulnerable children and families get the response they need when they need it. I am advised that it is expected that this funding will provide for up to 25 new FTE positions.

The department is keen to work with frontline staff to ensure that we prioritise these resources to the areas of greatest need. I am advised that there is a mix of short- and long-term resources required and this will require some flexibility to the make-up of those resources.

We have listened to our dedicated staff, we have listened to our front line, and we are providing more funding to meet the challenges they face on our behalf, looking after our kids. They tell us that we need to be focused on more prevention and early intervention and that we should be more collaborative and focused on what is best for the child.

The Strong Families - Safe Kids redesign is already seeing system improvements and we are in a strong position to seek better outcomes for families. By giving earlier support, children are less likely to be removed from their families and relationship breakdowns can be prevented. This investment is aimed at supporting frontline child safety officers, increasing support to families and intervening earlier for families in need. For young people, this breakdown often means absences from school, an increased likelihood of drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness and mental health problems.

This new funding I have announced today will be in addition to our election commitments of \$16.7 million into child safety and youth justice through our generational change for children and families policy, while \$9.5 million of this is for additional intensive family and parenting support services, including specific support for youth at risk.

Through the redesign, we expect to see significant and positive changes in the way we work with vulnerable children and families going forward. There is no more important task for us as a community than protecting our children. This is why the Hodgman Government is getting on with the job of redesigning our child safety system. On Thursday, in our Budget, you will see \$40 million of new money for child safety services across Tasmania. What will be in the Opposition's budget?

### **Budget 2018-19 - Economic Reforms**

**Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.49 a.m.]

Can you name one single economic reform you have delivered over the past four years?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I was talking about gold medal performances earlier today and I am going to check after question time but I believe this is the fourth question Mr Bacon has asked me this

morning. It might set a record because even if you compare it to the last two years of the last term, I think he has done more.

We have improved our competitiveness by reducing taxes, we have employed more apprentices, and we have employed more trainees. The major economic reform that we have worked hard on, that we have delivered, is to get our budget back in the black. They could not do it in the decade, says the Premier.

I am pleased to have the opportunity, once again, to talk about just how good a budget it is going to be on Thursday. What a positive pathway forward we are going to lay out for this state because it contrasts -

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing order 45 goes to relevance. We are waiting to hear of one initiative this Treasurer introduced that delivered any economic shift in the state.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - They obviously do not understand that tax reform is part of an economic reform package. Brick by brick, we have rebuilt the state's finances. We have taken this state from the depths of despair when it comes to confidence to being the most confident state in the country. We have businesses that are prepared to invest, we have businesses that are prepared to employ, which is in stark -

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing order 45 on relevance. Maybe this Treasurer does not understand it but economic reform is different from managing the budget. Economic reform is the question and economic reform -

**Madam SPEAKER** - I believe the Treasurer is getting to that point.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I have dealt with that point. The single best economic reform we have delivered is to repair the budget mess that side left us. Their performance for the period 2010 to 2014 will hang like a burning tyre around their neck, when Tasmanians were leaving the state in droves, when two out of three businesses felt that their policies were working against them. We have turned the state around. We have delivered confidence. We have delivered surpluses and the budget this week will build on that. It will deliver all our commitments, it will build the infrastructure of the 21st century, and it will take this state to the next level.

### **Budget 2018-19 - Net Operating Deficit**

**Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.54 a.m.]

The January revised estimates report showed an underlying net operating deficit of \$136 million for 2017-18. Since that time you have lost all control of spending through the election campaign. Will you be honest with the Tasmanian people today and tell us just how big the underlying deficit will be for this financial year?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. In answer to the question -

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. We have been very tolerant in listening to many interjections. We have been very patient, particularly with the targeted interjections from members opposite which are like a wall of words. The Treasurer has not even commenced his answer. I draw that to your attention and invite the Opposition to consider that people watching on the web cast will not be able to hear it.

**Madam SPEAKER** - The minister has made a good point of order. It has been very noisy to the side of me here. I request that we have more respect for the people giving the answers.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, thank you. Answering the question, it will be a lot bigger than the net underlying operating balances they were delivering.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I am happy to jump up and down all morning. I am asking for courtesy, please.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - We have improved the bottom line. We have returned the budget to an operating surplus. I noted yesterday that the shadow treasurer was focusing on net underlying operating balances. I had a look at what they were delivering and it is worthwhile informing the House of what they were forecasting in the 2011-12 budget.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The question is clear. Will the Treasurer be honest with the Tasmanian people today and tell us how big the underlying deficit will be this year? We do not want a history lesson. How big is the deficit?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Treasurer, be mindful of the question.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It will be a lot better than their net underlying operating balances. In the 2011-12 budget, they were forecasting an underlying net operating balance of nearly \$270 million. In 2012, they forecast a \$392 million, almost \$400 million, net underlying operating balance. In 2013-14, they forecast \$354 million in deficit as a net underlying operating balance. I assure the House that our net underlying operating balance will be a lot better than what they delivered.

Are they going to release an alternative budget? Are they going to explain to Tasmanians what they stand for, how they would pay for their policies and importantly, what their policies are? That is the opportunity the shadow treasurer has on Tuesday of next week. That is the opportunity the leader of the opposition has next Tuesday. They can wait until September and have the debate, but what Tasmanians want to know is what they stand for now. We know the showdown in September is coming.

On Thursday, we will deliver a budget that demonstrates that the state's finances are in great shape.

## **Legislative Program - Justice and Corrections**

### **Mr BROOKS question to ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Ms ARCHER**

[10.59 a.m.]

Can the Attorney-General please update the House on new legislation to be introduced to the parliament?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the Hodgman Liberal Government took a wide range of policies to the election that focused on keeping Tasmanians safe, protecting vulnerable people and victims of crime, and ensuring that our laws reflect the community's expectations. Today I am pleased to table legislation that helps deliver on these commitments.

The Corrections (Prisoner Remission) Amendment Bill will deliver our recommitment to abolishing the outdated practice of granting prisoner remission. It would be a surprise to many Tasmanians that under the Corrections Act 1997, a prisoner can currently be granted remission of up to three months off their prison sentence. Remission of prison sentences has remained a longstanding practice in Tasmania, despite it being phased out over the last 20 years in all other Australian states and territories.

It has been of concern to this Government that remission allows prisoners to be released up to three months before the release date handed down by the court. This practice is not in line with community expectations. Nor does it align with the well-known important principle of truth in sentencing.

In the previous term we tabled this bill in parliament and the bill passed this House but was not considered by the Legislative Council prior to the election. In the previous term, the Opposition was opposed to the removal of remission. In doing so, they demonstrated their willingness to oppose all our law and order policies at all costs. We know Labor is reconsidering major policies taken to the election. We know that from the news, with their position on gaming, apparently, which was a key platform of their 2018 election campaign. If a core policy position like this is prepared to be up for grabs, we ask they reconsider their deeply flawed positions relating to law and order, including their opposition to mandatory minimum sentences for serious sexual assaults on children.

If Labor was listening after their third worst electoral defeat in history, they would understand the community wants members of parliament to stand up for the most vulnerable in our community and our victims of crime. The community wants to know that victims rights will be prioritised, and when serious criminals are sentenced by the courts to a term of imprisonment they will be there for the term handed by the court.

Tasmania and the Labor Party is more than 20 years behind other states in recognising that the importance of truth in sentencing, which means letting a prisoner out early without any supervision, is not right. It is important to note the department is assessing other methods of incentives for good behaviour in prison that are more appropriate to early release.

When it comes to our criminal justice system, we know there will always be a need for incarcerating serious offenders, which is why we are taking a more strategic approach to actively



managing the needs of the Tasmania Prison Service. Nationally, prison populations are increasing and Tasmania is not immune from this trend. Under our Government there has been a considerable amount of investment in both staff and infrastructure. We have invested significantly in the Tasmania Prison Service since coming to Government with more staff, more beds and more funding than ever before. We have recruited correctional staff at an exponential rate; that is, 78 new correctional officers which includes 18 officers who graduated in December last year and a further 23 on 27 April this year. We have invested substantially in prison infrastructure with 81 new beds anticipated to come online this year. We have also committed to a new \$70 million remand facility in the south and a new prison in the north. We will deliver on these commitments.

I urge Labor and the Greens to listen to the community; to change their position and support the abolition of remission just as other jurisdictions have in Australia.

**Time expired.**

## **PETITION**

### **Public Land - Rosny and Bellerive**

**Dr Woodruff** presented a petition signed by approximately 175 citizens of Tasmania, praying that the next Government of Tasmania commit to prohibiting further privatisation of public land in Clarence, including Rosny Hill, Kangaroo Bay and Kangaroo Bluff, and ensure this public land is used to benefit the community through investing in low impact public facilities that promote the environment, history and amenity of locals.

Petition received.

## **MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

### **Tasmanian Government Services and GST**

[11.10 a.m.]

**Mr BACON** (Denison) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: Tasmanian government services and GST.

There can be no bigger issue in terms of Tasmanian government services than the GST. It provides 40 per cent of state government revenue and there is an unprecedented threat to GST at the moment that the Premier and the Treasurer refuse to take seriously. Around a month ago, federal Treasurer Scott Morrison said that he would be briefing state treasurers. We know from comments made by the Treasurer on Sunday that he has not sought that briefing, or it has not been provided, and he is not sure what it is in the Productivity Commission's report. It would be good in his contribution on this debate if the Treasurer could detail exactly what conversations he has had with the federal Treasurer around this issue and whether or not he has had discussions with his state counterparts since the Productivity Commission report was handed down to the federal Government.

This is a treasurer who likes to, if you are being generous, you would call it, mislead the Tasmanian public. He is almost a robot that has been programmed to say, 'Let me be clear', and to

do 100 push-ups and sit-ups every morning. The one thing he has not been programmed to do is tell the truth. That is something we see with this Treasurer time and time again. We now know that the Budget is going to have an underlying net deficit this Thursday. He said it was going to be bigger than Labor's underlying deficit, which I thought was an interesting admission, but we will have to wait until Thursday to see the detail around exactly how big this deficit is going to be. That is one of the ways he has sought to mislead the Tasmanian people.

He also talks about his failure when it comes to economic reform. We have not seen a single piece of economic reform from this Treasurer. If you are being generous about his performance when it comes to economic reform, you would say that his attempt to take over TasWater was an economic reform, but of course this is a bully who picked a fight in the schoolyard and then had to back down in one of the most humiliating backdowns in Tasmanian political history.

GST is such an important issue when we talk about the sustainability of state government services such as health and education. The minister responsible for child protection today was talking about a redesign of the child protection system. If people are going to have faith in the sustainability of Tasmanian government services, there is going to have to be a credible budget put forward on Thursday with projections that can be believed.

The Treasurer was asked twice this morning exactly how much GST we will receive in 2021-22. He refused to answer that question. Saul Eslake has come out and said that the conservative thing to do would be to take Mr Turnbull at face value and put the same dollar amount into the projections. Economist Saul Eslake is one of those people who has said there should be some supplementary projections done around the dollar term of the GST. If you look at the year 2021-22, the Treasurer has another opportunity to get up and say exactly how much GST we will receive in that year. On the projections done by Mr Eslake, it looks like a \$367 million cut in GST in 2021-22. This would cripple the Tasmanian public service and put massive pressure on a state budget, which is still nowhere near recording an underlying surplus despite what the Treasurer has sought to do in misleading the Tasmanian people. If the Government is serious about standing up for Tasmania, it would want to quantify exactly what kind of risk the budget is at from this potential cut.

We know that representatives from Western Australia have been posting on social media about their trips to Canberra to fight for more GST for Western Australia. We do not hear anything from this Government which details exactly what they have been doing. It is because it is very similar to their record of economic reform - it is not there. They have not delivered economic reform and they have not stood up for Tasmania where it counts - in Canberra. They have not been in Canberra talking to the federal Treasurer about this threat to our GST revenue. We want to know in the Budget on Thursday exactly how big a cut this could be and what it would do to our schools, our hospitals and other emergency services. We are talking about a four-year cumulative loss in GST on that dollar-for-dollar basis of \$688 million and in that financial year alone, 2021-22, a cut of \$367 million.

We have seen a huge election spend by the Government, much of that back-ended beyond the forward Estimates so they did not have to show it up before the election, but we know that as this parliament rolls on over four years, those years will come back into the forward Estimates. We have huge increases in spending. Peter Gutwein lost control of the election campaign when it comes to the way the Liberal Party conducted themselves. We are talking about billions of dollars of additional spending promised on a budget that does not still have an underlying surplus. There is no fat in the budget and we have seen them spend like drunken sailors.

We know that federal Treasurer Scott Morrison is offering briefings to the states but this Treasurer has not had a briefing. We do not know if he has requested one. The Leader of the Opposition wrote to the federal Treasurer requesting a briefing for the Labor Party. We do not know if the Treasurer has requested a briefing and been refused. He has said he is in constant contact with the federal Treasurer but we do not know exactly what those conversations entailed and the level of detail the Treasurer knows.

In the federal Budget released earlier this year, the Australian Treasury did not attempt to model GST distribution after next year. That is the amount of uncertainty the federal Treasurer sees in terms of the future of GST. We have heard no word. It is time for the Treasurer to answer exactly about the threat to our GST.

**Time expired.**

[11.16 a.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the member for raising this matter. It is an important matter to discuss and I am glad we had the opportunity in question time to make it perfectly clear to Tasmanians that the Prime Minister has provided a guarantee that Tasmania will not lose one cent of its GST.

I want to explain a couple of things in the federal budget papers. It is obvious that side of the House is confused. They have not bothered to read previous federal budget papers. Quite clearly, all that has happened in the past in the federal budget papers is that they have taken a relativity granted for one year and cast that forward across the forward Estimates. That is what they have done and it was meaningless to the point that they, like us, do our own GST numbers.

Those opposite stopped using the GST forecast in the federal budget and had Treasury go through the process of doing their own analysis, which is exactly what we do. The fact is that the numbers in previous federal budgets could not be relied upon because they simply forecast a revenue for the current year across the forward Estimates.

They know that on that side of the House but they have done a good job to con the media. Nobody uses them because the relativities change every year. Those opposite understand that in terms of the relativities there is a process that the Commonwealth Grants Commission goes through every year, then the treasurer of the day makes a decision as to whether or not he accepts those relativities. That is what occurs every single year and that is what will occur in future years as well.

On this side of the House we have the benefit of a guarantee from the Prime Minister. On that side of the House, what has Mr Shorten guaranteed? Nothing. He has said he will not provide a guarantee. That is the simple fact of the matter. This side of the House has a guarantee; that side of the House has nothing and they are clutching at straws. Do you have a guarantee from Mr Shorten?

**Mr BACON** - Point of order. Can you explain the Prime Minister's guarantee? Is the guarantee to the Liberal Party or the Tasmanian Government?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order, Mr Bacon. The Treasurer has the call.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - What would Mr Shorten do if he were Prime Minister? Have you asked him that question? What will he do with GST if he is the Prime Minister? Again, they will not answer it because they do not have any certainty from their side of politics, whereas we do.

Everybody understands that in respect of the GST it is constantly under review. It is reviewed every year by the CGC as they work through our relativities. There are five-yearly reviews by the Commonwealth Grants Commission with the next one due in 2020. We have certainty and we have surety in respect of the numbers that we have included in the budget. I will make the point again that the budget on Thursday will be a very good budget for Tasmania.

In terms of the net underlying operating balance, we will have a better bottom line than you. We will have a better bottom line than they did. Wait until Thursday and the budget that we bring down will be one that will stand this state in good stead not just for the coming year but for the future. It will build the infrastructure of the 21st century. It will take Tasmania to the next level. It will invest record amounts into health, into education, into protecting the most vulnerable. It will deliver a very solid record spend in terms of affordable housing. On Thursday people will get the opportunity to have a look at the budget, to form their judgments but it is a very good budget for Tasmania.

What they will be waiting for is for the Opposition's response to it. As I made the point this morning, what is the Opposition going to do? Is it going to provide an alternative budget? Will it explain to Tasmanians what the raft of election policies they took to the election stand for? I expect the Greens will probably do an alternative budget. They do every year. I do not agree with them -

**Ms O'Connor** - As kooky as it is, go on say it.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - In fact you have stolen my line. I was going to say as kooky as it is but they at least take the time, they put in the effort and they explain to Tasmanians what they stand for. They do not like football, we know that.

**Ms O'Connor** - We do like football. We just do not believe it should be publicly funded.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - You want to cut AFL football. You have made that point.

**Ms O'Connor** - No, we do not. You are lying again.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - In your last alternative budget, and I will point you to the line, you cut the funding for AFL football.

**Ms O'Connor** - Where is your money for a state team?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Today week, the Opposition will have an opportunity to explain to Tasmanians what they stand for, how they would fund their promises. Importantly it provides them with an opportunity to point out what they agree with and what they disagree with. In the absence of that all that we will see is more complaining, more whingeing and that is neither a policy nor a platform.

**Time expired.**

[11.23 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Denison - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it has been a hard morning in here listening to the Treasurer abuse standing order 151, tedious repetition. We have heard the same thing come out of his mouth a number of times this morning.

To clarify a couple of points from the Treasurer's contribution, it is completely untrue to say that we do not like football. It is a stupid and puerile statement. The stupid and puerile statements that have come out of the Treasurer's mouth this morning have been many. What we are saying is that there should not be public funding going to wealthy AFL clubs from interstate. If the Liberals were serious about promoting AFL in Tasmania they would invest funds in establishing a Tasmanian AFL team, not propping up one of the richest teams in the competition, although it may well be the best team in the competition.

The Treasurer also talked about the people of Tasmania knowing what the Liberals will stand for when the budget comes down on Thursday. The people of Tasmania already know what the Liberals stand for. The Liberals stand for big business. The Liberals stand for private profiteering. The Liberals stand for allowing corporations and vested interests to buy an election. That is what the Liberals stand for. Every step that they take is about propping up big business.

Only last week we saw how terrified they are of being cut off the corporate teat through their so-called review of the Electoral Act in Tasmania, which goes off into the never-never, is an internal review process when every Tasmania who observed the last election knows that donations reform is a no-brainer. We need real time disclosure, a ban on developer donations, a ban on donations from foreign companies, which the Liberals have taken. We know what the Liberals stand for. They are the party of big business, they are the party of the pokies barons. No doubt in this budget we will see the \$4.8 million payback money to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association.

It has been very frustrating to sit in here and listen to a debate about Tasmania's finances with a Treasurer who gets up in an incredibly childish and schoolyard manner and starts talking about the size of his bottom line. We do not want to know about the size of the Premier's and Treasurer's bottom line. We do not want to hear back and forth between the shadow treasurer and the Treasurer about who will have the biggest or the smallest bottom line. It is extraordinarily boring and puerile.

When the Treasurer says that this will be a very good budget, through his own prism of looking after big business and the top end of town, no doubt it is going to be a very good budget. This is a Treasurer who does not believe that in the south of the state there is a housing crisis, so how are we to have any faith at all that the amount of money allocated towards housing and increasing the supply of social and affordable housing will be realistic to address the crisis? We have a Treasurer who does not believe there is a housing crisis in the south of the state when there clearly is and a Government that is refusing to deal with the explosion of short stay accommodation. Partly this is because they are conflicted as a number of government ministers are on the short stay market.

One of the reasons we may well get shafted in this whole GST debate is that there is not a Tasmanian in the federal Cabinet. We are not at the table. There is no voice for Tasmania at the Cabinet table. The only voices are coming from those who are concerned about Tasmania's GST future, who are not Liberals. You can imagine the scenario where a Liberal Prime Minister who has chosen explicitly not to put a Tasmanian into his Cabinet will listen to the voices from Western Australia and New South Wales, who are in his Cabinet, and will apply the political imperatives that we know overlay this whole debate.

When the Treasurer gets up in here and says he has had a promise from the federal Treasurer that Tasmania will not be worse off, or was it the Prime Minister? Who would know? It is the same promise basically that Western Australia has been made by a federal government that is more concerned with the votes in Western Australia than they are with Tasmania.

In order not to be having this debate on such a regular basis, in order not to have our financial future placed in the precarious and not-to-be-trusted hands of the federal Liberals - and in fact either of the major parties, I would argue - we need to be looking after those parts of the economy that give us strength. We need to be protecting Tasmania's brand. That is where the growth in our agricultural exports is coming from, it is where the growth in tourism numbers is coming from and it is based on the brand. That has nothing to do with the Liberals in government. If the Liberals had their way the brand that we proudly treasure today as a state would not exist, because the Liberals would have logged and mined in the Wilderness World Heritage Area. They sought to revoke 74 000 hectares from the World Heritage boundary soon after coming into office in 2014. They have embarked on a brand damaging, expressions of interest process for development in protected area, which by acknowledged national and international metrics, will degrade wilderness values in the World Heritage Area therefore damaging our brand and therefore damaging our economy.

### **Time expired.**

[11.30 a.m.]

**Ms WHITE** (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is important to remember why we are having this debate. It was the Liberal Party in January 2017 that referred this issue to the Productivity Commission for review, looking at horizontal fiscal equalisation, which is the method GST is distributed right across the state. It is concerning because it was only in 2012 that we had a review by the Productivity Commission of GST that found overwhelmingly that the current method of distribution is fair, that GST could not have been less partisan. On it was the former Labor premier, John Brumby, former Liberal premier, Nick Greiner and businessman, Bruce Carter. In the main, that review rejected any suggestions that the GST could be distributed in a fairer, simpler or more transparent way.

Therefore, why last year did the Liberal Party again refer to the Productivity Commission a review of the GST? Would it have anything to do with the Western Australian federal Minister for Finance, Mathias Cormann who was very vocal last year? He said that the federal government has long acknowledged Western Australia's slice of the GST revenue is unacceptably low and top-up payments offered to Perth in recent years were a short-term fix because, 'We were always of the view there is a need for medium- to long-term reform', not ruling out putting a floor under the GST and not standing up to protect smaller states like Tasmania from that impact.

It is because of the Liberals that we are even having this discussion right now. The Productivity Commission has been reviewing GST in its distribution. It is the Western Australian Liberals and their counterparts in Western Australia who have been lobbying very hard in Canberra. On 30 May the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce had a photo with the federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, 'We continue to make the case for GST reform in the national interest. Great to meet with Scott Morrison this morning on behalf of Chamber of Commerce members.' He was smiling for the photo.

Where is Tasmania? Where has the Premier been? Why has he not visited Canberra? Why has he not knocked on the door of the federal Treasurer, advocating on behalf of our state? Where

have you been, Treasurer? You say you are in constant contact with the federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison. What exactly are you telling him on behalf of Tasmania and what guarantees are you getting from him? What are you saying to Mathias Cormann, whose senior adviser was the former chief of staff to the Premier? Surely through that avenue you have been able to get a guarantee that Tasmania will not be disproportionately impacted by any changes to the GST. Surely your arguments are that there should be no changes at all to HFE because the 2012 review found it was unnecessary. The system is currently the fairest and the most equitable and transparent it could be. The whole Productivity Commission review that has taken place has been a complete waste of time. Surely you are using your influence there. You are delusional to take the Prime Minister on his word when all he has said is that Tasmania will only get what is in the budget.

The federal budget has forecast for us to receive GST for this financial year, next financial year and not beyond that. When the Prime Minister says that Tasmania will get every cent of GST we are promised, that is good, but we are only promised GST for one more year. Our concern is that every year after that there is a dash and the Treasurer is framing up a budget to be delivered on Thursday with no certainty whatsoever about the GST distribution and how much Tasmania's share of that will be.

My concern when the Treasurer says that he is going to take the Prime Minister on his word that Tasmania will continue to receive GST based on what is in the budget, is that he is freezing Tasmania's share in dollar terms. That is where economists, like Saul Eslake, have raised concerns because that means a cut. In 2021, the cut to the Tasmanian GST could be \$367 million. Over the forward Estimates it could be as great as \$600 million. What you have said, based on what the Prime Minister's guarantee, apparently, to Tasmania is that we will not lose one cent. That means our GST, frozen at dollar terms, will see a real cut to our ability to fund essential services, like health.

Do you think the health system can afford a cut in servicing? It simply cannot. We have demands for people who are waiting days in the emergency department and ambulances ramped at all of our major hospitals. That is why this issue is so important. That is why in May last year I wrote to the Premier and asked him to join with us, across the parliament, to make a joint submission to the Productivity Commission on behalf of Tasmania, advocating strongly our shared view that Tasmania's share of GST should not be changed. He refused that offer.

We made our own submission and our own representations to the Productivity Commission when they came to Tasmania. They took evidence. I have written to Scott Morrison asking him to provide a briefing to us on the GST Productivity Commission Review. I have not had a response. I had hoped that the Treasurer would have been asking to see the Productivity Commission Review because one month ago, the federal Treasurer offered a briefing to treasurers across Australia. He said, and it was reported through the media, that 'over the coming weeks he would be briefing state treasurers on the Productivity Commission Review'. We know that our state Treasurer has not had a briefing. Either he does not care to know what is in the report because it will affect the way he frames up his budget, or he has not bothered.

The other concerning thought could be that the federal Treasurer knows that Tasmania is going to be left worse off; there is no Tasmanian to stand up for us around the Cabinet table. There are no Tasmanian ministers in Canberra, therefore we are not even on his radar. That is what concerns me most of all.

This could be a significant challenge for Tasmania to deal with. If the federal Liberal Government changes the formula, that is the distribution model for GST, economists like Saul Eslake have forecast it could have a significant impact on our revenue, as much as \$367 million, in the 2021-2022 financial year. Currently, we receive 3.7 per cent of the GST shares. That is \$2.5 billion contribution every year. Forty per cent of the state's budget is revenue from GST from Canberra. If there is a significant adjustment to the way GST is distributed, it will impact our ability to fund essential services. This is what makes us nervous. That is why we have been so vocal about it.

It is concerning that the Treasurer is so delusional and is happy to take the Prime Minister's word that things will be okay. I do not believe that is the case and the Treasurer needs to seek an urgent briefing. How can we believe anything that is in his Budget on Thursday if the Treasurer does not know what the forecasts are for 40 per cent of the state's revenue?

**Time expired.**

**Mr SHELTON** (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the GST allocation is very important to Tasmania. I compliment the Treasurer on his fine work over the last four years. We all understand the effort that goes into preparing a budget. Prior to that, in opposition, he produced an alternative budget. There is a lot of work that goes into the budget preparation. He has, with the help of the members of the Hodgman majority Government, brought this state's budget back under control. That has been a fantastic job over the past four years.

The Hodgman Government will always stand up for Tasmania's interest and for a fair share of GST funding. The Prime Minister has guaranteed that Tasmania will not lose a cent of any changes to the way that the tax revenue is carved up. The Prime Minister said that the dollars it receives are not going to go backwards. As the Treasurer said, Tasmania's level of GST is guaranteed.

**Ms White** - There are problems with that guarantee.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr SHELTON** - Senator Cormann stated -

The (federal) Government gives this absolute guarantee to Tasmania: that Tasmania will not be a cent worse off at the end of this process.

The Treasurer has mentioned today that the relativities are looked at every year. That is the process that we go through.

The GST fluctuates. As a state we need to build on our own revenues. The Treasurer and the Hodgman majority Liberal Government has done a fantastic job over the last four years growing own-state revenue. It has allowed our economy to grow and our position to be much stronger nowadays than it was after the Labor-Greens debacle.

It is so important to the economy, not just in the cities but right across the regions. Some of the statistics out there today are fantastic for Tasmania. Over my time, Tasmania was always considered a basket case as far as its economy went; for years it was considered that. After the Treasurer's good work over the last four years we have a Tasmanian economy that is around the top of the statistics right across the nation. Our state final demand grew in the March 2018 quarter. A



measure of spending by households, businesses and governments in Tasmania, it grew by 1.1 per cent compared to the December quarter of 2017, the largest growth in Australia. For Tasmania to have these figures is fantastic. Over the year to March 2018, state final demand grew at 4 per cent, the second strongest rate in Australia and only just behind Victoria at 4.4 per cent. This is 10.5 per cent above the level recorded in March 2014. By way of comparison, during the last four years of the Labor-Greens government state final demand went in reverse; it contracted and went back 1.4 per cent. There has been some wonderful work done by this Treasurer. We are making our budget more resilient. Therefore we can withstand any other shocks, whether there are any changes to the relativities or external shocks from worldwide influences.

Our population is growing at the fastest rate in more than seven years under the majority Hodgman Liberal Government. Because the economy is growing, jobs have been created, confidence is soaring and people are realising that Tasmania is the place to be. Tasmania's population increased by nearly 1200 people in the September quarter 2017 to 522 042, which is 0.7 per cent higher than it was the year before, so some great statistics there.

Tourism is up, there are more interstate visitors coming, and there is greater business confidence out there. Businesses are spending more money. In the north-west coast, for instance, there are new mines being created, new businesses opening up - we are talking about pumped hydro, we are talking about investment in Cradle Mountain. All this means there is a better economy around Tasmania now, and on top of the GST we receive from the federal Government our expenditure can go up.

The Treasurer mentioned this morning that the reason our expenditure is going up is because we are earning more money. State revenues are up and that has allowed this Government to be able to invest crucial dollars into improving -

**Time expired.**

**Matter noted.**

## **METRO TASMANIA AMENDMENT BILL 2018 (No. 14)**

### **Second Reading**

[11.45 a.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Minister for Infrastructure - 2R) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

The Metro Tasmania Amendment Bill 2018 makes a number of important changes to the Metro Tasmania Act 1997 in order to best position Metro Tasmania to respond to a changing public transport environment. It also removes outdated elements of the act in relation to the setting of fares and introduces important governance changes to Metro Tasmania and other state-owned companies that promote greater consistency and transparency.

The Government has confirmed its commitment to the development of a ferry service between Hobart and Bellerive to be operated by Metro Tasmania. As part of that commitment, the Government has identified the need to provide Metro Tasmania with the powers, under its

legislation, to provide a ferry service as part of an integrated passenger transport system. In its current form the Metro Tasmania Act 1997 only permits Metro Tasmania to operate road passenger transport services. This restriction is a reflection of the historic responsibilities of the Metropolitan Transport Trust, from which Metro Tasmania was created. The concentration on specific transport modes, to the exclusion of other potentially more viable options, is anachronistic in an era where the efficiency of how people travel around the city has become of paramount importance.

The community, government, local government and industry have shown ongoing interest in a passenger ferry service on the Derwent River. There is a long history of the operation of ferry services on the Derwent River. Regular ferry services between Hobart and Bellerive ceased in 1963, only to reach new peaks of demand following the *Lake Illawarra* disaster. In the order of 25 000 people a day crossed the Derwent River by ferry in 1975. Following the reopening of the Tasman Bridge, ferry services were continued by a range of operators, and with limited patronage, until relatively recently. In 2013, a report on the options for an integrated sustainable public transport system in southern Tasmania recommended the government trial a passenger service integrated with Metro Tasmania with the provision of appropriate waterside infrastructure.

Hobart, and its economy, is rapidly transforming. New developments in close proximity to the river, including residential, commercial, recreational and tourism ventures, will strongly influence future travel patterns. The time is right to develop and expand on Hobart's public transport options and to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Derwent River.

Mr Deputy Speaker, 83 per cent of all journeys to work in Hobart are taken by car. This is the highest proportion of any Australian capital city. Over 75 per cent of vehicles used to travel to the CBD each morning remain parked in the CBD during the day. Unsurprisingly, demand for road space in Hobart is heavily concentrated in morning and afternoon peak periods. As our population continues to increase, our capacity to efficiently accommodate additional vehicles on our road infrastructure will become more constrained. Ongoing expansion of the road network to meet peak demand will be increasingly expensive and provide diminishing returns in terms of travel time savings for commuters.

The Government has released its Greater Hobart Traffic Solution policy which provided a much-needed blueprint to future-proof our growing city. This policy adopted Infrastructure Tasmania's publication Hobart Transport Vision, which set out a vision for a number of ways to facilitate movement in an ever-expanding city - for our community and for our visitors. Flexible and convenient public transport services have an important role to play in providing alternatives for commuters, as Hobart residents are increasingly affected by demand for road space during peak periods. Measures that provide greater incentives for commuters to leave their cars are an important and effective means of reducing reliance on private cars during peak periods. Increasing the transport choices available to commuters is one such obvious measure.

Hobart's lineal growth along the Derwent Estuary provides a natural transport thoroughfare through the city. The development of a ferry service between Hobart and Bellerive is a first step towards better utilisation of this asset. A successful ferry service will be expected to draw patronage from existing car drivers and passengers, thereby reducing pressure on the Tasman Bridge in peak periods.

This bill removes any restrictions on Metro Tasmania on the type of passenger transport service it can operate, thereby enabling Metro Tasmania to lead development of a ferry service. The Government's intention is for a future ferry service to be operated by Metro Tasmania in order to

best support development of an integrated transport service. The amendments to the Metro Act provided by this bill enable this to occur. However, the bill does not exclude other options, or models, should these be required in the future to meet the Government's expectations with regard to integration of services.

To progress the operation of a Derwent River ferry service, Metro will be undertaking a preliminary demand analysis to inform the specifications and necessary supporting infrastructure to ensure the service aligns with transport needs. Work to develop the ferry service will also be incorporated into the Hobart City Deal, which will provide a coordinated approach to transport, land use planning and urban renewal, involving the three tiers of government

There are two additional amendments that we are seeking to make to enhance the act in this bill. One is to improve efficiency and remove duplication in setting fares, the other enhances governance of Metro Tasmania in line with other state-owned companies.

The Government believes it is important to remove red tape and duplication in regulation. Part 3A of the Metro act is one example of a layer of unnecessary bureaucracy that can be easily removed. The Metro Fares Order specifies the maximum prices that may be charged by Metro in respect of full-fare adult travel on urban bus services. The actual fares, within the maximum, are set by Metro. Metro urban fares for concession passengers, Metro non-urban fares, and fares for all passenger categories travelling on services provided by other operators are administratively set through each of the operator's contracts with the Department of State Growth.

The separate fare setting systems have meant that historical disparities in fare levels between the urban and non-urban areas have continued to be embedded, resulting in a significant 'step-up' in price for people travelling beyond the urban boundary.

The current Public Transport Bus Services Procurement Review (Project 2018) is considering options to resolve the inconsistency in fare levels. A transparent process for preparing the fare schedule, annual indexation provisions and fare review mechanism will be the subject of a future submission to Cabinet before the contracts commence.

The Passenger Transport Services Act 2011 gives the secretary of the Department of State Growth the power to enter into contracts with a passenger transport service operator for the operation of a regular passenger service. The new contracting arrangements will give the secretary the power to set fares under the fare structure, which will replace the powers currently in Part 3A of the Metro Tasmania Act. Removal of Part 3A will not prevent the Government requiring a review of Metro's pricing, which could follow similar parameters to the work that was previously done by the Tasmanian Economic Regulator.

The Government business portfolio comprises of state-owned companies, such as Metro, and government business enterprises. State-owned companies are established under corporations law through their respective portfolio legislation. Government business enterprises are established under the Government Business Enterprises Act 1995 through their respective portfolio act.

Government businesses provide substantial returns to the state and provide essential services to the Tasmanian community. Given their significance to the state, a sound commercial and accountability framework must exist for all government businesses. Although government businesses are established under two different governance frameworks, there is common objective that the governance and accountability framework is clear and appropriate.

The use of a statement of expectations has been an important part of the governance framework for state-owned companies for at least 10 years. Recognition of its importance was legislated in 2009 for the two state-owned companies created that year. The statement of expectations provides the respective state-owned company a clear understanding of the Government's policy expectations for the company and provides the context under which the board is to operate and make decisions.

While not a legislative requirement, a statement of expectations has been issued to all state-owned companies and includes the requirement that it be tabled in Parliament to ensure transparency. The amendments included in this bill will provide consistency and transparency in relation to the statement of expectations for all state-owned companies and create a legislative requirement that it be tabled in Parliament, similar to the requirement for ministerial charters provided to government business enterprises under the Government Business Enterprises Act 1995.

The Government Business Enterprises Act 1995 allows the Treasurer to issue Treasurer's Instructions in respect of guidelines, principles, practices and procedures that must be followed by the business. The portfolio acts of the state-owned companies extend the requirement to follow certain Treasurer's Instructions to all state-owned companies. However, the specific Treasurer's Instructions that are applicable are not consistent across the state-owned companies.

All government businesses also follow a common set of guidelines and for government business enterprises these guidelines are linked to Treasurer's Instructions. However for state-owned companies, if the Government wants to ensure compliance with the guidelines, a direction must be issued to the board by the members. The use of a direction is not considered to be a most transparent and clear mechanism to be used for the implementation of general policies applicable to all government enterprises.

The bill inserts a new section - members' statement of expectations - in the Metro act, with provisions similar to section 24 of the Irrigation Company Act 2011, to formalise the requirement for a statement of expectations. The new section is similar to clause 36(7) of the Government Business Enterprises Act 1995 and will require the portfolio minister to table the statement of expectations in Parliament within 10 sitting days of it being provided to the board of Metro.

The amendments in the bill also require Metro Tasmania to follow all relevant Treasurer's Instructions issued under the Government Business Enterprises Act 1995. In the interests of promoting uniformity and consistency in the governance frameworks for all state-owned companies, the bill also amends the portfolio act of each state-owned company to all have the same provisions.

These amendments will provide clarity to the boards of the state-owned companies and provide consistency of the governance arrangements across the portfolio of government businesses. The businesses are supportive of the amendments and welcome the additional clarity.

I commend this bill to the House.

[11.57 a.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I indicate that we will be supporting the bill, but there are a number of points and questions we need to put on record and on which we seek a response from the minister.

The issue of ferries has been one that has been discussed and dealt with, particularly in Hobart, for quite some time. It has been much debated in terms of moving people around Hobart. There is a lot of support for it, but with any good idea the work needs to be done to ensure that the services are sustainable and are hitting the right times and the right market.

As the minister has outlined in his second reading speech, Hobart has an extraordinarily high proportion of people using vehicles to move themselves around the city. There are many reasons for that. One of the reasons is that at times the public transport system either does not meet the needs of the commuting public or it does not meet the times. We hear stories of people saying I really would like to catch public transport, but it does not get me to where I need to be at the time. The other issue is the price point, ensuring people are able to make good, solid economic decisions about public transport.

In your second reading speech you referred to a 2013 report, which recommended the government trial a passenger services integrated with Metro Tasmania with the provision of appropriate waterside infrastructure. That was in 2013. It is now some five or six years later, and we are only just doing the enabling legislation to allow Metro to potentially run a service. You are just announcing all the work that needs to be done to prove up the potential for a ferry service, under what conditions and what areas. It is disappointing that in 2013 a recommendation was made and here we are five, heading into six years by the time we start to see the rubber hit the road or the ferry to hit the water. We are six years down the track. That would be a concern and if we could hear from the minister about the thought processes and why it has taken so long to enact that report that was recommended to government for trial.

The Labor Party supports the work that is required to do to prove up a ferry service. Whilst in your second reading speech there have been some references to integration there are still a number of questions. To give the Labor Party and the community the confidence to support this step, we are hoping you are able to put on the record what is being done to really give this the best chance of success.

In other jurisdictions, such as Sydney and Brisbane, and to a lesser extent Perth, there is a significant network of park and rides, and shuttle buses moving people to car parks or to ferry terminals. If we are serious about the ferry service on the river, we need to hear from the minister as to what kind of options are being considered to ensure that this is a success, and I know that Metro needs to do the work. Picking Bellerive, which we know is constrained in terms of its space for increased car parking capacity and the interchange at Eastlands where the majority of bus services travel to, we know that there are other areas up and down the river that could potentially sustain a ferry river service.

We have heard the views of the colourful and great Tasmanian, Bob Clifford, of ferry services and what he believes is needed to ensure that it is a sustainable proposition and that is not just dealing with commuter traffic but also during the day providing options for tourists to travel up and down our beautiful waterway, our beautiful harbour. My concern is that by narrowly focusing on Bellerive it does not deal with the network-wide issue. Not including other potential spots may undermine the work that Metro is being tasked with to make sure it is successful. It is about patronage. It is about getting as many people onto the ferries, making that decision to move from their cars to the ferries. The concern we float is that if you are just looking at Bellerive, which we know is already constrained in its ability to have a park and ride facility at that site, what considerations are being given to that.

The other issue is infrastructure that will be required. That will be on the port side and that will incur some level of infrastructure cost. We need some greater clarity around where the minister foresees that to be borne. Who bears that cost? Is it local government, is it the state government? We need some indication about those sorts of ideas. We ask these questions with the clear intent that we support ferry services. We want them to be successful but we know that when people make their decisions, particularly with car parking in Hobart, we know that the two points of determination will be time, how long will it take - how quickly will you get from A to B or Bellerive to Hobart or Hobart back to Bellerive - and what will be the price point? We know that if it is not marginally, or even significantly cheaper than parking, then people are not going to make that decision. If the sustainability of the service relies on a high price point you arguably end the service before it even begins.

We only get one shot at this. It has been talked about now since the bridge went back up about how we can bring ferries back onto the Derwent for commuter and other traffic. If we stuff this up now it would be a very brave government to go back in a short period of time to see if we could give it light again.

A couple of other questions, minister. It is the Government's intention for a future ferry service to be operated by Metro Tasmania in order to best support the development or the integrated transport service and the amendments allow this to occur. We have no argument with that but in terms of Metro's current skill set, the current experience, this is not within that. I do not mean that disrespectfully; that is just the reality. Is it the intent to look at Metro engaging a direct or indirect contractor, or to put a contract out for tender to the market? It would be good to hear from the minister about those kinds of thoughts and how best we encourage someone onto that link.

In terms of the second reading speech, it will be undertaking a preliminary demand analysis to inform the specifications and the necessary supporting infrastructure to ensure the service aligns with transport needs. It would be good to have on record the Government's thoughts, because this is the work that needs to be done, but what is the tipping point for the Government to make a decision to follow through? For want of a better way to describe it, what is the breaking point for getting this up? If a report comes back that it is worse than cost-neutral and will cost the Government more, will that mean that the Government will not pursue the ferry option? We would be keen to hear from the Government on that.

In the second reading speech, the minister says this service will be incorporated into the Hobart City Deal. We have heard from federal government Estimates that the city deal lacks a fair bit of detail. Apparently there is a lot of goodwill leading into the election and no doubt when that season comes around, sooner rather than later, we hope to see some significant announcements for Hobart and that city deal, but at this time the city deal is on the never-never. It is a political commitment as opposed to a commitment of government. Is the ferry service contingent on that city deal getting through?

While you are amending the bill to allow Metro to expand beyond bus services to rail and ferry traffic, you make no reference of the northern suburbs to Hobart light rail. It would be interesting to understand why that has not been referenced. If you are referencing ferries in a Metro bill that includes rail, why is that not a part of the second reading speech? It would be good to hear your thoughts on that.

I also have questions about the infrastructure for the transport needs. As you know, there are significant changes to the Bellerive Quay area with a significant marina redevelopment. What

impact do you understand that to have on ferry services, particularly given that Bellerive seems to be the single focus of the trial of the ferry? Do we know what impact that will have on times in terms of the size of vessel that could be used? We want to make sure the Government has taken into account that those changes will no doubt have some impact on that waterway which will then potentially have an impact on the time it takes for people to get from side of the river to the other. As we know, the two trigger points in decisions are time and cost.

I put on the record that, in terms of the Metro service, the Labor Party under the great stewardship of our shadow minister, the Honourable Craig Farrell, one of the nicest men in Tasmanian politics, put forward the concept of instead of just expanding Metro we would come together with a transport corporation that would deal with all passenger services across Tasmania and be separate from government, an organisation that could deal with all of Tasmanian transport needs and make decisions around that. We think that is a far better way to deal with a modern, contemporary transport system in Tasmania, particularly given that, whether we like it or not, there is always tension between private operators and Metro in terms of service and operations and lines.

With the integrated nature of what you are trying to achieve with this bill, we think it does not go far enough of being able to have an organisation separate from Metro Tasmania managing this, because you have Metro as the arbiter but also a competitor. We believe that is problematic for the negotiations and discussions that need to be had when dealing with passenger transport across Tasmania and how you move people from A to B, or A, B to C and then back to Z, depending on your needs of the day.

With the recision and the fares order, from what I understand from the briefing I had this morning, in terms of the Metro fares for adult urban, you are seeking to move it from a legislated change to administrative order, so you are moving the level of public oversight around fares for people in urban areas for Metro. As a trigger, when you move it from a legislative, very transparent and open decision where there is a level of accountability to parliament, I can understand efficiency, but in terms of transparency and having people aware and some level of accountability for fares, we are concerned you are moving from a legislated provision to more of an administrative one.

In the second reading speech the minister said the separate fare setting systems have meant that historical disparities between the urban and non-urban areas have continued to be embedded - we do not disagree with that - resulting in a significant step-up in price for people travelling beyond the urban boundary. The public transport bus service procurement review is considering options to resolve the inconsistency in fare levels, a transparent process for preparing the fare schedule and annual indexation provisions and fare review mechanism will be the subject of a future submission to Cabinet before the contracts commence. You are asking us to take you on trust to move it from a legislative to administrative decision process and we are unsure what Cabinet will decide on that. You are saying that will result in significant step-up in price for people travelling beyond the urban boundary, so does that mean Metro fares will increase to align with the private operators outside the urban boundary?

There are cost-of-living pressures for people who rely heavily on public transport around Tasmania. My mum does not have a licence and when dad is not able to drive her somewhere she uses the bus. When she comes to Hobart to see her grandkids she uses a Redline bus, a private operator, and she relies on those and Metro buses from time to time, as do my kids, my family and my friends. It is not only a personal interest, but there would be broad interest around the cost of living and the move from a legislative outcome for Metro to a private fare. In the second reading speech the minister made a specific reference to a significant step-up in price for people travelling

beyond the urban boundary. We hope you would be bringing that down as opposed to bringing Metro up. If that is not the case and Metro fares go up, that is a real concern to us.

You have not been able to outline what process you are proposing for fare schedules, annual indexation provisions and the fare review mechanism because it is subject to a future Cabinet decision. We flag that as a concern in terms of the cost of living and what the outcome would be, notwithstanding our support for this bill is on the public record.

I do not know why the bill is called Metro Tasmania Amendment Bill as the vast bulk of the bill refers to GBE management, particularly TasPorts, electricity companies and TT-Line GBEs. A large proportion of the bill does not actually deal with Metro at all, but deals with significant governance matters and Tasmanian government business enterprises. We are not opposing it but why this significant change to the current governance arrangements? Those governance arrangements are important. As a former minister and shareholder minister of GBEs, I understand the importance of clarity and transparency. We support the changes, but if you were someone interested in the governance of GBEs and you saw a bill referred to the Metro Tasmania Amendment Bill you would wonder. In your answer in question time and in the associated media all you dealt with is the Bellerive ferry service. Then, all of a sudden, the legislation deals with a significant range of changes to governance to GBEs, which have nothing to do - apart from the fact they are a GBE - with the Metro Tasmania changes and the ferry service.

Those changes are significant and they are important. In our view, they should be the subject of a separate bill before parliament so that there is transparency so the Tasmanian community knows that the parliament is dealing with in one bill for Metro Tasmania and enabling ferries to occur. There is also a separate bill, particularly given, from what I understand, that this minister is not a shareholder minister in terms of the irrigation company, electricity companies; you are Metro.

**Ms O'Connor** - Quite unusual.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - It is really unusual. TasRacing? No, you gave that away, didn't you? That was reallocated to another minister. TT-Line? No. Infrastructure, yes. In these bills you have the rail, and TT-Line, but racing, irrigation and electricity companies should be the subject of a separate bill.

Having said that, these changes are important for consistency and transparency. It is extraordinary -

**Ms O'Connor** - Given their form for being suspicious, it's reasonable.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - That is right. Even when I was out of this place in the last four years, it was enough to give me great concern about the activities of the Government in seeing their work.

**Mr Brooks** - During the four years that you were not here the economy seemed to go a lot better.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Back to the script. Can you write him a new script? It is embarrassing. You are better than that, apparently.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Mr Brooks.



**Mr O'BYRNE** - In conclusion, I indicate that the Labor will support the bill, notwithstanding a concern that when we were last in government, Labor recommended an integrated, sustainable public transport system in southern Tasmania with a trial. That trial is yet to occur and we are still some time off it, so there is a long period of time.

There are significant questions around the network approach by Metro. I would like to hear from the Government on that. There are infrastructure questions about Bellerive Quay and the marina redevelopment. Can the minister give us some assurance and confidence that there is not going to be a price shock for people in Metro. What mechanisms will the Government put in place in a future submission to Cabinet? Can the minister give assurances that there will not be an impact on the cost of living for current patrons of Metro Tasmania who rely on that service?

In clause 5, the words 'a public transport system' are removed and replaced with 'one or more public transport systems'. Can the minister give any indication about what impact that may have on private operators?

The Government is working through Project 2018 on contracts for private bus operators around the state. Will that movement from a public transport system to a 'one or more public transport systems' have an impact on the current contracts or potentially national competition policy in terms of the role of a GBE in a private area of the market? That may not have an impact but could the minister provide some advice on the significance of moving from a public transport system to 'one or more public transport systems'. Does that purely relate to modes, or does that relate to provision of a public transport service, be it on land and in different parts of the state?

[12.21 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Denison - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, I indicate that the Greens will not oppose this Metro Tasmania Amendment Bill 2018, but I do note it is a highly unusual piece of legislation. It has more clauses related to refining or defining the provisions that apply to government business enterprises than it does to Metro. Why is the Treasurer not bringing in an omnibus bill that deals with the requirements of government business enterprises or state-owned companies? We not only have Metro Tasmania but we have Tas Irrigation, TasRacing - if only there was a Treasurer's instruction that they end the cruel practice of greyhound racing - TasRail, TT-Line and TasPorts. This legislation, ostensibly about acknowledging that Metro Tasmania will ultimately be responsible for more passenger transport modes than simply road transport and Metro Tasmania buses, has become far broader.

I understand this might be done for efficiency, but it does raise questions about motive. As we know, under this Treasurer and the Liberals in government, the dividend policy by our Treasurer's instruction is 90 per cent of after tax profits. It is legislation that will have significant impact on the way GBEs operate. There should be consistency in the way GBEs and state-owned companies report to the shareholding minister and to the parliament. I have not seen any legislation that portends to be one thing and is so obviously another.

It is good to be debating legislation that paves the way for ferries on the River Derwent. The public mood for ferries on the river dates back decades. This has been Greens policy for some time. It is excellent to see the Liberals finally coming on board.

We have a media release that we put out in May 2016, when the Liberals were not yet on board with ferries, and Alderman Philip Cocker, the Greens alderman, and Alderman Damon Thomas moved to have ferries on the River Derwent to ease traffic congestion and lower emissions in

southern Tasmania. At that point Mr Hidding - and I remember asking him in Estimates - was not on board with ferries, so it is really good that we are making some progress and contemporising particularly the south of the state's transport system. That beautiful big blue highway, the River Derwent, should have passenger ferries on it. With the growth in tourism expected to be around 3 million visitors to the state by 2022 we are obviously going to need to have more effective passenger transport systems in order not to bring tens of thousands more hire cars onto the roads. In order to be anywhere near viable, a ferry on the River Derwent would require visitor patronage as well as locals getting to and from work and over the river.

I would like to know from the minister what the time frame is on the trial for ferries on the river and if we can expect to see any funding in this year's state Budget for the trial. What is the minister's vision for passenger transport and visitor transport in and around the city via the River Derwent? People would be very interested in that.

What we are dealing with here as a state is an island community that until very recently had a complete and total love affair with roads, via major party governments, and underinvested in passenger transport, pedestrian transport, cycleways, more buses on more routes, and light rail only came on board in the last term of the parliament and is now coming in board for ferries. We can acknowledge that without playing the blame game because no one government can fix that within a four-year term. Some significant progress was made in the last term and in the term before that in recognising that our transport infrastructure is in desperate need of modernisation. We need pedestrian walkways, cycleways, light rail, more buses, more routes, ferries on the Derwent, and integrated ticketing.

This is a subject the new minister is very well aware of because he, Mr O'Byrne and I attended the TasBus conference the weekend before last and, as has been the case at all the TasBus conferences I have attended in the last number of years as transport and infrastructure spokesperson, integrated ticketing is one of those subjects that keeps coming up. It is an issue that should not be party political. It is just what you need to have in place for a modern passenger transport network. It would be good to have an update from the minister on integrated ticketing because I remember back in 2015 when Mr Hidding was attending the TasBus conference there was a conversation about integrated ticketing coming on board soon. If you want to have a really effective passenger transport system, integrated ticketing needs to be done. It should be able to weave together your public transport system, your private operators and your community transport operators. It should be easy for any person to get something like a Myki card, as they have on Victoria's transport network, and be able to move seamlessly across modes of transport at an affordable price around the state.

Most Tasmanians would not be aware, although certainly in the south of the state we feel it, that Hobart is Australia's third most congested city. People in Hobart who travel to and from the city spend on average an extra 123 hours of their lives in traffic. That is six whole days of our lives in traffic each year. Anyone who lives either beyond the Southern Outlet or beyond the airport will recognise that congestion is an increasingly unproductive and frustrating problem for our communities. Yesterday, a public holiday morning, coming in via Sorell around 11 a.m., it was congested from just back from the Sorell roundabout to the airport roundabout, so we have an issue here.

**Mr Shelton** - Coming back from the peninsula? You had a very nice long weekend?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I did not have a long weekend because I came back to work yesterday morning. On a normal weekend coming back from the peninsula on a Sunday afternoon, it can be quite congested. On a workday morning coming in from the peninsula, even if you leave at 6.30 a.m. to 7 a.m., it will take you nearly two hours to get to work because of the clog from Sorell through to the airport roundabout. That is not one government's fault, but it is the design and the way the road network currently is. We do need to be thinking beyond cars.

**Mr Shelton** - I was more concerned about your experience in the wonderful Lyons electorate down on the peninsula.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mr Shelton, Lyons is a truly beautiful electorate, probably the most beautiful electorate in Tasmania, given the breadth of the landscapes that are in it.

**Mr Bacon** - I can feel the mailout already coming to the people of Denison saying you've let them down.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - You are emailing out, I am sure, Mr Bacon. In terms of sheer landscape value, it is hard to go past Lyons. It is a very beautiful electorate, which is why it is in the developers' sights.

Madam Speaker, we have to get past this mindset which says that building more roads will ease congestion. The minister knows this and I am not going to give him a lecture on the obvious, which is that if you build more roads, more cars will come. As a state, we need to start planning for much cleaner, much more efficient mass transit options. There will come a time when there is a rail line out to Sorell, as there should be.

There will come a time when you modernise the Tasman Bridge. It is getting past its use-by date and has capacity constraints that only worsen congestion. It is extremely unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists and we need to be planning within this term of government about the future of the Tasman Bridge and have some long-term vision for dealing with what will become increasingly urgent transport issues over the next 10, 20 and 30 years.

For example, the road from Sorell to the airport is not going to do the job, but adding an extra lane is sheer madness. It has been a relief to hear that the extra lane which is proposed for the Southern Outlet, another choke point, is to be a bus priority lane. Is that right, minister, a bus priority lane? My question to the minister is whether the new lane that is planned for the Southern Outlet be solely a bus priority lane, or will buses have to navigate that lane with cars? Also, what is the time frame for integrated ticketing?

We need to better understand what the proposed city deal actually is. For any person who does not have enough to do today and is watching parliament online, during the state election campaign there was something like an announcement between the federal government and the Liberals in caretaker mode for a city deal for Hobart. We have not heard anything about it since. The announcement came with no detail attached. It is easy to be cynical here, but there is a real opportunity. We have had commitments from the Prime Minister and a Liberal premier in caretaker mode that Hobart would be able to benefit from a city deal. We need to hold onto that commitment and make it work for the City of Hobart and Greater Hobart. This city has had enough of short-term thinking, it has had enough of ad hoc decision-making and political pump priming and being neglected, often while bigger roads are built in the north and the north-west. We need to make this city deal work for Greater Hobart. We have numerous councils responsible for Greater Hobart and

we have about five different bodies that make decisions that impact on the lives of people living in Greater Hobart, whether it is Clarence, Brighton, Glenorchy, Hobart or Kingborough councils. All those councils could be making decisions that conflict with each other.

We need to have something like a Greater Hobart act - and I know this was put forward by Hobart City Council - which requires the councils working in the south of the state around the capital city to work together, because there has not been enough of that in Tasmania to date. I would like to get some clarification from the minister, first, whether the city deal is a real thing, and second, if it is, where are the negotiations? What is the time frame for the next step of announcements, or announcement, in relation to the proposed city deal? For example, is there still a plan for an underground bus mall in Hobart? Could you please write that down, minister, because that is an important question?

**Mr Rockliff** - It is our policy.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - What was that? The minister is confirming that the Liberals' policy is for an underground bus mall in Hobart, okay. Does that mean is it like Labor's policy on pokies, for example, which is clearly up for grabs?

**Mr Bacon** - Didn't you hear the end of the story?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - What was the end of the story?

**Mr Bacon** - It is not up for debate.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - The pokies policy?

**Mr Bacon** - No.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Did you get rolled, Mr O'Byrne?

**Mr O'Byrne** - That's outrageous.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr Bacon** - Are you taking your lines from the Libs now?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - No, I am cranky today. Is that what we are going to be delivered through this city deal? Will it be an underground bus mall? What we need with a city deal is something that is well planned, strategic, well resourced, future focused, that takes cars off the road, prioritises pedestrians and passenger transport, and people who choose to ride on bikes, electric or not. We need a city deal that looks to the future of this city for the next 20, 50 or 100 years. We do not need this to be ad hoc and political pump priming.

If the minister could tell us what the city deal actually is that would be a relief to people who are quite excited about the possibilities, but do not know whether to believe it is a real thing, because there has been no statement from the Government, as far as I know, since the election on whether the city deal actually exists. We need this city deal, if it is real, to be delivering infrastructure for a generation, climate resilient infrastructure. We need all the councils that surround Greater Hobart

to have a say in this city deal if it is real. It must prioritise ferries, as well as buses, light rail, pedestrians and cycleways.

The whole debate that we are having about the future of Hobart and the congestion, points to the complete absence of any plan. Where is the city master plan? What has the Government done to deliver a modern city? Instead of alienating councils or picking fights with the Hobart City Council over the Macquarie-Davey couplet, why isn't the Government working with councils to develop a master plan for the city? All the sensible, modern cities have master plans. At the moment it is a bit like the development process for parks and reserves, it is all ad hoc. It is all whoever pops up with a new idea and there seems to be very little thought or planning going into it.

We need a capital city master plan. We need to ensure that we are pursuing a real city deal that has real money behind it and real consultation and is based on evidence, and that that process develops and delivers the future transport network needs of Hobart because the population of Hobart, as we know, is growing. As a state, we cannot afford to let it grow and build more roads for more cars and more car parks in the city where we could be housing people or have excellent commercial opportunities. If the minister can answer those few questions, that would be good.

I am also very interested to know whether the new fare setting arrangements for Metro via this legislation will keep that downward pressure on fares. When Senator Nick McKim was minister for sustainable transport, there was a move by Metro to raise fares to cover some extra costs. At the time, as I recall, he had the authority as minister to say that is going to impact on the cost of living of people at a difficult time so that will not be happening. What is the minister's power now to either raise fares or to make sure they are not raised? Can the minister give an assurance this process will not lead to a sharp increase in fares across the state, whether it is an urban, rural or regional area?

[12.41 p.m.]

**Mr BACON** (Denison) - Madam Speaker, there is only one stat in the second reading speech you need to convince you that we need to improve our public transport in Tasmania, particularly in Hobart. That is the 83 per cent of all journeys to work in Hobart are taken by car and this is the highest proportion of any Australian capital city. That alone shows we need to do a much better job.

The Labor Party will be supporting this bill. As set out by the shadow minister for infrastructure in his contribution, we have a range of points to raise and some questions. The bill is split into three components. Amending the Metro Tasmania Act to allow Metro to operate a ferry service is an important step forward if we are going to see ferries on the river Derwent any time soon.

This was also raised by the shadow minister: there is a bit of talk about other forms of transport but exactly where is the Government's thinking on the northern suburbs light rail proposal? There was the election announcement but not much talk about that since the election. If the new Minister for Infrastructure would give his thinking on what he sees is the future for that rail corridor that would be very much appreciated.

With the change around the fares orders, I was unable to be in the briefing that was arranged for the Opposition this morning. I attempted to be in that briefing but I could not be there. I was not sure about the changes to the way the fares are set: whether the Economic Regulator will still

play a role in the setting of those fares, exactly how extensive that role will be, given there has been a move by this Government to move away from using the Economic Regulator. We have seen changes to water and sewerage prices, electricity prices and now these changes. Can I get an indication from the minister exactly what the role of the Economic Regulator is under this Government over the next four years?

The other main point I want to speak on was also raised by the shadow minister for infrastructure around the Government's consistency and changes being made to Metro and a range of other state government businesses. Why has that been done within this bill rather than a separate bill? As the shadow minister said, providing clarity and transparency to the Tasmanian people about these changes, which on the face of it seem to be worthwhile, but a question about why the Government sought to go in this direction through this bill rather than through a separate bill? This would make the changes clearer.

I have had a constituent for a number of years, probably known to everyone, at least in the south, who is in the House of Assembly, Corey Geard, who is in a wheelchair and has had issues with Metro for a long time over wheelchair accessible buses. I would like an update from the minister. How many buses are still in the fleet that are not low floor and therefore inaccessible by wheelchair, parents with young children who have prams, and other mobility issues? Exactly how many buses are in the fleet that are inaccessible? How many are accessible?

We need some detail on how those services are advertised. The timetables are set out to say which buses are accessible and which are not. I see tweets from Metro to say that a bus that is advertised as accessible will not be able to be an accessible bus because of a breakdown or some other issue. There was some talk about moving to a system where people would receive a text message if the buses on their route were changed from an accessible bus. Beyond the tweets, what work is being done by Metro to let people know when their service has changed? What do you see the future of letting people know? How long will it be until the whole fleet is accessible to make the lives of people living with disability or moving young children around easier? I am not sure what the legislation requires. I think it was the end of next year. If the minister could outline that and his thoughts on letting people know when they are not available.

During the election campaign, an underground bus mall was promised, with much fanfare, by the Government. It got the front page of the *Mercury* on 1 February. I will read from the story:

A re-elected Liberal Government would build an underground transit mall in Hobart and wrest control of the city's busiest streets from the council in a bid to bust the capital's traffic congestion.

The party today will reveal plans for the new bus mall under Elizabeth Street ...

I am not sure, that those plans were released on 1 February. The minister can update us on those plans - if he has some engineering work or whatever.

It goes on to say:

'Our bold vision for Hobart's traffic network will transform the city centre, reduce congestion and provide the infrastructure needed for a modern, efficient public transport system,' he said.

A re-elected majority Liberal Government will plan, design and develop a new bus transit centre in Hobart for both Metro and other bus companies, to be included as part of the Hobart City Deal.

We anticipate it will be located centrally, potentially running underground in the vicinity of Franklin Square and Lower Elizabeth Street with ramp access to deliver buses directly onto the main routes to the northern, southern and eastern suburbs.

This is a transformational project for Central Hobart that will modernise Hobart's public transport infrastructure and reduce congestion both throughout the city and the surrounding areas.

When I read that story, I had my doubts. Talking to people during the election campaign, I had a lot of feedback. Most of it was sceptical about this so-called plan for an underground bus mall. A lot of people were in utter disbelief that this could be delivered.

That was on 1 February; it had a huge response in the media and front page of the *Mercury*. Very well done to the spin machine over the road. No one thought this could ever be delivered. That all changed. The *Mercury* quoted Jarrod Rawlins on 27 May:

I think people are excited, and curious more than anything at the moment, he said.

People would just, I guess, be trying to picture themselves in a box underneath the road and what that means to them.

I did not, of course, connect this with the underground bus mall at first. It is now clear that the Government has gone ahead and appointed a consultant on this project. It is well-known artist, Mike Parr. You might think that is a little strange when you go out to build a huge infrastructure, one that is going to be transformational for central Hobart and modernise Hobart's public transport infrastructure and reduce congestion. You would think of engineers, planners, those kind of people. I am starting to like this Government more than I did in the last four years. They have a bit of imagination. They have gone to a well known artist, Mike Parr. He has gone to work. You can see it in the photo in the *Mercury* right there. 'Underground bus mall becomes a reality'. This is 27 May. I am not sure if Mr Parr is underneath the road just yet. I think he goes in on Thursday. He probably does not want to see the size of the debt that Peter Gutwein is going to deliver so he will probably go in before 2.30 p.m. What this shows finally is a bit of credibility to this project. They have not only appointed Mr Parr as a consultant, they have started the digging. This is a fantastic outcome. I commend the new minister. I had my doubts about the previous infrastructure minister but as soon as I read this article I knew that the future of this project was in good hands with this minister. He has appointed a fantastic consultant. It is a fantastic way to start this project.

**Ms O'Byrne** - *Hansard* does not record humour or irony.

**Mr BACON** - I am serious. I am deadly serious.

This is my apology to the minister more than anything. I had my doubts on 1 February about the underground bus mall. It is fantastic to see a consultant appointed and work begun. Now that

the location has been revealed, we want to know is how much will cost and when it will be completed.

[12.52 p.m.]

**Mr BROOKS** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I support the bill brought on by my good friend and colleague, the honourable Mr Rockliff, the Deputy Premier. Mr Rockliff and I go back a fair way since I was first elected to this place over eight years ago. The advice he gave me was that it does not matter how good you are at making speeches here, it is what you do for the community. That advice is very true for my good friend and the Deputy Premier in his actions for the community with legislation like this. This is entirely indicative of not only the Government's agenda but also that of the Deputy Premier and the minister in our resolve and our drive to deliver for the community.

This is about a long-standing issue that was ignored for a long time by those opposite. This allows Metro Tasmania to operate any type of passenger transport service including ferry services. The reason that is so important as you would well know is that the ferry service debate and also the community and public feedback has been very strong. It has been well appreciated, certainly resoundingly in the last election, that we have an agenda for the community, including public transportation and looking at Tasmania's future needs. The result of this resolve and the result of our policy framework, which has enabled business to invest, which has enabled more people to want to come here and more tourists to come here, has meant we have to change the way we operate to accommodate that growth in demand and numbers.

What you see here is not only a minister but a government and cabinet that are committed to looking at not only the short-term requirements of the community but also the medium- and long-term requirements of the community. We know those opposite refer to it in their usual way, but quite often some political parties and members of parliament get distracted by the short-term political opportunism rather than the long-term requirements of the community. We will not apologise for standing up for the long-term requirements of the community. It is examples like this where the state Government and those ably led by the Deputy Premier as the minister for this legislation delivers for people who demand we look at the needs of this region but also of this state and take into account the requirements of the long and medium-term needs of those who want to utilise public transport at the moment and those who may do in future.

We also heard from the shadow treasurer talking about his appreciation for our work and commitment to the community to deliver for them, something that was vague and very visibly missing under the disaster of Labor-Greens dysfunction, but which we as a government have continued to step up and deliver, and that is part of what we are intent on achieving.

Clause 6 of this amendment bill, which is effectively section 5 of the principal act, omits 'road' and inserts 'road, rail, ferry or otherwise'. That is a significant change in the ability for Metro to deliver not only what we as a government want, but more importantly it is about what the community is saying it would like to see. This Government has worked hard on making sure we are a government that listens to the community, unlike the previous Labor-Greens disaster to which they were subjected.

Furthermore, this legislation forms part of our priority plan for the first 100 days of government, requiring its introduction into parliament by the end of June 2018. It is a privilege to stand here today on behalf of the government to debate this bill. It is another thing we said we



would deliver and we have delivered - again, in a stark contrast to what we were subject to when those opposite were sitting on the government benches.

The amendments to the act allow Metro to operate any form of passenger transport services. They do not effectively establish a ferry service. However the amendments provide the necessary statutory authority for Metro to operate such a service if required to do so, which there has been debate about. This is an enabling government. The business confidence index can prove that.

As to the Greater Hobart traffic solution, there remains a significant body of work to be completed before a ferry service can commence, including demand analysis and infrastructure upgrades, but this Government, through its sound financial management and understanding that you cannot continue to spend more than you have coming in but you also need to invest in the right areas, is investing in infrastructure. As the Treasurer pointed out today, we will continue to invest in the crucial and vital services we see across sectors such as health and education and public safety, but we also have a clear strategy on where the state's infrastructure is going. We have delivered capital works and infrastructure across the state already but we have always said there is more work to be done and that is what we remain committed to.

It is not just about roads or public transport per se, it is also about the facilities provided within communities. An example would be schooling. When people are looking at coming here for work or to relocate to Tasmania, they do not just look at the roads. They look at what sort of services are provided and what sort of infrastructure there is within education. We are proud that as a government we were able to provide such significant capital works funding into high schools in the north-west such as Smithton High, Parklands High, Latrobe High; all high schools that had been neglected for so long.

**Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.**

## **METRO TASMANIA AMENDMENT BILL 2018 (No. 14)**

### **Second Reading**

**Resumed from above.**

**Mr BROOKS** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, part of what we as a government are always looking at is meeting the longer-term needs of Tasmania. We are a forward thinking government that does not just look at the political cycle, unlike those opposite.

Part 3 of the bill includes fares. I have been consistent in raising this issue for eight years now; the need for more work around the disparity amongst fares of not only Metro but public transportation within regional communities. Part of this addresses some inconsistencies in the application and timing of fare increases and allows it to be consolidated under a single mechanism, which is really important. Ms O'Connor spoke about integrated fares or ticketing across all different modes of public transport. We have seen governments in other states and regions really struggle with part of that integration. If you look at integration of even a management software solution across any business, especially GBEs, there is always cost overrun and they always get it wrong. It is really good in theory but ultimately, unfortunately, expensive to the taxpayer. We have learnt from mistakes made by other states and other governments and is something that we do not just

rush in and buy the most expensive system on the market thinking that will work. It needs a clear strategy around it and part of this includes looking at where we are going with an integrated system and how we can reduce the regulatory burden, as required.

We are committed to continuing to improve not only as a government but also the services the government provides and delivers. That is part of the maturity of a majority Hodgman Liberal Government and our aim of providing the community not only with value for money but a product and service that we feel strongly about. When I was a minister in Cabinet and as part of the team, we strived to be a community service organisation. Ultimately that is what governments are and our focus on that is in stark contrast to what I experienced under the previous term of the Labor-Greens government. We will continue to be focused and committed to ensuring consistent improvement across all government sectors, including the provision of public transport as part of our system of delivering a better outcome for those who use public services and public service assets.

It was raised by Ms O'Connor and those opposite, partly their conspiracy theory, that we are trying to do something or get up to something, but we are not. They mentioned a significant portion of this bill does go into delivering a change in instructions to GBEs. The conspiracy theorists opposite think there is something there that is not and will spend most of their day arguing about something that does not exist.

We have consistently looked at how we can make things more effective, more efficient, improve it, with the sole aim of delivering a better outcome to the community. This improves clarity for the requirements between members and shareholders statement of expectation. It has been considered by Cabinet, given that it is tabled as a bill.

The question was raised whether other ministers agree to this. If it has gone through Cabinet, I assure you that it would be, so the conspiracy theorists and the tin foil hat brigade that belong to the Greens can be assured that there is nothing sinister here. It is about delivering a more appropriate mechanism to deal with instructions to GBEs. It is part of an efficiency that can be taken as one bill under the Metro Tasmania Amendment Bill 2018 that highlights the maturity of this Government that can handle more than one thing at the same time. This is in stark contrast to the disaster that we were subjected to. No wonder we went into recession, when you had a leaderless, clueless government of the Labor-Greens type that we were subjected to from 2010 to 2014.

This bill is a great indicator of where this Government is heading towards public transportation, looking at focusing on the future medium-, short- and long-term needs of the community and what they expect us to deliver, looking at the future but also addressing some of the concerns.

I support the bill.

[2.37 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I reflect on the bill but also on some general issues to do with transportation, especially in the bus sector. I reiterate some of the comments from earlier speakers about the importance of initiatives like integrated ticketing.

Through my travels around the world, especially in places like Europe, probably Denmark would be one of the highlights where public transport is a key part of getting around. With the

combination of planes, buses, trains, ferries, et cetera, you can pretty much get from one end of the country to the other without having to own a car. A key part of that is an integrated ticketing system.

**Mr Hidding** - Which is a good thing seeing it is a mass of islands.

**Dr BROAD** - It is a mass of islands, but even so, a large portion of the population is in a few major centres like Copenhagen, Aarhus and Aalborg. The key part is that you can jump from a bus onto a tram or train and the ticket remains valid. That is the same in Melbourne where you transfer from a bus to a tram as long as you are within certain zones and that zoning forms a logical basis for the cost of the fares. That sort of thing makes it very readily accessible, so you can get from one area to the other with a single ticket.

At the moment we have a system on the north-west coast, where to get from Port Sorell to the university in Burnie is quite difficult. You are dealing with different companies and there is no integrated ticketing. That forms a barrier to using public transport and reinforces the need for the use of cars. We have a fantastic highway in Braddon that gets you from Latrobe right through to Burnie on a four-lane highway. However, if you do not have a licence for whatever reason that lack of integrated ticketing makes it difficult to get from one end to another.

When I go to Sydney I remember to take the Opal card and top it up and the same with the Myki card in Melbourne. With these integrated travel cards, I can travel pretty much anywhere. That is a key part of this.

The use of ferries on the river is an idea that has been around for a long time. It is an idea that would be great for everybody except rowers who are out on the water getting washed off by ferries moving past. I know that is a problem in Sydney - hand up for personal bias. However, the river is an attractive transport system to get us around from one part of the city to the other and maybe go as far as Kingston or Blackmans Bay. However, speed is going to be an issue being able to get from one place to another in a timely fashion. If this initial foray in reconnecting Bellerive to Hobart works out, I hope that there is potential for other spots as well. This bill is definitely welcomed.

When it gets back to the north-west coast, we recently saw transport issues being raised by students at Don College. Don College has about 900 students. It has had up to a little over 1000 in past years, but there are 900 students now. Because of the lack of well-connected bus services to Don College many students rely on cars. That also concerns personal freedom. Once kids turn 17 and get their P-plates, they want to drive everywhere they can. There is a significant issue with parking at Don College, which was raised in the *Advocate* by Tom Rockliff - I am sure some distant relation to the minister - and Rebecca West. It is good that students make their issues known. They felt like they were not getting anywhere and people were not taking their issue seriously so they raised that in the media. As a result they got some traction.

I had a chat with them. There is no doubt that their parking issue is a multi-faceted issue. There are issues of people parking on grass and then not being allowed to park there anymore, which reduces the number of parking spots available. There are also issues with a lack of communication. There is a police officer on site who started booking people with no warning. That meant that suddenly kids were getting fines. If you are booked by a police officer rather than council staff instead of it being a \$25 fine I believe it is an \$80 fine. The police officer was also issuing cautions. A P-plater only has two cautions, so the next time, even though it was just a caution for parking in the wrong spot, the next caution means a P-plater is more than likely to lose their licence. It is quite a big issue to receive a caution for a minor parking infringement.

Another issue raised is that there is a one-hour parking zone on Watkinson Street, where the bus stop is at the top of Don College, which seems quite reasonable except that classes go for about 90 minutes. That means that if you park legally in that zone and you duck into a class, then you end up getting booked if the council monitors it. I wrote to the Devonport City Council to lift that to a two-hour time limit so that if kids were doing one class they could park in that zone and take the whole class.

They also raised the issue of the cost of taking the bus to Don College. There have been changes to the zoning of Port Sorell so that it is no longer counted as being rural. I am not sure of the exact classification, but it is now classed as a town. This means if a student transfers from Port Sorell to Don College then they are travelling on a much higher fare. Rural fares are much cheaper. It is the same when students travel from Sheffield to Don College; it is quite an expense.

We now have a requirement for students to attend formal education until they are 18. A student living in Port Sorell or Sheffield is zoned to Don College. To get there via bus costs quite a bit of money. It can be upwards of \$8 a day for the privilege of attending school, which students have to do because it is compulsory. That is creating barriers. It is much cheaper to run a car from Sheffield to Devonport in terms of fuel. No doubt students are thinking more about fuel than the cost of the car because they, if they are lucky, are driving their parents' car, then that becomes a real issue. It is much cheaper and convenient to drive a car to Don College, which, as a knock-on effect, has a big impact on parking.

These issues are all integrated. I hope to have more to say about that down the track. The students started an online petition which a great number of people have signed. Unfortunately, it is not in the appropriate format for parliament. However, I was pleased to see these students, Tom Rockliff, Rebecca West and others, had identified a number of issues. No doubt it is complex but they were not going sit down and complain about it; they are motivated and taking matters into their own hands and raising awareness. Hopefully, we can get these issues addressed.

The ongoing issue of the expense of students getting to their zoned schools could be a barrier. That needs to be addressed. As it is compulsory for students to go, then it could be an economic issue not being able to afford to get to their school. We have a number of barriers in education, and we hope transport to a school is not a barrier. That should be the least of students' worries. They should be worried about studying hard and giving themselves all the best for the future.

[2.47 p.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Minister for Infrastructure) - Madam Speaker, I thank members for their support of the bill and their questions and comments along the way which I appreciate. I will go through a number of those now.

The first issue was timing. Ferry services have operated on the River Derwent in various forms until relatively recently with varying degrees of public funding support and patronage. Multiple studies since the 1990s have identified the potential for a ferry service to support urban travel needs. However, the reports have also identified significant risks, particularly the likely level of demand and limited catchments for patronage.

While recommending a trial, the 2013 report did not address how these significant challenges could be managed in a way to minimise risk to the service delivery. As the member for Franklin noted, it is important the work to develop the ferry services is done properly. I add that it is

important that it is not done prematurely. I notice the member for Franklin had a bit of a crack about the 2013 report -

**Mr O'Byrne** - You are a bit sensitive about it, aren't you?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I am not sensitive at all.

**Mr O'Byrne** interjecting.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - That is fair enough. You mentioned Mr Craig Farrell. I know he has a lot of interest in transport matters, particularly trains. Fair enough. He was part of the report on the options for an integrated, sustainable public transport system in southern Tasmania. He was one of the members of the committee along with others. I wanted to peruse the report and I could not go past No. 28 in the introduction. I would have said that although the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources was cooperative in providing information and attending hearings of the committee - and I commend them for that and naturally their cooperation continues - in 2013 the then minister responsible for sustainable transport, the Honourable Nick McKim MHA, and the then minister for infrastructure, the Honourable David O'Byrne MHA, both declined a second invitation to appear before the committee as stakeholder ministers. The committee was disappointed by the decision of the ministers not to appear before the committee.

**Mr Bacon** interjecting.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I am sure he is devastated. There are a number of strategic issues the committee wished to discuss with the ministers and the department was not in a position to respond to these issues. I thought the member might appreciate some of that history.

We now have an environment in which there is growing community awareness of the impacts of our reliance on private cars and a preparedness to consider using alternative transport modes in order to meet travel needs. This provides an opportune time for bringing the development of a ferry service forward. For that reason the Government has committed \$2 million to the development of the ferry service, which I believe was one of Ms O'Connor's questions, and I acknowledge the Greens have been talking about a ferry service for sometime as well.

**Ms O'Connor** - The great thing is that we are all talking about it now.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - And we are doing it. I will not be committed to being held down to a time frame but we would like to have the staffing study completed by December and that would detail a time frame then - but as soon as practical.

**Ms O'Connor** - Did you start this, Mr Hidding?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Mr Hidding is in the Chamber and I know he has some interest in this legislation. This policy was detailed to the public through Mr Hidding's leadership, and I thank him for that.

Why only Bellerive to Hobart? A Hobart to Bellerive service is the logical starting point for what could become a much broader network of ferry routes if the concept attracts sufficient demand. Previous analysis has consistently identified Hobart to Bellerive as having the greatest potential demand and offering a potential competitive advantage over existing transport options across the

bridge. Other potential routes and destinations have been identified, including destinations to north, south and east of Hobart. In the case of Opossum Bay, a trial service has even operated. However, outside of the core Bellerive to Hobart route, all other options have been previously identified to have a number of challenges, including infrastructure requirements, limited patronage catchments and longer travel times compared to private vehicles. Other routes will need to be looked at very carefully in planning future service expansions to ensure the ferry provides the necessary competitive advantage to attract passengers from private vehicles.

There are a number of questions with regard to the design of the service, the infrastructure requirements and the service attributes. A critical part of service planning will be to properly understand the constant benefits to the community of the ferry service. The benefits are determined by the level of demand for the service and the sources of that demand. The Government has engaged Metro to undertake this demand study to better understand the role to be performed by the ferry service and to inform its development. In turn, the cost of the service, such as vessel specification, the number of vessels required and the frequency of the service, will be strongly influenced by the expected level of demand and the services expected to be catered for, therefore detailed costings have not yet been undertaken and will be done as part of the service planning and design.

There is not a single tipping point where service may be determined to be viable or unviable. Instead the expected patronage demand and sensitivity analysis will inform the key service attributes such as vessel size and speed.

It is noted that the interchange at Bellerive will be critical. As research shows, the transfers between loads, whether car to public transport, or between public transport services, must be managed carefully to minimise travel delays. In the case of a ferry service this will require consideration of the optimal location for disembarking from bus service or private vehicles to minimise the walking distance to the ferry. I note that with the restricted land space at Bellerive it is obvious the opportunities to walk, cycle and/or use a bus service to reach the ferry would need to be promoted.

We are committed to ensuring the appropriate infrastructure required for ferries is available. TasPorts has been tasked with identifying possible options for future ferry terminals in the Hobart CBD and the Bellerive areas and specific infrastructure requirements will be confined through service planning.

In response to questions from members, the Hobart City Deal is a real thing. An agreement to enter the city deal was signed 16 January 2018. This follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding for city deals between the Tasmanian and Australian governments on 29 December 2016. The first Tasmanian city deal - the Launceston City Deal - was signed on 29 April 2017. To quote from the Prime Minister's media statement on 16 January 2018:

The city deal will provide the focus needed to ensure that the Commonwealth, State and local governments are all working together to ensure the Greater Hobart area benefits from the city's transition. The City Deal will:

- Examine options to facilitate an Antarctic Precinct at Macquarie Point to harness the unique opportunities presented by the site
- Create a Greater Hobart Transport Vision to guide a coordinated approach to transport planning including assessing the feasibility of future public

transport options such as busways, light rail or ferries. This will also include considering ways to support the future of the northern suburbs rail corridor through improved amenity and greater residential options.

- Establish a Greater Hobart Act, to provide a strategic framework for local councils in the region and the State Government to work together to implement the objectives of the Hobart City Deal and complementary strategic land use planning outcomes.

I think that was a question of yours, Ms O'Connor.

**Ms O'Connor** - Minister, can I ask by interjection when we can expect to see some funds flow from the federal government? It was not in the last federal budget.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I will come to that in just a moment.

**Mr O'Byrne** - And if they are linked as well.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - The statement continues:

- Examine options to facilitate the development of the University of Tasmania's STEM presence in the city, to support both regional and international education, and innovation growth.
- Explore options to support affordable housing in the Greater Hobart region.

In addition to these key focus areas, other projects that are consistent with the vision and objectives may also be agreed during the development of the Hobart City Deal.

The three levels of government will collaborate with the private sector and Hobart community to identify local priorities, agree to a long-term vision for the city and commit to a coordinated plan of action.

The coordinated approach provided through the city deal offers an excellent opportunity to consider whole-of-network issues and the Government will pursue the ferry initiative in parallel with the city deal.

The question as to what happens if the city deal does not proceed is moot because the deal is indeed moving forward and we are committed to the ferry service. Funding will come at a time when we understand the true nature of the infrastructure required, Ms O'Connor, in answer to your question. I do not want to be specific about that at this stage.

**Mr O'Byrne** - My question is, are they linked to the point where if the city deal does not get up, then -

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - The city deal will proceed, so it is a moot point in many respects as the deal is moving forward. Metro is engaged in a demand study at this present time so we are very committed to the service. As to the underground bus mall - and I appreciate Mr Bacon's contribution today -

**Mr Bacon** - How much is it going to cost?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - The development of an underground bus mall was identified in the Hobart transport vision. A well-located and designed transit mall is a critical element to the operation of an integrated passenger transport network and while the competition for kerb space within the Hobart CBD will increase, alternatives must be considered if we recognise that the public transport system is to reach its full potential. As part of a coordinated approach to public transport the initiative is being pursued through the Hobart City Deal and it is too early at this stage to provide estimates of costs and completion dates. It is critical that the necessary planning work be permitted to be undertaken, including assessment of time frames for delivery.

The member for Denison, Ms O'Connor, asked where the city master plan was. The link between the city deal and a coordinated approach to transport planning has already been noted. The Government has stated its intention to leverage from work undertaken already to establish the first ever Greater Hobart transport master plan as part of the city deal.

**Ms O'Connor** - A master plan is about more than transport. It is also about how we house people and other zonings.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Land use planning.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I accept that. Operation of public transport services by Metro, the Government's intention is for a future ferry service to be operated by Metro Tasmania in order to best support development of an integrated transport service. Amendments to the Metro act provided by this bill increases the service delivery options available. However, the bill does not exclude other options or models should these prove to be capable of meeting the Government's expectations with regard to integration of services. The utilisation of a common ticketing system is integral to the delivery of an integrated urban transport system. We are all on the same page with respect to that. I made that very clear at the TasBus Association opening a few Saturdays ago. I note both Mr O'Byrne and Ms O'Connor were there, which I know was appreciated.

Under the bill, Metro Tasmania will have the statutory capacity to operate any mode of passenger transport services that the government deems necessary for the future transport needs of Hobart, including light rail. Light rail has been cited as one possible solution by the Hobart Transport Vision to meet the needs of Hobart's commuters in the future. The Government has undertaken to explore the viability of such a service as part of the Hobart City Deal and that is an exciting opportunity for the city.

The Government has engaged Metro Tasmania to undertake a demand study to better understand the role to be performed by a ferry service and inform its development. The Government has not placed a time frame on delivery of the ferry service at this stage but is focused on ensuring the critical elements to successfully deliver the services that are in place.

How does the bill affect Project 2018? Clause 5 amends the principal act such that the minister may form or participate in the formation of a company to perform functions relating to the operation of a public transport system. It also allows the company to perform functions relating to one or more public transport systems.

Mr Bacon, I was going to answer one of your questions about your individual constituent needs as to how Metro advises passengers about non-availability of accessible buses when the timetable



indicates a service will be accessible. It is by social media, Facebook and Twitter, and emails directly to any customers who have registered an email address to receive this advice. I will obtain the *Hansard* of your contribution because there were a number of questions in a couple of paragraphs. I will extract those questions and will write to you with the answers to those questions. I have not had the time to get all that information for you.

**Mr Bacon** - Thank you.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Metro will be able to perform functions relating to public bus transport and to public transport modes, such as ferries. Project 2018 is about contracting with bus operators for the delivery of bus services allowing Metro to expand its functions. It has no impact on that project and the purpose of the contracts to be agreed through that process.

Will the minister have the power to change fares? This was a question from both members. A proposed fare schedule would be set to apply over a period of time. For example, three or five years with a clear and transparent method for increasing fares periodically, such as through CPI increases. Before the new fare schedule is established for public bus services Cabinet will consider and approve the process for preparing the fare schedule, annual indexation provisions and the fare review mechanisms. Periodic reviews of fares that take into account the cost of travel and the appropriate level of government subsidies will form part of the processes for reviewing and adjusting prices under the new fare schedule. These reviews will consider all categories of fares and will be relevant for all providers of public bus services, not just Metro Tasmania.

The Economic Regulator has no role in relation to undertaking periodic reviews of bus fares. This ceased in 2014. Instead a fare schedule would be established by the Government and the Government can inform the development of the fare schedule drawing from many sources, including using the ad hoc inquiry powers of the Economic Regulator if required.

**Ms O'Connor** - Just for clarification that means that the minister has the authority to sign off on any fare increases or reject them?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Yes, Cabinet.

**Ms O'Connor** - Which is the way it should be. I have no problem with that.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Beyond the minister's decision there is no opportunity for the Opposition or the community to consult?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - We will be consulting on fare increases. We are very mindful of the cost of living concerns that both members have raised. With those concerns in mind in terms of the cost of living we would not anticipate a large jump in fare prices, but Cabinet will tick off on any increases, as I am informed.

Will there be a price shock for Metro passengers as a result of removing the current discrepancies in prices? This Government has established the principle that bus fare increases will be limited to not more than the CPI and this has been in operation since January 2018. The proposal is that all fares will be set by the one process to promote consistency. This includes ensuring that discrepancies like the one that currently occurs in the urban boundary is removed. Eliminating that step requires the ability to set fares that reflect the distance travelled rather than creating unofficial boundaries or a line on a map. This process will not mean that fares will automatically rise to match

those that apply in non-urban areas, but will rather create a consistent, smooth gradient across fares to reflect distance travelled.

Again a question from Mr Bacon, as of 30 June 2017, 52 per cent of the Metro fleet was accessible and 64 per cent of services were delivered by these buses.

**Ms O'Connor** - When is the time frame for 100 per cent?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - One hundred per cent of the Metro fleet will be accessible by 31 December 2022, which is consistent with the requirements of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act.

Regarding the governance amendments in this bill, this bill appropriately includes a clause to ensure there is a legislative requirement for a statement of expectation for Metro Tasmania.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Minister, before you move onto that bit I had a question regarding the Bellerive Quay and the marina development and the potential impact. You did not specifically deal with that.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Yes, but I will do that with the master plan.

The bill includes a clause to ensure there is a legislative requirement for a statement of expectation for Metro Tasmania. However, this amendment in isolation would have created further inconsistency between the legislated governance arrangements for state-owned companies. It is not often that the portfolio act for a state-owned company is amended and in considering the proposed changes for Metro Tasmania it is proposed that making one bill is the most efficient way to implement consistency.

Regarding the issues raised by Ms O'Connor and Mr O'Byrne about including clauses with implications for broader GBEs and state-owned companies, there is no conspiracy here. I note that you are supportive of the bill, regardless of raising this issue. The bill appropriately includes a clause to issue a statement of expectations as a legislative requirement for Metro. It is the Metro bill. It relates to the Government's expectation as to what Metro can operate, so I argue that it is appropriate for that to be included in this bill. In their previous roles, I am sure members understand that shareholder's statements of expectations are very important in ensuring the state-owned company is operating in such a way that is consistent with government policy and performance expectations.

Metro has one, as have other state-owned companies. Regardless of whether it is a legislative requirement, GBEs all have a ministerial charter that has a similar purpose to the statement of expectations. All we are doing in this bill is formalising what is currently common practice. In doing that, it is efficient and a way to mirror this across other state-owned companies which do not have the current legislative requirements, noting that the recently created companies do.

In this House we amend bills all the time which have then consequential amendments. This is an example of that.

The number of clauses is related to the number of state-owned companies and reflects the current level of inconsistency across the state-owned companies. The opportunity has also been taken to move clauses to create further consistency. The number of clauses does not directly relate to the substance of the amendments or the extent of the change that will arise from them being

introduced. For example, a statement of expectations has already been issued to all state-owned companies and the practice has been for it to be tabled in parliament.

The Minister for Infrastructure has responsibility for Metro, TT-Line, TasRail and TasPorts. Unlike the Government Business Enterprise Act, it provides the government's arrangements for all government business enterprises. The governance arrangements for state-owned companies come from a combination of the Corporations Act and the individual Portfolio Act of each state-owned company. If these were governance amendments being made for a government, this enterprise would be done through the Government Business Enterprise Act by the Treasurer. However, as it is for the portfolio act of all state-owned companies, and the Minister for Infrastructure individually has the responsibility for the portfolio act of the most state-owned companies and it is considered appropriate and efficiently to be done in this manner, the amendments have been supported by the Treasurer and other portfolio ministers.

The Treasurer's instruction issued to the Government Business Enterprise in relation to dividends references the requirements to follow the guidelines for Tasmanian Government businesses' dividends. That already applies to GBEs and state-owned companies so there will be no change to that practice.

The proposal for a ferry service between Sullivans Cove and Bellerive is not contingent on any one particular development but rather reflects a range of factors. We have asked TasPorts to explore all possibilities for delivering the required infrastructure for ferries. These will need to align with the developments at Bellerive Quay which includes consideration of appropriate facilities for a ferry berthing, passenger amenities and access to other areas of Bellerive Quay development.

I hope I have covered members concerns and questions. I thank members for not opposing this bill but supporting it.

**Bill read the second time**

**Bill read the third time.**

## **CORRECTIONS AMENDMENT (PRISONER REMISSION) BILL 2018 (No. 15)**

### **First Reading**

Bill presented by **Ms Archer** and read the first time.

## **HOUSING LAND SUPPLY BILL 2018 (No. 19)**

### **First Reading**

Bill presented by **Mr Jaensch** and read the first time.

## THREATENED SPECIES PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2018 (No. 8)

### Second Reading

[3.17 p.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Denison - Minister for Environment - 2R) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 to increase the penalties for taking threatened species in Tasmania.

The shooting of three threatened eagles since May last year has provoked community outrage and resulted in significant media attention on the penalties for taking these and other threatened species. The penalties relating to taking - or killing - threatened species are set out in sections 51 and 61 of the act. The current maximum fine is 100 penalty units, which currently equates to \$15 900, and there is no provision for a custodial sentence.

Monetary penalties for taking threatened species in other Australian jurisdictions range from \$10 000 in South Australia to \$500 000 in Western Australia. Custodial sentences - as well as, or instead of, fines - also apply in most other states and territories.

Recent changes to threatened species legislation in other Australian jurisdictions have consistently involved increasing penalties, with legislators pointing to growing community expectation that Australia's threatened plants and animals should be appropriately protected. In Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, the penalty for taking a threatened species can be a 24-month imprisonment term in addition to a substantial fine. In the Northern Territory, the penalty can include imprisonment for up to 10 years. Increasing the penalties for unlawfully taking threatened species in Tasmania will make Tasmania's legislation comparable with those other Australian jurisdictions that have contemporary threatened species legislation.

The amendment bill I put before you today will increase the number of penalty units for unlawfully taking threatened species from 100 to 629 penalty units. This represents an increase in the maximum penalty from \$15 900 to more than \$100 000. The amendment also provides for a custodial sentence for up to 12 months' imprisonment. The current daily penalty that may apply for each day during which an offence continues after conviction will also increase from 20 to 126 penalty units; an increase from \$3180 to \$20 034.

The substantial increase in fines and the threat of a custodial sentence will send a clear message about the seriousness of unlawfully taking threatened species in Tasmania and provide a significant deterrent and enhanced protection of Tasmania's unique flora and fauna.

I commend this bill to the House.

[3.20 p.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Denison) - Madam Speaker, the Labor Party is happy to support this legislation. I recognise that it is important and valuable legislation which, as we have heard the minister outline just now, sees a significant increase in penalties for the taking and killing of threatened species in Tasmania. It is worth noting that the bill means significant increases of those penalties from where they are today, and rightly so.

Currently the penalty for taking and killing threatened species is 100 penalty units which equates to \$15 900 and there are no custodial options in the penalty regime. This is out of step with other states, where penalties range from \$10 000 to \$500 000 and include custodial sentences. This legislation will increase the number of penalty units for unlawfully taking those threatened species from 100 penalty units to 629 penalty units, making the maximum penalty an increase from just over \$15 000 to over \$100 000. Once passed, this legislation will also allow for a custodial penalty of up to 12 months. I agree with the minister that the threat of a custodial penalty sends the community a very strong message about how seriously these offences are taken by the parliament and the community. This legislation will bring us into line with other states and territories and will show that the offences are taken seriously, as is the endangering of any Tasmanian threatened species.

In Tasmania we have more of the share of threatened species than other states. There are over 680 threatened species listed in Tasmania across flora and fauna, vascular and non-vascular plants, vertebrates and invertebrates. Many species that once lived here were once threatened, later became endangered and eventually became extinct. That is a terrible shame in our history. Legislation such as this that increases penalties for taking threatened species sends the right message to the community.

It has been said this bill was triggered by the shooting of a number of sea eagles in Tasmania over the last year or so. In 2017 one example of those shootings saw an eagle found shot and left for dead in the Gagebrook wetland reserve just outside of Hobart. The bird was found by a bird spotter and taken to a veterinary clinic in Kingston where X-rays were conducted that showed shotgun pellets inside the bird that was drastically injured. It was still alive when it was found but it had been shot up to 10 days previously. It is quite horrific to think of the bird lying there slowly starving to death until it was found. Its injuries were so severe that it had to be put down. Some wildlife advocates at the time said that shooting of large birds like that is sadly quite a regular occurrence and is sometimes carried out by the sorts of gun owners who shoot at road signs, farm equipment, and anything that moves. That was a quote in the paper last year from a particular wildlife advocate.

Many responsible shooters have also publicly expressed their outrage over shooting large birds, as in that example. Earlier last year another eagle was shot and taken to a wildlife refuge, where it died two days later. At that time an anonymous donor put up a \$12 000 reward for information that would lead to the shooter's conviction, so already we can see there is huge public sentiment for an increase in penalties and community outrage, quite rightly, at the treatment of threatened species in this way.

These were the motivations behind this legislation and the Labor Party is pleased to be supporting it. It is relevant that in today's paper there was quite a lovely article about wildlife photographer Mehrdad Abbasian that seemed quite timely to alert the parliament. For anyone who has not yet read it, Mr Abbasian captured an incredible image of white-bellied sea eagles at the Mersey River. They are on the threatened species list. He said that patience, research, and dedication as well as a little bit of luck is what it took to snap a particularly glorious photo like the one he snapped at that time. He has seen them at that spot before and said while there was a lot of luck involved with getting the shot just at that time, it also required a lot of research and studying of the species, its habitat and those particular birds' movements. It is a beautiful story about someone being able to enjoy those beautiful creatures and take that photograph because they are still with us, as they should continue to be.

I note that the department of Primary Industries and Water has a recovery plan in place for threatened eagles. That plan notes that white-bellied sea eagles such as the ones photographed by Mr Abbasian are distributed around the coastal perimeter and inland lakes of Tasmania. The plan also looks after wedge-tailed eagles, which are endemic to Tasmania and occur throughout our beautiful state. It notes that white-bellied sea eagles are listed in Tasmania as vulnerable and under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act are a migratory species. The white-bellied sea eagle has also been listed as a threatened species in Victoria and South Australia.

The Tasmanian population is listed as threatened for the following reasons: their population is believed to be fewer than 1000 mature birds; the population may be declining; it is subject to a number of identified and ongoing threatening processes; and it occurs in a single population in Tasmania. A critical habitat for the survival of this species is defined by its nesting habitat, and the white-bellied sea eagle has a less specific nesting requirement than some other eagles, although they favour larger trees when available, especially in mainland Tasmania and on the larger islands. Generally, this species nest in mature forests within five kilometres of large water bodies, or more rarely on sea cliffs and rock stacks. Occasionally, on offshore islands, they nest in low coastal scrub where cliffs or small trees are not available. Large estuaries and convoluted coastlines are the favoured sites for both nesting and foraging, as these provide a longer interface between land and water. Density is lower on the west and south coasts and this is possibly due to the lack of forest shelter from high winds. The plan notes several threats to eagles, including loss of habitat, disturbance of nests and natural mortality, including shooting, poisoning, trapping, electrocution, oiling, entanglement, pollution and collision with power lines, vehicles, fences, and wind turbines.

The objectives of the plan are to increase the effectiveness of predictive nesting habitat models for application statewide; reducing the proportion and number of nests found prior to rather than during development on all tenures including, but not restricted to forestry operations and land clearance; reducing the precaution of nests subject to disturbance; identifying human-induced causes of feeding failure and mitigate against such causes; increasing breeding successes; increasing the number and density of active territories; developing and applying protocols for effective eagle management during all land development; monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of management prescriptions; implementing prescriptive nest reserves for conserving nesting habitats; identifying new threats and implementing strategies for their mitigation; reducing the occurrence of eagle mortality and injuries in number and proportion, particularly those attributable to human activities; engaging the electricity industry in reducing the proportion of eagle collisions and electrocutions; responding to inquiries for information on eagle management by affected interests of the public; and undertaking research into eagle biology that targets improved species management.

While many of these are issues for the Government to consider more broadly, including how we protect threatened bird life with the increase in wind energy in Tasmania; increasing penalties for trapping and killing threatened species goes some of the way to sending that right message.

Another wonderful example of great work being done to protect threatened species in Tasmania is the Save the Tasmanian Devil program. This is a fulsome program including a whole range of elements, including the ambassador program, which sees suitable Tasmanian devils sent to world-class zoos as ambassadors. Some good news recently was that two new ambassador devils, Smiley and Levi, were transported to New Zealand to take part in the Strangely Beautiful Australia exhibit. Those two devils joined Herod, who was already in New Zealand as part of the Tasmanian Devil Ambassador Program.

Other parts of the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program include annual monitoring, captive management, as well as projects looking at research and collaboration, road kill and wild devil recovery.

The Tasmanian devil is a unique creature and very special to us in Tasmania. Historically they were present on the mainland too, but they are thought to have become extinct on the mainland more than 3000 years ago, which is long before European invasion and settlement. However, while the devil is now an icon in Tasmania it was not always considered so special. Apparently, early settlers in Hobart Town complained of raids on poultry yards and in 1830 there was a bounty scheme for the removal of devils from properties. Incidentally, that bounty scheme also applied to thylacines and no doubt contributed to their eventual extinction. For more than a century devils were trapped and poisoned until they became rare, then endangered and headed for extinction. They then became protected by law in the 1940s and numbers slowly began to increase again.

In 1996 devils were once again under threat this time from the devil facial tumour disease. From this has born the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program. In 2009 the federal government listed the devil as endangered under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. This followed Tasmania's listing of the devil as endangered, which occurred in 2008. In late 2008, the Tasmanian devil was listed as endangered on the red list of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, which is widely considered the most authoritative system for classifying species at risk of extinction. The Tasmanian devil remains wholly protected. In part thanks to these listings and to the Save the Devil Program populations of Tasmanian devils remain widespread across the state. They live in coastal heath, open dry forest and mixed rainforest.

I am sure I was not the only one in this Chamber who recently enjoyed watching the David Attenborough program on Tasmania's wilderness. We saw firsthand the beautiful cinematography by Chilean-born Max Moller, who filmed that amazing documentary looking at a whole range of Tasmanian animals including the Tasmanian devil. I thought to myself that anyone who has not visited Tasmania may have come away thinking that every Tasmanian bushwalk comes with the soundtrack of screeching devils. I was not sure if that is a good or a bad thing in reducing or increasing tourist numbers, but time will tell. Anyone who has not seen that documentary it is still available on IView. I recommend having a look.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Max did a great job.

**Ms HADDAD** - Yes, it was overwhelmingly beautiful footage, wasn't it? It was very beautiful.

Labor is pleased to support this legislation, but before I conclude my remarks it is important to note the significant cuts in staff that have been seen across the public service, across a whole range of departments since the election of the Hodgman Government. On 7 September last year, Threatened Species Day, the Community Public Sector Union Tasmanian Branch called for the Threatened Species Unit to be added to the threatened list. The Threatened Species Unit is part of the Department of Primary, Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and was established in 1995 when the Threatened Species Protection Act commenced. At that time, and still, 680 species were listed in schedules of the act as either endangered, vulnerable, rare or at risk. We are told that the Threatened Species Unit had historically been funded through a combination of Commonwealth grants allocated to address specific species concerns, or through agreements such as the Regional Forest Agreement and state government funding.

Both state and federal governments have turned their backs on threatened species and the number of staff at that time in the Threatened Species Unit had reduced from around 15 FTEs to just 2.8 FTEs. I acknowledge that was September last year. I ask the minister in her summing up on the bill to let us know what the FTEs are currently in the Threatened Species Unit and whether any other departmental restructures that have occurred since that time in September last year, may have affected the work of the Threatened Species Unit in either a positive or negative way?

The Commonwealth Public Sector Union has a campaign underway at the moment regarding Commonwealth cuts to this area. They have a petition circulating which tells us that most threatened species could slip into extinction because of the federal coalition government which is slashing jobs of 60 people working to protect them. The coalition government has used the budget to rip support out from Tasmania's biodiversity conservation work, cutting up to a third of the Department of Environment and Energy staff who work to stop Australia's accelerating extinction rate. Seventeen birds and mammals are expected to disappear in the next 20 years unless Australia improves its protection of threatened species and their habitat. This threatens the survival of species, including the orange-bellied parrot, the northern hopping mouse, and the helmeted honey eater. These cuts are within the control of the federal Minister for Environment and Energy, Josh Frydenberg. They tell us the Australian rates of species extinction are some of the highest in the world. Right now, due to a lack of resourcing, around a third of our threatened species are not monitored at all.

The Commonwealth Government has cut \$14.8 million in this coming budget which is a small saving for the government at the expense of threatened species in our natural environment. Australians know our threatened species and the environment are valuable and worth protecting, that climate change needs serious responses from governments, state and federal and that we need long-term resourcing for policy protection and regulation. I ask the minister, acknowledging those cuts were made in the federal budget, if she can let us know whether any of that \$14.8 million of federal funding that has been cut from the federal Department of Environment and Energy will have any effect on Tasmania and whether the minister has expressed concern over these cuts to her federal counterpart.

[3.38 p.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I support the Threatened Species Protection Amendment Bill 2018. The purpose of the bill is to increase penalties for taking or killing threatened species in Tasmania. Recent changes to the threatened species legislation in other Australian jurisdictions have consistently involved increasing penalties for taking these threatened species. Increasing penalties for taking threatened species in Tasmania will make Tasmania's legislation comparable with other Australian jurisdictions with contemporary threatened species legislation.

The days of bounties for the destruction of the thylacine and wedge-tailed eagles are now no longer acceptable. Government policy is now reflecting that change. The current global rate extinction of plant and animal species has no historical precedent and is considerably greater than the rate of extinctions that would occur naturally.

We now know that within the last 200 years Australia has seen a wave of plants and animal extinctions. So great is the human impact since European settlement that 50 per cent of the known mammal extinctions worldwide since then have occurred in Australia. Tasmania is not untouched. They Tasmanian thylacine, once the largest carnivorous marsupial in the world, became extinct through over-hunting as did the Tasmanian dwarf emu and King Island emu. The Macquarie Island



parakeet and the Macquarie Island rail became extinct mainly through the predation by feral cats introduced to the island.

A significant number of plant extinctions have also occurred in Tasmania through land development which resulted in the loss of habitat. Plants extinct in the wild in Tasmania include the giant New Holland daisy, the brown guinea flower, the black bristle-rush and the coast banksia.

In total, 41 plant and animal species are recorded as having become extinct in Tasmania in last 200 years.

Government and community attitudes towards nature conservation have changed dramatically since European settlement. My electorate of Lyons features the vast amount of the lowland native grasslands which are a critically endangered, ecological community listed under national environment law. Native grasslands are generally defined as areas of native vegetation, dominated by native grasses with few or no emergent woody species. Herbaceous plants are the dominant life form in Tasmania's low land native grasslands with most of the biomass consisting of a single dominant species, for example kangaroo grass or silver tussock grass. Despite the dominance of grass species, grasslands can be extremely rich in other plant species such as lilies, daisies and orchids which often occupy the spaces between the native grass tussocks.

There are various types of native grassland in Tasmania but this ecological community is comprised of two major sub types, differentiated by the dominant native perennial grass species. That is the lowlands silver tussock grassland and the lowland kangaroo grass grassland.

The vegetation of the lowland native grasslands of Tasmania, ecological community is mostly limited to a ground layer of grasses and other herbs. Trees and shrubs are usually absent to sparse and the grasslands typically occur in areas up to 600 metres above sea level.

The remnant lowland native grasslands of Tasmania are regarded as one of Tasmania's most threatened and fragmented ecosystems and the most depleted vegetation formation in Tasmania. The lowland native grasslands of Tasmania ecological community generally exist as small fragmented remnants within its range. More than 83 per cent has been lost since European settlement. The majority of patches are found on private land. Implementing or continuing sustainable land use practice is encouraged at sites containing this ecological community. The lowland native grasslands of Tasmania provide vital support to a diverse range of plants and animals that are important for maintaining and improving biodiversity. They also support our bee colonies which are extremely important for our biodiversity.

Threatened species, as above, are not just in my electorate of Lyons. There are more than 600 species of plants and animals that are threatened in Tasmania. They are classified according to their level of threat as endangered, vulnerable or rare in the schedules of the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995.

This strategy is being developed to outline the approach to conserving Tasmania's threatened species and has the following aims:

- (1) to ensure that threatened species can survive and flourish in the wild.
- (2) to ensure that threatened species and their habitats retain their genetic diversity and potential for evolutionary development.

- (3) to prevent further species becoming threatened.

The strategy also takes two broader approaches towards these objectives:

- (1) addressing key threatening processes; and
- (2) addressing priority threatened species.

The strategy identifies six points of reference as having the greatest impacts and they are considered in detail: clearance of native vegetation; impacts of pests, weeds and diseases; degradation of water systems; inappropriate use of fire; inappropriate and illegal harvesting; and impacts of stock.

By increasing penalties for taking or harming threatened species, we can bring our legislation into line with other Australian jurisdictions. By adding another component to our threatened species strategy, we have an even better chance of stopping extinction of some of our threatened species.

I draw your attention to the orange-bellied parrot. I spoke to former member David Llewellyn this morning. He feels quite strongly about this.

**Mr Hidding** - He was the minister when most of them disappeared.

**Ms BUTLER** - Yes, not that it had anything to do with him. The orange-bellied parrot is approximately 200 millimetres long. They are quite tiny - a little larger than a budgerigar - and its plumage is bright grass green above and mostly yellow below with the bright orange patch in the centre of its lower belly. It has a bright azure blue patch on the outer wing and a blue bar across the forehead above the nostrils. It is on the brink of extinction. The orange-bellied parrot has been ranked one of the world's most rare and endangered species. The main threats to that particular species include habitat loss and modification, and cats and foxes also are a major issue - that is if we do have foxes. There are foxes where they migrate to, but not here in Tasmania that we know of.

Let us not talk about the foxes. Other threats include the spread of noxious weeds, mortality caused by collisions with structures, and inbreeding due to a small population and other genetic factors. What is being done to save the orange-bellied parrot? In 2006 the Australian Government, together with other state governments and organisations like Birdlife Australia, committed \$3.2 million to protect and expand OBP habitat by working with landholders in their winter breeding grounds in Victoria and South Australia. Conserving breeding and nesting habitats in Tasmania was also another major part of that funding. Other strategies included improving important migratory habitat and controlling predators in north-west Tasmania and on King Island, and managing and enhancing the OBP captive breeding program.

I reiterate my support for this bill, and my colleague's words, by saying the substantial increase in fines and the threat of a custodial sentence will send a clear message about the seriousness of unlawfully taking threatened species in Tasmania. They will provide a significant deterrent and enhance protection of Tasmania's irreplaceable and magnificent flora and fauna.

[3.47 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Greens support this bill as we supported the bill when it came before the House last November and was passed, but I believe did not make

it to be debated by the upper House. That is why it is back here today in the same form that it was in when it came before us as the Threatened Species Amendment Bill 2017.

We support this bill. It is a very necessary part of protecting endangered species, particularly protecting wedge-tailed eagles and other raptors and birds of prey that are attacked, either through acts of purposeful maliciousness or less actively. This is about active and purposeful damaging of wedge-tailed eagles. This bill represents just a tiny part of the work that must be done to protect threatened species like the wedge-tailed eagle. It is not nearly enough to ensure their protection by introducing tougher penalties.

The minister made a strong statement about the Australian community's concerns, their expectations that Australian plant and animal species should be protected. It is the same community that has expectations of this Government to do so much more than they are currently doing to protect threatened species and to stop doing the things that they are doing which are actively endangering threatened species in this state.

We should be looking at a bill here today which is holding this Government to account and essentially taking them to the court of public opinion about the damage they are inflicting every day on threatened species in Tasmania. The fact that we have threatened species still hanging precariously to existence in some parts of Tasmania is thanks very much to the hard, unrelenting and passionate work of people such as Christine Milne, Dr Bob Brown, and the many generations of environmentalists and activists in Tasmania who put their lives and energies and sometimes bodies on the line to protect the forests which provide the homes and environment where these animals live.

Without those people caring for the places these threatened species inhabit we would not have anything like the diversity of species in Tasmania. So many of them are threatened and seriously endangered; 680 species are listed as endangered, vulnerable or rare, at risk of not surviving, some of them perhaps not past next summer. We do not know whether some of them are still surviving at all because we do not have any research being undertaken by this minister's department about the existence of many of these threatened species.

This is very important work and it has come to pass because of the very hard work of predominantly Mr Craig Webb from the Raptor Refuge in Kettering. It was Craig Webb's work and the other volunteers who work at the Raptor Refuge. I met Natalie and some of the other people who volunteer their time to look after the raptors which are provided to that refuge because they are the only people in Tasmania who take care of those birds when they are seriously damaged. I went out there recently and saw one pen Mr Webb has erected, a huge space that had six wedge-tailed eagles that will be living there for the rest of their lives. They are all survivors of electrocution which has knocked them off the perch they have tried to settle on at the top of a TasNetworks' pole or a wire where wind has knocked them off and they have electrocuted their wings and fallen to the ground and broken bones. These birds are being cared for and protected by volunteers in southern Tasmania on behalf of us all. It is work that should really be undertaken with the support of the state. These are our iconic species. The wedge-tailed eagle, the goshawk and the white-bellied sea eagle are birds which are incredibly beautiful and occur in Tasmania like nowhere else on Earth.

There are many actions that need to be taken to protect threatened species in Tasmania. Providing criminal penalties which are serious demonstrates that shooting or killing threatened species is considered to be a serious offence. That is very important. We have a list of other things that this Government must be doing to make sure that the threatened species move from the

endangered, threatened or rare list onto the plentiful, surviving and flourishing list, because that is where we would all like them to be.

There are three things that this Government particularly needs to concentrate on. They need to stop cutting down the habitat these species need for their food and homes. They need to understand and prevent the impact on other major industries, such as tourism and the fish farm industry, and on the environments that are protected such as national parks, World Heritage Areas, recreation areas and conservation reserves. The Government also needs to fund the management and recovery work for threatened species.

The principal driver in Tasmania for why we have so many species on the threatened species list - apparently 680 - is because of this relentless attack on wilderness and on native forests. It cannot be the case that we can seriously bring in a bill which is trying to protect threatened species on the one hand and have another proposal to go into the 356 000 hectares of forest which are sitting in a reserve to be protected until 2020, without understanding that going into those forests is about going into habitat for these threatened species.

I went back to the work that the Greens did around the attempt by Mr Barnett to move into the 356 000 hectares of high-conservation forest and bring in the cable logging and the chainsawing. These forests are high-conservation value, recognised as such under the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement by both the environmental movement and the forestry industry. The 356 000 hectares was established by an independent, very long scientific assessment that was extremely extensive and identified, lot by lot, area by area, the forest type, the threatened flora and fauna and the other values in each of these lots. They were set aside for protection for the future of those forests and for all humans on this planet into the future to wonder and experience the sorts of species that live there and the beauty and tranquillity of these places which are like nowhere else on Earth.

If the minister would like to really step up managing threatened species, I can point out some places which her own colleague, Mr Barnett, has on the chopping block that contain habitat for wedge-tailed eagles or known wedge-tailed eagle nests. These are in the Tarkine: the Duck River lot, the Frankland River lot, the Dempster Plains, the Horton River, the Windsworth Hills and Arthur River lots, the Black River area, the Dip River, the Flowerdale River and the Hellyer River. All of these places, just in the Tarkine, have acknowledged habitat for the wedge-tailed eagle and sites of wedge-tailed eagle nests.

These are some places just in the Tarkine, which as you would be quite aware, coming from Braddon, the important work that people who are protesting; activists who are putting their lives on the line, showing other people and their community that they care about these places. They are going out in cold, wet and wild weather to sit in those forests and demonstrate their support for the other animals and species that live there; to demonstrate their support with other people around Tasmania who are prepared to do whatever it takes to protect those forests. You cannot re-plant those forests. You cannot go back in and re-seed the natural landscape.

It is those landscapes which are also under threat, should the Dover woodchip export facility go ahead. The forests around Geeveston have the swift parrot habitat. The goshawk, and wedge-tailed eagle habitats are all in the Geeveston area. It is those forests that would be part of the logs that would end up in Southwood and be chipped and exported each year through the Port Esperance woodchip port.

It is madness. We have, on the one hand, a bill to protect wedge-tail eagles and other birds, yet at the same time, this Government is still going into forests on the east coast of Tasmania that have swift parrot nesting and breeding habitat. The other aspect of this cognitive dissonance of this Government is the way it mismanages the other industries of salmon and tourism. We have in salmon farming, known threats to endangered species such as the maugean skate.

This minister has demonstrated effectively a complete lack of interest in doing any funding or research within her department of threatened species monitoring. We have no information about the impact on the maugean skate from the intensive and industrial-scale salmon farming that has been happening in Macquarie Harbour. Although reports have been outsourced by IMAS, we would not know what the outcomes of those research reports are. We would love to have some information on how many years of survival the maugean skate's eggs have. I heard that there is real concern from scientists that the very low oxygen levels at the bottom of Macquarie Harbour mean that the skate is not able reproduce in the time frames it normally would.

When I was preparing for this bill today, I revisited the second reading speech I made last year. That day was 30 November. I made a comment then that the temperature in Tasmania was 33 degrees on that day. That was a very high temperature. Something that was happening at the same time was extremely warm waters around the coast of Tasmania, particularly in Macquarie Harbour. We were hearing unvalidated reports of mass numbers of salmon dying in Macquarie Harbour but there was no confirmation from this Government. Despite environmentalists and the Greens asking questions, the minister for Primary Industry refused to provide any evidence about that. It is clear that farmed salmon do not like warm water. They do not like water that has almost no oxygen in it. What we had in Macquarie Harbour last summer was a toxic soup where large numbers of salmon initially died from a herpes virus. Then, about two months after the state election, when the Government had effectively kept the lid on the details of what happened, we found out that 1.35 million salmon had died in Macquarie Harbour. That is not a figure that has been recorded at any other time in the history of Tasmania. I am not aware how many other countries regularly have mortalities of 1.35 million farmed salmon fish. I am guessing it not anything like world's best practice for this to occur.

My point is, what else has been happening under this Environment minister's watch to the threatened species in Macquarie Harbour? What else is happening to the world heritage values in Macquarie Harbour? What else will be assessed in Storm Bay? Is the minister for threatened species going to be looking after the impacts of intensive farmed salmon on migratory whales? What about the spotted handfish in Ralphs Bay? What about the kelp forests off Kingston?

This minister has not called in a number of things which need to have an intensive assessment to look at the impact on Commonwealth threatened species. Where is the assessment on the spotted handfish in Ralphs Bay for the Storm Bay proposal? Unless we look at the whole environment and the cumulative impacts of industries, we cannot possibly properly understand the impact on species.

This bill is an example -

**Ms Archer** - You are never happy.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - It is an example of fiddling around with the small things instead of going back to the top and looking at the big issue.

The big issue is what the priorities are that guide the direction of government, that drive the direction of this state, so we can be confident in 50 years or 100 years' time we Tasmanian people will be travelling in this state with a whole lot of other species; that we are not going to be living in a place that has a couple of birds and a couple of plants. We should be living in a place that has our iconic species living and travelling with us, that we still have wedge-tailed eagles, white-bellied sea eagles, beautiful tawny frogmouths, blue lobsters, maugean skates and migratory whales. These are the things we, and people who come here to visit us, value.

If we truly want to protect them, we need to do a few things. We need to put some serious money into stopping illegal land clearing which is occurring throughout eastern and many regional parts of Tasmania. We need changes to the planning scheme to put biodiversity protection above developments. That is a first order priority that must be dealt with before a development application can proceed. We need to get rid of the corrupt processes we have in place at the moment. They have delivered us secretive, environmentally damaging changes to the Tasmanian World Heritage management plan. It has been done without consultation and against the directives of the World Heritage Committee and have opened up our parks and wild places in Tasmania to unfettered tourism development.

You only have to look at the leaked copy of the Reserve Activity Assessment the Greens talked about in parliament this morning and to read a few of the things proposed to understand this has nothing to do with protecting wilderness but has everything to do with making money from it. It says the developments in Lake Malbena are proposed to provide 'privileged access' to Tasmania's wilderness. It will involve the costs to individuals of \$4250 per person. This is about making money. This has nothing to do with protecting threatened species. The most cynical thing of all in light of this is that parts of this reserve activity assessment require 'pruning the wilderness' for occupational health and safety. Since when do you go into wilderness and prune it for OH&S? That is just so mad.

What this will do is remove six alpine yellow gums so they will not affect the buildings that are being put into Lake Malbena. What sort of a proposal in a World Heritage Wilderness Area takes down threatened species to protect buildings that are being put up? It is the sort of proposal that gets through with a government that does not prioritise wilderness values.

Going back to eagles for the moment and paying attention to them, as this bill is all about, the best thing this minister could do for the eagles in Tasmania is to direct TasNetworks to establish a memorandum of understanding with a place like the Raptor Refuge or other such conservation group or body to create the sorts of management and operational practices that are required to have no electrocutions of wedge-tailed eagles in Tasmania. That is achievable. It is what happens in South Africa. South Africa is a very poor and very large country relative to the size of Tasmania. They have a vast electrical network across the whole country. They have a demonstrated commitment that they have been working on for 21 years where they provide immediate changes to their electrical overhead wires when birds - and they have very large birds in South Africa - get electrocuted on a particular section of wire. This changes because bird movements change. They are so responsive that they send people out immediately the next day to check the issue and change that piece of infrastructure to make sure the birds can see it and are protected. This is what we can do in Tasmania. We can do this in our state and all it would take is for the minister to direct TasNetworks to do this as a matter of priority.

**Ms Archer** - I can't direct TasNetworks to do such a thing.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - You can so.

**Ms Archer** - I cannot.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Yes, you can. You can make this a policy.

**Ms Archer** - I am not responsible for TasNetworks.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - You can make it a policy statement. This can be a policy directive to prioritise the birds to ensure they are not electrocuted. It is entirely possible.

**Ms O'Connor** - If the Government wanted to do that of course it could.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Absolutely.

**Ms Archer** - Like when you were in government you did it? Not.

**Ms O'Connor** - I wasn't the environment minister, sadly, or the minister for energy.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Dr Woodruff has the call.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - We would also call on the Government to take a serious look at the under-resourcing of the Threatened Species Unit. In the last four years the Parks and Wildlife Division and the experts within it have been gutted. There is barely a person left in the Threatened Species Unit. I have said before and unfortunately it remains to be true that the Threatened Species Unit itself is a threatened species. Only a couple of people are left working in the area. There is almost no content and expertise. There were 15 staff but by last November there were only 2.8 full-time equivalent staff.

We have a Government that is pushing development further into our wild places around the state. They are pushing secretive expression of interest processes across the state that are giving us, for example, the Rosny Hill development on the eastern shore of Tasmania, in Bellerive, a beautiful nature recreation area. Why would you want to do anything with that place, except perhaps put some rubbish bins up there? People living there have been asking for rubbish bins for 30 years. People would not mind a toilet either. That would not be too much to ask for. Everyone would agree it needs a toilet, rubbish bins and some people would agree it needs a cafeteria. Instead, what we have is a proposal to scalp the top off the hill, essentially to denude it of threatened species, and to give it over to a private developer. That is the priority of this Government.

**Time expired.**

[4.16 p.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I echo the sentiments of our shadow and Ms Haddad, who has indicated the Labor Party's support for this important bill in terms of increasing the penalties around dealing with threatened species. It is an issue that shows the journey Tasmanians have been on in valuing what is special about this place. When you look at the fact sheet, it refers to the fact that the shooting of three threatened eagles since last May has provoked community outrage and resulted in significant media attention. It was not long ago where acts such as this would not have created such outrage or media attention. It shows the journey Tasmania has been on in understanding not only what is special about this place but the kind of unique animals

we have that need as much support as possible from its government and its people to ensure that threatened species are given the best chance to be removed from that list and returned to a sustainable population.

The interaction between people and the environment around us creates significant tensions, particularly and historically with the agricultural communities in dealing with species that see agricultural activities as an opportunity for a bit of food or activity, which creates some challenges for the farming community. That does not in any way justify any action in response from any part of our community in attacking, killing and responding to what is a natural activity of our most special species in Tasmania.

It is good this bill has been introduced as a response to the shooting of three threatened eagles but we should also acknowledge the advocacy on behalf of threatened species in Tasmania by not only members of environment groups or political parties but people across the community, regardless of their political stripes, feel strongly about our species, particularly those that are threatened and are at risk from either human activity or activity that occurs in the wild.

I acknowledge that this is not the basis of one political view or one group. There are people across the political spectrum who feel strongly about these issues. Having said that, there are obviously environment groups that lead the charge on this and provide the opportunity to allow other people to give voice to those campaigns.

We welcome the bill. I echo the concerns raised by our shadow, Ms Haddad, regarding the impact on the Threatened Species Unit by a combination of federal and state government cuts, which has meant that the Threatened Species Unit - and those who work within it - has been severely curtailed. Late last year the unit was reduced from 15 full-time people, down to just 2.8. You can imagine the morale of those people who are left dealing with what is, because of human activity, a tsunami of a threat against threatened species. We need a well functioning, well resourced unit to respond to the threats and to the dangers which evolve over time, and which look different in different parts of our state. The fact that those numbers have been reduced so significantly should be a concern for all of us.

You cannot say in one breath that you care about our threatened species and you want to protect them, and then by your actions cut the government's capacity to respond, to have plans and to work with resource management groups and industry groups. It is a complex policy mix to deal with this.

It is not just in the environment portfolio; it is in the energy portfolio, particularly with wind farms and electrical assets, which do cause some difficulty and some challenges for our species in how they get around. That is also a real threat and so it is always a balance. When you get species that are listed on the Threatened Species List that indicates that government and the community needs to do more to protect those species.

I understand the minister has been asked this question and I look forward to the response in terms of the resources, and also the minister's activities in raising these resource issues with her federal counterpart. I am not sure if you had a ministerial council prior to this. This looks different in different states; different frameworks are required. Being a former environment minister for a period of seven months, back in 2010, I went to a couple of ministerial council meetings. I went to the last one that the honourable Frank Sartor attended, when he was heading towards his final election campaign. He retired and he went out with a bang. He was very vocal and said, 'If we are going to do something, let us have a crack. Let us not just put out a statement at the end of this



ministerial council meeting, that means nothing and does not actually take the show forward'. Whilst you probably wanted a stronger communiqué out of that ministerial council, he inspired the then federal minister, Tony Burke, to do a bit more than probably would have happened.

It does rely on ministers at the table to advocate strongly for national and federal resources, particularly coming from Tasmania, given we are expected to, and have taken, a lead role around the table for a number of years. It is disappointing. I raise that in context of the significant cut to the unit which advises the work of those ministerial councils.

Like Ms Haddad, I also acknowledge the film work of Max Moller and his efforts in highlighting the beauty of Tasmanian species and the particular special nature of Tasmanian animals. I have known Mr Moller for a number of years. His passion for Tasmania, his love of the place and his energy is infectious and overwhelming. When you live in a place, you are brought up there and your family has been there for a long time sometimes you do take this place for granted. Sometimes it takes someone from outside to say 'Do you realise how special this place is in some of the things that are here'. Max's passion has worn off on not only thousands of Tasmanians but hundreds of thousands of Australians and people from around the globe.

Our daughters go to gymnastics together at Kingborough. We would be sitting around waiting for the kids to finish and he would tell me about his weekends out in the bush and the wild and his former Chilean military service. He has all the commando gear and all the strategies and he goes into the bush. He would tell me the stories. He would be laying in wait in full camouflage, just waiting for one of our beautiful animals to appear. We saw that on the David Attenborough program a few Sundays ago. The efforts that he would go to, not only weekends, not in just a week or a month but over a long period of time, to capture what was some of the most amazing footage of uniquely Tasmanian animals some of which, unfortunately, are under threat. It was spectacular.

When I congratulated him he was very quick to talk about the work of Black Devil Productions but also those others that work with him - Nick Heyward and Simon Plowright of Wild Creature Films who managed to film those Tasmanian devils inside the den. I will not go into too much detail about the activities of the Tasmanian devils in the den. You will have to see that for yourself but it is a particular part of their life cycle and their work. It was amazing being so close to the action in terms of the platypus running between creeks. As Luke Martin from the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania pointed out, you cannot pay for that footage. We know on the night in Australia 750 000 people saw that program and it out rated a heavily-promoted political interview on the other station, which it should have. That kind of advertising, that kind of filming and the images captured speak volumes about Tasmania, about the place and why we all love and care for it so deeply.

It is not just the filming that Max did. Sir David Attenborough did not wake up one morning and think, 'I might get a few people to do a documentary on Tasmania'. The work that Max had to do to talk himself into a conference, to talk himself into the front row with the gift of a platypus and in the question and answer session with Sir David Attenborough to get in his face and talk about Tasmania. That put it on the radar and he was able to convince David Attenborough's people that this is something of worth. This is something that they should follow up.

This film and the vision taken by Max and those I have already mentioned was absolutely stunning. In the context of this bill and in valuing our species, valuing our animals in Tasmania we know will take constant vigilance and we should not relax. I know Max is retired from wildlife film making, which is bizarre. I am sure we can start a petition to get Max to take up the camera

again because it was absolutely beautiful and it showed in glorious pictures the beauty of Tasmania and our flora and fauna.

It was important to put that on the record given this is a bill talking about increased protection for our threatened species. There is no greater motivation for us in this House and those around the world to protect our species when you can see how beautiful they are in the images taken by Max Moller. I again indicate, as our shadow has, that we will support the bill.

[4.30 p.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Denison - Minister for Environment) - Mr Deputy Speaker, before I address the questions I join in the last comments that were made about Max's filming efforts. I had not met Max in person until the week that it was about to go to air. I had not yet received an email that he thought he had sent or was about to send. He started talking to me and I had a very blank expression on my face. My apologies to Max for not knowing who he was at the time until he explained what he was talking about. It is truly wonderful footage.

We can all agree that when we travel, when we come home it reminds us that we do live in a very special place. Despite one of the contributions from someone who never seems to be happy with what this Government brings forward, this is a very important amendment bill. It is not only in recognition of the cases of the three eagle shootings that we have seen in the media, but it has brought to the forefront exactly what is happening and why there is a need to make our penalties more contemporary, particularly for the taking offence.

There are smugglers out there. There is a market for threatened species, unfortunately. Sometimes the penalty is much lower so they are prepared to take that risk. We have to keep looking at penalties across the board in a number of different laws. In this particular case to have a significant deterrent we have to increase the penalties significantly. That is the purpose of this amendment bill.

However, the debate, as usual, has ranged more broadly than that. I am not complaining about that. I will endeavour to respond to specific questions that have been put.

As I have explained I brought this bill into the House on the last sitting day so there was not any time for the bill to be dealt with in the other place. In the interim there was another fatal shooting of an endangered wedge-tailed eagle in the Launceston area in April. It is a heinous act and we can all agree on that. It deserves to be condemned and whoever is responsible needs to face the consequences of their actions. That particular shooting is still being investigated by wildlife enforcement rangers from DPIPWE.

This Government is committed to changing the laws. That is the purpose of this amendment bill today. We want to send a clear message that this will not be tolerated in our state. As this bill envisages to achieve, it should act as a significant deterrent to those who commit these heinous acts.

A number of members asked about Threatened Species Unit. There is a significant amount that I want to go through in relation to this. I explained this during the last debate, but the Threatened Species Unit does not sit alone. There are numerous staff members across DPIPWE who deal with these issues every day across the state. They see it as their duty in their roles to protect threatened species. The Threatened Species Unit within DPIPWE currently employs 2.9 FTEs. When I came before the House on the last occasion it was 3.3.

**Dr Woodruff** - It has gone down; there are even fewer.

**Ms ARCHER** - Let me explain before I am interrupted please, Dr Woodruff.

It consists of five staff members. Recruitment of an additional full-time threatened special botanist is also underway. The staff comprise highly qualified professionals with expertise in zoology, botany and ecology. Over the past several years the number of FTEs in the Threatened Species Unit has fluctuated due the temporary amalgamation of another section in 2013-14 financial year and the completion of fixed-term contracts. The department continues to review staffing levels in order to ensure it is able to meet statutory and other obligations and more -

**Dr Woodruff** - You are not able to. There used to be 15 staff. The fluctuations are in your control.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask the member listens to my contribution.

**Ms O'Connor** - You are misrepresenting the facts.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. The minister will be heard without interjection.

**Ms ARCHER** - I sat there in relative silence. I would like to have an opportunity to explain to you how the department works. Clearly the member for Franklin, Dr Woodruff, does not have an understanding. I do not expect her to understand how it works across the department. I did not know how to explain it until I became -

**Dr Woodruff** interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. This is not a debate. This is a ministerial response to questions raised. The minister will be heard without constant interjection.

**Ms ARCHER** - Mr Deputy Speaker, the department continues to review staffing levels in order to ensure it is able to meet statutory and other obligations and ensure effective outcomes for our unique plants and animals.

Aside from the dedicated staff in the Threatened Species Unit, threatened species management has become of the daily business for many areas of DPIPW. It extends to agencies as diverse as Tasmania Police, the Tasmanian Fire Service, and the Department of State Growth, reflecting how seriously this Government takes the protection of our unique species. Within DPIPW there is a dedicated program for the orange-bellied parrot with staff of nine FTEs and a budget of more than \$650 000 per year as well as the specific investment of \$2.5 million to build a new captive breeding facility for this critically endangered species.

**Dr Woodruff** - That's federal money, isn't it? None of that is state money.

**Ms ARCHER** - You ought to check your facts there.

**Dr Woodruff** - You tell us; you have the facts. Is that correct? It is federal money.

**Ms ARCHER** - That is a state program. You can wait until Thursday when you can see the Budget. In Estimates there will be an opportunity for you go through all these figures if you like but at least allow me to get through the answer.

**Dr Woodruff** - Just be honest.

**Ms ARCHER** - I am being honest.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Woodruff. The minister will continue.

**Ms ARCHER** - There is a specific investment of \$2.5 million to build a new captive breeding facility for this critically endangered species.

Do I have unlimited time on this, Mr Deputy Speaker?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Forty minutes.

**Ms ARCHER** - We have the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program which has up to 25 staff. Tasmanian devils are a threatened species. We have visiting interns for that program. The figures for these programs do not include the enormous investment of our program partners whom we provide with technical and administrative support.

DPIPWE wildlife operation staff undertake compliance activities to protect our threatened species by investigating and prosecuting the illegal taking of listed plants and animals and the introduction of exotic species that could affect our native species. They work closely with Tasmania Police and compliance officers in other agencies, all of whom play an important conservation role.

The six members of the department's conservation assessment section provide threatened species management advice to local government, the EPA, Mineral Resources Tasmania, the Forest Practices Authority, Tasmanian Fire Service, each of which have their own staff whose role includes the consideration and management of threatened species. The department also provides advice to companies and individuals and develops prescriptions for the management of threatened species to ensure they are consistently and effectively protected across all tenures. Other staff in the Natural, Cultural and Heritage division monitor threatened species in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and work closely with the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens on the collection and conservation of threatened plants.

On public land, the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service employs more than 300 staff who play a vital role in managing habitat for threatened species across our reserve estate, as well as ensuring visitors to our parks and reserves are well educated and behave in a manner that is respectful of the values of those unique assets.

The Inland Fisheries Service undertakes monitoring of some of the state's most vulnerable fish species, as well as managing the eradication of carp, which pose a considerable threat to our natural aquatic environment. Marine conservation staff work specifically to protect threatened marine mammals such as southern right and humpback whales. A collaboration with the Worldwide Fund for Nature has resulted in a \$100 000 investment to protect the threatened shy albatross. The Tasmanian Government has also successfully partnered with NRM South to obtain \$82 000 from the Commonwealth's Threatened Species Recovery Fund for the urgent conservation of one of Australia's most threatened trees, Morrisby's gum. As well as a significant investment in on-ground

management, the Tasmanian Government also supports threatened species research through partnerships with the University of Tasmania, CSIRO and other research organisations.

In 2015 we provided \$52 000 to the University of Tasmania to document marine natural values, including the maugean skate in Macquarie Harbour, and I will have more to say about that in a minute. We also allocated another \$90 000 to skate research last financial year, which in turn has helped leverage a \$280 000 research grant to investigate the skate breeding biology. This research will help clarify the relationship between the maugean skate and the Macquarie Harbour ecosystem, including the potential effects of aquaculture on skate habitat.

While our focus is naturally on Tasmania's threatened species, we continue to contribute to recovery efforts in other states and territories. Departmental staff work with our mainland counterparts to directly support recovery efforts of the eastern quoll, eastern barred bandicoot and eastern bettong.

In short, the Tasmanian Government's commitment to threatened species protection is significant, ongoing and integrated across all of the areas I have just detailed. With the greatest respect to all members who have asked this question, to restrict it to a specific unit is not taking into account the significant expertise and practice of hundreds of staff within DPIWE and other departments and agencies I have identified. I urge members to consider that. I am sure the staff, who take their roles in this area very seriously, would be deeply offended to have it suggested that only the Threatened Species Unit deals with threatened species in the area of flora and fauna on a daily basis.

I also want to talk about some recovery plans in relation to threatened species. There are currently 690 flora and fauna species listed under the Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995, with 213 of these listed as endangered, 120 as vulnerable, 319 as rare, and 28 as presumed extinct. Recovery plans are only one of a number of management tools that can be developed for threatened species and there are currently 30 recovery plans covering 171 species. The development and review of these plans is carefully prioritised.

A new recovery plan covering 36 species of Tasmanian orchids was formally approved by the federal environment minister last year, as was a new recovery plan for the giant freshwater crayfish. Reviews of recovery plans for two endemic plant species have been completed this year, with another currently underway. The department continues to work with researchers, volunteers, industry and other jurisdictions to develop and implement recovery actions for Tasmania's most at-risk species.

The department will continue to refine the process to prioritise threatened species management to ensure that the best conservation outcomes can be achieved with available resources and to ensure conservation measures for threatened species and vegetation communities are efficient and effective.

The member for Denison, Ms Haddad, mentioned federal funding. We are aware of the proposed changes to the structure of the Department of Environment and Energy's Biodiversity Conservation Division and we do not anticipate any impact for Tasmania. My department's staff will continue to work with their federal counterparts to progress important threatened species conservation measures, including the review of recovery plans, the preparation of conservation advice and the ongoing project to streamline Australia's threatened species listing processes.

I confirm that I attended a meeting of environment ministers on 27 April this year with minister Josh Frydenberg, who is well aware -

**Ms O'Connor** - What a disgrace he is!

**Ms ARCHER** - I will pretend I did not hear that interjection.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is true. He has defunded threatened species management, approved land clearing, loves coal.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - I have had various discussions with Mr Frydenberg on a number of different issues and topics in this portfolio.

In the member for Franklin, Dr Woodruff's, contribution she referred to Craig Webb. In relation to Mr Webb's work, I too have visited his Raptor Refuge and I must say it is an amazing facility. After that visit, I made it one of our election commitments to contribute \$7000 to a hotline for his work at Raptor Refuge. He has been successful in rehabilitating many birds of prey for release. That is the reason we have committed \$7000 per annum to maintain a hotline to ensure injured birds get the best and most timely care possible. That will be in our commitments funded this year. That is good news and I am sure Mr Webb is pleased with that contribution. It is a pity that much of the contribution from the member for Franklin went on to criticise this Government instead of at least acknowledging that there is being work done in this space. It is not an easy area to address.

**Ms O'Connor** - You reintroduced 1080, let management plans lapse, and want to log rainforests. Give us a break.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - Ms O'Connor, you had an opportunity to make a contribution. You did not make it and you are doing it by interjection now.

**Ms O'Connor** - I did not need to as Dr Woodruff did an outstanding job. Your record speaks for itself.

**Ms ARCHER** - There was a specific question in relation to the maugean skate. I will provide a bit more detail in relation to the Government's recent action. Since 2015 the Tasmanian Government has provided support to the research undertaken by the University of Tasmania's Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, or IMAS, on the maugean skate, including assistance with skate surveys in Macquarie and Bathurst harbours. In 2015, \$52 000 was provided to UTAS to document marine natural values, including maugean skate, in Macquarie Harbour. Initial surveys indicated that the number of skate in Macquarie Harbour was higher than predicted but more surveys were required.

In January 2017, IMAS research conducted on behalf of DPIPW and the EPA noted that changes in water quality and the ecosystems at the bottom of Macquarie Harbour had the potential to impact on skate breeding. The report concluded that more research was required. A total of \$90 000, including \$80 000 from the EPA, allocated in 2016-17 to undertake further studies has

been successfully used by IMAS to leverage additional research funding of \$280 000 from the Commonwealth Government's Fisheries Research and Development Corporation which I have referred to already. Twenty-five maugean skates have been tagged with sensors to measure dissolved oxygen, temperature and depth, and 53 acoustic receivers were deployed on the harbour to receive this information. IMAS is continuing its research this year. Winter physiology trials are to be carried out in July and more skate will be tagged.

To date, a total of 195 beam trawls have been carried out in the northern part of the harbour, which includes Swan Basin, Liberty Point and Table Head, with the aim of collecting maugean skate eggs. So far only one live egg has been found, in November 2017. The egg was reared under controlled laboratory conditions for approximately three months until it expired for unknown reasons. A total of 56 hatched or empty eggs of indeterminable age have been collected in beam trawls, with the majority found above 20 metres at the edges of rocky substrate and trawling for live eggs on soft substrate will continue. That is the information I have to hand.

**Dr Woodruff** - So you've managed to kill it off, have you?

**Ms ARCHER** - I will ignore that too.

I would like to place on record that the Greens are not the keepers of the entire environment. I commend the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, for having the decency to acknowledge that there are more people who care for the environment and our threatened species of flora and fauna. The Greens come in here on a daily basis, high and mighty, as if they are the only ones who care for threatened species, for animals, for the environment. It is quite offensive -

**Ms O'Connor** - All we point to is your track record.

**Ms ARCHER** - It is personally offensive and I am sure that most Tasmanians would see that it is offensive too.

**Ms O'Connor** - You don't speak for most Tasmanians.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - We could talk voting statistics but the Greens cannot come in here constantly and say they are the only ones who care.

There was also a reference to Storm Bay and the assessment process. I am not going to deal with hypothetical situations because if a project needs an environmental assessment that will go through the appropriate environmental assessment process. In most cases I do not need to be involved; there is an independent environment protection authority for that. That was created by this Liberal Government to ensure an independent arm's-length process from government in relation to that. Again I find it deeply offensive that the Greens come in here and criticise staff, criticise a particular person who cannot come into this House and defend himself or his decisions.

**Ms O'Connor** - Who's that?

**Ms ARCHER** - The independent EPA.

**Ms O'Connor** - It's not independent. It has the secretariat from the environment department.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - I urge them not to do it. You can attack us, we can come in here and defend ourselves but staff and -

**Ms O'Connor** - An independent staff member? Very good.

**Ms ARCHER** - Staff as in departmental staff -

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order; this has gone on long enough. Minister, please address your comments through the Chair. Interjections will cease. Dr Woodruff, I caution you. Ms O'Connor, please cease interjections. The minister has the call.

**Ms ARCHER** - I was saying that they come in here and criticise staff, they criticise the independent EPA, they criticise other people outside of this House. I am going through a list here. My words keep getting taken out of context because they interrupt mid-sentence. They constantly attack people who cannot defend themselves and they do it under parliamentary privilege by coming in here and making contributions which are deeply offensive to people who cannot defend themselves.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I have responded to each question. I addressed the issue of Storm Bay. I do not think the member for Franklin was listening but she can always read that on *Hansard*.

**Bill read the second time.**

**Bill read the third time.**

## **NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2018 (No. 7)**

### **Second Reading**

[4. 56 p.m.]

**Ms COURTNEY** (Bass - Minister for Primary Industries and Water - 2R) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

The purpose of the Natural Resource Management Amendment Bill 2018 is to amend the Natural Resource Management Act 2002 in order to improve and strengthen Tasmania's natural resource management arrangements and ensure that our natural resources are managed effectively and efficiently.

The amendments contained in this bill in no way compromise the management of our natural resources. Rather, they serve to streamline the process, and are in line with the Government's policy to reduce administrative costs as well as the number of boards and councils in the state.

The most significant amendment in this bill is to remove the roles and functions of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council from the act, and instead create the ability for a special-purpose committee to be formed on an as-needs basis. This is not a new initiative. Section



9 of the Nature Conservation Act 2002, for example, has provisions for special advisory committees. In both the Nature Conservation Act and the bill before you, the minister may establish such committees on a needs basis and appoint the members to advise on matters in relation to the administration of these acts.

The general functions and powers of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council are to advise the minister, as set out in section 7 of the Natural Resource Management Act 2002, and the council has many minor roles and functions scattered throughout the legislation. The council has also, in the past, fulfilled an oversight function by identifying priorities and implementing and administering national and state programs relating to natural resource management.

The 2015 natural resource management review undertaken by the department found that the council's role has diminished over the years. During the review process, many stakeholders questioned the usefulness of the council's current role and the majority recognised the need to change the council and its functions to achieve more robust and targeted outcomes. Under the proposed amendment, the roles and functions of the council will be removed. Nevertheless, it is important that the minister continue to receive specialist advice on emerging and topical natural resource management issues from a broad range of stakeholders.

In removing the council, the minister has the ability to form a special-purpose committee as required. This enables the minister to bring together issue-specific experts on a case-by-case basis rather than relying on a council with more general expertise.

The act currently requires that the minister review the Natural Resource Management Act every four to seven years to ensure the arrangements are operating as intended. Thirteen years have passed since the act commenced and the NRM bodies have demonstrated a clear ability to perform their roles and functions and continue to do an outstanding job. The department's 2015 review was the second to find that the NRM bodies are operating as intended.

In light of the excellent performance of the natural resource management bodies, the bill extends the statutory time frame for reviewing the act from every seven to every 10 years. Further, a minor amendment to the act will remove the statutory requirement for accreditation criteria. These criteria are currently used by the council to assess draft regional strategies and provide advice on which natural resource management strategies should be accredited.

While the accreditation criteria are approved by the minister, they are primarily an evaluation tool used by the council to inform its advice on natural resource management strategies and advice. The provisions for accreditation criteria are also outdated and refer to a national ministerial council that no longer exists. Removing the requirement for accreditation criteria does not in any way alter the Government's capacity to assess and accredit draft regional strategies in accordance with the act.

Extensive consultation was undertaken during the course of the review undertaken by my department, including face-to-face meetings with key stakeholder groups. The three NRM regional bodies were also provided with a consultation draft of the bill and there was strong support for all the changes contained in this bill.

These amendments are not onerous, and as noted earlier, serve to streamline the natural resource management capabilities of the three NRM regional bodies.

I commend the bill to the House.

[5.01 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate the minister on bringing her first bill to parliament. This may be a momentous occasion. This is a good one to start with, being relatively uncontroversial. Labor will be supporting the passage this bill.

I have had a long association with natural resource management as a scientist, as a professional, and also as a committee member and former deputy chair of Cradle Coast NRM. It is good to be able to continue this relationship, although being through parliament. My time served on the committee was under the tutelage of Jeremy Rockliff's father, Rick Rockliff, who was chairman for a long time of the Cradle Coast NRM committee. I acknowledge the power of work Rick Rockliff did in that role.

I will provide some background on the way NRM functions at the moment and how it started. It goes back to the first round of the National Heritage Trust, NHT funding, which John Howard used as a method to grease the wheels to be able to sell Telstra. In the Telstra sale there was a wad of cash put aside into the National Heritage Trust for the benefit of the environment of the whole country. That was on the back of an awakening in rural and regional Australia to the benefit of protecting and enhancing the environment which sprouted the landcare movement which still exists today.

The funding from NHT moved on into NHT2. That was reviewed by the Rudd government and the name was changed to Caring for Our Country. What started off as a program focused on the environment and on regional decision-making changed into, and still continues to be, is a very political use of taxpayers' funds across the nation.

Originally the whole idea of having natural resource management committees was to develop rational strategies so that the money funnelled from the federal government would be spent on the ground, according to what the local community decided was the most important natural resource management projects. That is how it started.

The NRM committees were set up. If you go back to the original document, Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Framework 2002, you will see the message from the minister at the time who some people might recognise as David Llewellyn. He said:

The sound management of Tasmania's natural resources is fundamental to our future. Sustainable industries and healthy ecosystems underpin our prosperity as a state.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to the sustainable management and protection of Tasmania's natural resources. With this in mind, the Government established the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Steering Committee, representing State and local government, industry and community groups to develop a Natural Resource Management Framework.

The original funding from Canberra it was virtually untied: 'Here is a wad of cash, you develop all your strategies, you demonstrate where the greatest environmental need is and then we will funnel the money through the local NRMs and all this onground work will happen and everything will be all tickety boo.' That is the way it was envisaged but, over time, we started to see a lot of

the money being tied to pork barrelling and election promises instead of being relatively untied and directed to what the locals thought was the best thing. It was because there was a big wad of cash so 'we will carve up so much money and that will go to protecting the reef, so much will go to culling camels or whatever the latest election issue was.' Away you would go.

The funding from the state government was to keep the NRM administrative ability in place. It funded the chief executive and some administrative purposes and so on. The rest of the staff were funded by the money that was coming from Canberra. Over time we have seen that this sort of funding has broken down. Also as part of this original set up in 2002 there was in place a review every four to seven years. This was on top of the regions continuing to develop local strategies.

Now we get to the context of the bill. The review was done in 2015. The executive summary of the bill states that:

This report satisfies the requirements to review the Natural Resource Management Act 2002 and the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Framework by the end of 2015.

Then it goes on to make a series of recommendations. This is from the 2015 NRM review, the Review of Natural Resource Management Act 2002 to the final report and recommendations. Now we get to the recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That the Framework be updated to better reflect stakeholder relationships, include contemporary language and remove references to programs that are no longer in operation.

Some of that has happened. For example, the federal council is no longer in play now and has been removed. I am not aware of the framework being updated. I am aware that, for example, there was some intertwining bits of work like, for example, the 2013 to 2030 A Summary of Natural Heritage Strategy for Tasmania. That deals with natural heritage, not just natural resource management. Other than that I cannot see an update of the framework having occurred since 2015. I am interested in where that is because that was one of the recommendations from the 2015 review:

Recommendation 2: That the Framework's definition of natural resource management be expanded to emphasise the development of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations and the role of stewardship and sustainable management.

Once again as I cannot see an updated framework, I do not know if that has been included:

Recommendation 3: That the value of reviewing the Act every four to seven years be assessed.

I agree with that, too. Having been a part of the NRM committee, some of these things just rolled over and they were like a rubber stamp. As this review showed, to a large extent the NRMs are operating as they should. That has been shifted out to 10 years in this legislation.

**Ms O'Connor** - TFGA supports seven.

**Dr BROAD** - I think every 10 years. We will get to some of the issues with NRMs in general in a minute, which may make that 10 years irrelevant anyway:

Recommendation 4: That the Act and Framework be amended to remove roles and functions of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council, and create the ability of the Minister to form special purpose committee as required.

As we have seen, that has happened. If we go into the report it gives more detail on the council:

The roles and functions of the Council

The Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council is to advise the minister on natural resource management issues ...

This was outlined in the discussion paper put out before the 2015 review and it talks about the framework that reinforces the roles of council as prescribed by the act.

Further, it notes that:

... the main role of the council is to: 'advise the Government, as well as encouraging broader understanding of NRM, particularly by promoting the Framework's Principles.'

In addition, the council should: 'establish effective communication and liaison mechanisms with the Natural Resource Management committees and with stakeholders, including industry, resource users and community groups.'

The framework states that the council will advise the Government on:

1. statewide priorities for natural resource management, including funding priorities;
2. appropriate accreditation criteria for natural resource management strategies;
3. the accreditation of Regional Strategies and the setting of appropriate standards and targets;
4. the best way of delivery consistency in natural resource management across regional boundaries;
5. the most effective means of building community capacity with regard to natural resource management;
6. the efficiency and effectiveness, including performance monitoring against standards and targets of the activities undertaken under Regional Strategies on which the council has received annual reports;
7. the implementation and administration of funding programs; and
8. matters referred to the council by government.

That was the idea and it all sounds good, but in effect it did not work that well, and that is for a few reasons. One is because much of the implementation of the regional strategies is taken out of our hands and taken over by Canberra and, as a result, if you wanted any money you had to do exactly what you were told; you had to put the forms in in exactly the right form, you had to tick the right boxes and so on. Much of that regional decision-making was taken out of our hands so it was like, 'Here are the Canberra-derived priorities for Australia. Do you have threatened species? Do you have wetlands?'. If you did not tick any of these boxes, or if you only ticked one or two, then you did not get the money so it was, 'Hang on, our Landcare facilitators are about to lose their jobs'. 'Okay, we will give you a bit of extra cash to tide over the Landcare facilitator', and all this happened between the original NRMs direct to Canberra, and that basically removed that regionalisation and the influence that the state could actually have. It evolved into a situation where the states' only role was to make sure that the NRM had enough money to survive.

I know Mr Jaensch is probably all over this, having been a former executive chair of the Cradle Coast Authority. That reminds me, there is a bit of a bugbear I should probably have a crack at you about while I am here, going back to those days.

The council was set up with all good intents and purposes but because of the way the funding changed over time, it meant that there was little impact. The requirement for the regions to develop their own regional strategies in one way is really good because it is an opportunity for the community to get together and talk about their environmental priorities, where they think things should be funded and what is really important to them. The only problem is that it no longer has any influence on the funding because all the funding comes from Canberra. All the priorities are set in Canberra and bizarre things happen like the strategy being delayed. The NRMs did not know what was coming. The NRMs' funding was about to run out; the priority was about to be announced, and then all of a sudden they were announced and you had to do everything online. You had two weeks to apply to something that you had never seen before, and then because it was all online, the 56 or whatever regions around Australia would all try to apply at once. Then the system would crash and you would lose a week, and then it would be delayed, and the whole thing was a real hodge-podge. That is really nothing to do with state government but is all to do with the federal influence and the federal government being very controlling. This certainly came out.

The roles and functions of the council were discussed by the people who participated in this NRM review, and in my discussions with the NRMs I think it is a reasonable step to eliminate the council and give the minister the option of forming a special-purpose committee. To a large extent this committee had a really good role in setting up the NRMs. They were quite active in the early years helping set up the NRMs and getting things in place but then over time their roles and functions diminished to such an extent that they became irrelevant. That is why we are agreeing -

**Ms O'Connor** - Because government stopped listening to them.

**Dr BROAD** - That was not their function.

Recommendation 5 was that the principles of natural resource management principles be reviewed more regularly and updated to reflect that NRM includes all Tasmanians, NRM should be based on sound decisions, NRM arrangements should be aligned with existing processes and NRM arrangements should be contemporary. I am not sure where that recommendation of updating their resource management principles has been addressed and again that probably leads back to there needing to be an update of the framework.

Recommendation 6 of the 2015 review was that priorities for natural resource management be reviewed more regularly and updated to better reflect encouraging capacity building, better NRM outcomes, supporting the sustainable development and use of natural resources, managing current and emerging risks of natural resources and promoting the value and role of NRM. Development of short-term focus priorities is recommended. I am not sure where that one has gone as well.

Recommendation 7 is that the act's framework be amended to remove the requirement for accreditation criteria and that one has definitely been ticked off in this bill. I would like some response from the minister if possible about what happened to those recommendations that potentially were not acted on. Where is the Government with that?

We have to go back to a little bit of history about the way the NRMs were set up. One thing is that we do not have consistency across Tasmania in the way the NRMs operate. With NRM North, there were already a lot of natural resource management activities in the north of the state in the old 03 telephone book area. They had a lot of engagement with councils and so on and the NRM there had a lot of co-funded staff, co-funded by NRM and council money. NRM officers were jointly funded. NRM North has always had more of a closer association with grassroots communities because that is basically the way the committee and everything was set up. I am not as familiar with NRM South. There was not anything there in a NRM form so NRM South was more created, whereas with NRM North there were already NRM activities there so it was already happening and it was just a matter of bringing everybody together. They were different circumstances.

The Cradle Coast NRM was set up in conjunction with the Cradle Coast Authority. As a former committee member of Cradle Coast NRM, that created a whole number of problems including the subsuming of Cradle Coast NRM by the Cradle Coast Authority. The original intent of the Cradle Coast NRM was that it was to be an independent body hosted by Cradle Coast Authority but over time it became basically the NRM arm of the Cradle Coast Authority and lot of the independence was taken away. That debate is still occurring.

One thing in this legislation as well is that while it changes the language around committees one thing that could potentially happen is the amalgamation of all three regions. This has been discussed at the committee level of the various NRMs: the idea of bringing together all of the NRMs to potentially make some cost savings by having fewer overheads and so on. That was dealt with in this review and the people who submitted responses to the review still appreciated the idea of having the three regions. However, that is still a live consideration amongst the three NRMs in the state.

The other consideration we have at the moment is the fact that once again the federal government has the whip hand and has changed the funding structure. Now the NRMs have to apply for funding in a competitive basis.

Recently, Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South were deemed not to be offering value for money which means they will run out of money on 30 June. There has been a bit of money to tide them over.

An issue with the way NRM funding has come over the years has been that the staff do not know whether they are going to have a job. The funding comes, stops, and gets carried on with a bit of carry over money. Sometimes the NRMs will use funds they have stashed away to keep staff on. It will mean that contracts for some employees expire on 30 June, which is only a couple of weeks away. If you were in their position, you would be looking for other work now. This is one

of the big issues with NRM - the lack of continuity and funding. Sometimes the funding rounds are only one or two years and it makes it hard for any organisation to keep good staff.

I have not heard the minister speak on this. There is a real danger that without this federal funding the NRM model will collapse.

NRM North seems to have gone well although the ABC report said the outcome of the tender process was confidential. It appears they have a fair slice of the pie and they will be okay. What happens if the Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South do not get funded? They lose their staff; the whole thing collapses. I would like some guidance from the minister on where things are at there. What sort of discussions have you had? There is this significant risk, not only for the NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM but if Cradle Coast NRM collapses and is defunded, that severely undermines the ability of the Cradle Coast Authority to remain in existence because of the way some roles in administration are carried by both Cradle Coast Authority and Cradle Coast NRM.

If Cradle Coast NRM is no longer about, there is no way that the Cradle Coast Authority can afford to stay in their building. There is debt involved in paying for the upgrade of the building. There are risks outside of natural resource management if this problem is not solved and we do not have a solution.

Could the minister give some guidance on the future on the NRMs themselves in this current funding scenario? We are talking about the value of reviewing the act every 10 years. Maybe in one year's time or less, in six months or a few months time, there may not be Cradle Coast NRM or NRM South. Some guidance on what the situation is would be good.

The NRM is something I have been passionate about. I worked on a project called Landscape Logic. I worked for CSIRO sustainable ecosystems and was hosted by the University of Tasmania. I did work on modelling nutrient and sediment loads in various rivers across the state. There were some colleagues who did an interesting project in Victoria. Reading from a paper they produced, an information package, I will read verbatim from it as it sums up some of the issues with natural resource management over the years. This is from Reading a Landscape: an Overview of Landscape Logic Research:

Australia has an unfortunate history of environmental management. We hold the world record for mammal extinctions over the last 200 years (16 out of the 245 species) and as the National Australia Audit Office has pointed out in the four audits since 1997, that can account for the \$4.2b from the sale of Telstra as kilometres of fences, millions of trees and hectares of restored wet lands but they cannot tell if this has made any material difference to the state of the environment.

There are lots of good reasons why. The scale of intervention is usually too small to make a difference. The long time lags between action and response mean we often can't expect to see a change for decades. And our efforts are easily overwhelmed by changes in climate, markets and other forces outside our immediate influence. But there is a limit to how long we can keep trotting out these excuses.

One of the biggest challenges is the lack of long term data to tell us the state of the environment and the direction it is heading. Without that information, we cannot hope to tell if we are making any difference when we intervene.

We had \$4 billion and much of that money went into projects like clearing some willows, for example. All the waterways up and down Tasmania had willows cleared, or weeds sprayed, or some action like that. However, because of the way the funding is structured there is no money for follow-up. You may as well paint some rocks green because you go back to these rivers in five or 10 years' time and all the willows are back or the weeds are out of control because there is no budget for maintenance. This is why we need a bit more strategy.

Often, there is very little science underpinning some of these actions. I have seen projects where they talk about replanting riparian vegetation in order to stop nutrients getting into the river. The only problem is, it does not work. When you do the work and you try to determine the impact of that strategy, if you want to stop nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen getting into the river it does not work. If you want to stop sediments getting into the river then preventing animals getting into the river works. However, if the real issue is nitrogen and phosphorus getting into the river, it makes zero difference. Yet, all around Australia we have seen programs and projects where all this money has been spent and there is very little accountability.

This project brought up some other issues. Many things happen in our environment that we have very little control of as individuals or even governments. There are things that happen; huge environmental influences that are from the macro issues. In one example some Victorians looked at aerial photos of areas in Victoria from 1947 to 2008. They could plot changes in vegetation over three areas in northern Victoria. Armed with the vegetation change maps, they held workshops with long-term residents to test the accuracy of their mapping and dig into that oral history. Led by Digby Race from CSU, they traced back the story of vegetation change in these areas to the 1860s. What they found highlights the importance of some of the slow drivers of change, the short, sharp shocks, and some forces which have acted gradually.

For example, over time we have had timber cutting; gold discovery had a big influence; pasture development for sheep; the introduction of rabbits; and fire frequency, while other issues like the crash in the wool price in the 1990s and the drought had more of an immediate impact. When there was a huge boom in gold, there was a lot of land clearing because they needed the timber and the resources. Once the gold boom stopped, it declined. When rabbits were introduced it had huge environmental impacts and it still does, just as high wool prices leads to land clearing and low wool prices leads to areas regrowing. They could see these influences over time: even little things like changes in land clearing regulations. Providing natural gas for heating had a big impact because people were not cutting firewood like they were: the increase in macropods and hares and as was seen going forward, the influence of large machinery, like centre pivots. In Tasmania we see all these areas getting cleared so the centre pivot can do a full circle instead of half or a quarter circle. These things have a big influence.

It made me think about how that influences change in Tasmania. We have seen big influences on the environment. The removal of the Aborigines from Tasmania had a huge impact. Their reduction in burning had a massive impact on Tasmania. Mining exploration - there was huge exploitation of the area we now call the Tarkine with the building of races, the hosing away of hillsides into sluice boxes to get tin as well as logging, and the way they used to explore where they would light big fires and these fires would rage away because the land had grown wild after it had not been managed by Aborigines. Then they would go and have a look at the out-crops and tap rocks. That is how they did their mining exploration by setting off these large-scale fires. Then we have land clearing.



These influences in Tasmania on our island are things that are very difficult for governments to control. Some things governments can control. Much of the environmental damage has already been done and it is irreversible. For example, we can talk about heavy metals in certain rivers from mining activities. I remember a classic example was the Duck River. Before white settlers arrived in Circular Head the river was quite cobbled - it had cobble stones, but quite rapidly - and you see this across rivers all around the state and the country - people came in, and ringbarked trees which they cleared. There was a huge sedimentation in our rivers, which is irreversible.

In the Tamar, for example, the sedimentation and the land clearing that has happened in the upper catchment means that we have a muddy flood plain now. The moment that we stop taking that sediment away, the sediment will always come back. If dredging is the number one option, you are going to have to keep dredging forever.

Also it brought me back to a seminal piece of work that no one has ever heard of - bar myself and Professor Tony Norton. In a paper to the Ecological Society of Australia I did some work called Globalisation and its Implications for NRM in Tasmania's Agriculture Sector. I talked about some of the influence -

**Mr Jaensch** - I'm waiting until they make the film.

**Dr BROAD** - If you have some funding in your budget I am sure we could come to an arrangement.

What I identified is there is a lot of pressure on our agricultural landscapes. NRM is not just about wilderness, it is about the whole landscape. If we are going to manage some of these environmental challenges, we need to manage the whole landscape. The agricultural landscape has a big influence on the environment. There are many things that are putting pressure on our agriculture that mean it makes it very hard to implement any sort of change in the agricultural system that will have an environmental benefit.

I talked about the impact of globalisation and the loss of control. One example is the dairy industry. The dairy industry in Tasmania used to be very diverse. There used to be a whole number of co-operatives. I did a diagram showing the number of co-operatives. Every little town had their own butter co-op or their own creamery. It dwindled down over 50 or 60 years to regional co-operatives. Then it became one co-operative. That was bought by Bonlac and then that was bought by Fonterra. The last big co-operative has now been subsumed in Australia and is owned by foreign capital. The big players in the Tasmanian dairy industry are multinationals. We see this in potatoes through McCain Foods and Simplot. We see it in poppies and now we see it with Sumatomo buying out Pyrethrin. These are huge global influences. This globalisation means that you are dealing with a boardroom in Tokyo, America or Canada rather than anything local.

This pressure is forcing farmers to go down four distinct areas in order to keep producing stuff at a profit. These particular strategies to cope with a globalised farming industry have a negative impact on natural resource management. We see an intensification of operations. The operations cultivate more; they use more chemicals and use more fertilisers. There has been a lot of consolidation. We see a lot of smaller farms being bought out by bigger farms. That process is accelerating at the moment.

The new generation of farmers are buying more land, and putting in big centre pivots. They are driving massive tractors and trying to grow more crops across a larger area. They are also

modifying the environment. They are clearing land to build pivots and building dams; all those things have an impact on natural resource management.

The other thing that they do is they specialise. They are getting more and more specialised. We see that again in the dairy industry. When the dairy industry was based on small family operations and you had a creamery down the road, all the skimmed milk would go to pigs. Pigs and dairy went hand in hand. That is unheard of now. Only 20 years ago dairy farmers would supplement their income by growing crops. That is virtually absent now too. Increasingly, they specialise. All this means that it is very hard for natural environmental programs to be put in place.

On the other side, some of these environmental programs get recognised by commanding price premiums. We are seeing a change at the moment, which is very good, where we not only have environmental stewardship but also ownership. Examples of fencing to keep stock from waterways; from trying to use only the fertiliser that you need rather than the fertiliser that is prescribed which is one of my bugbears - farmers putting on fertiliser way in excess of what they need. Not only are they wasting money but a lot of fertiliser is ending up in our waterways.

Things are changing and we have seen environmental stewardship programs like Europe Gap, which are taking the environment into account. You cannot be green if you are in the red, if you are a farmer. That is the old saying.

This NRM bill does not address those bigger issues. It addresses probably half of the recommendations that came out of the NRM review. Yet this is a changing landscape. We do not know what NRM is going to look like in even a couple of month's time if these two NRM bodies fall over. It is a pity that the power and the potential that NRM had when it was first set up, the ability for communities to have a say about what their priorities were in their region and directing money to fix that and create a better place has been subsumed a domineering federal government and priorities that come out of Canberra instead of coming out of the local regions.

Again this bill in its function in the way it is put together is non controversial but there are still much, much bigger questions to be answered for NRMs' future and let us hope things go well with Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South.

[5.37 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Denison - Leader of the Greens) - Dr Broad, that was an excellent contribution. Fact rich and highly educational. It was very good and I enjoyed it.

We will not be opposing this legislation although it uses a different set of words, but it does abolish an advisory council for the NRMs. I understand that this has been consulted with stakeholders and that there is no great controversy about the move that is being taken here. Having listened to the minister and Dr Broad, I understand that the council that this bill seeks to abolish may not have been as relevant in the operation of the NRMs in recent years. That to me would point to a structure that has, as Dr Broad said, become more political, potentially less scientific and therefore less likely to request or heed the advice of an expert standing committee that was established to advise on NRM matters.

We get from the minister in her second reading speech that it is an efficiency measure in line with the Government's moves to streamline processes. This is exactly what happened to the Tasmanian Climate Action Council. That was the then environment and state growth minister, Matthew Groom's first legislation to parliament. It was to abolish the independent expert

Tasmanian Climate Action Council because the Liberals did not want to hear from the experts, and then only a few weeks ago, a highly respected animal welfare advocate, Malcolm Caulfield, resigned from the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee because he said the Government was not listening on animal welfare issues.

We do not know what the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Committee had to say, for example, about all these changes to management plans. The National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Committee is a shadow of its former self. I note that we are not here debating legislation that neuters some advisory body to the Minister for State Growth or the Minister for Building and Construction, or the minister for roads, roads and more roads. Again we are in here dealing with an advisory body whose purpose in being established was to provide advice on evidence-based good land use management practices.

Dr Broad is right: we need to look at these matters from a whole-of-landscape perspective. We need to be having conversations as a community about how connected we are to the natural world. If we degrade our environment we are lost as a species. We need to be having conversations that address the triple bottom line, because you get a lot of talk about the economy, a lot of talk about society, but not so much on the environment. Once we start having those conversations where we recognise that it is all connected and we are all connected to the environment, the world would be a much better place.

I note that the Minister for Environment is not in here and I did want to address a criticism that the minister, Ms Archer, made of Dr Woodruff in relation to the Threatened Species Bill, but it is relevant here. Ms Archer felt personally offended that we come in here and stand up for the environment, for threatened species, for the wilderness and World Heritage Area and protected areas. I know we are not the only people in this place who care about the environment; we are not the only people in this place who have children and/or grandchildren. Our track record, however, is consistent and, in this place, your record speaks for itself. As offended as Ms Archer may have been about us standing up for the environment and in that criticising her, the record of natural resource management and natural place management of the Liberals in government is appalling. The record speaks for itself.

The Premier, then opposition leader, went to the 2014 state election saying that not one more stick of Tasmania would be protected. Shortly after coming into government, the Liberals lined up with the Abbott Government to try to have 74 000 hectares of high-conservation value tall forests revoked from the boundary of the World Heritage Area.

One of the then minister for primary industries' first moves was to reverse the ban on 1080, which we know impacts on wildlife. That is why the then 'minister for threatening species', David Llewellyn, was part of the process to phase out the use of 1080, which has been significantly and substantially increased under this Government. I would like to know from the Minister for Primary Industries and Water what are the levels of 1080 use in Tasmania at this day? There are many people who are extremely unhappy about that particular decision.

We also had threatened species plans like the plan for the swift parrot allowed to lapse so that logging could be prioritised. We have a whole new statewide planning system that weakens environmental protections and makes proposals like the Cambria Green development for Dolphin Sands on the east coast even more possible. It is a corrupted planning system now that locals on the east coast are very concerned will not have the tools within it to prevent that massive and inappropriate development on the east coast on an area of land which is currently zoned agricultural

land on the edge of a Ramsar-listed wetland at Moulting Lagoon. This 3500 hectare mega-development has been waved through the first hurdle by four of the eight Glamorgan Spring Bay councillors without asking any questions, for example, about water use.

We have such a flawed approach to natural resource management. We cannot even recognise properly as a state what our natural resource wealth is and we are prepared to roll over and give it away to the lowest bidder. We are suckers for hundred-million-dollar promises, big bells and whistles development proposals, which are now being shoved through the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council without the public being given any opportunity to have a say at that point. Now we have Thursday as the deadline for representations to prevent that area of Dolphin Sands from being turned into a special area unlike any development that Tasmania has ever seen before.

No questions were asked by council about water requirements or water use. No questions were asked by council about the impact on a Ramsar-listed wetland of a mega-development with two proposed golf courses, five minutes up the road from Swansea, which already has a golf course. No meaningful questions were asked about the rezoning of agricultural land on the east coast to high-intensity urban residential special area development, tourism, palliative care - who knows what? We are so susceptible in this state to big-money promises that despite our vast wealth of natural assets, our extraordinary beauty as an island, the fragility of our environment and our ecology, there was not a question asked by Glamorgan Spring Bay Council that related to the impact on natural resources in the area. There was not a question asked about where the money is coming from. I bet there have been no questions asked by the Premier, the Treasurer or the Planning minister.

We know that the proponent of Cambria Green Tourism and Agriculture Pty Ltd visited the Premier in 2015 and presented a gift. Three years later, the people who live on the east coast near Swansea and Dolphin Sands are presented with this massive development that has been enabled through the Office of the Coordinator-General, out of public view, for years, so that people only now get an opportunity to make a representation once the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council has waved through the first stage of the specific area plans.

As a state we are woeful at properly managing our natural resources. As a country, we are woeful at it. We gave away our gas and we continue to do so. In Western Australia we paid multinational mining companies to mine big holes in the ground and then leave us in the lurch. We are virtually giving away our gas, our energy security for the future as a nation. Here in Tasmania, we are giving away vast chunks of agricultural land to big-money private developers, a number of them connected to the Chinese communist government.

That should be a matter of concern to everyone because the Chinese communist government has an appalling human rights record. Ask the Tibetans or the Uighur Muslims who are now in their tens of thousands incarcerated in northern China, being re-educated by President Xi Jinping's party, the same president that our Premier sucks up to every time he goes to China and every time he opens his mouth in this place.

As a state, we should be much smarter and more strategic about how we manage our natural resources. We should be looking after Tasmanians, whether it be in housing or feeding the Tasmanian people. We should be looking after this island's sovereignty, our democracy, our natural resources, our water supplies and we are a long way from that. This bill, with respect, has very little of substance that relates to real environmental management or a scientific and strategic approach to natural resource management in Tasmania.

As Dr Broad said, despite some of the fantastic work they are doing with community groups on the ground, NRMs have become politicised. Now we have a funding process where the federal Liberals seem to think that not-for-profit environmental organisations who have a longstanding history in this area should compete against each other for a limited pool of funding. They have set up a competitive tender process for their own organs of government and, of course, the south missed out and the north-west missed out. In fact, in 2016-17 financial year, NRM South received \$1.86 million in grants and subsidies and the Cradle Coast NRM received about \$1.5 million in federal grants. Now we know that both were knocked back on their funding applications because, in the words of Liberal Senator Richard Colbeck, the tenders did not achieve value for money.

What is value for money when we are talking about natural resources, ecological resilience and community action to improve their local environment and therefore the resilience of that environment to deal with threats like climate change? It is a mindset where if you cannot see a forest making money or if you cannot sell it, log it, give it away within the term of a government for political purposes it is not achieving value for money. It is all the more galling because as we know in terms of our forests, which are one of our great natural resources, around \$1 billion of public money was poured into native forest logging, industrial logging and wood chipping in Tasmania in the 11 years between 1997 and 2008. Associate Professor Graeme Wells from the University of Tasmania can attest to this.

On the Government's track record, we also have logging in threatened species habitat, logging in wedge-tailed eagle's habitat, the devil's habitat, rainforest logging proposed by Mr Barnett, a significant under funding of Parks in order to undertake environmental management, not just pour the money into the highly visible and high-end tourism experiences. It is about resourcing Parks so that they can improve the environment within our protected areas, or protect those areas that are particularly sensitive and fragile.

What has happened to the Parks and Wildlife Service under the Liberals in government is an absolute travesty. When I first came to this island 30 years ago the Parks and Wildlife Service was an icon, a beacon of sustainable, truly sustainable land management, where the protection of ecology, of wilderness values and historical human cultural values was the priority. Now we have a Parks and Wildlife Service that has been turned by the Government into an instrument of enabling the degradation of wilderness values.

The expressions of interest process for protected areas in Tasmania will buy a recognised and measurable metric, corrode wilderness values in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature we know what wilderness is. It is:

A large area of unmodified or slightly modified land and/or sea retaining its natural character and influence without permanent or significant habitation which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.

To preserve its natural condition: what we have under the Liberals in government - and Ms Archer is part of this too so her sensitivity is irrelevant in light of the facts - is a policy which seeks to exploit the natural and wilderness values of an area and therefore degrade them. The Parks and Wildlife Services' own definition of wilderness is an area that is of sufficient size, naturalness and remoteness from mechanised access to enable the long-term integrity of its natural systems, diversity and processes, the maintenance of Aboriginal cultural landscapes and the provision of a wilderness recreational experience.

I commend anyone in this House who wants to understand why the conservation movement is so concerned and stands alongside other users of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, including the Anglers Alliance, who wants to get a deeper understanding of the threat to go to the Environmental Defender's office and ask them for a copy of the presentation they have made at public meetings statewide. This presentation shows how our approach to natural resource management in protected areas is completely flawed. Also, call Vica Bayley -

**Mr Brooks** - For a balanced view.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - He leaves you in the shade in terms of his knowledge, his intellect, his integrity and his heart for this island.

Within this presentation that has been made at public meetings around the state, some interesting little maps, for example, show the parts of the wilderness zone in the vicinity of Cradle Mountain, which were excised and converted into a zone that allows helicopter access and built private tourism accommodations. You have cut-outs that redefine areas as not wilderness because there are developers who want to get in there and exploit them. You have a cut-out for Lake Malbena, a specific cut-out between the 2014 draft plan and the 2016 plan, a specific, little special deal there for a proponent who wants to have half a dozen structures and multiple helicopter flights into the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

In this outstanding document, you can see the impact on the wilderness values of a single hut on the south coast track. For people who do not understand that our Wilderness World Heritage Area is the only one of a thousand properties on the list that has the word 'wilderness' in its name, this document is essential reading. It helps you to understand wilderness can be measured, mapped, protected and it can be destroyed. The impact of just one hut on the south coast track, in terms of the damage to wilderness, is visible, measurable and unarguable.

For any proponent who has themselves caught up in this process and is now bleating because they have come under some heat, there have been four years now where proponents had an opportunity to rethink their desire to degrade wilderness values and then to make money out of the wilderness. Four years: it was always going to be a problem for proponents who became involved in a corrupted process. The RACT spotted this straightaway, listened to the public and said, 'Fine, we will not extend into the Freycinet National Park'. But other proponents have not been so receptive to the public message. Other proponents have ignored common sense and now they are caught up in a filthy process, a process which has been secretive, completely opaque and has shut Tasmanians out of the conversation.

Obviously the Greens will have much more to say about these issues over the weeks and months ahead but this is one of the most critical environmental issues this parliament and the people of Tasmania will face in this term of government. Critical, because if we stuff up the wilderness, we have unalterably damaged a wilderness which is unlike any other in the world and is remarkable for its intactness and for its beauty, but we will have profoundly damaged our brand. As one angler said at the public meeting last week:

If I want to see people, helicopters, cars and trucks and things I will go to Cradle Mountain. If I want to enjoy a quiet weekend's fishing with my mates, I will go into Lake Malbena.

**Debate adjourned.**

## ADJOURNMENT

### Boer War Commemoration at Wynyard

[6.00 p.m.]

**Mr BROOKS** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to briefly update the House on a community matter that I had the privilege of attending on the weekend. At Wynyard there was a dedication of commemoration for those who served and died in the Boer War. It was a long time ago, but at the end of the day people who served in all theatres of conflict and served in the Australian Defence Forces wrote a blank cheque for their lives, payable to the country and to the Australian community. Whilst it was a long time ago, it was one of the first conflicts that Australia ever engaged in, and it does not diminish the sacrifice of those who did pay the ultimate price.

There is some conjecture on how many Tasmanians paid the ultimate price. Back in those days there were more casualties due to illness and sickness than actual battlefield wounds. That in no way diminishes the bravery of young Tasmanians would have seen on the battlefield but also in the way that they served this nation.

As we saw more recently on Anzac Day - and I have spoken on the adjournment on that matter as well - we all continue to pay our respects to those who serve in defence of our nation. Also, our thoughts and prayers are with those who are currently serving either in conflict or not, who are members of the Australian Defence Forces, our brave men and women of Australia who continue to ensure the security of Australia. This parliament is protected by those who wear a uniform of the Australian Defence Force.

### Taroona Football Club - Statewide Cup Final

[6.03 p.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Denison) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to heartily congratulate the Taroona Football Club on their victory in yesterday's Statewide Cup Final. It was a thrilling match against the Kingborough Lions where the Taroona Pirates prevailed three goals to one. Three goals from Zoe Horgan, Lily Hulton who was awarded the player of the match award, and Adelyn Ayton who delivered a wonder strike from 35 yards and sealed the match for the Pirates.

The quality of play on show yesterday and the size of the crowd that attended was testament to the tremendous advances that have been made in women's football over the past decade. Taroona, as yesterday's result showed, have been one of the leading clubs in women's football. I commend them on their efforts in this for many years.

This morning I heard a story from one of the members of the Taroona Football Club about where it all began for that club. I want to share that story with the House. Many years ago a young girl came home from her day care to talk to her mother, Emma, and she told her mother that someone at her day care centre had told her that girls cannot play soccer. This, I am told, did not go down very well with her mum who immediately went about organising Taroona's first-ever women's team. They might not have been as well drilled as today's high quality squad, but they forged the path and set an example for others, including their daughters, to follow.

The young girl I am talking about is one of the goal scorers from yesterday, Zoe Horgan. I can only imagine how special yesterday's match must have been for Emma as she watched her daughter Zoe help win the statewide cup and prove once and for all that girls can play soccer.

There is still more work to do in this area. During the course of the recent election campaign I had the pleasure of meeting another goal scorer from yesterday, Adelyn Ayton, along with Estella Cruickshank when I went to Kelvedon Park to announce Labor's funding commitment for the club's facilities and redevelopment. Tarooma's current facilities are similar to many clubs around Tasmania and across all different sporting codes in that they were built in a time where there was not a need to provide facilities for women and girls. That was not a consideration. I understand that Tarooma has since been successful in securing the required funding for the redevelopment of their clubrooms.

I remind all representatives in our House and at all levels of government that we need to ensure that standards of facilities available at our local sports grounds is commensurate with the skill, passion dedication and enthusiasm of all the women and girls who play sport in Tasmania, most recently the winners of the Statewide Cup, the Tarooma Pirates.

### **Rowing for Gold**

[6.06 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on adjournment to talk about an event that I was very privileged to attend on Saturday 26 May, and that was Rowing for Gold. It was a function held by Rowing Australia. Rob Scott, the President of Australian Rowing, took formalities. It was opened by Sports minister, Jacqui Petrusma, and our Labor member for Franklin, Alison Standen, was also there.

It was a privilege to attend. The reason why is it was an opportunity for me to be presented with my McVilly-Pearce pin. The McVilly-Pearce pin is a relatively new initiative of Rowing Australia. Everybody who has represented Australia gets a numbered pin. You might notice I have been wearing my pin on my suit. The McVilly-Pearce pin was named after Cecil McVilly who, in 1912, was the first Australian to represent the country in the Olympic sport of rowing. In 1912 he attended the Olympics. Unfortunately he was disqualified for interference which probably meant he strayed into the other lane, but he went on to win the Diamond Sculls at Henley in 1913. He was also in World War I and was a bit of a war hero. He was an all rounder.

The Pearce part of the McVilly-Pearce pin was named after Henry Robert (Bobby) Pearce who was Australia's first gold medallist in the sport of rowing. In the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam he won the single scull and he backed that up with a 1932 win in the Olympics in the single scull in Los Angeles. He was so far in front in one race he noticed that a mother duck and ducklings were in his lane and he stopped rowing for a period to allow them to get out of the way. Then he went on to win by some distance. He was an outstanding athlete. That results in the creation of the McVilly-Pearce pin.

The night was very well attended by a number of luminaries from the Tasmanian rowing scene. It was really great to catch up with some long-time friends. The sort of friends that even if you have not seen them for a number of years when you get back together it is like not a day has passed. There was a whole bunch of rowers including Simon Burgess, Dana Faletik, Sam Beltz, Dion Birtwistle, Anthony Edwards, Tom Gibson, Brendon Long, Sam Waley, Ali Foot, Claire Shield,



Chris King and Shanne McGinnis. I was not aware but Shanne was the first woman from Tasmania to represent Australia in rowing. I always thought it was Urszula Kay but apparently Shanne McGinnis beat her by a couple of years.

As it currently stands, I believe there have been 831 pins awarded spanning the entire Australian rowing teams ever. I am proud to say that I was number 587. On the night, the numbers of the pins span from 182 to 751. There was quite a spread there. It was a great evening.

Another important person in my rowing career was there - my former coach, John Driessen, the coach of a number of the athletes in the room that night. I definitely would not have been receiving my number 587 if it was not for the efforts of people like John Driessen and the Ulverstone Rowing Club, where it all started.

### **WorldSkills Australia National Championships**

[6.10 p.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate the Tasmanian team that competed at the WorldSkills event in Sydney last week. Our state team achieved what can only be described as a truly magnificent result. For those who are not aware, the WorldSkills Australia National Championships bring together 500 of Australia's best skilled employees under the age of 23 every two years to battle it out to be named the nation's best. Competitors demonstrate their locally grown skills over three days. This year, that was in front of 30 000 visitors, industry leaders, experts and top education providers. After three days of intensive competition, Team Tasmania achieved a remarkable medal haul.

The 17 young apprentices and trainees have done our state very proud, bringing home six gold, one silver and two bronze medals. Joshua Boon from Ulverstone took out the gold medal for cabinet making. Joshua is a product of the TasTAFE system and works for UCI Joinery in Ulverstone. Joshua competed in the 2016 national competition in Melbourne and was determined to win gold in 2018, so well done to him.

**Dr Broad** - He worked very hard.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Yes. Samuel Laing won the gold medal for carpentry. Samuel is a product of the TasTAFE system as well and works for JPO Building Contractors in Devonport. Mitchell Stephan won the gold medal for plastering. Mitchell is a product of the TasTAFE system and works for Darren's Plastering in Hobart. Justin Bye won the gold medal for the heavy vehicle mechanics. Justin is a product of the TasTAFE system and works for MDG Contracting in Shearwater, closer to my home.

Colby Neal took out the gold medal for sheet metal work. Colby is a product of the TasTAFE system and works for Burnie Plumbing Supplies. Phoebe Martin took out the gold medal for floristry. Phoebe was trained at the Marjorie Milner College in Melbourne and is the owner of Flora Gondwana in North Hobart. Becky Turner won the silver medal for hairdressing. Becky is a product of the TasTAFE system and works at CAJ Hair and Beauty in Moonah.

Liam Woodleigh-Hardinge won a bronze medal for IT Network System Administration and is also TasTAFE trained. Liam works at Sacred Heart College in New Town. Kayden Stafford won the bronze medal for welding and is also TasTAFE trained. Kayden works for Elphinstone Pty Ltd

in Wynyard. Well done to those students and to all who competed. Thanks to the families who supported them and the fantastic teachers who helped guide them in their respective industries.

It was not the end for the trophies. Tasmania was recognised as the best performing region in Australia and brought home the Evatt Shield. This is a tremendous accolade and further demonstrates the fantastic quality of our vocational, education and training system and especially that training delivered by TasTAFE. I congratulate all those involved and wish the best of luck to the winners selected to represent Australia at the forty-fifth WorldSkills International Competition in Kazan, Russia in 2019.

### **Noel Kelty - Tribute**

### **Paula Kelty - Tribute**

[6.14 p.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I stand to finish the eulogy I started last sitting for Mr Noel Kelty. I was up to where Noel's family had taken solace in his passing with the knowledge that he is now reconnected with his daughter, Joanne. The death of his only child was something that neither Noel nor Paula truly came to terms with. No parent should experience the death of their child. The strength he showed during this tragic time was something that the Kelty family drew inspiration from.

Whilst that time was truly devastating for Noel, he did not let it define him or make him bitter towards life. He made the conscious decision to carry on his life in the spirit of his daughter. That showed the true character of Noel.

According to Noel's family, he was a great-granddad to six great-grandchildren, Grace, Alex, Oliver, Lucy, Tom and Liam, granddaughter-in-law Penny, grandson-in-law David and son-in-law Wayne.

Through his later years, Noel took great interest and pride in his family's achievements and I am told he never wanted to talk about himself. He wanted to ask questions about everyone else and what they were doing, whether that be work, school, sport, travel or music. According to the Kelty family, the interest he showed in their lives made them all feel very special and help create an individual connection between them and Noel.

Since I gave that eulogy, I sadly learned that Noel's wife Paula passed away last week within three weeks of him passing away after 70 years of marriage. Paula Kelty was born in 1926 and passed away at 92. She was married to Noel Kelty for 70 years. It is incredible that Paula passed away quietly in her sleep only a matter of weeks after losing Noel, the love of her life.

I have the eulogy here. Paula Kelty quietly passed away at home in Longford on 6 June 2018, loved wife of Noel for 70 years, beloved mother and mother-in-law of Joanne and Wayne, friend of Esme, cherished gran of Scott and Penny Hadley, Alison and David Whiteman, adored great-gran of Grace, Alex and Oliver Hadley, Lucy, Tom and Liam Whiteman, daughter to the late Colin and Mabel McArthur of Sandy Bay, sister of Molly, Velma, Joy, Katherine, Colin, Jack and Dora, loving aunt to all her nieces and nephews.

Paula was a life member of the Longford Bowls Club and also the Australian Labor Party. Paula and Noel have left a massive gap in the community and in their families. Go in peace, Paula and Noel Kelty, lives well loved and lived.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

### **Men's Sheds**

[6.17 p.m.]

**Ms COURTNEY** (Bass - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise this evening to enthusiastically support the Tasmanian Men's Sheds movement and particularly three of the north-east sheds I have visited in the past week. I was privileged enough in my previous term to be the parliamentary secretary to the Premier with responsibility for Men's Sheds. It is something I greatly relished and now that I do not have that responsibility I am still loving the opportunity to go and meet with men and women around the state.

I visited the Bridport Men's Shed which was first discussed in 2014 to service the increasing population of men in that community to utilise their spare time. With the support of the local community, tradies, business owners and Dorset Council, which donated a disused shed that was sitting in a paddock, the team of men managed to build their shed as their first project. I was honoured to open the Bridport Community Men's Shed in November 2015 and I pay tribute to president George Andrews for his leadership and the role he has played in that community for a number of years. It was great to be able to catch up with George and about a dozen members last week to hear their latest efforts, including continuing expansion and also responding to the needs of the community.

I was also privileged to visit the Dorset Community Men's Shed. I was hosted by president, Mervin Chilcott, who is always very proud to spruik and talk about the benefits of their facility and how it services the wider Scottsdale community. The latest project of the Dorset Community Men's Shed has been Rosegarlands, which opened last week in collaboration with the local council and I believe Mayor Greg Howard was participating in that opening.

The Men's Shed has expanded in recent years to provide art classes. It has been very responsive to the needs of the community and it is great to see, whenever I visit, that it is very active. It is also a very handy place to visit at this time of year because they cut and prepare boxes of kindling and when you arrive home at the hours I do in the evening and your only heating source is wood fire, being able to have pre-cut kindling and not have to walk around the garden with your Dolphin torch looking for sticks is very useful. I thank the men who cut that. It is a great resource and I will continue to come and support your organisation. Indeed, the money that is raised from those boxes - I believe they sell for \$7 and they donate \$5 from every box to the Hospital Auxiliary. That has been one of their main fundraisers for the community for a number of years, so I thank them for that.

I also had the privilege of visiting the Furneaux Islands Community Shed over the weekend, which is located on the school grounds on the glorious Flinders Island. The weather was astonishingly amazing; it was perfect. Currently the shed operates out of the Flinders Island District High School and while that offers a number of challenges around the ability for members to access the shed when school is on, it does provide a lot of opportunities for participation with younger students. One of the members of the men's shed participates in some of the woodwork classes for

the kids. It was lovely to be able to drop in and see that the men's shed has embraced the entire community. It seems not to have either age nor gender as a barrier and it has a really wide representation in that shed. I am looking forward to continuing to work with them, including Peter McConnell and Dale Wells, on projects looking at a new space that will potentially make it available during school hours, because that is a challenge. What they have already built up is an absolute credit to them. It is a facility that services the needs of the community, provides a place for people to go for respite but also a sense of belonging. They do some really handy woodwork as well, so a great range of skills there.

Men's sheds are obviously predicated on amazing volunteers and one of the great strengths of men's sheds around the state is that they respond to the needs of their local community. I thank them. I thank the Tasmanian Men's Shed Association, the dedicated people who are behind it, including their executive officer and their leadership team for what they do, the kilometres that they travel getting out and about, and the way that they support men's shed to strengthen regional communities.

### **High Tea for Hope - Ovarian Cancer Support**

[6.22 p.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Denison - Minister for Justice) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I also agree with my colleague about men's sheds and community sheds, more particularly in my electorate as I think they are referred to more often. Notwithstanding whatever title they hold they are a wonderful community asset. I must say that Ms Courtney is becoming a resident of Flinders because I know she has spent quite a lot of time there this year and she should be commended for that. It is a beautiful place to visit.

It was with great pleasure that on Sunday 27 May 2018 I attended the High Tea for Hope, which is now an event organised by the Ultimate Foundation of Hope, which is a newly created not-for-profit organisation in Tasmania of which I am also the inaugural ambassador. I have been asked to be the ambassador of that organisation, partly because I have gone every year and they know that I will keep going and it is a pretty sure bet that I will attend their functions. I think this is how I get these roles. I make light of it but it is an important organisation. It not only raises funds in relation to research for ovarian cancer, but also raises awareness of ovarian cancer.

Although it is always lovely to get together at a high tea where we can enjoy some Tasmanian fare, the High Tea for Hope event also has an extremely serious side to it. It is organised by a group of women in Hobart led by Katrina Driessen who joined forces to create a dedicated support service in Tasmania for ovarian cancer patients and their families. The funds raised from the High Tea for Hope go towards assisting the creation and set up of the only specific support service in Tasmania for ovarian cancer.

It is a dreadful form of cancer. All forms of cancer are dreadful, but statistically an average of three Australian women are diagnosed with this condition every day. I will go through some more statistics in a minute because it is an important one to raise awareness of, not least because the symptoms are quite often like everyday symptoms that women tend to experience.

Since becoming ambassador for this inspirational organisation I have had an increased awareness and interest in this important cause. Wanting to help raise awareness myself, I have always held an afternoon 'teal', which is the colour of the ribbon that represents ovarian cancer. I

do that not only to raise a small amount of funds myself but to mainly get some women together to help raise awareness of this condition.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 1613 new cases of ovarian cancer will be diagnosed in 2018. A total 2.5 per cent of females diagnosed in 2018 will be with ovarian cancer. The estimated number of deaths from ovarian cancer in 2018 is 1069 and 5.1 per cent of all female deaths from cancer in 2018 will be as the result of ovarian cancer. Statistically 5.1 per cent does not sound a lot but I would hazard a guess that many people would not be as aware of the symptoms of ovarian cancer as other forms of cancer. It is things like bloatedness and if you experience any change or discomfort as a female and it is not usual for you then that is something you should get checked out - but women are not typically good at getting checked out, as are men. Sometimes we think if we are feeling a bit of discomfort or pain it will go away. I suppose the message is that if it does not, you should have a check-up with your doctor. All too often - and I am guilty of this myself; I am probably the worst person to be giving this advice - we lead busy lives and put our own health last. What I and others need to do is to put our own health first because we are good to no-one if we fall ill ourselves.

In addition, in 2017 ovarian cancer was estimated to be the eighth most commonly diagnosed cancer in females - again something I was not aware of. In 2015 there were 926 deaths from ovarian cancer in Australia. In 2018 it is estimated that this will increase to 1069, so it is a bit staggering that we are expecting an increase. In 2014 ovarian cancer was estimated to be the sixth most common cause of death from cancer in females in Australia. Finally, only 43 per cent of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer each year will survive. That is a really high statistic and that is because the diagnosis is often late because we do not realise the symptoms until it is too late. Unfortunately, when most women are diagnosed, their cancer will be at an advanced stage making it very difficult to treat successfully. That is why creating awareness and talking about the signs and symptoms of this disease is so critical.

I have a friend I do not want to identify but who has three beautiful children and, following the birth of her third child, discovered ovarian cancer. She has successfully had full treatment for the first lot and was in remission but it has returned so she is currently undergoing further treatment, all at about the age of 40. It is quite devastating at that age to be diagnosed with something like that. Although cancer never discriminates according to age, it is a cancer that is more common in middle-aged women, which I do not think 40 really reaches. However, if ovarian cancer is found in the early stages up to 95 per cent of women will be alive and well after five years.

We heard from Dr Michael Bunting who was the guest speaker at the High Tea for Hope this year. He offers a statewide service in Tasmania and he shared information and insights on a number of topics, such as the science and symptoms, treatment options and personal stories including the one I told today which I identified as my friend.

I hope that helps raise awareness to some members of the House.

**Time expired.**

### **Rosny Hill - Leafy Sun Orchid**

[6.30 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I provide a bit more context in light of the debate earlier in the day about threatened species: the need for threatened species management

across Tasmania in both wilderness areas, in national parks and inner city suburban suburbs such as Rosny.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - You are not reflecting the previous debate of the House?

**Dr WOODRUFF** - No, I am not reflecting. I certainly would not do that. I am talking about Rosny Hill, a nature conservation area, which is the place where a number of threatened orchid species are known to exist. In fact, they may only exist in substantial quantities on the Rosny Hill nature recreation area.

I am speaking of the leafy sun orchid, *Thelymitra bracteata*. This is a very special little orchid that people who walk, jog and take their dogs up for daily recreation on Rosny Hill may be lucky enough to spy. The Clarence City Council undertook some documentation and survey work around the plant earlier in 2016. The council found that orchid to be an endangered species under the Threatened Species Protection Act, that it has only been recorded in four locations in Tasmania and the Rosny Hill nature recreation area is the only location that is known to contain a sizeable population of that particular beautiful orchid.

It is relevant because management of threatened species has been much discussed in recent times. If this Government is keen to make a mark in this area, the Premier would have a keen interest in the situation that is unfolding in Rosny Hill, which threatens not only the particular endangered orchid, *Thelymitra bracteata*, but the amenity, pleasure, silence, safety and the public ownership of that beautiful Rosny Hill.

Rosny Hill is much loved to local residents and to people who live in Bellerive, who live on the other side of the Derwent and who look across at the treed hilltop on the Eastern Shore. Rosny Hill is extraordinary in having survived this long in the intense suburban environment of Hobart. It is a beautiful jewel of a place that gives people who go there spectacular views of Hobart, a place of reflection and recreation.

That reflection and recreation is under threat by a private development that is proposed to take the top off the Rosny Hill from the nature recreation area and convert it into a large private development with conference space for 250 people, a number of restaurants, private bar, accommodation, and a huge car park, all in the name of progress, all in the name of fixing up some alleged problems with anti-social behaviour and littering on the hill-top. I refer to a letter that was written by Mr John Counsell to the mayor of Clarence, Doug Chipman, earlier this year. Mr Counsell acknowledged the claim by the Clarence City Council about the problems with so-called antisocial behaviour and littering which Council is seeking to remedy by putting a massive private development on top of the hill. There are quite a few residents that have expressed amazement and those who have been round for a bit longer have expressed outrage that the Clarence Council is seeking to resolve a problem of their own making by inserting a massive private development as the solution.

It is a problem of their own making because the Clarence City Council has never put a rubbish bin at the top of Rosny Hill, despite taking it over from Parks decades ago with the alleged reason of fixing it up and managing it properly. They took it over and effectively have let it run down to explain a narrative of it falling apart and needing to be saved.

There are plenty of solutions for the issues of Rosny Hill. They involve having a consultation with the community, having a discussion with the residents. The residents have wanted to have that

discussion with their own council but the council has steadfastly refused to have a public meeting. It is still stonewalling their own community who put a petition to council at the last meeting asking for a public meeting to discuss what should happen to the public space at the top of Rosny Hill and council is holding them off for as long as possible. They have 72 days that they can stonewall their own community.

There are many ways that local residents would like to continue to use their Hill: the passive and active recreation pleasure that they get, the bush walking, bird watching, orienteering, rogaining and photography that they use at the moment. On behalf of the community I encourage the council to get out and have a chat to them about it.

### **Blue Derby Pods - Award**

#### **Silo Hotel - Opening**

[6.37 p.m.]

**Mr HODGMAN** (Franklin - Premier) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I note the recipient of the Spirit of the Tasmania Tourism and Hospitality award at the Tasmanian Young Achiever Awards in April this year was Tara Howell. Tara is one of the dynamic duo alongside Steve who is behind Blue Derby pods which offers a wonderful three-day guided mountain bike ride through the Blue Derby mountain bike trails in the north-east of the state. They are a wonderful example of world class ecotourism. It is a business that showcases many aspects of northern Tasmania. The pods are pre-assembled in Launceston, the bedding is from Waverley Woollen Mills and the menu for evening meals is designed by local chef, Daniel Alps, with a focus on seasonal and locally-sourced Tasmanian produce.

I was thrilled to be at the official opening of the Blue Derby pods last year. It was one of the Government's expressions of interest tourism projects which successfully got off the ground thanks to the innovation, drive and the enterprise of Tara and Steve. It certainly brings new opportunities for people to experience this wonderful natural area, to do so on the back of a mountain bike and be part of what is very much an exciting element of Tasmania's visitor economy.

The Government recognised the rapid growth in cycle tourism and as a result in September last year we announced a \$6 million contribution towards the establishment of delivering on our cycle tourism strategy. It is the part of the T21 Visitor Economy Strategy to seize the opportunities available in this growing sector. Through the strategy we have invested in mountain bike trails across the state including at St Helens, Derby, Maydena, Mount George and the wild Mersey trails as well as various bike projects funded through local councils.

In 2019 Derby will play host to round two of the Enduro Mountain Bike world series after hosting the event successfully in 2017. It will provide a further opportunity for north eastern Tasmania to attract participants, media, spectators to the region, injecting money into the local economy and providing the region with national and international exposure.

Most importantly I offer my congratulations to Tara, who is a trail blazer and also an inspiring industry leader in Tasmania's great tourism industry. She has been well recognised in the Tasmanian Young Achiever Awards in the Tourism and Hospitality category.

I also take the opportunity to note the significant developments occurring in Launceston thanks to the extraordinary drive and enterprise of Mr Errol Stewart, ably supported by Adie and the great team around them. We talked today about the significant private capital investment in Tasmania,

which is outstripping the nation in a sign of great confidence. The opening last week of the Silo Hotel and also the emergence of the development at the C H Smith site, both sites which had for so long stood undeveloped, under utilised and vacant, perhaps as I said last week, symbolise a view amongst some that it was perhaps a little too hard to get things done. The drive of Errol, Adie and his team to breathe new life back into the grain silos that they were into what is now a truly world class hotel development is a great testament to Tasmanian enterprise. It is also a great example of how conservation and adaptation to our heritage buildings can accommodate modern facilities, contemporary design, as well as the positive outcomes that are generated when the private sector works very closely with local and state government and the broader community to receive such broad support for what is a wonderful development.

The Silo Hotel opened last week. It was something that Errol imagined around 2012 or 2013 when a former government invested in levees to protect the north bank precinct area. The silos, as I say, which had stood undeveloped for many years, have now become a \$30 million development delivering 108 new hotel rooms for Launceston. It is a key component of the North Bank recreational precinct, which state and federal governments contributed more than \$7.3 million towards. Construction is well underway on the precinct. It is set to be completed in December. In addition a new pedestrian bike/foot bridge linking the Launceston seaport with North Bank should be ready later this month.

It is also important to acknowledge the Mantra Group's commitment to the Silo Hotel, which will operate under their fine Peppers brand. Expansion of Mantra's undertaking in the state is a sign of confidence that many investors and business owners have. Already they have close to a dozen properties operating in this state. This is the latest. We welcome their investment in our state, particularly in the north.

Whilst it was a significant challenge no doubt for Errol and their team, it is a testament to their drive and capability, also to the builders, designers up to Errol and his management team. The Tasmanian Government has supported both projects, the Silo Hotels and also the C H Smith redevelopment. In our view it demonstrates that you can actually get things done here. It does typically rely on the innovation, drive, enterprise and commitment of people like Errol and Adie Stewart. They are great Tasmanians. We congratulate them on the opening of the hotel. I look forward to a similar opening of the C.H. Smith development in due course.

### **Daniel Gurr - Tribute**

[6.44 p.m.]

**Mr SHELTON** (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I pay tribute to the efforts of Daniel Gurr, a young man from Deloraine who has achieved the top accolades in his field of wood chopping for his age.

Many people would know the Gurr name from Deloraine, specifically my colleagues in Lyons. Daniel, now aged 21, was born to his mother and father, Jo and Matthew. Matthew is a world champion axeman in his own right with 30 years' experience. Matthew has won at least 16 world championships himself.

Having a father who was a champion in his field, it was only natural that Daniel would develop a love for the wood chopping sport. He has always had an axe in his hand. He began wood chopping at the age of five. He continued to compete in events and improve his technique during his time at Deloraine School. He loved wood chopping, which has led him to become a fully qualified arborist.



By the age of 17, Daniel had made the final of the tree felling in Sydney. I have spoken in this House before about Daniel's abilities in tree felling. It was a huge achievement for him. Tree felling is a very complicated sport. For those who do not know, it takes a lot of skill and endurance; three shoes, putting a pocket in three different places as you climb the tree, taking the front out of the log, coming back down dismantling your shoes and going up the other side. I have seen Daniel give the opposition, two, two-and-a-half minutes head start, and he literally runs up the tree. It is a fantastic effort by Daniel.

Of course, fitness is an incredibly important role in tree-felling competitions; it is considered very much an endurance sport. You have to have the skills, the fitness and the endurance, and it is one of the hardest disciplines in wood chopping.

In 2017, Daniel was lucky enough to travel to Norway to train and compete in the Timbersports Rookie World Championship. This was a great experience for him and his father to attend and fuelled his desire to win the coveted title. He has been lucky enough to travel the world and refine his skills in competition and training sessions, all being a build up for the 2018 World Rookie Championships held only a few weeks ago. As a result, Daniel recently qualified to travel the nearly 17 000 kilometres from Deloraine to Marseille in France to compete in the 2018 STIHL TIMBERSPORTS World Rookie Championship.

To win the title, he had to compete in four different wood chopping disciplines. The winner would be the person who accumulated the most points over the four sections. Hoping to be the first Australian to walk away with the title, he trained in Germany before the competition. Daniel had to compete in all aspects of the competition: the stocksaw, standing block chop, the single buck and the underhand chop.

I was talking to his father, Matthew, at the Campbell Town Show. He was at the wood chopping and said, 'Daniel is up tonight. At about midnight, you can go on to the internet, google him and watch the championships'. I know that Matthew would have had a late night and would have been very pleased at the outcome.

Daniel was placed fifth in the stocksaw; first in the standing block; and sixth in the single buck and was trailing 19-year-old French competitor, Michael Del Pin, by three points before the last competition, the underhand chop.

Daniel smashed out a personal best time and took out the final section boosting his points tally which led to the overall victory and earning him the title of STIHL TIMBERSPORTS World Rookie Champion, a title that has never been won by an Australian before. The second place winner was Michael Del Pin from France, and Chas Hass of the United States, one of Daniel's idols, received third place.

Again, I congratulate Daniel for his wonderful performance in winning the rookie championship title. We wish him all the very best for his future endeavours in the sport of wood chopping.

### **Daniel Gurr - Tribute**

#### **Extreme Weather Event - Effect on Derwent Valley**

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Minister for Resources) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I concur with the remarks that my colleague and friend, Mark Shelton, made in congratulating Daniel Gurr on his world championship success in Europe in recent weeks.

Likewise, I saw Matthew at the Campbell Town Show. He was very excited and hopeful about Daniel's prospects, and he came through, which is terrific. It gives me the opportunity to refer to the Tasmanian Axemen's Association and the wonderful relationship that they have with Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the state Government.

I was pleased to be able to secure the memorandum of understanding for the next three years of funding support for this very important world class sport undertaken by the axemen's association and wood chopping all around Tasmania, not just the country shows but other shows as well.

I concur with Mark Shelton's remarks and congratulate Daniel and all those involved wood chopping events and for what they do.

Tonight I would like to reflect on the recent floods and the response to those floods, particularly in the Derwent Valley.

In the 24 hours leading up to 9 a.m. on Friday 11 May 2018 more than 120 millilitres of rain fell in Hobart and surrounding suburbs, whilst 236 millilitres fell on Mt Wellington. That makes 11 May 2018 the wettest Hobart day since 1960 and the second highest recorded May rainfall in a single day for Tasmania.

The extreme weather caused considerable damage across southern Tasmania, including through to the east coast and specifically in the electorate I represent in the Derwent Valley. It was one of the most heavily impacted local government areas. Some of those impacts related to roads washed out, bridges damaged, and parks and recreation grounds inundated. At Tynwald Park in New Norfolk, a young boy on his bike was airlifted to safety during the floods.

In that regard I want to pay a wonderful tribute to all those emergency services personnel, those first responders, and acknowledge the hard work and leadership of our Premier, Will Hodgman, and Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management, Michael Ferguson, who were out there supporting the Tasmanian emergency services and volunteers. I acknowledge all of them for what they have done. It was an incredible job in the face of extreme and challenging circumstances.

Buildings, fencing and equipment were heavily damaged or destroyed. Farmers' crops were heavily damaged or ruined. Creeks were choked with debris. Drainage systems were overwhelmed, causing severe pipe damage and the like.

I visited many of these areas in the Derwent Valley on 18 May with the Deputy Mayor, Ben Shaw. I thank Ben for the tour, meeting with residents and business people affected in Molesworth and parts of the Derwent Valley. We visited Tickleberry Farm and had a look at the damage there. Bill Smith was there and was clearly very concerned for his future. The raspberry farm was damaged almost beyond repair. There was huge damage all around. We had the opportunity to move up into and around Molesworth and other parts of the community, visiting homes and properties that were clearly damaged.

I refer to a quote of Derwent Valley Council general manager Greg Winton. He said, 'Some of the consequences of the flooding won't be seen for six to 12 months. That could be anything from further road failures to the sub-structures of the roads, weed management issues and further bank erosion issues'.

I refer to the Premier's announcement of a few days ago in terms of the additional disaster assistance grants that have been made available to non-profit organisations and individuals and businesses affected by the floods in early May. It is an important announcement and I put on the record my thanks to the Premier and the Government for their leadership. As a local member of parliament, I will be in New Norfolk again on Friday following up with the mayor, the deputy mayor and other businesses and individuals and families affected.

Assistance is being provided through this announcement through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. The Government is continuing to work with the Derwent Valley community, which is still recovering from the flood event. To assist with the recovery, the state and federal governments have made further funding available to help those who need it most after what has been a challenging time. The Government is adding \$20 000 to the RACT Community Fund which is playing a key role in assisting non-profit organisations like our local clubs and associations recover. Grants up to \$5000 will be made available to assist individuals in urgent and genuine need of assistance. For information for Housing Tasmania on 1300 665663.

In addition to the NDRRA funding, the Tasmanian Government is offering grants of up to \$10 000 for small businesses to meet their short to medium-term recovery needs, including the cost of repair and clean-up. Call Business Tasmania on 1800 440026. Non-profit organisations maybe eligible for grants of up to \$2000 to meet their short to medium-term recovery needs, including the cost of repair and clean-up. Phone RACT on 62364325.

**Time expired.**

**The House adjourned at 6.54 p.m.**