

Tuesday 9 April 2019

The President, **Mr Wilkinson**, took the Chair at 11 a.m. and read Prayers.

E-PETITION

**Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage
Amendments) Bill 2018 (No. 47) - Further Consideration**

Mr Dean presented an e-petition signed by approximately 422 citizens of Tasmania who draw to the attention of the House the extremely serious consequences and undue haste of the Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018 and request that the House defer debate until the legislation is fully considered by a parliamentary inquiry and/or the Tasmania Law Reform Institute.

Petition received.

QUESTION UPON NOTICE

The following answer was given to a question upon notice -

1. BASS STRAIT ISLANDS - RESIDENTS - TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

Ms FORREST asked the Leader of the Government Business in the Legislative Council -

According to the Department of Health and Human Services and other government websites, a number of concessions are available to residents of the Bass Strait islands who need to travel off island for medical and education/training services.

With regard to these concessions -

- (1) What concessions exist for residents of the Bass Strait islands?
- (2) Are any concessions means-tested; and
 - (a) if so, which concessions do they apply to; and
 - (b) how is the means test applied?
- (3) How many individuals avail themselves of these concessions on King Island and Flinders Islands, listed separately?
- (4) What is the cost to the government per annum?

Mrs HISCUTT replied -

- (1) The transport concessions for medical and education/training services available for residents of the Bass Strait islands are -

- (a) Conveyance Allowance Air Travel Program; and
- (b) Age Pension Air Travel Concession Program.

The programs offer financial assistance toward the cost of transport from their home on a Bass Strait island to mainland Tasmania. The Conveyance Allowance Air Travel program offers financial assistance to school students to attend an educationally appropriate school, or grades 11 or 12, on mainland Tasmania. The Age Pension Air Travel Concession program offers financial assistance of 50 per cent of the airfare for one return trip to northern Tasmania per financial year.

- (2) Only the Age Pension Air Travel Concession is means-tested, as the pensioner must hold a current Centrelink Concession Card endorsed 'Age' (for age pension).
- (3) The number of residents of the Bass Strait islands who have applied and been found eligible for the programs in 2018 are -
 - (a) for the Conveyance Allowance Air Travel program -
 - 22 students who live on Flinders Island received the concession; and
 - 15 students who live on King Island received the concession.
 - (b) for the Age Pension Air Travel Concession program -
 - 37 pensioners who live on Flinders Island received the concession; and
 - 19 pensioners who live on King Island received the concession.
- (4) The cost to government for these two programs in 2018 was -
 - (a) for the Conveyance Allowance Air Travel program, around \$145 000; and
 - (b) for the Age Pension Air Travel Concession program, around \$11 000.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT

Welcome to New Staff

[11.08 a.m.]

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, I formally welcome recent additions to the staff of the Legislative Council, Leigh Noy and Jacinta Antoniazzi.

Leigh has been appointed electoral officer to the member for Huon. He holds a Diploma Of Community Service, Financial Counselling and an Advanced Diploma Of Agribusiness Management. He has over 17 years experience in banking and financial services, including 10 years in the Huon area.

Jacinta has been engaged on a casual basis to assist the committee secretariat during the period of Jenny Mannering's maternity leave. Jacinta has administrative experience and is currently studying a Bachelor of Legal Studies at the University of Tasmania.

Leigh and Jacinta will be observing proceedings in the Chamber today as part of their orientation to the Legislative Council. On behalf of all members, I extend a very warm welcome and we look forward to catching up with them.

Members - Hear, hear.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

Glenorchy Lions Club

[11.09 a.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, it gives pleasure to welcome the City of Glenorchy Lions Club to the Legislative Council. Lions Clubs are well known for their fundraising barbeques, but there is much more to Lions than a sausage sizzle at Bunnings. Lions Clubs are one of Australia's largest community service providers and are involved in a diverse range of initiatives across our communities. There are 1350 Lions Clubs and over 30 000 members across Australia. Breaking it down, that equates to 70 hours donated per member per year, \$1750 in fundraising per member, a whopping \$50 million donated to local communities, and 14 million Australians directly assisted by Lions.

Where there is a need, there is a Lion, and this is so true for the Glenorchy community. The Glenorchy Lions Club was chartered on 1 April 1964, and was the seventh club to form in Tasmania. The club also includes the Leos, the younger members. The club's influence is demonstrated across our community with some noticeable ventures we can directly attribute to the club. One of its first initiatives was to provide support and financial assistance to the establishment of the Golden Years Club in Glenorchy. This legacy remains today with the Golden Years Club, of which I am a proud patron, being a principal club for the community of senior citizens.

We can also thank Glenorchy Lions for the Montrose Bay Foreshore Community Park. This is the primary recreation area for families in the northern suburbs and is utilised by many community organisations. The Lions hosted a family fun run at the foreshore park a few weeks ago, to raise funds for Diabetes Tasmania. Within recent years the club has developed a working relationship with the Glenorchy City Council, taking leadership of such initiatives as the Montrose Bay regatta, Dad's Day Out and Carols by Candlelight at Tolosa Park.

The Glenorchy Lions are attuned to the needs of our people. In recognising our culture and diversity in Glenorchy, the Lions Club has connected with the Multicultural Council of Tasmania. Over the last year, the club has hosted a dinner at our multicultural hub, donated towards MCOTs fortieth anniversary and most recently supported the launch of Harmony Week. In Glenorchy Lions' recognition of our migrant communities, club secretary Jenny Pritchett was quoted in our local newspaper as saying -

The City of Glenorchy Lions Club recognises that a socially inclusive and accepting community is a more productive, positive and happier community...now, more than ever, it is so important that as a community we are encouraging and celebrating our diversity.

The Glenorchy Lions remain true to tradition and can often be seen outside Bunnings. I spotted them getting ready for the masses early on Sunday morning. I am sure the daily takings increase when there is the unmistakable blue tent of the Lions outside Bunnings. Who can resist?

While continuing with its regular voluntary activities, the club has been selected to host this year's Lions Tasmania District Convention. This is the fortieth anniversary of the first convention, also held by the City of Glenorchy. This is a real honour and a mark of respect towards the club from its peers. I am proud that the Glenorchy Lions have been chosen to host the convention. Our community has much to showcase. With over 50 clubs attending, it will give a huge boost to the local economy. I wish you all the very best for the convention. I commend you for putting up your hand to take on what is a massive task pulling the extensive program together. You are working hard to ensure it will be a rewarding experience for all attendees and with the true spirit of Glenorchy Lions on show, everyone will have fun and be justifiably impressed with what our community has to offer.

I extend my gratitude to members of the Glenorchy Lions Club and the Leos for their selfless commitment to our community. I have barely touched on what the Lions are doing for our community and genuinely cannot think of an event at which its members are not on hand to help out, always smiling and happy to be making a difference. They are ordinary people doing extraordinary things and that is the Lions' way.

Sticht Legacy

[11.14 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I recently attended a reception to celebrate the return of some historic items to Queenstown, including a beautiful necklace previously owned by Marion Sticht, the wife of Robert Sticht, a former mine manager for Mount Lyell mine. Robert Carl Sticht worked for the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company, initially as a metallurgist and later as a manager, from 1895 to 1921.

Marion Oak Staige and Robert were both born in the United States and left for their new home of Queenstown, Tasmania shortly after marrying in 1895. Marion and Robert Sticht were important figures and community leaders in Queenstown. In his role as manager, Robert had the magnificent Federation-style Penghana House built overlooking the town and mining works, now owned by the National Trust and lovingly managed by Karen Nixon and Steve Berndt. I acknowledge and thank Karen for her important role in seeing this necklace returned to Queenstown.

While the relevance of some of the charms of this necklace are uncertain, we presume they were pieced together by Marion Sticht. I have some photographs if members are interested in looking at these. It is not a glamorous necklace in any sense, but it is very historic.

The necklace consists of a fine gold chain, to which 27 unique pendants or charms are attached. Almost half of these are engraved with dates and places relating to the events in the lives of the family. These charms are a miniature biography of this couple in objects commemorating important moments in their lives such as marriage, anniversaries, holidays, trips back home and the birthdays of their children.

A number of the charms are marked for the Launceston jeweller F&W Stewart; some are likely to have been made in the United States and in Europe. While not of significant monetary value and

not particularly artistically significant, their real value resides in their assemblage over time by the couple. This is both unique and historically important.

The journey of this necklace is unclear as Marion and her sons fell on hard times following Robert's death in 1922. Marion and her two sons moved from Queenstown to Balfour in reduced circumstances with a private mining venture leaving them £70 000 in debt. The couple's significant library was sold in 1922 and their equally impressive art collection was auctioned the following year. Marion died in Melbourne in 1924.

The other beautiful items in the display cabinet put together by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery - TMAG - include a chatelaine aide memoire circa 1870, a little note cover made of silver and ivory with a beautiful love poem written in German; the railway spike driven in by Mrs Marion Sticht to complete the railway link at Mount Lyell; and the ceremonial hammer made from wood and brass that we believe was used to hit in the last spike at the Mount Lyell Railway by Mrs Sticht.

Karen Dixon, the manager of Penghana, became aware of this necklace and communicated with its most recent owner, Ms Frances Herriott from Queensland. Karen brought the whereabouts of the necklace to the attention of TMAG's decorative arts curator, Peter Hughes. Karen helped connect TMAG with Ms Herriott, who was also intending to attend this event but sadly could not make it at the last minute.

TMAG acquired the Sticht charm necklace for the state collection with the support of the TMAG Foundation Ltd. This necklace, when bought from Ms Herriot, was complete, undamaged and unrestored.

I thank and acknowledge the TMAG Foundation community that supports the work of TMAG by raising funds for research, exhibitions, TMAG's education programs and acquisitions such as the Marion Sticht charm necklace. Without its support, TMAG simply could not have acquired this wonderful piece of west coast history.

Getting the necklace back to Tasmania was the first step. The next step was getting it properly mounted for display back where the story started, in Queenstown, and that is where I became involved. As a proud representative of the west coast region and a member of the TMAG Foundation community, I worked with TMAG director Janet Harding and others to ensure it would be displayed in Queenstown.

I acknowledge the financial support of TMAG, Peter Walker, the general manager of Mount Lyell Copper Mines, and the Honourable Jeremy Rockliff for their financial support that added to my financial support and saw these items returned to the west coast.

The Sticht charm necklace is an important illustration of Tasmania's west coast stories and many of the charms have a special meaning.

I encourage anyone visiting the west coast to call in to the West Coast Community Services Hub to see this display. I have a photograph that shows some of the charms up close, and there is more information about the other charms in the display.

I acknowledge the support of everyone at Libraries Tasmania for offering the library as a venue for Marion Sticht's necklace so it can be available for everyone to enjoy, locals and visitors alike.

For many people, their favourite charm was the little charm that has the initials of both Robert and Marion on it, the dates on which they were in Tasmania, and a map of Tasmania with a little gemstone, possibly a diamond, right on the spot where Queenstown is.

Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize

[11.19 a.m.]

Mr FINCH (Rosevears) - Mr President, the Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize has been spoken about here before. The member for Windermere gave a terrific speech about it last year, which I will quote from, and he talked about how memorable and wonderful the trip was.

Other members have been on the trip, too. I know the member for Montgomery thoroughly enjoyed her trip. The members for Derwent and Murchison have taken the trip as well. All have been afforded that wonderful opportunity. I was speaking with another former member, Rene Hidding, the other day about the trip and he said that it is a trip of a lifetime to experience this Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize trip.

It is an essay-based competition for grade 9 students which helps promote and preserve the meaning of the Anzac spirit in the Tasmanian community. The six prize winners have the opportunity to study Australia's participation in the Great War by taking a study tour to visit significant World War I landmarks and battlefields on the Western Front in Europe.

Students also undertake to do research into individual soldiers who fought in World War I as part of the preparation for their trip to Belgium and France. We all were compelled to do that research. My chap is here, Michael - Mick - Manion, who went from Beaconsfield to the battlefield and unfortunately was killed in 1916.

The Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize was first awarded in 2004 and is an initiative of the Tasmanian Government supported by RSL Tasmania. The prize is jointly administered by the Department of Education and Communities, Sport and Recreation Tasmania in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The prize recognised World War I veteran Frank MacDonald, who was born in Ulverstone in 1896. Interestingly, our RSL representative Libby Perkins, who knew Frank MacDonald, is from Ulverstone as well and will be coming along on the trip.

Frank MacDonald died in August 2003 at the age of 107. I think there was something in the genes of that man. He was the last of the 40th Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, the only all-Tasmanian battalion raised during World War I.

Frank MacDonald was responsible for repairing signal lines between headquarters and trenches. He received a military medal for working courageously under heavy fire. He also served in World War II and received the Legion of Honour in 1998.

I am highlighting this because on Saturday we had the most fantastic day with the people from the tour in Parliament House; we used one of the committee rooms to have our gathering and then I showed them through the museum. We also had a tour through the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council in between our various sessions. From the way the eyes of the young people lit up, I would not be at all surprised if we see some of them here as staff or parliamentarians in the future. They were very interested - such is the high calibre of these students.

If you do not mind, I will name the team itself - not in any particular order, but I notice that I am mentioned last: Kristy Broomhall, who is from the Premier's office and has done a fabulous job with the detail, it has been excellent; Griffin McLaughlin from the Tarremah Steiner School; Jenna Stacey, a student from Mount Carmel College; Lydia Kelly from St Patrick's College; Mia Cooper from Ogilvie High School; Nell Hentschel from Bayview Secondary College; and William Scott from Scotch Oakburn College. Two teachers go on the trip every year; this year we have Ivor Leonard from the Hutchins School and Mel Burnett from the Bayview Secondary College.

As mentioned, Libby Perkins is the RSL representative, and then there is a chap who is there to make up the numbers. I am looking forward very much to meeting Dr John Greenacre, who will be our tour guide. Everybody speaks affectionately of him and all are very appreciative of his knowledge and how he imparts that to the team.

Mr Dean - He is a great person.

Mr FINCH - Yes, you mentioned that in your speech. You also mentioned the opportunity to go to Anglesea Barracks, the Soldiers Walk on the Domain and the War Memorial in Canberra, where we were met by Brendon Nelson, who also gave a speech. We also went to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which is significant to me. Paul Keating made a significant speech at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier 26 years ago; it is well worth reading and I trust our young people will look into the details of that speech. I must also mention Judy Travis, from the Education department, who has coordinated these tours for many years; she is a wonderful lady. The member for Windermere also mentioned the Sir John Monash Centre. Was it open when you were there?

Mr Dean - Yes, and we went to it.

Mr FINCH - I look forward to going there because he is a famous Australian. Peter FitzSimons has written a wonderful book called *Monash's Masterpiece: The Battle of Le Hamel and the 93 Minutes that Changed the World*. Sir John Monash was at the Battle of Le Hamel, and because he was an engineer, he organised it down to the very minute - or so he thought. He thought the way he had it structured that battle would take 90 minutes. It took 93 minutes, so it was a wonderful achievement and the centre recognises one of the great commanders of the World War I.

I look forward to visiting those places I have spoken about over many years, like the Menin Gate, Passchendaele, Fromelles, Villers-Bretonneux, Amiens, Pozières and the Somme, which we will visit on Anzac Day; all components of the Western Front. I will leave you with a quote from the member for Windermere's contribution last year. He said -

The sacrifices made and the heroics and tragedies of our Diggers are the reasons we can never forget them. That is why Anzac Day can never cease and why the RSL must continue to be supported by our governments - and they are very strong reasons for the Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize to continue in the long term.

Interstate Parliamentary Bowling Carnival

[11.28 a.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, my special interest contribution will be divided into three sections - before, now and tomorrow. This concerns the tradition and history of this

institution. The Interstate Parliamentary Bowling Carnival originated in Sydney in 1960, when Sir Lyell McEwin MLC and Mr James Heaslip MP of the Parliament of South Australia, together with their wives, called at Parliament House in Sydney en route from the Australian Bowling Carnival in Brisbane. Over a cup of tea, they discussed with an MLA and an MLC from New South Wales, and the then Clerk Assistant, later Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales the possibility of individual games between their two state parliaments. Sir Lyell suggested making it an annual competition between all state parliaments.

As the senior state parliament, New South Wales agreed to sponsor the first competition and this was held in Sydney from the 9 to 11 May 1961. All states participated, except Victoria. It was so successful that representatives of the participating states decided to make the carnival an annual event. In January of this year, the fifty-ninth carnival was held in Sydney. We had a reception at Parliament House and they showed us where they had a bowling lawn at the parliament. The idea of the parliamentary bowling competition is to provide a way for parliamentarians from the states to catch up with their colleagues when they travel to different states for the carnival. One night each in the carnival week is set aside for a party, whether it be Labor, Liberal or another, and that tradition carries on. I was interested to see that it had a such a high social activity within the parliament; they actually have two bowling greens at Parliament House in New South Wales.

Rules for the conduct at the carnival have been established over the years and are reviewed at each carnival. Hosting the carnival is rotated among the state parliaments and over the time the carnival has come to be held in January each year. Until 2005, 45 carnivals had been held under the rules established in 1961, which provided for separate sitting and former member carnivals - so at the same carnival, they had sitting members and past members. However, in 2006 due to dwindling sitting member participation, a Fours competition involving both sitting and former members was played.

It should be of interest to note that since 1961 using the traditional format, Tasmania has won 10 carnivals; Victoria, nine; Western Australia, eight; South Australia, seven; NSW, six; and Queensland, five - that was until 2005. Some of the names of the people who participated in those teams - and I have gone back to the more modern history - include George Shaw, David Llewellyn, Des and Hugh Hiscutt, the late Tony Benneworth, the late Sue Napier and the late Colin Rattray, Peter Schulze, and even Kerry Finch participated.

Mr Finch - For goodness sake.

Mr GAFFNEY - It just goes to show, it is not a matter of ability, it is just about participating and performing the best you can for your team in the carnival.

Since 2006 it has become a Fours. I am not allowed props, but on the Table in front of members is the bowl from the 2006 annual shield. Since 2006, it has gone to Queensland, New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Queensland, Queensland, Western Australia, Western Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia; in 2019, it was won by Tasmania. Since 2006, Western Australia has won five; Tasmania, four; Queensland, four; NSW, one; South Australia, zero; and Victoria, zero - no ability whatsoever.

In 2019, we nominated two teams from Tasmania, which was a good effort, to go to New South Wales but about a week before we arrived, two members of the Queensland team, because of family deaths, were unable to participate so two of the Tasmanian team members played for Queensland so that they had a team playing, and we just played with one team. The members of that team were

Gabi Haros, Darryl Chellis, Ron Cornish, Geoff Squibb and myself. We were fortunate to win the carnival.

Why is this important? The Diamond Jubilee Carnival - the sixtieth carnival - is being held here in Hobart from 6 to 9 January 2020 at the Sandy Bay club. There is only a committee of one at the moment - and that is me - and unfortunately only two-thirds of me have to be at the meeting for there to be a quorum, so I am fortunate in that way. It is naturally declining, but it is important we ensure that the sixtieth carnival is a good event. Once that occurs, I doubt whether we will be involved as much after that.

I thank the President and the Speaker for their involvement in organising the 2020 carnival, which has to start now. There will also be a function or reception at Government House. The formalities will include a launch, a reception, government briefings and the party night I mentioned. We will be having a display in the foyer closer to the event. We are encouraging as many players as possible - present and past - to participate in this quite significant event as far as the parliament goes. Part of the formalities will be a trophy night. We also always do a tour of the region, which is very good for people coming from the mainland and their spouses and partners, and that will be a significant event.

I encourage members, if you cannot attend the four days of bowls, come for two days of bowls. We are trying to get together three or four teams. I will come back to you and harangue you about this between now and then. It is important that we recognise this event. We are fortunate the sixtieth is here - I think that is good for parliamentary bowls. If we win one more time, we will finish equal top with Western Australia. I encourage people to put their names down and consider making this event part of their holiday. All people pay for themselves, this Government is not involved. We hope the honourable Mr Finch will grace us with his presence once again.

Saving Shark Park

[11.35 a.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - Mr President, in January this year I was informed that the football oval at Old Forcett Road, Dodges Ferry would be dropped as a Southern Football League ground because of its poor condition caused by lack of water. The ground is nicknamed 'Shark Park' as it is the home of the Dodges Ferry Sharks. If Shark Park were dropped as an SFL ground, it would mean the end of the footy club. As someone who grew up in regional Tasmania, I understand how important football teams are to their communities as well as how much time, effort and passion players, coaches, volunteers and fans dedicate to their club.

Club president David Bellars and Phil Hammer from the Sharks visited my office to speak to me about the club's predicament and ask for my help. They told me the ground's water had previously come from a bore. However, the salt content of the bore's water gradually increased to the point where it could no longer be used to water the ground. The Sorell Council allowed the club to use the water from the Dodges Ferry Primary School. However, there was only enough water to irrigate the ground three times a week and access to this water was to cease when the new school year began. The recent hot summer and windy conditions have significantly degraded Shark Park's topsoil and killed a number of sections of the turf. Knowing how important the Dodges Ferry Sharks are to the community, I wanted to do everything I could to save the ground and the club.

In early January, I organised a meeting between David, Phil, Sorell mayor Kerry Vincent and representatives from SFL, TasWater and the state Government to discuss what we could do to save Shark Park. Following this meeting, a joint investment of \$25 000 was facilitated between the state Government, TasWater, AFL Tasmania and the Sorell Council to purchase enough water to ensure the ground's surface was prepared for the 2019 footy season.

With the short-term needs of the club sorted, a second meeting was held in February to discuss a long-term solution to Shark Park's water issues. Mayor Kerry Vincent stated that constructing a pipeline to the area had been discussed for the past 20 years and the Sorell Council was willing to cover half the cost of this pipeline if another investor covered the other half. Following this meeting, I went to the Treasurer and to emergency service and Infrastructure ministers who all agreed the Tasmanian Government and Sorell Council would jointly fund and invest \$420 000 to build a 4.5-kilometre pipeline from Forcett to Shark Park.

As a result of this investment, SFL games will continue to be played on the ground, securing the future of the Dodges Ferry Football Club. In addition, this will ensure the Dodges Ferry Cricket Club continues to have a home ground. The new pipeline will supply the rapidly growing Dodges Ferry Primary School with water and the school will also continue to use the football grounds for its sporting activities. The Dodges Ferry Fire Brigade will also utilise the water supply, increasing its capability to respond to emergencies and keep the community safe. The new pipeline will go out for tender and will be constructed in time for the 2020 school year and SFL season.

I thank all those who played a part in saving Shark Park - Mr David Bellars and Mr Phil Hammer from the Sharks; Mr Russell Young and Madeleine Ogilvie from SFL; mayor Kerry Vincent; and Robert Higgins from the Sorell Council; ministers Peter Gutwein, Jeremy Rockliff and Michael Ferguson; and representatives from AFL Tasmania, the departments of Education and Sport and Recreation, and TasWater.

This is a fantastic outcome for the Dodges Ferry community and a great outcome for Football Tasmania. Thank you.

Lindisfarne Football Club

[11.40 a.m.]

Ms SIEJKA (Pembroke) - Mr President, the Lindisfarne Football Club, also known as the 'Two Blues', is a club in the Pembroke electorate that is achieving great things on a number of fronts. These achievements are made all the more sweet when the Two Blues' history is taken into account. The Two Blues club was formed in 1911 and it has competed in the Clarence Football League and the Tasmanian amateur football league southern division. Through this time, they have won a number of grand finals, although these were few and far between.

In 1996, it joined the newly formed Southern Football League, now known as SFL, where it still competes today. After a solid start to its SFL tenure, the Two Blues suffered a disastrous period between 1998 and 2004, when the club lost 74 consecutive senior matches. In 2008, Lindisfarne enjoyed a much-needed reverse in fortunes by going through the season sweeping all before them, undefeated, only to go down to the Huonville Lions by 37 points in the grand final. However, 2018 was truly the Two Blues' year. In 2018, the Two Blues reached heights no other club in the Southern Football League had done before by winning the seniors, reserves, womens and colts grand finals. Winning a premiership for each grade is a huge achievement and one the Two Blues are, not surprisingly, very proud of. These wins have been referred to as a literal 'bluwash'.

Acknowledgement must go to the hardworking committee members - Martin Trinder, Mark Hutchinson, Chris Harper, Jane Anning, Barbara Phillips, Bev Shadwick and Frank Shadwick - for their efforts, and to coaches, Daniel Willing, Matt Howell, Josh Young and club trainer David Clark. However, it is the combined efforts of the club's committee members, coaches, volunteers and supporters that must be congratulated for all the club's success, as well as the wonderful community environment that is fostered.

The club has a philanthropic focus, with regular fundraisers for local causes taking place throughout the year, making them legends on and off the field. Of note has been their work to honour former player and club legend, Alex Harris. Alex tragically passed away of brain cancer in 2017 at only 19 years of age. When he was unable to continue playing football due to his illness, Alex adopted the role of a team trainer under the guidance of the seniors' trainer. His mother, Trudi Harris, said Alex was a mad footy fan and was rarely seen without his jumper. His mother is quoted as saying that, 'He just loved playing with his mates at Lindisfarne, with his dad, Greg, driving him to footy every week'. After being diagnosed with the illness at age 14, Alex continued to amaze all around him with his determination during two years of chemotherapy and having to learn to walk again. When chemotherapy kept Alex at home, he would constantly be looking on Facebook for the scores of the Lindisfarne games. Alex met every day with a smile on his face, never giving up, and even on his bad days he thought of others. He was a true hero to everyone who knew him.

At one game, the club organised for sponsors Hall Payne Lawyers to be Lindisfarne goal sponsors, donating \$2000 to CanTeen Tasmania for the total number of goals kicked in this match. In 2015, the under-18 team organised a fundraiser, for 'Team Harris Hobart', in support of their teammate, who needed major surgery for a brain tumour at the time. The players held a head-shaving and leg-waxing night, where they raised \$5000 to help Alex with his cancer treatment journey. Other fundraisers included the donation of \$5 from the sale of each Two Blues beanie, one of which I own, going toward the Alex Harris Hands on Heart Foundation. The foundation is raising funds to create a chill-out space for young people undergoing cancer treatment in Hobart. During 2015 and 2016, the club held fundraising matches for the GI Cancer Institute in honour of another club member, Mick Miller, which raised over \$15 000 combined. Last year, \$6000 was raised on the various charity football days for the Alex Harris Hands on Heart Foundation, CanTeen, Maddie Riewoldt's Vision and the Alex Gadomski Fellowship.

The focus on contributing to the community is evident from the club's leadership right through to the club's supporters, with team members having donated their match fees to charity as well. Celeste Miller and Carol Howell are the two club stalwarts who have been behind many of these efforts and their dedication to the club's continued community focus must be commended, along with the greater club membership who support these worthy causes. The Two Blues is a club that fosters a great sense of community and pride among their supporters. I wish them all the very best for the 2019 season and will see them at Anzac Park again soon. Go Two Blues!

MOTION

Assistance Animals - Review of Accreditation and Registration Process

[11.46 a.m.]

Ms SIEJKA (Pembroke) - Madam Deputy President, I move -

That the Legislative Council -

- (1) recognises the important role of assistance animals in supporting many Tasmanians living with a range of disabilities and impairments;
- (2) understands the valuable therapeutic benefit that assistance animals provide;
- (3) recognises the challenges associated with gaining eligibility for assistance animal accreditation and registration; and
- (4) calls on the Government to commit to a review of the accreditation and registration process for assistance animals.

Pets, whatever shape or size, form an important part of many Australian families. They are companions, friends and so much more within our community. For some, pets form an essential part of day-to-day living. For those living with a physical disability or mental illness, trained pets such as assistance animals provide valuable therapeutic benefits to their owners, enabling them to better participate in and navigate day-to-day life. Many may think that what is considered an assistance animal is limited to the guide dogs used by the visually impaired, but the range of assistance animals required by people living with disabilities and mental illnesses is much wider.

As reported in a story in the *Advocate* in February last year, some Tasmanians already use dogs that provide essential therapeutic support to address their mental illnesses. The story in question focused on Tasmanian man, Grant Parke, who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder following his experience with the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. Mr Parke relies on his assistance animal, Loui, a golden retriever, as a means of supporting his mental health in his everyday life. Loui has been trained to recognise when his owner is in distress, to remind him to eat and drink, and to wake him up if he is experiencing nightmares. Mr Parke has stated that having Loui at his side provides him with the confidence to participate in the community in ways his condition may have otherwise prevented him.

Furthermore, as Mr Parke noted, the support provided by his dog was effective when compared to other treatments, such as antidepressants, in alleviating the symptoms of his PTSD. Outside the use of dogs as assistance animals, other animals such as small horses can provide mobility support and companionship for those with physical disabilities. Animals such as parrots, cats and mice may also provide therapeutic benefits to those suffering from a range of mental illnesses or intellectual disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, anxiety and depression.

Non-traditional emotional support animals such as this are widely recognised in other countries, such as United States, as being essential to the mental health of their owners, providing companionship in stressful or overwhelming situations. This wide range of assistance animals can provide a real and tangible benefit to the quality of life of those living within our community. These animals are able to facilitate the wellbeing of their owners and provide a valuable form of companionship to those with physical disabilities and mental illness. As Mr Parke's story is testament to, it has been shown to be an effective way to alleviate the everyday struggles associated with mental illness.

Recognition of the value assistance animals provide to those living with mental illnesses or other conditions is lacking within our society and legal system. For instance, those who rely on assistance animals face a variety of challenges when travelling with their companion, as private businesses are often hesitant to realise the necessity of assistance animals. This is especially so in

cases where animals are not guide dogs. In a notable case, a man suffering from cerebral palsy was denied the ability to take his assistance dog with him on a domestic flight. The reason given by the airline was that because his assistance animal was not trained by an accredited school, the dog could not be allowed on the flight, despite the lengthy training the dog had received.

While the federal court found the actions of the airline constituted discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act, it highlights a problem with how assistance animals and their owners are treated in the community as those with disabilities must continually bear the onus of proving that their assistance animals are legitimate. In fact, in 2015 the Australian Human Rights Commission received five times as many complaints concerning discrimination for non-guide dog assistance animals than it did for cases concerning guide dogs. This indicates that those who use assistance animals that are not as well recognised as guide dogs are more likely to face discrimination and be discouraged from participating in day-to-day life.

These problems are not helped when owners are unable to have their assistance animals centrally registered and accredited by a government agency. Unlike all other Australian states, Tasmania does not have a system of accreditation for assistance animals. Without a system able to recognise and accredit assistance animals, many owners are left with the responsibility to continually prove to private businesses that their animal is necessary to assist with their condition and is sufficiently trained.

This is in contrast to a system where owners can present airlines, public transport providers or other businesses with a single identity card for the animal that demonstrates the animal meets hygiene and other training standards. Put simply, without a centralised accreditation system, those who seek to treat their disabilities and mental illnesses with an assistance animal are placed in a position of further disadvantage every day.

This means that ultimately those with disabilities and mental illnesses must make a choice between effectively treating their condition and participating in everyday life. Furthermore, by implementing a system that provides for the accreditation of assistance animals, business operators can operate with greater certainty with regard to their obligations under discrimination laws because it allows them to be confident that animals entering their businesses have met government-approved standards.

An accreditation system also helps to prevent assistance animal fraud, where individuals falsely claim their pet is for a therapeutic purpose in order to obtain benefits they otherwise would not, to the disadvantage of the public and those who genuinely require assistance animals.

To remedy this, the Government should commit to a review of how assistance animals are treated within Tasmanian legislation and look towards implementing accessible transport mechanisms which can be used by people living with disabilities and mental illnesses within our community to recognise assistance animals and the benefits they provide.

Such a review should consider the variety of ways that assistance animals are used by members of the community and recognise how individuals with different disabilities - whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual - require different levels of assistance from their animals. For example, an accreditation process could consist of a two-tiered system where some assistance animals perform their duties within the home or small public open spaces rather than other animals that are required by their owners to be with them at all times.

However, any review of how assistance animals are treated within Tasmania must involve consultation with a variety of actors in the community, be it the organisations responsible for breeding and training the animals, local businesses or, in particular, those living with disabilities who require the animals. The Government should commit to including all parties in consultation to develop policies that best reflect the diverse interests of the community on this issue.

Furthermore, such a review should also consider how our state system can better reflect the system seen in jurisdictions around Australia, helping to facilitate the ability for those with assistance animals to travel interstate. Implementing such a system would help facilitate access to services for those living with disabilities and mental illnesses and also go further to ensure that people are not subject to unfair discrimination.

Such improvements in how assistance animals are accredited within this state would ultimately lead to better outcomes for those who rely on these animals to support them in every aspect of their life.

[11.55 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Madam Deputy President, first, I thank the member for Pembroke for bringing this motion forward.

The Tasmanian Government recognises the vitally important role that assistance animals, primarily assistance dogs, can play in improving the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals who utilise these supports. Assistance dogs include sight dogs, hearing dogs, mobility dogs, psychiatric service dogs and other animals that are trained to support people with disability in public places, in employment and when accessing goods and services.

Assistance animals are not pets but rather are trained to support a range of activities and different types of disability and conditions. Their capacity to change people's lives by giving them independence, mobility, safety and companionship is widely acknowledged, and the vital role of assistance animals is strongly supported in Australian society.

Notwithstanding the regard in which assistance animals are held, the issues relating to the accreditation, use and regulation of assistance animals are complex areas of policy and law, and continue to represent practical issues for regulators, including with regard to training, certification and accreditation of assistance animals and handlers.

All Australian jurisdictions currently have a range of laws dealing with assistance animals, but there are variations regarding accreditation, policies and regulations. The Liberal Government has a strong record of delivering better outcomes for people with disability. Issues relating to regulation of assistance animals are a key area of focus for us at present.

That is why representatives of the Tasmanian Government are currently actively participating in a national working group focused on achieving a nationally consistent approach towards assistance dogs to alleviate the barriers to training recognition, accreditation, identification and especially travelling between jurisdictions.

The Commonwealth's Disability Discrimination Act 1992 is relevant in this context and applies throughout Australia. Section 9 of the DDA defines an assistance animal as one that is authorised through a state or territory and is trained through an accredited organisation. The DDA covers discrimination on the ground of disability, including discrimination because of having a carer,

assistant, assistance animal or disability aid. The DDA also states that an assistance animal must be trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability, and to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for an animal in a public place.

The DDA operates alongside Tasmanian legislation. It imposes additional requirements and obligations, and if there is an inconsistency, federal law will override state law. In this regard, the DDA is facilitative in nature and ensures there is no legal barrier within this state or any other regarding the use of appropriately trained and conditioned assistance animals.

The member for McIntyre and I witnessed such training when we were having breakfast last week.

Tasmania currently has laws relating to guide dogs and hearing dogs which provide coverage for guide and hearing dog users and trainers to enter public places, accommodation and services, including transport.

The Guide Dogs and Hearing Dogs Act 1967 provides a right to guide dog users and trainers to enter public places, accommodation and services, including transport.

The Dog Control Act 2000 permits blind and hearing-impaired persons to be accompanied by guide dogs and hearing dogs, respectively, in public places, public passenger vehicles and certain areas where other dogs are not permitted.

The Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 has 'reliance on a guide dog' and a definition of disability, and contains provisions that prohibit direct or indirect discrimination. However, it appears it seems unlikely to directly protect those using an assistance dog.

The Taxi Industry Regulations 2008 require that a driver must not discriminate against a person with a disability who has an assistance animal, as defined in section 9(2) of the DDA. While we have some legislative and regulative coverage in this area, it is acknowledged that the broader definition of assistance dogs, and assistance animals more generally, is not comprehensively covered by current Tasmanian legislation.

Despite work needing to be done in reviewing the accreditation registration process for assistance animals within Tasmania, it is important we do not undertake this working in isolation from other jurisdictions seeking to address similar issues. It makes sense that any laws that apply in Tasmania to reflect the DDA and best practice accreditation and regulation of assistance animals should be appropriately harmonised with the rest of the country. A nationally consistent approach will reduce confusion regarding regulations and allow for consistent messaging and training in relation to assistance animals. It will make it easier for people with disabilities travelling to different places with their assistance animals to understand and maintain their rights.

Consistency will also enable organisations working in multiple jurisdictions to have a clear understanding of the regulative framework without needing to respond differently in different states and territories. In considering moving toward a national approach, states and territories will have different issues to address. In Tasmania, we need to consider factors such as Tasmania's biosecurity laws, given that many animals used as pets that may also be assistance animals are prohibited in Tasmania. Poor regulation around assistance animals has caused problems in other jurisdictions in relation to human and environmental safety. There have also been well-documented issues where unscrupulous pet owners have abused rules designed to help people with genuine disabilities.

Working toward national consistency in this area is seen as important by all states and territories. The national working group comprising state and territory senior officials met in November 2018 and considered a position paper drafted by Western Australia. At this stage, all jurisdictions have given support to achieving a nationalised public asset test, which would establish an Australia-wide minimum standard of training for guide, hearing and assistance dogs. Work is currently underway to review all jurisdictions' public access tests and public access rights for assistance dogs. The national working group has agreed that achieving this as the first step will assist in moving toward achieving national policy on assistance dog approvals. This approach could then be extended to consider other assistance animals. The national working group will make recommendations to the Disability Reform Council, on which the Tasmanian Government is represented by the Minister for Disability Services and Community Development, the Honourable Jacqui Petrusma MP.

The Tasmanian Government is already focused on improving the regulatory framework in relation to assistance animals and is working with other states and territories to achieve a nationally consistent agreed way forward. Anything we can do to improve people's capacity to safely participate and engage in personal and public life is vital. As such, I commend the member for Pembroke for raising this matter today.

Madam Deputy President, I move -

That the motion be amended by deleting (4), and instead inserting -

- (4) calls on the Government to commit to participating in the national working group so as to achieve a nationally consistent approach towards assistance dogs in order to alleviate the barriers around training recognition, accreditation, identification, travelling between jurisdictions, and any biosecurity risks.

[12.05 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Madam Deputy President, the member for Pembroke will make a decision about whether she is willing to accept the amendment. I believe it is a useful amendment in light of what we heard about the national working group already undertaking work. The National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS - has also given a contribution around that national approach. I believe this commits the Government to work toward, and be part of, a national process, but we will hear what the member for Pembroke says. I am moving towards supporting the motion.

[12.06 p.m.]

Ms SIEJKA (Pembroke) - Madam Deputy President, I appreciate the Government's acknowledgement of the need to review the accreditation and registration process and that a nationally coordinated approach is required. While I support the amendment, as it is good to see the Government is interested in progressing this work, there is no commitment to implementing any working group recommendations. I appreciate it is difficult to do so without having seen those, but it would have been good to see an intention to make necessary changes if they are required.

Amendment agreed to.

[12.07 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Madam Deputy President, I acknowledge the interest and support the Government has provided to this important issue. I, like the member for Montgomery, the

honourable Leader, had breakfast at Customs House last week, as we do regularly when we stay in Hobart. There were two guide dogs there and it reminded me of the valuable work of guide dogs. When I saw the member for Pembroke's motion, I recalled that. They sat quietly. We spoke to the owners about how beautiful they were.

Mrs Hiscutt - Through you, Madam Deputy President, I also noted they were training the dogs to keep their tails in so that people would not tread on them. It was very interesting.

Ms RATTRAY - Especially in a confined space like that, with many people walking around. They were conscious of the animals' bodies and how people were going to move around them.

With the amendment in place, I support the member for Pembroke. This is a great initiative. I did a Google search. The NDIS website notes the regulation of assistance animals and AA trainers -

Currently the Agency recognises training organisations that are registered under the requirements in the state and/or territory in which the participant wishes to use their AA. Arrangements for co-training (by participants) of an AA currently need oversight by a registered AA training organisation to ensure regulatory requirements are met.

The Australian Government continues to discuss the appropriate regulation for AAs for public access rights authorisation. The Agency will actively contribute to this process and, when a national approach is finalised, the Agency will adjust its approach to funding AAs as necessary.

The NDIS is a key stakeholder in this area because it supports people living with a disability who may well be looking for an assistance animal to support them in their daily lives. The NDIS is being very proactive in that area.

I was interested when the member for Pembroke said that other animals are used as well; she said cats, and I thought, 'Yes, cats'. Certainly people have great affection for their cats. You probably would not be able to take them out with you. I do not think they like going out that much. The member also said mice. At home they might be a comfort - certainly not for me, but for other people.

I was quite interested to hear the wide range of assistance animals. The member for Pembroke went on to say that they are a valuable form of assistance to those in our communities. I can appreciate that. It is an interesting area, when you think about the value of animals. Everyone these days seems to have a pet of some description, particularly dogs.

I was watching a bit of TV early on Sunday morning when they have all that footy stuff on and they had a whole segment on players and their animals. In Western Australia, they even had a beach run. Everybody seems to have a pet and with social media, the pet seems to have more of a profile than the person does at times. It is becoming quite interesting that pets seem to have such a huge role in a family's or a person's life these days. It is very difficult to have a pet when you are not home very much, which is why I do not have a pet, but I appreciate that others do.

The reason assistance animals are so important is that we have people in our communities living with all types of disabilities. It may not necessarily be that they lack hearing or sight; there are many other areas that impede their day-to-day living.

It is perfectly sensible that we also be part of a national approach in regard to this. I am not always a big supporter of national approaches, but I understand the reasons for the Leader's putting in the amendment. It talks about travelling between jurisdictions and any biosecurity risks. That is very important as well. We want to make sure that anyone who needs to travel with their assistance animal does so without having to face any huge barriers as they go about that.

Generally, the public is understanding more of the therapeutic benefit of assistance animals and the fact that we are talking about that in this motion this morning reflects that. I congratulate the member for Pembroke for bringing it forward. It heightens the information that we will all gain more broadly in the community about the value of assistance animals.

Part (3) recognises the challenges associated with gaining eligibility for assistance animal accreditation and registration. I do not have much information about that; possibly there may not be any registered organisations in place yet in Tasmania, but I feel sure that organisations that do dog training or other kinds of animal training would be able move into that field of expertise. People take their pets to dog obedience classes, particularly when they are young, to get them to be well behaved when they are out and about and at home.

The four points of this motion are worthwhile. I am happy to provide my support to them in the motion the member for Pembroke has brought before the Council and I congratulate her on her initiative. We know what a great pet lover the member for Pembroke is herself and how important Frankie is in her life. I believe on occasions Frankie does some campaigning as well and often steals the show. People want to engage with Frankie.

I support the motion and look forward to the Government's commitment to the review process and the national approach to this important area.

[12.16 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Madam Deputy President, this is what parliament is all about sometimes, when we recognise that a gap needs to be filled in providing for those in the community who have issues and concerns. If we can have assistance animals properly accredited and if we can put in place a mechanism that provides a degree of status for these animals, it is important to do so.

I congratulate the member for Pembroke. I, too, can appreciate the need for the national approach when it comes to this matter. It would be good to see this matter moved forward. Because of the fact that people travel, it would be important to have a consistent approach.

I support it. I understand the sentiment behind it. You only have to look at how pets are such a valuable part of the family and how much joy they bring, especially to those who might be living on their own, and I can attest to that. One particular chihuahua is spoilt rotten by a certain individual in our family, and brings a lot of joy to my 96-year-old father, who lives on his own.

Pets do bring a lot of joy to families. On the other hand, sadly, a cat in my daughter's family, Lionel, had to be put down today because of kidney failure at the age of 16. There will be a lot of tears in that household today

This is about people who need assistance animals to go about their daily lives and to help them cope with the traumas or stresses they have had in their life. We have to recognise that these animals are needed to help people function in our society. I applaud the member for Pembroke in bringing this motion forward. I support all four clauses and the new clause. As the honourable Leader has

said, it is calling on the Government to participate in national working group. It is the Government that has to do these things and this is what the motion is all about. The Government is saying it is prepared to take it on and do it in this manner, and we have to grasp that opportunity. Thank you.

[12.20 p.m.]

Ms SIEJKA - Madam Deputy President, I thank members for their contributions. I am pleased to see work will be happening and I will follow that up closely because it is important to ensure the registration and accreditation process for assistance animals is made easier and is unified. Assistance animals provide a range of support for people - they give them more independence, help them with mobility and provide companionship. I am not sure what sort of support mice provide. A number of animals can sense when somebody has high blood sugar and things such as that. Who knows what mice are capable of? Different animals that can do all sorts of things.

Mrs Hiscutt - My son had a pet mouse and he absolutely loved it. It calmed him down, so maybe it is a therapeutic -

Ms SIEJKA - Yes, a number of dogs, for instance, do all sorts of things. Understanding there are gaps in the legislation is an important first step, along with wider understanding in the community of the role assistance animals play. We all need to think more broadly than guide dogs. While I do not undermine the wonderful work they do, there is a range of opportunities for other animals to assist people living with disability. If we do not start talking about it, people may not realise they are there or acknowledge the work they do.

The member for McIntyre mentioned the Tasmanian situation. It is difficult here to register and get accreditation for an animal. It is also difficult to access an animal, and that is also the case around Australia. There is a small number of breeders, and part of that is because of the amount of work that goes into training animals. It is something people do not go into lightly because it is difficult and time-consuming. While they are keen for awareness to be increased, they are always conscious that if they see an influx of people realising the opportunity to access an assistance dog, it would be a double-edged sword.

Ms Rattray - You would imagine more opportunities will come about as governments regulate and people become aware.

Ms SIEJKA - Absolutely. I mentioned in my contribution the potential for perhaps a two-tiered or multilevel system to take into account the high level of training required for guide dogs alongside other dogs or animals simply offering companionship. There is potential for that sort of thing that we have not had previously.

In response to your other comment, Frankie is probably more popular than me on social media. Every time she is mentioned, people say 'We love Frankie!', but nobody ever says that about me.

Ms Rattray - I am sure they do.

Ms SIEJKA - Maybe, I will have to check. I urge all members to support the motion to improve the understanding of challenges associated with and the need to work towards an improved training and accreditation process for assistance animals in Tasmania.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

**JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION (MARRIAGE
AMENDMENTS) BILL 2018 (No. 47)**

Consideration of Amendments made in the Committee of the Whole Council

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Mr President, I move -

That the bill as amended in Committee of the whole Council be now taken into consideration.

Suspension of Standing Order 284

[12.26 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Madam Deputy President, I move -

That so much of standing order 284 be suspended in respect of this bill so as to allow the amended clauses and the new clause references only to be called without the need for the amendments to be read again in full.

Motion agreed to.

Standing order suspended.

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Madam Deputy President, I move -

That the amended clauses and new clause references be read.

Amended clauses and new clause references read.

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Madam Deputy President, I move -

That the amendments be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Third Reading

[12.28 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Madam Deputy President, I have further concern in relation to this bill. I raised these issues during the Committee stage, but they were never answered. I have grave concern about why those questions were not answered. This bill with its amendments will go to the other place. If the other place does its job, it ought to look at questions asked and seek answers, and take some time to do so. They are in the most unfortunate position that this will not be allowed to happen.

Madam Deputy President, I refer to statements made by yourself, the member for Murchison, relative to the Commissioner of Police and concerning the commissioner's report made available to her and later tabled by the Leader of the Government. I do so due to my concern that honourable members may have been persuaded by what the member attributed to the Commissioner of Police in support of both the bill and amendments to clause 28D involving body searches by police. You may have been influenced in your decision on the bill and the amendments to 28D. These comments were made by the member for Murchison regarding the letter from the commissioner and discussion with him.

The first comment occurred on Wednesday, 3 April 2019 following my input. The member for Murchison made the comment, which I will read from the uncorrected proof of *Hansard*. I do not believe it has been corrected in any way, Madam Deputy President.

Ms Rattray - I am looking for a quote and have not been able to find it.

Mr DEAN - I see.

Mr DEAN - The first comment was -

I also consulted with the police commissioner, and while I did not circulate his letter because he requested that I not do so, he was supportive.

Further on in the *Hansard* of Wednesday, 3 April, the member for McIntyre said -

That puts us in a bit of an awkward position. If we are able to seek advice from the Solicitor-General and that comes in the form that it arrived in, unprecedented, and yet the police commissioner is referred to as offering support and yet we cannot receive that advice, how does this work?

I need to relate this to put it in its right context. The Deputy Chair said -

I heard the member say she had consulted with this person, this person and this person. Whether that person allows that conversation to be released is up to the person in charge.

The member for McIntyre then said -

I heard that the member received written advice. I may be corrected there.

The member for Murchison said -

By interjection, I will refer to that advice when we get to the section on the bill that relates to that. The overall advice was supportive of the legislation. As to particular aspects that have any real implications for police, we will deal with that at a later time.

In relation to the proposed new section 28D, the member for Murchison commented -

In speaking to the commissioner previously, he said I could refer to his broad comments. I understand from the letter that the police are broadly supportive of this legislation.

Going further through the *Hansard* for 4 April 2019, the member for McIntyre makes this comment -

Okay, it is the member for Murchison's amendment then. That is what I am asking. How do we know that the police commissioner has authorised this?

The member for Murchison replied-

As I said in my previous contribution, after I received this letter I spoke to the commissioner to clarify that it was the case and it was confirmed with me by the commissioner.

Conversation continued and the member for Launceston made this statement -

Reading it, it is very different to what I imagined it to be. I was of the understanding, from hearing from the member for Murchison, that he supported the legislation. When she said he did not want it tabled, I thought it was a bit interesting. I wonder where in the letter it says he supports anything -

Ms Rattray - Did you say difficult or different?

Mr DEAN - 'Reading it, it is very different to what I imagined it to be.' The member for Murchison said, 'I did not say that.' The member for Launceston then replied -

It says so in *Hansard*, with respect, and that was the insinuation I read. I emailed the police commissioner asking if I could have a copy of the letter so I could have a better understanding. I have the same concerns with the amendment because, while he notes the amendment and says what should happen, he does not say it does happen, so I am left a little in the dark.

On 3 April 2019, the member for Murchison said -

I also consulted with the police commissioner, and while I did not circulate his letter because he requested that I not do so, he was supportive.

Last Friday, I spoke with the minister for Police because I thought it was the appropriate way to do this, rather than make direct contact with the Commissioner of Police. I did not want to do that. I advised the minister I would be forwarding him a report in relation to *Hansard* with information we had received during the debate that related to him, and that I was requesting the commissioner provide an answer to some of the issues raised. My EA put an email together, forwarded it to the minister and attached supporting documents from *Hansard*, and the previous letter that was tabled. I am not sure what other documentation was provided.

The Commissioner of Police responded yesterday, and his letter says -

Dear Mr Dean,

Correspondence to the Minister for Police Fire and Emergency Management.

The Minister has referred your email of 5 April 2019 in relation to the debate on the Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018 to me for response.

I can advise that on 1 April 2019 I wrote to the Hon. Ruth Forrest MLC in response to a request seeking information about Tasmania Police policy in relation to searches. As you are now aware, the letter provided a factual summary of the operational procedures contained within the Tasmania Police Manual. These procedures are also publicly available on the Tasmania Police website.

Subsequent to this letter, I spoke to the honourable Member for Murchison and reiterated my support for the LGBTI community and broadly indicated that any legislated amendment should protect the role of police. I did not express support or otherwise for the proposed bill, as that is not my role.

The comments in Hansard made by the Member for Murchison are her personal interpretation of operational information and discussions with me. On that basis, I do not believe it is necessary to correct the record.

Yours sincerely, D. L. Hine, Commissioner of Police.

Mr DEAN - I am not sure if I triggered something -

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - If you could put your mind back on the debate.

Mr DEAN - I wonder whether I have been put into office. I do not know what is going on.

Referring to this letter from the Commissioner of Police, clearly saying he supports the LGBTI community, and we all do that, he broadly indicated that any legislated amendment should protect the role of police. He said, 'I did not express support or otherwise for the proposed bill, as that is not my role.' A number of times, the member for Murchison said the police commissioner was supportive of what was going on and of the legislation. That statement was made by the member for Murchison. It is in *Hansard* unless *Hansard* has been corrected; I have not seen a corrected version of it if that is the case.

Mr Gaffney - For clarification, member, I heard you say, 'supportive of the legislation'. At no time did Ms Forrest say so of her amendments, she simply said so about the legislation. I assumed that legislation was the document we received from the lower House, which says this is the legislation, and the commissioner has said he is supportive of the LGBTIQ community, which supports that legislation. I am interested to know how you draw a conclusion it was about the honourable member's amendments. If you could help me with that, I missed it.

Mr DEAN - I will need to read through the whole thing again.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - No, that would be repetition and I would call you out for that.

Mr DEAN - The member has asked me to refer to a point and I did not quite understand what he was on about, so what am I to do?

Mr Gaffney - You just said 'legislation', you did not say 'amendment'.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Order. The member for Windermere can continue his contribution on the third reading. I remind members debate on the third reading is more restricted than at an earlier stage and is limited to the contents of the bill.

Mr DEAN - This is new information and it relates to the contents of the bill, specifically to the evidence attributed to the Commissioner of Police in gaining and drawing support for the bill.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Which you have put on the record now. That is fine.

Mr DEAN - It is very clearly attributed to this bill. I will attempt to find the answer to your question. It would mean my reading through the whole of the *Hansard* and that would take some time. I thought I made it fairly clear in my comments in relation to it. I am not sure whether members are entitled to debate my position on the third reading, but we will see what happens there.

Mr Gaffney - I apologise.

Mr DEAN - From this letter it is clear the Commissioner of Police was not supportive or otherwise of the legislation or amendments. All he was doing was reiterating what was in the Police search manual and he did that very clearly. To say he was supportive of the legislation or amendments is just not right and, in my view, should not have been asserted. Why did the member say this? I cannot see how the Commissioner of Police's position, as articulated, could ever have been interpreted as support for the bill, or amendments or any other part of the bill, other than to say he was supportive of LGBTI people. The parliament, in fact, could have been misled by the information provided.

Madam Deputy President, I seek leave to table the document as received from the Commissioner of Police.

Leave granted.

Mr DEAN - I want to refer to the petition I tabled this morning, also. I did not have it at the time of the debate; the information on that is new. It contains signatures of 422 people. It was an electronic petition that had been circulated for one week only. That was the time limit on it. There was little publicity given to it. I am not sure how long the petition tabled by the member for Hobart had been in circulation, but I think that had more than 90 signatures on it.

Mr Valentine - I think it was 91.

Mr DEAN - I do not know how long was that in circulation.

Mr Valentine - There is some announcement today.

Mr DEAN - I would suspect much longer than one week.

Mr Valentine - I think it was at Salamanca Market on the Saturday morning they were collected, so it was one day.

Mr DEAN - Was it electronic? I thought it was electronic.

Mr Valentine - No, it was manual.

Mr DEAN - It would not have mattered too much if there had been 400 000 signatures on that e-petition that I circulated; it would have made little difference, or no difference. That is the sad thing about the whole thing.

I reiterate that it is unfortunate this legislation did not get the unanimous support of the whole of this House, which I believe it could have done had it followed proper and due process. That is my opinion on it. The third reading will get through.

[12.45 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Madam Deputy President, during this debate much mention was made of our esteemed colleague, Vanessa Goodwin. I would like to table a letter written to me by Vanessa Goodwin on 11 January 2016, in which she says -

Dear Rosemary

I refer to correspondence received from your electorate office seeking an update to the recognition of a new gender, post-gender reassignment surgery.

The Anti-Discrimination Commissioner is currently working on a paper in relation to intersex and gender reassignment, which will be released for public consultation in the near future. The paper will examine matters relating to gender reassignment and the Government will consider any recommendations contained in the final report.

I seek leave to table the letter.

Leave granted.

The Council divided -

AYES 7

Mr Farrell
Mr Finch
Mr Gaffney
Ms Lovell
Ms Siejka
Mr Valentine (Teller)
Mr Willie

NOES 6

Ms Armitage
Mr Armstrong
Mr Dean
Mrs Hiscutt
Ms Howlett (Teller)
Ms Rattray

Motion agreed to.

Bill, as amended, read the third time.

MOTOR ACCIDENTS (LIABILITIES AND COMPENSATION) AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 4)

Second Reading

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council - 2R) - Madam Deputy President, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

This bill proposes amendments to the Motor Accidents (Liabilities and Compensation) Act 1973 to clarify the power to make regulations relating to the Motor Accidents Compensation Tribunal. The act establishes the Motor Accidents Compensation Tribunal, which resolves or determines disputes between the Motor Accidents Insurance Board and parties seeking or in receipt of scheduled benefits under the act. The act also provides the power to make regulations in relation to the tribunal.

Concerns have been raised about the lack of clarity concerning the power to make regulations under the act. The Motor Accidents Compensation Tribunal Regulations 2009 are due to expire in June 2019. It is necessary to ensure that the power to make regulations is clearly set out to allow the tribunal to function effectively.

This bill clarifies the power to make regulations under the act by amending sections 28 and 34 of the act. These amendments will provide clear powers to make regulations in relation to awarding of costs and prescribing procedures for hearings, and determination of matters, referred to the tribunal.

The bill also includes a doubts removal provision in relation to previous determinations or awards for costs made by the tribunal under section 28 of the act. The doubts removal provision, set out in proposed new section 28(9), deems a determination, or an order as to costs, made prior to the commencement of the amendments, to have been validly made.

This bill will provide greater clarity and certainty around the powers to make effective regulations for the tribunal.

Madam Deputy President, I commend the bill to the House.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Honourable members, I welcome the Hobart Probus Club to the Legislative Council today. They are guests of the President. I hope they enjoy their time here to observe our debates.

Members - Hear, hear.

[12.55 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Madam Deputy President, I am always interested in something when it says the bill also includes a provision to remove doubt about the validity of determinations made by the tribunal and the ordering of costs to parties by the tribunal. I am interested to know if there is something behind what has brought this bill to the House. Has something happened and we need to ratify it, if you like? I would need a response to that because I am not keen to support retrospectivity as a normal practice. I need to understand if there is something behind why this has come before the parliament.

From my understanding the MAIB organisation is doing quite well. It is covering its costs. I believe it is actually making money. I think we need to be reminded that it is not necessarily in my view a money-making organisation. I know we need to cover our costs but we need to make sure that the people who need to use MAIB are the ones that benefit so it would be interesting to know

how many ongoing cases we have, and how many are unresolved and for what reasons they are unresolved at this point in time. We will not necessarily have MAIB come before the House before December and then we only do that every second year.

It is always good to be updated on what is happening in that regard because we know it is a no-fault scheme. A no-fault scheme is an ideal scheme for us to have in this state. It has certainly served the state well and obviously the board that administers MAIB and the CEO and the like are doing a pretty good job in that regard.

As I said, I need to be fully apprised of why we have this amendment bill before us. I understand the clarification aspect, but it is that validity of determinations made by the tribunal and the ordering of costs to parties by the tribunal. I want to make sure that we are not having to ratify something that has already been done. We need to be up-front if there is something that has been done and the parliament needs to ratify that; we need to know what it is before I offer my support. They often say it is only a small bill and there is probably not much in it. Well, often there is something in it otherwise we would not necessarily have it.

I am interested to hear what other members have to say.

[12.58 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Madam Deputy President, in reading through this I too have one question to ask and that is, is there any particular case or cases that will be affected by the passing of this bill? I would really like to know that. Retrospectivity is always an issue from my perspective and if we are passing legislation that advantages a particular party to something that is currently before the tribunal then we need to know about that before -

Ms Rattray - Or disadvantage.

Mr VALENTINE - Or disadvantage; it can be either. I appreciate the second reading speech and saying that it provides clarity concerning the power to make regulations under the act. I have highlighted here that these amendments will provide clear powers to make regulation so obviously that is the concern.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS

Penitentiary Chapel Historic Site, Hobart

[2.30 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

- (1) Given recent concerns expressed by previous volunteers at the Penitentiary Chapel historic site in Hobart, can the Leader inform the House of current management arrangements for the site, including detail of ownership; leasing periods, if any; and operational responsibilities from a daily and long-term perspective?
- (2) Can the Leader offer any detail on recent discussions the Minister for Heritage and the Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events and/or other government officials have had with relevant

bodies relating to the operation and long-term future of the site and the status of the clock on the site, which is believed to be older than Big Ben, and any moves being made to ensure the clock will be effectively maintained so as not to allow it to fall into disrepair?

- (3) Can the Leader also indicate the Government's attitude to the site being managed by the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, with appropriate funding, with a view to the potential of the site being fully realised for the benefit of tourism in the state, providing an opportunity to tell a more complete story of Tasmania's convict history?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Hobart for his question.

(1) to (3)

The Penitentiary Chapel and Criminal Court is an early and important heritage place. It has an interesting convict past. It was Hobart's historic second gaol and played an important role in Hobart's criminal justice system. The site is entered in the Tasmanian Heritage Register in recognition of its heritage value to the whole of Tasmania.

It was transferred into the ownership of the National Trust of Tasmania approximately six years ago. The trust has operated the site as a heritage museum for over 30 years. Volunteers, staff and private operators have run historic tours, ghost tours, private functions, theatrical performances and other events over the period, and the trust continues to operate ghost tours and *Pandemonium*.

In recent years, the trust has secured funding from the Tasmanian Community Fund to develop a contemporary audio-visual production called *Pandemonium*. *Pandemonium* exposes visitors to the site to the broader story of convictism and the experience of the male and female convicts who came to Tasmania. Its development reflects the trust's interest in breathing new life into the experiences offered to visitors. This development has been interesting and an important way of generating a new, innovative and engaging experience.

The Tasmanian Government is encouraged by measures being taken by the trust to refresh the experience it offers to visitors. The Tasmanian Government does not own or manage this site and the notion of transferring this site to another operator would be a matter for the trust. The site's entry on the Heritage Register means any works or development proposed need the approval of the Tasmanian Heritage Council.

The clock and the clock tower are an important feature of the site and are protected by this entry. The maintenance, upkeep and conservation of the site and features like the clock are the responsibility of the trust.

Gaming Machine Taxes

Mr GAFFNEY question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.35 p.m.]

In reference to the *Fourth Social and Economic Impact Study of Gambling in Tasmania*, Volume 1: Industry Trends and Impacts, completed by ACIL Allen Consulting for the Department

of Treasury and Finance and published on 17 January 2018, would the Leader please confirm that the figures contained in Table E.2 - State and territory gaming machine taxes - are true and accurate?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Mersey for his question.

The jurisdictional gaming machine taxation rates contained in Table E.2 of volume 1 of the *Fourth Social and Economic Impact Study of Gambling in Tasmania* were accurate at the time the data was sourced by ACIL Allen from the jurisdictions annotated under Table E.2 - New South Wales Treasury (2016) and Western Australia Department of Treasury (2017).

This information may be reported differently by jurisdictions, for example, by using annual versus quarterly taxation rates and thresholds. For this reason, information in the study may be presented differently in other sources.

Neighbourhood Houses - Increase in Core Funding

Ms SIEJKA question to LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.36 p.m.]

The core funding for Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, the peak body for the 35 neighbourhood houses, has not been increased for 10 years. Without an increase in funding, the peak body will be cutting its core staff by 25 per cent on 30 June, dropping from 2.2 FTE to just 1.7 FTE. This will reduce their capacity to support their members, will force work back onto the individual houses and will greatly impact the peak body's and the network's work for Tasmanian communities. Will the Government commit to an increase to the peak body Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania's core grant?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Pembroke for her question.

The Liberal Government is a passionate supporter of our neighbourhood house network. That is why the Government invested an additional \$8.8 million into the network in our 2018-19 Budget, including an increase of \$45 000 for core funding to each house.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania has made a budget submission for the 2019-20 Budget. The Tasmanian Government is currently in the process of finalising its budget and this submission will be considered as part of the process.

Neighbourhood Houses - Increase in Core Funding

Ms SIEJKA question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.38 p.m.]

The Government increased the core funding for all neighbourhood houses this year by \$45 000. These funds were to enable each neighbourhood house to reach safe staffing levels of 2 FTE. Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania has raised with the Government for over six months that unless

that \$45 000 has indexation and an equal remuneration order - ERO - applied, it will not achieve its intended purpose.

- (1) When will the Government apply indexation to each neighbourhood house grant increase of \$45 000?
- (2) When will the Government apply an ERO to each neighbourhood house grant increase of \$45 000?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Pembroke for her question.

- (1) The Tasmanian Government has committed to increase core funding for each house by \$45 000 per annum. The use of these funds will allow each house to increase its staffing to the equivalent of two full-time employees if they choose to use the funds for that purpose.
- (2) Given this funding represents an increase to core funding, it will be subject to indexation and ERO in the future. This will apply for the 2019-20 financial year.

Strahan Bus Services

Ms FORREST question to the LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.39 p.m.]

With regard to the recent decision by the Department of State Growth to discontinue the direct bus route from Strahan to Hobart due to low passenger numbers, what are the actual passenger numbers using this service over the last three years, reported on a weekly basis?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Murchison for her question.

I am advised that based on the monthly passenger claims provided by the operator for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 calendar years, an average of 22 one-way passengers per week caught the service from either the west coast to Hobart or from Hobart to west coast during this three-year period.

With three return services per week, this equates to around three to four people per trip.

Recent more detailed analysis of the 2018 patronage data shows that 51 per cent of these passengers travelled on student or child fares; 28 per cent travelled on adult concession fares, including university students over the age of 18; and 22 per cent paid full adult fares.

**Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage
Amendments) Bill 2018 - Radio Interview**

Ms LOVELL question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.40 p.m.]

In relation to an interview given by the Leader on the northern Tasmanian radio station program *Tasmania Talks* on Monday, 8 April on the Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018, the interviewer asked -

What is the Process from here inside the parliament with this legislation?

The Leader responded -

Well, in the Legislative Council we've still got to do the third reading speech and that will be done this week, so once it passes our house, which the greens and labor of course have the numbers to do it, it will then go to the lower house.

Who are the Greens members in the Legislative Council to whom you referred during this interview?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Rumney for her question.

I apologise for that. The Labor-Greens tag seems to be there all the time and it should have been 'Labor members'.

**Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage
Amendments) Bill 2018 - Radio Interview**

Ms LOVELL question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.41 p.m.]

In relation to the same interview given on the *Tasmania Talks* radio program on Monday, 8 April, the interviewer asked the Leader -

How much notice would you expect to get between sighting the legislation and voting on it?

The Leader answered -

Well, sometimes, it depends on how big a bill it is and this was, like huge, it should have gone, these amendments are separate to the original bill that was going through and they should have been referred to the Tasmania law reform for proper consideration and consultation.

The Tasmania Law Reform Institute has taken the unusual step of releasing a statement in relation to this bill. I will read now from this statement. This statement has already been read into the *Hansard*, so I will only read a short part of it -

This is in accordance with TLRI practice not to comment on Bills that are before Parliament, any related amendments or any debate surrounding those Bills, except where reforms relate to recommendations previously made by the TLRI.

This means that we will not comment on the Justice and Related (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018, or any related amendments, until a final form of the Bill is enacted.

Preliminary work on this reference has commenced, and will continue regardless of the status of the Justice and Related (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018. This means that the work of the TLRI should not defer consideration of the Bill by the Legislative Council. Our research will incorporate consideration of the terms of any Bill passed into law.

Can the Leader please confirm that the Government understands that TLRI, as per its statement, is unable to comment, and will not be commenting, on a bill before parliament until a final version is enacted?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Rumney for her question. I am not sure what the member is looking for, other than the fact that the Government still believes that the bill should have originally been referred to TLRI for further consultation and consideration.

Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018 - Radio Interview

MS LOVELL question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.43 p.m.]

My question relates to the same interview on *Tasmania Talks* on Monday, 8 April about the same bill.

The interviewer asked the Leader -

Will parents who now have the option of putting a sex on the birth certificate of their child be able to put a sex that is demonstrably not the biological sex of the child?

The Leader responded -

Well it's hard to say just at the minute Brian because the bill still hasn't finished ...

The interviewer then followed up with a further question -

So you don't know the answer to that question, cause I would have thought that's pretty obvious, if you have the opportunity as a parent to make these sorts of judgements, you look at your little girl and go oh we want to call him jack and we'll put him down as a boy.

The Leader responded -

At the moment that's a very real possibility ...

Can the Leader please explain how this would be a very real possibility under the amended bill as passed by the Legislative Council?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Rumney for her question, but I do not know I can answer it without thinking about it. I will have to take that one on notice.

Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018 - Radio Interview

Ms LOVELL question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.44 p.m.]

In relation to the same *Tasmania Talks* interview on Monday 8 April and on the same bill, the interviewer asked the Leader -

Is there any clarification then in the legislation that you've seen that would limit the number of times a person is able to alter their gender in a defined period of time? How many times, can you do it every day?

The Leader responded -

At the minute there is nothing in the legislation to say how many times you can or can't. This is why it needs to go to the law reform institute for proper consultation and consideration.

Can the Leader please explain how this is possible under the amended bill considering the amendment moved by the member for Windermere and supported by the Legislative Council, proposed new Part 4A, 28A(7) -

An application must not be made under this section in relation to a person within 12 months after a gender has been registered in relation to the person.

Mrs HISCUTT - I will have to think about that. I will take the member's question on notice.

**MOTOR ACCIDENTS (LIABILITIES AND COMPENSATION)
AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 4)**

Second Reading

Resumed from above.

[2.46 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I have lengthy answers for the members for McIntyre and Hobart.

In answering the member for McIntyre's question, to provide context, it is worth stating in full the relevant provisions of the Motor Accidents (Liabilities and Compensation Act) 1973, section 28, Determination as to right to scheduled benefits -

- (8) Regulations made for the purpose of this section may -
 - (a) prescribe the manner in which any determination by the Board or the Tribunal is to be made; and
 - (b) prescribe the manner in which a matter shall be referred to the Tribunal and the time in which it can be so referred; and
 - (c) make provision with respect to -
 - (i) the exercise of rights of infants in relation to references to the Tribunal and the determinations on such references; and
 - (ii) fixing the amount of costs to be paid by a party to a reference to the Tribunal; and
 - (iii) the enforcement of orders of the Tribunal for the payment of costs; and
 - (iv) the discontinuance or dismissal of a reference to the Tribunal for want of prosecution.

In the past it was considered that these provisions provided power to make regulations relating to the procedures for hearing and determining matters referred to the tribunal, the manner in which the tribunal informed itself and for the tribunal to order costs. Members will note the current provisions make specific reference to costs as well as the manner in which a determination is to be made.

However, in the process of remaking the regulations, the chair of the tribunal raised concerns with the department that the powers granted by the act to make regulations might not be as clear as previously understood. The department took advice that confirmed the chair's concerns that the act could be clearer and that it was timely to consider the regulation-making powers under the act while the regulations were being remade.

It should be noted that the tribunal, MAIB and other parties appearing before the tribunal were operating on the assumption that the current and past regulations were properly made. In such circumstances it is prudent to remove any doubt about past determinations and past orders for costs by the tribunal. It would be unsatisfactory, even in a theoretical sense, if a lack of clarity in the original act left it open for past decisions of the tribunal, for those now operating in good faith, to be set aside to the detriment of parties who thought their matters had been resolved.

To address the point made by the member for Hobart, the chair of the tribunal has advised the department that to his knowledge there is no current or pending action against determinations of the tribunal or orders for costs. As such, it is not expected any party will be disadvantaged or put to an advantage by these amendments. These amendments do not represent a shift in policy but make clear that the act empowers the making of regulations in a way originally intended and previously understood to allow. The validation clause is simply an exercise of removing any doubt, however remote, over the past decisions of the tribunal, given the concerns raised about the lack of clarity in the current act.

Regarding the member for McIntyre's question of pending cases before the MAIB, I will take those questions on notice. I have not been able to obtain that information in this time frame.

Bill read a second time.

MOTOR ACCIDENTS (LIABILITIES AND COMPENSATION) AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 4)

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 -

Section 28 amended (Determination as to right to scheduled benefits)

Ms RATTRAY - Madam Chair, I appreciate the Leader's response to my questions in the second reading. Clause 4, section 28(8)(c)(ii) is amended to clarify that regulations may be made in relation to all aspects of cost to be paid by a party to a reference to the tribunal. Does that mean it is absolutely clear the tribunal can allocate costs to the party? Has this been an issue in the past? Has there been confusion over who pays costs? Have there been issues as to who is liable for costs?

I would not want to see that people do not take the opportunity to challenge and go to the tribunal for a ruling if it looks as if they could be hit with a really large fee. Are we making sure the tribunal can allocate cost to the party who puts in an objection to something they have been provided with?

Mrs HISCUTT - The tribunal was working under the presumption they could avoid costs and there was a little ambiguity. This bill clarifies all of that. There has been no policy change; this is simply clearing it all up. Does that answer the member's questions?

Ms RATTRAY - Thank you. In the past, the tribunal has awarded costs to a party who has challenged a determination and it was unclear whether they were able to do so. Has a party challenged costs awarded against them?

Mrs Hiscutt - While the member is on her feet, no - this is to make it clearer, to take any doubt away. Nothing has changed.

Ms RATTRAY - There will not be any detriment to anyone who has put in a claim under MAIB? The claim perhaps is disputed and then they go through the tribunal process. I am really keen to assure myself that this is not going to deter anyone who wants to go through the tribunal process. That is my concern. If you are worried about having to pay significant costs in relation to this process, you might settle for something less than what you perhaps would be entitled to under the MAIB compensation process.

I am looking for some clarification around that - that it will not be detrimental to people who are probably already quite distressed having to make an MAIB claim in the first place and who then have this process on top of it. It is a \$50 000 exercise to go to the tribunal and if you lose, you have to pay that as well. You have probably gone to the tribunal because you were not happy with the determination that was made. I think it is really worth making sure that we are not going to disadvantage anybody through this because the tribunal will not have to pay.

The MAIB will not have to pay out of its own pocket. I want to make sure we are not going to unfairly treat somebody who is already in what I would suggest is probably a difficult space.

Mrs HISCUTT - I am assured no additional powers are given to the tribunal, that the situation will still be the same as normal as it has been, and there is definitely no policy shift or change. Also the regulations I read out earlier, 28A(8)(c)(ii) says 'fixing the amount of costs to be paid by a party to a reference to the Tribunal' et cetera. It is the same; it is just making it clearer.

Ms RATTRAY - I appreciate that. Now I am absolutely certain that if anyone comes to my door or the door of any other honourable member of this place saying, 'We feel that the tribunal has awarded costs against us and we will make sure we let people know it is not worth taking a claim to the tribunal.' I want to make sure that is certain and I think it has made it really clear that is not the Government's intention here, so we will not hear any of those stories out in the community. I am comfortable with that, thank you.

Mrs HISCUTT - We are not changing anything or any powers. It is just a clarification as to what is there.

Mr VALENTINE - Madam Chair, looking at the amendment at clause 4(d)(9) -

A determination of the Tribunal under this section, or an order as to costs made by the Tribunal in respect of a determination of this section, made before the commencement ... is declared to be as valid ...

This is about only declaring matters that have happened before as still valid after this is passed.

It is definitely not retrospective, which is what you told me earlier in answer my question. My only question is: with respect to this, does it change for anything that might be on foot at the moment? I did ask the question about whether anyone was going to be disadvantaged and the answer came back no, but does it actually change the capacity of the tribunal to look at costs for those previous ones with the current legislation before us?

Mrs HISCUTT - The simple answer is no because there is no additional powers awarded to the tribunal under this.

Mr DEAN - Madam Chair, I am trying to make sure I understand events going on here. How far back does retrospectivity apply in this case? Does it go right back to the initial time of the previous regulations or beyond that? Does it go back forever? Was there a particular case? You might have covered this and I might have missed it. Has there been a particular case that has brought this matter forward for this matter to be considered? Someone obviously must have looked at it and seen a possible error or a flaw there somewhere to now warrant this legislation or this amendment?

Mrs Hiscutt - It was the tribunal.

Mr DEAN - The tribunal that picked it up? It is interesting to know that.

I will get confirmation on the matter that the member for McIntyre has been talking about, that is that there are no pending cases at all that could be impacted by this where the previous legislation before this clarity - before now - where people might have been relying on the position, the data and the regulations as they previously were. So no case is likely to be impacted, or no known case in relation to the legislation as it was. I think I have made that clear, I am not sure.

Mrs HISCUTT - The chairperson has advised the department that to his knowledge, there is no current or pending action against determination of the tribunal or an order for costs. This has come up as part of the 10-year review, which happens on a regular basis with a lot of our statutes, and this is simply a clarification bill. You asked how far it goes back to - this is a bill for an act to amend the Motor Accidents (Liabilities and Compensation) Act 1973 - that is the start, or the beginning, however you like to put that.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clauses 5 and 6 agreed to and bill taken through the remainder of the Committee stage.

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Resumed from 20 March 2019 (page 51)

[3.04 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I thought it appropriate to commence my comments regarding this year's State of the State Address by reiterating what I said when I concluded my contribution to last year's State of the State Address.

I am referring to the need for each House in the Tasmanian Parliament to recognise and respect the rights, roles and responsibilities of the other. The Government has the right to implement its plan for the future of Tasmania, as outlined by the Premier in the State of the State Address and the Legislative Council has the role, and indeed the duty, to review on its merits any legislation endeavouring to implement the Government's plan.

Sometimes it is a balancing act to make things work but I believe we mostly have it right.

As Leader of the Government, I am committed to working openly and constructively with all members in an atmosphere of mutual respect, and my track record reflects that. I reiterate that commitment as we work together through the Government's legislative program over the rest of this year.

I stand for re-election next month and I have been doorknocking in my electorate. It is something I do regularly, not only at election time. I do so because knocking on doors is one of the best ways to gain a feeling for what is going on in my electorate, to gauge how my constituents are feeling, to find out what issues are important, to find out what parts of the Government's plans are working and what is not. That feedback I have been receiving shows an acknowledgement that the Government is doing a reasonable job all over.

The Government's plan for Tasmania is producing results. As the Premier said in his address in the other place, it is an exciting time to be in Tasmania. The issues of economic growth and jobs are always going to be the keystone of any plan to better the lives of Tasmanians. If we do not have a strong economic base and jobs for Tasmanians, we will not have the investment needed to maintain and improve our quality of life. On these fronts, the Government is demonstratively delivering the following -

- Per capita our economic growth is almost the national average.
- Employment is up - since the Government was elected in 2014, 12 400 more Tasmanians are employed.
- Business confidence is up and business success rates are the highest in the nation. I see a more positive attitude in businesses in my electorate. Mr President, try finding a car park in Penguin on a weekend. There is a real buzz in the town, and it is not only in Penguin.
- Tasmanian exports are going gangbusters. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics International Merchandise Trade exports data shows Tasmania exported a record \$3.8 billion in goods and produce in the year to February 2019.

People want to be in Tasmania. Our population is growing. Over the year to June 2018, Tasmania's population grew by 1.09 per cent - that is an extra 5687 people - to 528 097 people. That is the highest growth in nearly a decade. The latest international visitors survey statistics show nation-leading growth in the number of international tourists and increased levels of visitor spending. The Deloitte Access Economics report for the December 2018 quarter pointed to elevated business confidence, a growing infrastructure pipeline, strong international trade performance and population growth, and a healthy jobs market as very positive indicators for the state. The report noted that times are good for Tasmania and that Australians continue to vote with their feet to come and live in Tasmania.

In general terms there can be no doubt that Tasmania is doing pretty well. It is a far cry from when I recall Tasmania seemed to be almost always last on national and social indicators.

I will focus on one of two areas of importance and relevance to my constituents in Montgomery. The first is tourism, which is an interesting one. On the one hand, we want more people to visit and experience our unique offerings, helping our economy grow in the process. On the other hand, we have to be careful to preserve the very thing - the uniqueness - that makes us attractive as a destination in the first place. There is such a thing as too much love and we have to understand

when that happens in order to protect our special way of life, so it can continue to be enjoyed by visitors and locals alike.

The Mount Roland cable car and Cradle Mountain in my electorate of Montgomery are classic cases in hand. I am a big advocate for the Mount Roland cable car. It is a project that will have the balance right. It was a pleasure to see the Mount Roland Cableway and Adventure Precinct has passed stage 1 of the Government's innovative expression of interest process. This approval lays a path for the proponents to undertake a reserve activity assessment and seek approval through the relevant federal and state government planning approval processes. The proposal, if approved, will see a 13-cabin gondola cableway provide access to the summit of Mount Roland at the back of Sheffield and via the mountain's western face, which is otherwise inaccessible by any visitors. The cableway will be set within an adventure precinct complete with mountain bike trails that will be a unique drawcard among Tasmania's other world renown mountain-biking attractions. The concept planning for this project began in 2012. Local business owners and long-time advocates for the cableway on Mount Roland decided to try to make the idea a reality.

A community survey completed in 2011 indicated locals would not support any structure impeding the view of the northern face of the mountain, so with this in mind the proponents turned their attention to the western face of the landmark. There is no doubt in my mind the clear majority of people in Montgomery, especially those in the Kentish municipality, want the Mount Roland cable car to go ahead. They want to see results and progress, yet we recently saw on the front page of the *Advocate* a group who opposed completely a development on the mountain and the surrounding reserve. I can absolutely accept their right to express concerns and I am pleased to note some of them are willing to seek further information.

This project could be a huge benefit to the region by creating jobs and providing new and exciting ways for visitors to interact with our environment. The Government knows our national parks and reserves are key drivers of growth in our visitor economy, which is why it supports the Mount Roland cableway project. If approved under all state and federal planning laws, it is expected to create between 12 to 17 full-time jobs and add significantly to the local economy, with capital investment estimated at \$21 million. It is another tourism experience that will stimulate our regional economies while encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more, and this is important in areas such as my electorate of Montgomery.

Recently councillors in the Central Coast municipality and I were invited to attend a familiarisation tour of the business members of the local tourism association. It was a full-day trip on a bus and almost 30 people attended. We had fantastic commentary along the way from Scott Midgley the bus driver, manager of Pioneer Park and president of the Coast to Canyon tourism group. He was ably helped by Howard Smith of Cradle Coast Tours. Both knew their local information extremely well and communicated much of it to the assembled guests. The tour started from the Ulverstone Visitor Information Centre at 9.00 a.m. and finished at 5.00 p.m. and was jam-packed with visitors to 16 of the members' tourism businesses.

The overwhelming message I received from this tour was that the tourism sector - and in particular, this local tourism association - is going strong. One operator, Geoff Deer, who operates the Gunns Plains Caves tours is even thinking about having some sort of function at the caves. He is currently thinking of taglines and is looking for suggestions. We, who know him well, call him the 'Caveman'. We suggested he have a caveman party, and many funny jokes were made. Burnie is expecting 43 cruise ships to visit next year, with Gunns Plains Caves and Wings Wildlife Park expected to be big recipients of visitors. Visitor numbers to this area grow every year, of late. The

whole group is enthusiastic. Some are a bit worn out and are looking forward to the winter, but most have plans for the future and are all very confident with their business plans.

It is difficult to talk about tourism in Tasmania without referring to Cradle Mountain, also in the wonderful electorate of Montgomery. The Government is committed to elevating Cradle Mountain as a world-class tourism destination and sustainable ecotourism experience, and that is very exciting indeed.

The proponents of the Gateway Precinct will be selected this year. Once complete, the Gateway Precinct will attract up to 80 000 additional visitors to the region each year, directly injecting some \$29 million into the local economy and supporting 140 local jobs.

The Gateway Precinct will become the prime entrance to this world-renowned heritage precinct, national park and wilderness area as well as the main access point to Dove Lake and departure points for the world-famous Overland Track.

The Gateway Precinct will be the departure point for the Cradle Mountain cableway that has recently secured funding of around \$60 million with a contribution of \$30 million from both the Tasmanian and Australian governments.

Stage 1 of the Government's Cradle Mountain visitor experience, the new centre at Cradle Mountain Gateway, will be completed in the fourth quarter, January to March 2020, and construction of the Dove Lake viewing shelter will commence then as well.

Only last week an important milestone was achieved with the Commonwealth Government commencing its assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act of 1999 - the EPBC Act - of the Dove Lake viewing shelter development proposal. This important step will allow the community to have its say, with a public submission period now underway.

Following public consultation on the draft Dove Lake development proposal and environmental impact statements, the final statement includes the repurposing of the proposed kiosk into a discovery ranger station to enable Parks and Wildlife Service staff to provide better onsite engagement with visitors, additional external seating and viewing spaces to minimise site crowding, and a shuttle bus service to meet the demand that car parking would have provided.

The Cradle Mountain Master Plan will deliver new and unique visitor experiences for the region to encourage visitors to stay longer and visit again.

In his speech, the Premier announced the Government would invest an additional \$300 000 in a partnership with the Cradle Coast Authority to deliver a range of strategic local economic projects to retain population share in the region, to improve the educational outcomes and unemployment rates and leverage the strengths of the coast to create local investment and more jobs.

I certainly welcome that news and the commitment to the Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan. Two key elements of the futures plan include a high-powered economic development steering group and a regional investment framework for identifying and assessing feasible projects of regional significance. To quote the Cradle Coast Authority's CEO, Daryl Connelly -

CCA developed the Futures Plan with the region, for the region. It's not just a plan for CCA. It will only work if all stakeholders get behind it.

... The Tasmanian Government has done just that, and I thank them very much on behalf of more than 100 key stakeholders, who put their time and effort into developing the plan.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the work of the Cradle Coast Authority and its CEO, Daryl Connelly.

A second specific issue I raise briefly as part of my contribution is to commend the efforts of those involved in supporting the operations of Simplot at Ulverstone. In particular I welcome the federal government's recent \$12 million grant to upgrade Simplot.

This is an investment that will support jobs and exports for north-west Tasmania, particularly in regional communities. Production capacity at the plant is estimated to increase by 5 to 10 per cent over the next decade. The Simplot potato processing factory currently employs more than 400 Tasmanians and buys around 300 000 tonnes of potatoes from Tasmanian farmers each year. Its importance to the state economy and particularly to my own electorate of Montgomery should not be underestimated.

The continuation of Simplot is a big win for Tasmania and I am very pleased that the grant will support the long-term competitiveness of the plant. The grant funding will be met by Simplot's own \$39.3 million investment, for a total project cost of \$51.3 million. It will employ 117 people over three years of construction and it will secure around 300 other jobs instead of them going offshore. To quote Simplot Ulverstone factory manager, Nigel Cowan, says -

This investment is fantastic news for the 320 people that we have [employed] in the plant itself and the 165 potato farmers and seed growers across the state ...

I will share some exciting developments in our energy endeavours and the immense associated benefits to Tasmania's economy. These developments are vitally import to my constituents in Montgomery because much of this economic development will impact my region in jobs and wealth. In February, the Australian Government made two important announcements, a \$56 million commitment to progress the Marinus second interconnector project and a commitment to work with the Tasmanian Government to underwrite the first phase of Tasmania Battery of the Nation project as a part of the Underwriting New Generation Investments program. This represents a significant development in delivering the Government's Tasmania-First Energy Policy and in progressing this once-in-a-generation energy infrastructure development. Our energy pursuits will spearhead industrial development in the state for many years to come at a time when other states are still debating which direction to take.

The Tasmanian Government has backed this commitment with up to \$30 million to support the development of business cases for three shortlisted pumped hydro energy storage sites in advance of the first of these sites to file an investment decision. The three shortlisted sights are Lake Cethana and Lake Rowallan in the north-west and Tribute Power Station on the west coast. I believe Lake Rowallan is in the electorate of McIntyre.

Ms Rattray - The electorate was named Rowallan before it was changed to Western Tiers.

Mrs HISCUTT - Yes, of course. Lake Cethana is very much in the electorate of Montgomery. As the Prime Minister noted recently -

Projects like this reinforce the investment that has already been made in renewable power across Australia and makes it possible by providing the reliability component which gets prices down and makes sure the lights stay on.

Australia's electricity market is on the edge of a period of dramatic change and Tasmania is well positioned to play its part. I took the opportunity at Lake Cethana to tell the Prime Minister how good this is for our state. We have nation- and state-building projects such as this providing a massive economic opportunity for Tasmania. On his recent visit to Tasmania, federal energy minister, Angus Taylor, noted that -

Projects like this aren't nice to have, they are necessary to have. We must have them ... We stand ready to finance them.

Australia will need an interconnected grid, dispatchable on-demand energy and long-duration storage to meet customer energy needs at lowest cost. A TasNetworks initial feasibility report shows that Marinus Link can support these outcomes. It is estimated that, in construction alone, Marinus Link will inject \$1.3 billion in economic stimulus and 1000 jobs in regional Tasmania, including in my region, and broader economic benefits to Tasmania. I note we have a little company called Stream Contracting, run by a good friend of mine, Rusty Jones. Look out, Rusty, you and your sons will be busy for years. The new renewable generation projects made possible with the Marinus Link in operation will generate significantly more economic opportunities for Tasmanians, taking that economic injection up to \$5 billion with over 2000 jobs for years to come. These jobs will attract our children to stay and raise their own children here and will encourage others to return home. I must note that Rusty has his two sons working with him, and it is wonderful to see.

We have what the rest of the nation needs and wants. We have the cleanest, most affordable energy in Australia. We are already on the cusp of reaching our 2022 target of 100 per cent renewable energy.

The last specific initiative the Premier referred to in his State of the State address that I wholeheartedly commend relates to the Government's Affordable Housing Action Plan. That plan includes a number of important initiatives to help support our young people in need of housing and builds upon the initiatives from the previous action plan.

One such initiative to alleviate youth homelessness on the north-west coast will include building a new purpose-built youth foyer or dedicated youth facility for Burnie. Good client outcomes have previously been achieved through such an approach and the development of new facilities is welcome news. The new Burnie facility will represent an investment of around \$10 million and will provide approximately 25 units for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, giving them the prospect of a much brighter future. A youth foyer is a safe environment that will give young people experiencing homelessness supported accommodation, a pathway to education and the opportunity to participate with a job in our growing economy.

I acknowledge a number of significant and welcome investments in the 2019 federal budget, which bolster investment and infrastructure in Tasmania to address our state's needs into the future and grow the economy. Of special interest to me in my electorate of Montgomery is an additional \$16 million for the Old Surrey Road and Massy Greene Drive, part of an additional \$210 million investment in Roads of Strategic Importance statewide. That is a good investment. I am pleased to see it because Surrey Road is divided by a cement plinth and before that plinth was there, trucks and cars would come down that hill so fast, they would miss the corner and end up in one or two of

the houses on the other side of the road. The cement plinth was put in the middle of the road to stop that, and you still see where people scratch the cement plinth on their way through.

I have referred to the exciting opportunities in the energy arena, and the federal budget locks in the commitment of \$56 billion to progress the Marinus second interconnector. The Tasmanian Government will continue to work cooperatively with the federal government to embrace all opportunities for our state as we plan for strategic growth.

I reiterate the Premier's comments - the Government has a strong and detailed plan to make life better for all Tasmanians and it is a plan that nobody can deny is delivering results. The Second Year Agenda tabled by the Premier in the other place spells out initiatives and commitments being pursued throughout 2019. Mr President, I commend it to the Council.

[3.27 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, in responding to the Premier's address, each of us has a chance to speak overall and focus on our own communities and electorates. I enjoyed listening to the member for Montgomery because our electorates border. Even last year, with the change of boundaries, we were discussing the loss of primary schools and so on. I appreciate the comments.

Last year, I congratulated the Premier and his Liberal colleagues on being returned to our state Government for another four-year term. I joined with her Excellency the Governor in acknowledging that Tasmanian Parliament has again increased the level of female representation in both its Houses in 2018. However, with recent events, and for the first time in Tasmanian history, there are more females than males in parliament - 21 as opposed to 19. I dare say this is probably a first for any Australian state.

One of the most pressing challenges before us is climate change. Tasmania's relatively mild, cool climate and its hydro system leave us well placed to address climate impacts, but we are not immune to its negative effects. We only have to recall marine heatwaves, wildfires, drought and severe floods within the past three years and the damage done by this year's wildfires to natural ecosystems, infrastructure and the honey and tourism industries.

To deal effectively with such challenges, we must plan ahead. That means adapting to a warmer climate and requires us to be part of the global effort to limit damage by cutting emissions. We have made some progress on this with improved transport and industry energy efficiency during this time of population productivity growth. However, the assertion that Tasmania reached zero-net emissions in 2016 is open to question and is unsustainable. It uses unverifiable land use accounting and is based mainly on a low level of forest harvesting.

Climate change is real. It is caused by us and it remains the ultimate challenge for Tasmania and this parliament. We can become national, even global, leaders in climate change mitigation, but only if the Tasmanian public is fully engaged in the essential transition from fossil fuels. That requires a big effort and a lot of cooperative planning, starting now if not sooner.

My electorate of Mersey is one area where government investment in flagship industry sectors of tourism, agriculture and fisheries is very noticeable. Significant changes have been evident in my electorate as business confidence and the economy have improved, bringing more jobs to those fortunate enough to reside in Mersey.

Tourism has remained a pillar of the local economy and will no doubt continue to grow. I am very pleased state and federal funds are being promised for projects to attract tourists and also provide healthy recreational pursuits for visitors and locals alike. A good example is the Kelcey Tier mountain bike trail. I attended the opening of stage 1 and from all accounts it is a very good track.

A recent announcement of another \$850 000 of federal funds will also be well received and go a long way towards ensuring the track is one that will be very appealing to the mountain-biking fraternity. One only hopes that the coastal cycle path from Port Sorell to Wynyard also continues to evolve.

Mr President, both *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels are being replaced. With the recent launch of the new flagship *Tasmanian Achiever II* along with her sister ship, the Victorian ship *Reliance II*, those new vessels will benefit the whole state. These impressive ships measuring almost 210 metres long and 28 metres wide will have the capacity to carry 40 per cent more cargo than our existing ships.

Toll's \$172 million investment will be complemented by a further \$139 million to be spent on property upgrades that will optimise the efficiency at Webb Dock in Melbourne and the Burnie port. This increased capacity will provide new opportunities to Tasmanian businesses that compete with other Australian and international businesses.

There was hope last year that either the Devonport Airport and/or the Launceston Airport would host the planned Qantas Group Pilot Academy. Qantas chose Toowoomba for its first training site. However, a recent media article highlighted that a Chinese airline is considering setting up a pilot training school at Devonport Airport. Negotiations are believed to be in their early stages. The discussions so far have indicated the potential to train both international and domestic pilots at the school, a state government spokesperson said.

The Office of the Coordinator-General has had discussions with possible flight schools regarding the potential for operating from Devonport Airport. It is too early to speculate on the outcome or potential jobs and investment; however, the Government is of the strong view that a pilot academy in Devonport would have a significant positive impact on jobs, investment and activity in the region.

It is believed a Chinese airline is looking at leasing a tenancy at the airport. The airport belongs to the state government-owned TasPorts. It is understood that Tasmania's mix of terrains and the state's range of airports enhances Devonport Airport's appeal as a training site.

It is not clear whether a potential training school would be relevant to the possibility of direct Devonport-China export flights, which would allow fast transport of high-end Tasmanian agricultural goods. Unfortunately, Tasmania was not successful in attracting the flying school; however, I am pleased to see the changes occurring at Devonport Airport to assist with the expanding aviation needs for the north-west coast and that of Tasmania.

Public housing shortage is a very concerning issue and problem, although I am pleased to see the Government is taking this seriously. The minister, Roger Jaensch, is open to innovative and practical solutions and is doing all he can as minister to investigate and find possible short-, medium- and long-term solutions. This is not an easy task. It is one that has been an issue for this Government and preceding ones.

I, along with many Merseysiders, am very pleased that the return of sites such as the former Devonport maternity hospital to a greenfield state has increased the availability of usable land towards the centre of Devonport.

Last year's announcement of \$20 million of federal budget money to help Tasmania bolster Biosecurity Tasmania was well received. The fruit fly scare was definitely a wake-up call, not only for the Government but for Tasmanian businesses and constituents.

Another key area in my electorate, as for everybody else, is education. I have spoken before about the important role St Brendan-Shaw College, Geneva Christian College and Don College play in my electorate. St Brendan is a school that has a year 7 to 12 cohort; Geneva has kindergarten to year 12; and Don College caters for year 11 and 12 students from surrounding high schools, those being Latrobe, Sheffield, Reece, Devonport, Ulverstone, Penguin and even some from St Brendan. I am therefore concerned when I hear the Premier state in his speech that 43 schools have extended to year 11 and 12 and that we are on track for all high schools to extend by 2022. I think the original policy was that all schools that wished to extend their year 10 cohorts to years 11 and 12 would do so by the end of year 2022 when it was the end of the policy. There has been a subtle change in the language used by the minister. I would be less anxious had there had been a clarifying comment from the Premier emphasising that Don, Rosny, Hellyer and Launceston colleges and the like will continue to thrive and be an option for Tasmanian students.

Vocational education provides a solid, practical foundation enhancing a young person's chances of attaining fulfilling employment. In liaison with staff at Don College, I have come to feel particularly concerned about funding for the college in general, especially the trades area. A staff member stated to me -

The Vet Building and Construction program has an exemplary record of achieving over 50% employment before students complete the course.

The growth has placed increased demand upon the limited infrastructure with some workshop spaces being fully timetabled and other spaces congested due to the thoroughfare design.

Staff now have no alternative but to turn students away due to full classes and not having the option of running additional classes to meet demand.

This will be amplified in future years as this year's grade 11 cohort are the smallest in number with College numbers set to increase over the next few years. The current High School grade 7 cohort numbers report as being the biggest for 10 years.

We knew this growth was coming. It was predicted way back a decade ago as the Education department has a good grasp on the births and transfers from other jurisdictions -

It's the growth and success of all subjects in the Material Design and technology area not just Building and Construction that is placing undue pressure on our limited facilities. For example we are the only college/school in the state with two classes (44 students) of UTAS Object Design (Scotch Oakburn is the closest with 16 students this year).

The minister is aware of these concerns because one of the school association parent members has spoken to him. That teacher went on to describe the history and infrastructure of Don College as follows -

Regarding the history of the Don College buildings I offer the following information taken from the publication From Pillar to Post - A History of the Don College 1973-1997.

In 1969 Architect John Gott proposed that the layout of Don College consist of 4 connecting hexagonal hubs and a square building on the northern side for a gymnasium.

It was planned that the construction would take place in two phases. The science and resource centres would be the built first and completed to a stage so students could move in while the arts, humanities and the gymnasium were being constructed.

The second stage was permanently shelved in 1976 due to increased material costs and delays in construction.

Gott reluctantly agreed to the plan of repurposing the science and resource centres while realised that many 'would not be fit for purpose' being used as classrooms.

The college was left to make do with what it had.

Increasing enrolments saw the addition of temporary terrapins some time before 1985.

I can reinforce that because my first year as a year 11 student was at the new Don College. The two structures that were designed were not fit for purpose for a lot of the other building that went on. Now, in total, over 28 temporary terrapins are bolted together to form eight teaching areas and spaces. In other colleges in the state, there are more purpose-built buildings for the different technologies. This is what is of concern. Metals and Engineering teacher James Ryan is also concerned about funding. He stated -

My job is to guide and train young people in the final stages of education and assist them to transition from school into fulfilling careers that will enable them to become productive members of society. However, recent times have hindered this process (inadequate facilities and large class sizes) and I believe that is due to insufficient funding from the current Liberal Government. We have been told by management that expansion in our Trades workshops will never happen because the Liberals are channelling funding to the years 11/12 extension schools. We have also been told that if we raise this issue with DoE, that they could simply pull the rug from under us, close down the area and send our students to an extension school where the funding is being channelled.

Mr Ryan said that the stress had led him to consider leaving the teaching profession. I quote -

... currently I am considering a return to industry due to the stress of managing an overcrowded facility and the fear of students being in an accident.

They have neglected us here at Don College.

I feel obligated to seek clarification from the Government on this pressing issue. The fact that such passionate and valued teachers are considering leaving the education sector due to funding concerns is extremely concerning to me in light of my background as an educator.

These colleges play a very important social role for 17- and 18-year-olds to meet new mates and to experience a wide range of courses that cannot be offered in a smaller high school environment.

In smaller regional areas, like the north-west coast, it is important that young people are able to interact and meet a variety of characters in a safe and supportive environment.

I also believe the transition from year 12 to university is made somewhat easier for those students who have already had a transitioning experience from a structured high school to less formal year 11 and 12 college years.

On another topic, the Mersey Hospital has often been in the spotlight on a local, state and national level, and tends to be a bit of a moveable feast. The announcement by the minister, Mr Ferguson in 2018, announcing the new helipad as part of a fast, high acuity helicopter medical retrieval network, should be viewed as a positive step and secure the future of the Mersey as an integral asset and vital link in the Tasmanian Health Service.

At the time, Mr Ferguson pointed to the recently constructed North West Regional Hospital helipad, which had been used 17 times in the year since it opened. 'This should reassure the community that our plan to improve local health services is working and is helping save lives on the Coast', Mr Ferguson said.

The helipad cost \$2 million and is part of a \$24 million-investment to improve patient transfer. Tasmanian firm AJR Construct was awarded the contract and many of us who live in the area have watched with interest as the helipad has risen in the grounds. It is expected to be opened mid-way through this year.

The helipad will cater for larger rescue helicopters in the future and enable better services and access to interstate and intrastate hospitals in an emergency. Unfortunately, some of the large beautiful trees outside the hospital needed to be removed. This was a safety issue with the requirements of helicopter needs.

I also believe that the criticism made by some community members about the cost of the helipad and its building, and whether the building was a necessary priority, was more to do with misinformation and misunderstanding of the role this service would play in critical and acute situations.

With regard to another focus for the health sector, members would recall my previous special interest speech regarding the Trauma Awareness Network Australia and the group's efforts to raise awareness of childhood trauma and breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma with its profound mental health and social impacts. TANA's key message is that people react to their circumstances in a predictable and adaptive way. This reaction is universal and becomes ingrained in the person. However, these survival strategies became maladaptive when circumstances improve and threat is no longer present. With support, people can be facilitated to reclaim a greater degree of control and

responsibility over their lives. TANA builds clear communication systems for sharing of knowledge and for the creation of a shared vision, bridging top down with bottom up.

Their goal culminates in a public health system founded upon the optimum balance between effectiveness and robustness. TANA envisages a society where each person feels valued and acknowledged with a strong sense of safety and connection.

From this state of being, people learn the skills of self-regulation and self-management, and become more tolerant and understanding of others. TANA advocated for strategic prevention of toxic stress as an effective action towards a public health policy that mitigates the effects of toxic stress at each stage in the lifecycle from the earliest stage possible.

While this approach may initially require substantial investment, through the use of data-supported policies, significant savings in the long term are assured through the prevention of ill health. By anticipating, addressing and meeting the needs of people, they will naturally aspire to reach their greater potential and to make a more significant contribution to their communities.

By supporting people coping with the effects of toxic stress on their bodies and mind, they learn to function in a significantly more productive way. When each person's experience is valued, our society becomes more integrated, utilising skills and innovative abilities, and maximising each person's strengths.

I am pleased to share with members and those listening that the Health minister has expressed interest in the TANA approach and recently offered TANA directors the opportunity to meet with a senior member of his department to further discuss the concept.

I hope this will be the first of many opportunities for the group to advocate for the implementation of TANA's vision.

While presenting a variety of aspects involving the health sector, I was pleased to attend the opening of a new wing of the aged care facility in Port Sorell called Rubicon Grove last Friday.

It is a wonderful facility and a tribute to OneCare, the board, the staff, the architects, the community and the Latrobe Council. It is particularly satisfying for me because I can remember standing on swampy bushland in 2005 saying to the care providers, 'How about building it here?'. They will also facilitate a shopping centre, childcare centre and medical centre, effectively making that the centre of the town.

Port Sorell has been one of the fastest growing centres in the state for the past 12 years -

Ms Rattray - Has it been overtaken by the Legana area more recently?

Mr GAFFNEY - Possibly by numbers but not by percentage, if that makes sense.

An important aspect of the health of individuals and keeping people out of hospitals is for individuals to reflect on their lifestyle and life circumstances. Emotional, social, physical and spiritual health are all integral for individuals and community wellbeing.

As patron of the Devonport Poultry Club and patron of the Devonport Junior Soccer Club and patron of the Devonport Strikers Football Club, I am well aware of the need for adequate facilities, transport options and opportunities to keep people connected.

All of us in this place are very aware of the importance of activity, connectivity and expanding networks and relationships to ensure all people are involved.

Last year, I presented a special interest speech on BioMar Australia taking over the old sawmill in Wesley Vale. That is not to be confused with the pulp mill. The latest Latrobe Council newsletter informed residents that council recently issued the building and planning permits for stage 1 of the BioMar project at Wesley Vale, valued at \$17.1 million.

We only recently toured a number of our fish farming facilities throughout the state. BioMar holds a well-established position in Tasmania as the leading supplier of fish feed for Atlantic salmon since entering the local market in 2003.

One in every three farmed salmon in Tasmania is fed BioMar fish food products, which are currently being exported from Scotland. The \$56 million proposal will bring a world-class, state-of-the art fish feed production facility to Wesley Vale.

When fully operational, the facility will produce up to 110 000 tonnes per annum of aqua feed product to support the aquaculture industry; it is expected to create 55 full-time jobs and an additional 30 jobs across the region through indirect support, operational port services and logistical roles.

The Wesley Vale site will export its product internationally, enhancing Tasmania's reputation for quality products. Tassal said it provides an alternative source for their fish feed.

While there have been some detractors, with community members questioning certain aspects of the Living City development, the state Government has provided significant funds for the Living City project.

The project's progress is described on the Living City website. The Waterfront Precinct will feature a hotel, restaurants, residential apartments, riverside park and potential marina.

By developing the Waterfront Precinct, the connection from the cultural and civic heart of Devonport to Mersey River and Bass Strait will be realised, opening the city up to the waterfront, which is a long-held community desire.

According to the website -

Concept plans for the precinct were released for community consultation between December 2016 and February 2017 and reflect the area bounded by Rooke Street, Best Street, Mussel Rock and the Mersey River.

In October 2017, Fairbrother, a local development company, was selected as the preferred proponent of the \$40 million waterfront hotel -

Under the terms of the agreement, Fairbrother will be responsible to develop, finance and construct the hotel and to appoint the operator. It is expected to take about two years to construct.

The site works are anticipated to begin in 2019. The council intends to address development of the public open space element of the waterfront precinct by applying for suitable grant opportunities as they arrive.

As with any development, there will also be people from the community wishing to voice their opinion about certain aspects of what is being proposed - perhaps historical trees, pathways and garden beds, areas they once thought of as being protected may be under threat. The 2018 local government election cycle appears to have confirmed some of the concerns I raised when changes to the Local Government Act were initially proposed.

The amendment I felt carried the greatest risk were the all-in, all-out four-year terms. In the past four years, we have witnessed dysfunctional councils, by-elections, elected members frequently having public spats and councils under administration. I am in favour of half-in, half-out biennial election cycles, allowing regular feedback from the communities regarding council performance, supporting a natural transference of corporate knowledge and corporate networking and leadership continuity.

Unfortunately, under the current legislation, the possibility exists that an entirely new council could be elected on a single controversial issue, and that does not bode well for good governance. I believe having 505 individuals nominating for 29 councils, including 104 mayoral and 141 deputy mayoral candidates, is problematic. While I am all for people having a choice, too many candidates may cause voters to disengage. The 'may be interested' ratepayer is less likely to thoroughly research the profile of every candidate. Candidate wish lists, while appealing at times, are not always achievable or affordable, and frequently do not relate to local government responsibilities. Then again, nor do some of the wish lists of some candidates in the next round of Legislative Council elections, particularly pertaining to the seat of Nelson. In some municipalities, adversarial media comments between candidates are already creating an antagonistic flavour to these elections.

The amended act does not require mayoral and deputy mayoral candidates to have any previous local government experience. Prior to 2014, 12 months as an elected member was compulsory. I believe this affords individuals an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the rules, the regulations, meeting procedures, roles and attached responsibilities. A positive and progressive council needs new ideas and personalities around the table. However, for the best practical outcomes, local government is best served by people prepared to work together as a team, providing stability, objectivity and appropriate decision-making processes.

Before chairing the 2017 parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Future Gaming Markets, I was inclined to accept the proliferation, use and accessibility of electronic gaming machines in Tasmania. I view gambling, be it a day at the races or a ticket in a sweep, as a bit of fun. Many of us would recall the casinos opening in Hobart and Launceston - dining, entertainment and dressing up were part of a special night out or an occasion. These days, the glitz and glamour of the casinos seems to have faded. The inquiry heard references to casinos as 'pokie barns'. The 2003 deed negotiated between the Federal Group and the government stated that 3680 EGM licences would be granted, 1180 being housed in casinos and the remaining 2500 taken up by hotels and RSL clubs. There are currently 89 hotels and 7 clubs with gaming machines and approximately 250 venues that choose not to.

In light of the state Government's current economic position, it is difficult to sustain the argument that the Government is dependent on revenue from gaming. Currently, gaming activities in Tasmania contribute only 1 to 2 per cent of state revenue. In comparison, the figure is 12 per cent in Victoria, and in Queensland it is closer to 13 per cent. In contrast to other states and territories, Western Australia confines pokies purely to the casinos, which are viewed by locals and visitors alike as destination points, places to enjoy a special night out. The pubs and clubs promote local music and are vibrant, social places for people to chat and interact. It is also worth noting that Western Australia has the nation's lowest rate of problem gambling.

Player losses through EGMs in Tasmania in 2016-17 amounted to \$182 million, and 60 per cent of approximately \$110 million was attributable to pokies in clubs and pubs. Some Tasmanian towns which can least afford them have the highest concentration of pokies. Glenorchy has 270 machines, with \$20 million lost in revenue to that community in 12 months. Devonport has 230 poker machines for a community of 30 000 people, nearly one poker machine for every 90 adults, one of the highest rates in Tasmania and extracting approximately \$12 million from locals annually.

While industry stakeholders claim pokies create jobs, information provided to the inquiry challenges that position. The committee was informed that \$1 million in pokies revenue provides three jobs in the gaming industry. In the retail industry, \$1 million would support 10 jobs and in hospitality, \$1 million equates to 16 to 18 jobs. While banning pokies from pubs and clubs did not garner enough support from the six-member committee to be adopted as a recommendation, the majority of the committee did support recommendation 2, that the Government adopt strategies to facilitate the reduction of a significant number of EGMs from Tasmanian hotels and clubs by the 1 July 2023. Unfortunately, the Government is maintaining its pre-inquiry position of a decrease of only 150 machines, which results in no meaningful change because it represents the number of EGMs currently not in circulation.

Tasmania would benefit if EGM numbers in pubs and clubs were reduced by at least half. I was asked on radio what I would suggest as a significant number. Being chair of that committee at the time, I could not give a number because we had not done an investigation into what a significant number would mean. Now the gaming inquiry is closed, I can say that at least half the machines in our community could be put into storage or back into the casinos, where they belong. This is especially so in a place like Glenorchy and in my electorate of Mersey.

Although I believe confining poker machines to the Casino and *Spirit of Tasmania I and II* is the correct thing to do, it was not going to bode well with the wider public, especially with powerful lobby groups vocally condemning Labor's policy. Now is the time to markedly decrease the number of machines before the next agreement is signed, before the state commits future generations to another long-term deed and legally binding legislation. During previous sessions, I also asked the Government to commit to those communities identified as having a higher proliferation of gaming machines. That has not occurred and it is not likely to do so. It seems as though the Government is intent to continue with its pre-election policy commitment from 2012.

One of the attributes I recognised and appreciate in the people of the north-west coast is the willingness to share their beliefs in a respectful and thoughtful manner. One important discussion I encourage members and all Tasmanians to have with their friends and family is the issue surrounding end-of-life care and voluntary assisted dying, previously referred to as the euthanasia debate. While the VAD bill will have little impact on the majority of the community, the debate on

the bill will be exceptionally important for individuals whose health situation is causing irreversible intolerable suffering.

I accept that some causes take many years, decades or even centuries to achieve acceptance and agreed implementation by the majority of society. Change in community attitudes is never absolute and it can be difficult to put aside ingrained views or opinions to allow space for new thinking or to take the time to evaluate why we feel the way we do about a certain issue. One can only admire those in history who have stood their ground and progressed an issue they believe is worth fighting for. It is also worth noting that better outcomes and understanding will result if we consider different viewpoints. People's opinions relate very much to their own life experience, environment, their knowledge base and sources of reliable information.

Differences of opinion regarding legislation or social issues surface in communities, be it land use planning, mandatory sentencing, surrogacy, same-sex equality, confusion over the relationship between the protection of the environment and mining, forestry and fisheries development. To some people not directly impacted by those issues, these debates may appear relatively nonsensical, insignificant or a waste of time. However, to the person, people or communities impacted by that specific issue, the conversations and decisions made by authorities can be exceptionally crucial and life-changing at times.

Mr President, we all have had and will continue to have our differences in this Chamber and indeed the other place, whether because of party policies, personal morals, values and ethics, or when expressing the will of the constituents of our own electorate. Although we may not agree on a certain bill, clause or recommendations from a committee, I believe the people I work with in this parliament are all here because they want to do their best to represent their communities. I am grateful for their contributions and feedback. Regardless of whether I agree or disagree with some legislation, I believe it is still imperative for me as a responsible member of the parliament to strengthen all legislation by offering and supporting worthwhile amendments. At the end of the debate, I may vote against the bill.

I am an independent member elected by the constituents of Mersey. They elected me to represent their interests and ensure changes to legislation benefit them as well as Tasmania as a whole. I therefore commence researching bills and policy issues with one thing: an open mind. The questions I always ask myself when I finish researching and reviewing bills are: Is this legislation required? Is it a sound and solid bill? Is it evidence-based? Does it impact or enhance the lives of Tasmanians? Will it achieve its stated objective?

I have no issue in providing my support for a bill if it is supported by evidence and it is a sound bill. If the legislation appears unsupported, it up to the Government and stakeholders to put forward cogent arguments and justification for it all. If a bill falls short and does not achieve its stated objective, I will suggest the amendments to strengthen the bill. If a bill arrives in this place from the other place, it is our responsibility to address it as such.

That is why I have been, and continue to be, anxious about and critical of the Government's mandatory sentencing reform agenda in Tasmania. I firmly believe the majority of Tasmanians want to provide a safe environment for community members and provide a range of options for the judiciary to make an appropriate judgment based on their expertise and experience. I also have no objection to people receiving appropriate sentences for engaging in criminal activity; however, there is little evidence to suggest mandatory sentencing actually works. Many professionals within the legal and justice system have voiced concerns over the premise. Everybody found guilty of a

serious crime will be sentenced, but will be sentenced accordingly in view of the magistrate's or the judge's experience.

I wish the Government and my colleagues all the best for this coming parliamentary session. I congratulate members for their participation on many of the parliamentary committees which play an important role in the function of this Legislative Council. I look forward to working, debating and collaborating with you to ensure my constituents and the people of Tasmania can have faith in the political process.

Mr Adam Brooks, the member for Braddon, recently resigned for personal reasons. Whatever your political persuasion or way of doing things, you cannot help but admire Adam's passion, his work ethic and his unwavering enthusiasm for helping his local community and the wider electorate of Braddon. Adam has had a tumultuous political career, it must be said, but he was a solid grassroots member and a wonderful advocate for his constituents. I wish him the very best in the future.

I take this opportunity to specifically acknowledge the work of the Leader, the member for Montgomery. It could not have been the easy task stepping into what is a demanding and busy role, as I am sure the member for Derwent attests as a first-term member. I wish you all the best.

To the member for Pembroke, I also thank you for your dedication, insights and commitment to hitting the ground running in this place. You have done a great job.

Finally, Mr President, I would like to formally thank you for your leadership in this Chamber, your willingness to share your knowledge and, for all the times I have observed you, gently and diplomatically guiding members in procedural and committee matters. I wish you well.

To those standing the May elections, I wish you all the very best. I congratulate the Premier on his address.

[4.04 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY - Mr President, I had almost forgotten that this is the last sitting week before the elections, but we will have some time to talk about that later on. When I got the Premier's address out of my wheelie case, I realised it was quite a few weeks ago when I put my reply together, so I hope it all makes sense today.

Never has there been a truer word spoken when it comes to my electorate of McIntyre when we hear there is much to do. Honourable members, over the past few months since the boundary redistribution, I have been working hard to get to know the new parts of the McIntyre electorate and my communities while not neglecting in any way those communities that have had me as their member for the past 14 years. Getting to know these places has certainly taken me back to my first term as an elected member, where there was no silver bullet for getting known in the electorate - just plain hard work and constant commitment. Members, you all know the drill: keeping one's feelers out for information on events and issues, then doing one's best to turn up in person, make the appropriate contact, offering support and providing that support where possible. It is a constant juggling act. I do not need to tell you, Mr President, or any other member in this place. It is one that keeps me driven to represent the people of McIntyre to the best of my ability.

I want to touch on the electorate tour of McIntyre on 19 and 20 February. It was not a long tour of the western part of McIntyre, but we managed to see quite a few businesses, meet a number

of locals and listen to elected members from the Meander Valley Council, who took the opportunity to raise issues in our meeting.

My thanks go to all those members who joined us over those two days. To have members stay for the entire program was wonderful and very much appreciated. Thanks to Melissa, my electorate assistant, for your efforts in making the program work so well. That was Melissa's third electorate tour. Sorting times between our various stops, accommodations et cetera, can be a bit of a challenge at times and Mel does it without any fuss. I am fortunate to have such great support.

During our tour we experienced a number of exciting ventures in the electorate, for instance, the Adams Distillery at Perth. The two Adams, in such a short time, have expansive plans underway with great prospects for growth in such a short time of being operational. Other, more established businesses, such as the honey venture at Perth, continue to promote the Tasmanian brand through their products which fit a special niche of product and marketing. Interestingly, if we go to Adams Distillery again in the future we might try the later timeslot rather than 10 a.m. It might have been a little early for tasting the fruits of the distillery. It was a bit early for me to taste whisky.

The development at the industrial precinct at Westbury highlights business confidence in the area with Ridley's fish pellet factory under construction and well on the way to providing product to support the salmon farm industry - an industry, as we were informed recently on our tour looking at salmon and trout farming in the state, that is growing in leaps and bounds and currently sources most of their fish feed from Queensland. How good will it be when Tasmanian businesses can supply the industry as a whole. The member for Mersey also talked about the fish pellet factory.

Mr Gaffney - BioMar.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, BioMar. In the old Wesley Vale mill site?

Mr Gaffney - The timber mill site.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, the timber mill site. It will be interesting. I hope that we might get an opportunity to look at that site sometime in the future. I appreciated the opportunity recently to look over the salmon farms. The west coast trip was fantastic and then again to the Cressy site, where we looked at the hatchery, and down the Huon as well. We have another day left on that journey and I am sure we will get that opportunity. To the member for Murchison and the member for Huon, who organised those trips, thank you. It was enlightening. When you look at what goes into producing a piece of salmon, I have said it off the record and I will say it on the record - I will never complain about the price of a piece of salmon. You can understand why fish is the cost it is when you look at what goes into producing and supplying that into the market.

It is my pleasure today to take honourable members on another tour around the electorate, and I am going to start with Flinders Island. I contacted all my council areas, as I do a couple of times a year, to see what is happening in their patch, and also to make sure that I have a full understanding of their aspirations. I received a list of projects from the Flinders Council General Manager, Bill Boehm. Thank you very much to the Flinders Council for doing that. I am not going to read every project but I want to give members an idea of the main projects so that the Government will look at what we have provided here today as members and representatives of our electorates.

First of all, the Whitemark Airport, the \$3.6 million from the state and the Australian Government. That is in regard to a runway upgrade, which continues to be of importance to the

island community. If you want to get economies of scale into an area like that so that we can have visitor numbers increase and the cost of visiting the islands kept at a lower level then we need to continue to have larger aircraft. That way the economies of scale kick in. That is at the top of the council's wish list.

The other really important infrastructure feature -

Mr PRESIDENT - We lack a quorum. I know one member has had to go outside for a short time. Perhaps the bell should be rung, too, because the people in here have been in here for the whole debate and they might need a rest.

Ms RATTRAY - I would like to think that they want to hear what I have to say.

Quorum formed.

Ms RATTRAY - Mr President, it has often been said that it is quality not quantity, so we will have to go for quality, and I will continue on. Before we invited members back to the Chamber I was talking about - win some, lose some. It seems like it is pretty much how it goes.

Another very important piece of infrastructure for the Flinders Island community is the Lady Barron port. That is where all the goods come in and are then distributed across the island. As we know, when it comes to produce from the island, they go out through the port. The Lady Barron port is essential for the community to continue to be a great contributor to the Tasmanian economy. Their request is for \$2.3 million from the Australian Government for a rock breakwater. That is protection, a rock wall breakwater. I know that there is continued support for that. I have more information on that and will quote from the document that I received -

With a growing seafaring community, maritime safety is a major issue for Eastern Australia and Tasmania. The community driven proposal is to construct Safe Harbour facilities at the Lady Barron Slip Site.

In 2011, members of the Lady Barron community raised the possibility of providing safe harbour marine facilities at Lady Barron. They are well on the way. The funding request is for \$2.3 million from the Australian Government and \$3 million from the Australian and state governments for marina and support facilities. It is very well planned and well needed. That is their highway; that is how they get their products on and off the island. It should be viewed in that vein when there is a consideration by governments to support the island.

My next electorate tour will be to Flinders Island. I have been promising it for a number of years and I give that commitment here today. There is one small matter in the middle of that, and that will be an election. We cannot go before the election, but I will be watching carefully around the Chamber and asking members. If they are not interested then 2020 can be a possibility. I would like to take you to Flinders Island. Everyone at some stage must go to Flinders Island and see this wonderful island community.

When we go to Flinders Island, the other main part on the council's wish list is the reconstruction and sealing of Palana Road. It is to form the main transport backbone for Flinders Island. An excellent road upgrade would significantly contribute to the economic development of the island. The proposal is for council and the Australian Government to fund the reconstruction and sealing of 29 kilometres of Palana Road. While 29 kilometres might sound like a lot, we do

not have many heavy vehicles on the island, so perhaps the quality of the seal does not need to be as high as it would be for the freight route between Launceston and Hobart. It may not be \$1 million per kilometre. I do not know that for a fact but I do know that sealing a road costs about \$1 million per kilometre. That needs to be fully explored. It will make a big difference to the island community.

Also important is a redevelopment of the Flinders Island Sports and RSL Club. That is their community hub alongside the hall. You play golf and bowls there, and it is the RSL club as well.

Mr Dean - It is a meeting point, is it not?

Ms RATTRAY - It is a meeting point. The Lions changeover dinner is always held at the sports club. They manage to get really good catering. It is first rate. It is Flinders Island's most significant community-led project, with council as a positive supporter. The proposal is for council to assist and partner with the Flinders Island Sport and RSL Club to redevelop the site around the bowling greens and the golf course to include redeveloped clubrooms and a function centre. It is not a large space. When you get a lot of people into that area it is quite limited. Facilities will be extended to house activities that complement current activity. A new tennis and netball court is being developed and possibly a gymnasium space as well; complementary high-quality residential development abutting the golf course and short-term tourist accommodation; and revamping and improved maintenance for the existing challenging nine-hole golf course. It is not a links course, but there is usually plenty of wind on the island so it is quite a challenge for golfers and they love it.

The funding request for that is seeking an initial \$2.7 million grant from the Australian Government and the state Government to fund the main community elements that are beyond the scope of the sports club for this exciting integrated development.

Thank you to Flinders. They put their proposals forward, they are well-researched and they have full community support.

Mr Dean - Salt of the earth, those people.

Ms RATTRAY - It has been my pleasure and honour to represent them for 14, almost 15, years now.

Mr Valentine - If you look at its port facilities, for instance - they are very important for a community like that.

Ms RATTRAY - It is their highway.

Mr Valentine - It is. It is like a highway to them. Air access is limited in terms of what it can bring.

Ms RATTRAY - The proposal to upgrade the runway will allow larger aircraft to come onto the island; larger aircraft, more people on board, the cost of the fares perhaps diminish a little. It is not an inexpensive exercise to get to and from the island. When people go and see the magic of the island, they wonder why they have not done it before.

Mr Valentine - When it comes to bringing in heavy infrastructure, port facilities are absolutely essential.

Ms RATTRAY - The *Matthew Flinders* and the Bayles family who service both Cape Barren and Flinders do a fantastic job. You do not have to have me stand up here for a number of years and talk about the issues we have had around that. We had that in the past, but we do not have that anymore. We have a wonderful service.

Now, to actually complement the Flinders-Furneaux Group service, it is probably the Bridport end that causes the most problem. Only last week the boat *Matthew Flinders* missed the tide coming in to Bridport and sat for something like eight or nine hours waiting for the tide to come in with a load of cattle. We have a deepwater port at Lady Barron and not at the other end where they come in. That is a challenge.

You have transport cartage contractors sitting around for hours. They can see the boat but they cannot get the livestock off.

Mr Dean - They might have to teach their cattle to swim.

Ms RATTRAY - That is another issue.

Mr Finch - If I might, member for McIntyre, you were willing to talk about Flinders Island a couple of sentences ago. I recall the flight we took over Cape Barren Island when we were looking at the handover of that land to the Aboriginal community. That flight and flying over those islands, you could have been anywhere in the world. The Caribbean, anywhere. Stunning from the air, beautiful.

Ms RATTRAY - Absolutely. Nothing has changed since you took that flight. It is still stunning. Every time I go, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to be able to visit on a regular basis but also remind myself how fortunate the people who live there are to live there. I also acknowledge the challenges they have as well.

The member for Murchison asked some questions today about support for student travel. All of those aspects of island living are really important to the island community. I acknowledge that King Island has some of the same challenges as Flinders. Anyone with an interest in tourism or mountain biking would know we had approximately 5000 people at Derby in the Dorset community for the Enduro World Series mountain biking championships the weekend before last. It is a world championship and the whole place was abuzz. You could not find a car park anywhere. I am fortunate that my uncle lives in the main street of Derby and I parked there, but people were parked kilometres away from the action.

I arrived later in the day. I wanted to be there for the presentations. I walked along to the bridge where I thought I would have a better look at the bikes coming up over the hill. There is a spot from which you could see the bikers coming up over the hill. As I was walking along, it was announced the event was over. I stood on the bridge for an hour and watched the continuous stream of people who came out of the hills, thousands of people all along the track with big cowbells and homemade instruments. One was full of cans on a big stick, making a noise. That is the way you encourage riders over the course. It was fantastic. To Dorset Council's credit, it has embraced the mountain biking concept and done a fabulous job. There have only been good reports in any media I have seen following that event. My congratulations to Dorset Council, particularly the general

manager, Tim Watson, who has driven that particular event. It has been supported by the entire community.

Mr Valentine - The community is happy.

Ms RATTRAY - You cannot buy anything in Derby that is not extremely well priced. Something you probably would have been lucky to ask \$80,000 or \$90,000 for in the past is now selling for well over \$200 000, some \$350 000. A home looking over the start of the track has been sold for around \$350 000. Real estate prices have gone through the roof. More broadly, there are fewer people living in the community. There are absentee landowners. A lot of it is Airbnb, short stay accommodation, that type of thing, but it is being used.

Mr Finch - I remember it was being used by the lesbian community who moved in there -

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, 20 years ago there were a lot of -

Mr Finch - That brought Derby to life as well, in a population sense.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, a lot of people came and they involved themselves in the community. A lot of those people have now moved on. They have taken the opportunity to move to Scottsdale, if they are looking to downsize or relocate. Some people have moved to Ringarooma or Bransholme. They have decided their house was worth so much more than it was and they have not moved far away, they are still in the community and have taken the opportunity to move.

Mr Valentine - To Winnaleah, perhaps.

Ms RATTRAY - Not as much.

Mr Valentine - They haven't moved that far around?

Ms RATTRAY - Winnaleah is not that far away from Derby, but it does not seem to have gained the draw the other places have. Winnaleah has always been a community that has relied heavily on the outskirts, on the farming community supporting the township. We are going along okay. I will not say we are humming but we still have well-established, long-term farm families in the district and I expect they will continue to be there for many generations to come.

Mr Finch - Is it inappropriate to mention the *Trail of the Tin Dragon*, the show in Derby?

Ms RATTRAY - No, I do not think it is inappropriate. We need to know the good and what may need work.

Mr Finch - I took some tourists there to see that audiovisual display.

Ms RATTRAY - It is closed.

Mr Finch - Is it?

Ms RATTRAY - Yes.

Mr Finch - That was a magnificent attraction and something that highlighted the Chinese community of that district, particularly Derby.

Ms RATTRAY - The member raised that matter with me after he had taken some friends up into the north-east and said he was disappointed when he went into the Tin Centre and was going to show them the video on the large screen. It showed the Derby floods, when the Cascade dam broke. It felt like you were there. The video no longer plays and the room has been repurposed. Let us hope that with the new influx of people coming into the area, once they step off their bike toward the end of the day or before they start - although it looks as if they get on the track and they do not get off until dark - they will take the opportunity to urge the centre to reinstate that initiative. I will pass that on to those who need to know

Mr Finch - For those visitors who come for the bike riding, it would be a memory that will stay with them. It would be a good talking point to promote tourism in the area, to make sure you to go to that centre and look at that audio-visual display because it is very modern. It was a contemporary presentation and stunning.

Ms RATTRAY - Plenty of things are happening in the Dorset community and I am pleased to participate in some of those events and do whatever I can. Our office is always busy with people walking in, contacting us and asking us for support from around the electorate. I am pleased to say we are expanding. I look forward to that in the next few weeks.

We put out the call to Break O'Day and John Brown, the general manager, responded. You cannot ask for anything more than that. They are proactive and put their four priorities to us. Most councils must look at their four priorities and put those out. The Government will be interested in those. They are also getting on the bandwagon for mountain biking. Connectivity for cyclists and walkers is an increasingly important issue, which they are focusing on with the mountain bike trails currently under construction. Council has developed a proposal to complete missing sections of the existing Georges Bay foreshore multi-user track, which includes the critical piece from the St Helens foreshore at the wharf to the start of the existing track at the bottom of Jason Street. That is going to be one of their initiatives.

Second, housing accessibility is very difficult, which we heard through the short stay accommodation inquiry that has been re-established. I am sure that will be something we will talk about more. General manager John Brown goes on to say -

With the tightening rental market, the availability of housing in the BODC area is nearly non-existent. In recent years Housing Tasmania have sold a number of properties, but no new social housing has been created. With our low socio-economic situation it is important to have a good supply throughout our area for those less advantaged.

He is absolutely right that all communities need to be catered for. I note that there are three new units almost completed in Scottsdale. Another three parcels of council-owned land are being handed over to CatholicCare, which is establishing homes under the Affordable Housing Strategy for particular demographics. They will be welcomed in that municipality, but I suggest that Break O'Day needs the same consideration in regard to that area of need.

It is nothing new to hear from anyone on the ground in those communities that houses that were available for private rental in the past have now been repurposed and put into the short stay market. That takes out that capacity for people to get into the rental market; it makes it difficult.

Mr Valentine - And also the need to house tradespeople as they come in to do various projects. That also creates a bit of a problem.

Ms RATTRAY - There was quite a dearth of accommodation, throughout the building of the new St Helens Hospital; there were many tradesmen there. It is fantastic; though I have not seen the finished product, I drove past a couple of times when it was still a worksite - and they do not want a member of parliament turning up unannounced hoping they can get a look in. I am looking forward to seeing it. I commented on the minister's Facebook post last week, where he was being shown around through the new facility, that I look forward to the opening - that was a hint I was looking to get an invite to the opening, and I am sure I will. That will be a wonderful establishment. In the future we will not have to deal with the flooding of the St Helens Hospital and the issues that come with that as we had to in the past.

Mr Armstrong - What will become of the old hospital site?

Ms RATTRAY - It is prime real estate. I am not sure what the Government has earmarked -

Mr Armstrong - Will it be demolished?

Ms RATTRAY - I do not know; that is a good question. I hope the Government will take that on notice and we can all be apprised of that. It is prime real estate; it is in the main street of St Helens. The only thing is that you might have to build it up a bit because when we have a lot of rain, it floods. It is between the big supermarket and the smaller IGA on the corner.

The third thing was recycling. The problems of this sector should be at the forefront of discussions throughout the state as we are facing a mounting problem of viability and sustainability in this area. We need to be proactive in tackling this, yet the Tasmanian Government does not seem to appreciate the extent of the problem. They may have a view that this is an issue that local governments should deal with, and it is within our hands to achieve this. They are ignoring the mounting international and national problems in this sector. I heard on talkback radio - I think it was yesterday - when somebody rang up asking about the container deposit legislation or where that program is. We still do not have it. The former member for Western Tiers talked about it; it was supported by this House on numerous motions, but still we do not have any incentives for the community to do the right thing. Yes, we have a litter hotline. If somebody wants to ring up and is lucky enough to get the rego number, they might be able to progress a complaint. But many people, unless they want to put their name to it, are probably not going to do so. If we had some incentive for people to reuse those containers thrown out on the sides of roads and the like, it would be doing our community a real service. It behoves us to continue to support this initiative. The former member for Western Tiers would certainly want us, as the House of review, to continue to push that with the Government. He could see the merits of it. We had an inquiry under the Environment, Resources and Development Committee all those years ago, which said it was a no-brainer. At the time the government said we did not have the economies of scale - well, let us make the economies of scale work in the interest of our broader community. I congratulate Break O' Day Council for raising that issue as number three in their dot points.

The fourth thing is employment and addressing the barriers to employment. It is something that is more acute in regional and remote areas -

Through the MTB [mountain bike trail] project and other developments the local economy is changing and we need to take advantage of this. The BODC and the local community is appreciative of the Tasmanian Government's Jobs Action Package for the BODC area, but we need to ensure that we maximise the success of this and other initiatives.

We want people to come into the areas, and offer them job opportunities, but, again, we have to house them. They have to have affordable housing or they are not going to make a sea change. Unless you have somewhere affordable to stay, you may not necessarily take up an initiative under the Jobs Action Package. A couple of things need to work together there. Thank you to John Brown of Break O' Day Council and the mayor, Mick Tucker; they are always proactive.

Northern Midlands is a very proactive council. I was very pleased to receive quite a large package from them and I have gone through it. I will start with Bracknell and a reticulated sewerage system. Investing in the critical infrastructure to support reticulated sewerage is essential in order to address the environmental and public health issues in the community of Bracknell. To service 460 residents, including the primary school and a number of local sporting clubs, is certainly very important. I look forward to being able to progress that. That is one of the areas spoken of when we visited the community.

The Valley Central bioenergy hub - I know \$90 million is a big ask for stage 1, but it is a joint venture. The council and project partners have undertaken feasibility studies to analyse the opportunities and benefits of bioenergy for businesses located in the Valley Central Industrial Precinct and across the region. It is another one of the projects the member for Western Tiers had also progressed in his time and that is something I will be continually working on as well. Investing in urban growth, the Westbury Road intersection upgrade is located in the Greater Launceston area. This is almost the member for Launceston's area so I will not wander into that. She will be able to look after that area well enough herself.

Ms Armitage - Which area was that?

Ms RATTRAY - The Westbury Road intersection upgrade. I will put it on her chair so she can look at it at her leisure.

Moving to Carrick, there is a housing infrastructure plant; the Carrick sewage treatment plant, a significant investment - the contribution from local government is \$8.5 million and investment sought is \$8.5 million. A \$17-million project but the essential infrastructure for the construction is for up to 1100 new homes. As we know, housing in any of our rural areas is key and to be able to get that type of support would certainly be a great asset.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Order. We are lacking a quorum on the Floor.

Quorum formed.

Ms RATTRAY - I have been struggling to keep a quorum today.

When we visited on the McIntyre West electorate tour, the Meander Valley Council - a very proactive council - gave us a pretty good overview of its expectations. I have talked about the Cressy projects and one of the other areas, the Northern Midlands, provided some information which was very much appreciated. Ben Lomond strategic projects, the next iconic walk, and the council is seeking funding partners to enable full implantation of the recommendations of the Ben Lomond tourism feasibility study in the order of \$2 million.

When you look at what the promotion of Ben Lomond could do, \$2 million is not a large ask. I encourage the Government to support the council on that. I have talked about Cressy and they are looking for an upgrade to the swimming pool complex. It is \$750 000 and that would go a long way to upgrading the swimming pool, with a renovated kiosk and office, new entrance, shade structure over the toddler's pool and a younger children's play area.

An upgraded and expanded sport and recreation complex at Cressy for \$1.5 million and \$2000 for an educational cenotaph interpretation. I note that a number of areas were looking for \$2000. Evandale was looking for \$2000 as well for a cenotaph interpretation project, as well as Longford and the Avoca community. I did reply to all councils saying I thought they could apply to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for that. Four projects at \$2000 - \$8000 - with support of council would be well received under the Department of Veterans' Affairs. I suggested they take the opportunity to do that.

It is with much sadness, and some members may already know, that the Avoca School will no longer be in operation after this year. Next year, 2020, will see children go to Campbell Town or to Fingal. They may choose to go there if they are closer. They have an annexe at the St Marys District School up to grade 3, I believe. It might be less travel for the little tackers. It is terribly sad. The numbers are down to something like 11.

Mr Dean - What grade did it go to?

Ms RATTRAY - They went to grade 3. The Fingal campus is annexed to the St Marys District School. They do not have a principal but they still cater for the little tackers, as I call them, to cut back on the travelling, particularly if they come from a district outside Fingal township.

Mr Dean - Do they travel to Campbell Town from Avoca by bus?

Ms RATTRAY - Yes. It would take an hour. It is going to be a big change for that community and the school has the local swimming pool and the community garden. It is about the school and it is about that community hub you lose when you lose a school. I am sad for the community but I am realistic about what we can offer in the education of our children. We will be working with the community to make sure they receive the best education.

I touched on the cenotaph project for Evandale. There is the Morven Park Recreation Ground master plan. That park is the home of the Evandale Football Club, the Weagles and the Eagles. Eagles is the men's team and Weagles is the women's team. They are going gangbusters. I am the patron of the Weagles. I am very proud and looking forward to going to a number of games whenever I can. It is an important project that will make sure that facility is fit for purpose for those community groups. There is a proposal for sealing Nile Road, for \$2.3 million. That is an important road and members who have taken the opportunity to use the Nile Road will know it can do with an upgrade.

The Longford Visitor Appeal Study is an ask of \$4000. There is a Longford Urban Design Strategy and some costings have been put forward. One of the good initiatives for Longford is the Northern Midlands Health, Fitness and Sports Centre at a cost of \$603 772. It is worth noting they have a cricket club, football club and athletics club. They are all working together to promote that facility and I congratulate the Northern Midlands Council on being so proactive. I am fortunate to have proactive communities that say what they are looking for and state their aspirations. We look forward to working with Government to achieve them.

In the Meander Valley, there is an issue with the slip lane at the entrance of the Trowunna Wildlife Sanctuary on Mole Creek Road. I sent an email to the minister and the response I received was that there has not been a serious accident there to date. My response was that simply because there has not yet been a serious accident, does not mean we should dismiss the request for a safety feature. I will continue to push for a review of that initial position from the department, and I have provided the priority projects for the council. That slip lane is a priority for the owners and managers of the Trowunna Wildlife Sanctuary. When we visited on the electoral tour we could see that you can sit for quite some time on your side of the road if someone is coming the other way. A slip lane on the left-hand side coming from Deloraine is not a big ask. It does not have to be gold-plated, it is a slip lane. It is not likely to be such a big job. I went to Longford on Friday morning after returning from Hobart and the earthmoving works being undertaken to bypass going into Perth and heading to Longford are astronomical. I have never seen so much concrete or so many boulders. It is unbelievable. If only I could see a little of that for some of my roads in other places in the electorate, it would be gold.

I have the Railton area of the Kentish Municipality and I have made contact with the council. Much to their surprise, I informed them at the Sheffield SteamFest that I was their new member, 'Oh', said the general manager, 'are you really'? There is work to do in engaging the Railton community and ensuring the Kentish Council understands my role. I attended the Railton Bowls Club dinner two weeks ago. Word is starting to get around. I look forward to getting to know that area. I have already made contacts at the Railton community house and they are a great bunch of people, putting in hundreds of volunteer hours.

Mrs Hiscutt - It is difficult. I have about three-quarters and you have the remainder. For them to put their minds around that would be an interesting exercise for them.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, that is right. It would not be a complete contribution from me if I did not make some comment on the slow vehicle passing lanes. Recently, on my way to the west coast, I chose the Murchison Highway and I was delighted to find the plethora of well-signed slow vehicle turnouts.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Now you have to encourage people to use them.

Ms RATTRAY - I can assure you, I used them. It was a bit wet the day I drove down and I did not know the road that well. I do not travel that often. I have written here -

which I used a number of times as the weather delivered a cold snap and quite a bit of rain. Not knowing the road very well, I was cautious and I pulled over wherever I could and let the locals get on their way.

I could tell they knew where they were going and they knew their road well.

My question to the Government is, why is it so difficult to replicate this great safety initiative on the eastern side of the state? Surely, the signage template is there and much of the survey work on the north-east and east coast section has been done, yet those travelling the Tasman Highway from Launceston to Orford - the member for Prosser will be happy I am pushing through to Orford - which we know covers a significant part of the Great Eastern Drive, continue to be disadvantaged in safety and comfort. The west coast highway is a great example of comfort and safety and the long-promised works need to begin. It was terrific, and a pleasure to drive that road, the Murchison Highway, even during a cold snap and a wet day. I did not have any issues with it. I thought, 'Can we replicate this on the eastern side?' I will continue to work on that, Madam Deputy President.

The road maintenance contract continues to cause problems across my electorate and I cite the area from Herrick to Pyengana. The vegetation canopy covering the road is a real challenge for larger vehicles and there are plenty of them on this stretch of highway - milk tankers, stock and grain delivery trucks and a vast number of caravans and Winnebagos that head to the south of the state via the north, north-east and east coast. It is not that hard. You simply need big machines to take off some of the canopy. That will help clear the road and make sight lines better for vehicles. It will also help during winter when we have those frosts and we will not have as much ice on the road if the sun meets the bitumen. My roads are not the only roads that struggle to obtain that fully implemented maintenance contract. It is a big contract and I have shown members in this House. It is at least two inches thick.

It is important to have that. I talk about the white lines all the time. It is a matter of weeks and the paint is gone because of the road pavement width. It is difficult for larger vehicles not to run over the white line. If they are not running over the white line, they have dropped off the side of the road. They sealed the sides a month or six weeks ago and they put around four inches of hot mix over the original seal. Now we have a large drop on the side of the road in some places. If somebody drives too far over and one wheel drops off, there is nowhere to go. We do not have any barriers on the side of the road to stop vehicles going over.

When I went through the Sideling last week, a vehicle was off the road and in the bush. The driver was okay - he was standing on the side of the road after managing to pull himself out - but I could only see the top of the car. The member for Derwent knows what the Sideling is like.

Mr Valentine - So do I.

Ms RATTRAY - I know. I am not the only one who drives it. The member for Launceston provided me with some breaking news from the *Examiner* at around 9 o'clock this morning, 'Sideling keeping mainland buyers from Scottsdale: Real estate'. It says the quality of the Sideling road is a major factor in stopping people moving to Scottsdale and surrounding towns. This comes from Harcourts North East owner, Andrew Bennett. The Dorset council is attempting to secure federal funding to upgrade the road, which was reported last week. Mr Bennett goes on to say -

'The Sideling's a big thing,' he said.

'You get people from the mainland coming out here to look at a place, and once they drive out here [on the Sideling], that's it. They're not interested.'

The drive from Launceston to Scottsdale is about an hour, whether via the notoriously twisty Sideling (the section of the Tasman Highway between Scottsdale and Launceston) or via Lilydale.

This is interesting. Roughly speaking there is about \$100 000 difference between a house in Launceston and a house in Scottsdale. People would be really interested in buying out here, if they could get into town. I do not think they are going to get into town in half an hour. I do not think that is going to happen, unless you are very quick and breaking a lot of speed rules, so even if the Sideling were upgraded -

Mr Farrell - Maybe a high-speed train from Scottsdale to Launceston?

Ms RATTRAY - Interestingly, and I absolutely agree with this - and there is a photo to back it up - when it was so hot in January, the Sideling just disintegrated. The asphalt surface just disintegrated. It said, 'The Sideling is baking in the heat'. That was in January -

We have a crew up there with the water cart trying to keep the pavement temperatures down, so it doesn't run and peel up everywhere.

They were not quick enough, because it did. It just peeled up everywhere and ran.

Mr Valentine - It is a two-edged sword, is it not? If you take the canopy away to get sun onto it, during those hot spells that increases the -

Ms RATTRAY - I suggest that the quality of the product being used is not up to standard. We are not the hottest place in Australia. I am sure the roads are not peeling. I do not know. I do not know that the roads -

Mrs Hiscutt - There are a lot of dirt roads out there -

Ms RATTRAY - But, as we know, for tourists gravel roads are not appealing because they do not always have insurance cover if they are hiring a car, which can be additional and more expensive. I will ask the member for Launceston if she would like to shoot that through to me and I will provide it to *Hansard* at a later time. Thank you.

Again, I come back to the fact that more maintenance needs to be done. If the contract is not adequate, we should revisit the contract. We need to revisit the contract. I look forward to having a conversation with the Infrastructure minister at any time of the day he might like to do that. I have some really useful suggestions. I continue to put them in to the department, but unfortunately, I receive no responses.

Mrs Hiscutt - You will have to ask him to go for a ride on the roads again.

Ms RATTRAY - I have already done that once with the previous minister, and he absolutely agreed with me that my suggestions were quite valid and quite reasonable, but, sadly, I have not seen any improvement or any action in those areas.

But I will continue to write to the minister, which I do regularly, because, as I say, I have had no response from the department, sadly. I will write to the minister outlining my concerns and provide some suggestions on how we might need to be able to go forward.

We have had a reasonable tour around the electorate, and I will continue to bring matters to the Council whenever I can.

Moving on to the Premier's address, it was interesting and pleasing to see the areas covered in the speech, including irrigation schemes, the salmon industry, the mining industry and the forest industry with a new processing facility at George Town. I will not stray into the member for Windermere's territory there - but interesting and pleasing -

Mr Dean - That is about the only thing we can talk about.

Ms RATTRAY - How pleasing was the announcement that for the first time in 27 years growth has been recorded across all industries - all industries. That was pleasing. I notice that for agrifood, gross value is up 50 per cent. Private new capital expenditure is \$352 million, an increase of 64.5 per cent. It says power prices were kept at 1.5 per cent, but 1.5 per cent of quite a bit is quite a bit, unfortunately. I get frustrated when I see a lot of solar panels on houses, and being put on houses, and wonder how long it is going to take for people to receive a reasonable return for their investment. It must be a bit frustrating for them if they have gone to the expense of putting on solar panels and it will be six or seven years before they see any benefit. We can only encourage the state Government to continue to have discussions with the federal government about the solar energy rebate.

The challenges in a number of industries are skills for certain job opportunities, and also the PTSD reform, which refers to stress in the workplace. Regrettably, the number of employees presenting with stress-related issues has increased. It is disappointing that people feel that stress and need to go through it. The Government has put in some reforms to do that. I believe we have a bill coming forward in regard to that. I am sure we will have the opportunity to talk more about that in the future.

I have already mentioned this in respect of the Break O'Day community, and it is clear that it is not exclusive to that community - access to housing and housing affordability continues to be a significant issue for many in our communities, in the cities and other areas across the state. The Government will need to continue the Affordable Housing Strategy and will need to take partners on board. I do not think any government, no matter what colour, will be able to fully address that situation.

Education is another important area of the fabric of our community. Early learning opportunities have been opened up across the state with the establishment of the 11 free preschools. How this supports the learning achievements of our students will be of interest to us all over the coming years. We have talked about education, and those early learning opportunities for preschool students and how we want to make sure we do not miss being able to support people, particularly families with young students, in some of the challenges in educating their children. It is something we will be watching out for.

Interestingly, on another matter regarding Tourism Tasmania and the work it does with the visitor information centres and the wonderful volunteers who continue to showcase their various areas and regions and the state more generally: following a workshop at Woolmers in the north of the state, where the various volunteers from information centres gathered, feedback was received from some in attendance that the event was poorly organised and unprofessional. Tourism numbers are steadily on the increase and we rely so heavily on our information centres because they are often the first contact point for visitors when seeking information and what is recommended to see and do in the area. We need to deliver the right skills and to do that in the most professional way possible for those valuable volunteers to make those important links between visitors and communities. I was not there, but that was the feedback I received. These volunteers, if they are

not working in the centre, gave up their time to go to a workshop and then came away feeling that they had been treated somewhat unprofessionally. I think is disappointing. I want to place on the record for Tourism Tasmania that we need to make sure we look after that valuable commodity of volunteers. It means going the extra mile, making them feel valuable and treating them like professionals because they take their job so seriously. They wear tee-shirts, they work as a collective group and it is hard yakka. They are there on Saturdays, Sundays and quiet days, and perhaps in the middle of winter, they are still open, providing that valuable service, so please treat them with respect. I have written here that we have had a 43.5 per cent increase in visitors since 2014 - there are many people coming into our state and visitor centres are often the first port of call. Tourists will drive into a town, look for the yellow or blue 'i' and will head straight there.

One of the information centres recently told me that a gentleman came in - a lot of people come in to charge their phones and wander around while the phone is charging a bit, and had a shave. He wanted to borrow the power point to have a shave so he had obviously been on the road for a few days and felt like he needed to.

There was a question about the neighbourhood houses support from the member for Pembroke today. We all received the letter from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania. It is certainly important to acknowledge the work of neighbourhood houses. In my contribution I talked about building a relationship with the Railton community house. Everyone has them and they are so valuable. Again, often a lot of volunteer effort goes into those. I know the Government will be looking to support neighbourhood houses in whatever way it can to sustain the work they do and I encourage that.

On another note, I acknowledge the work of John Hooper, the executive officer, who is moving on; I believe he has finished up with Neighbourhood Houses. If he has not, he will be doing so very soon. I acknowledge his work and the years of contact that has always provided information to members of parliament. I have always been appreciative. He is heading to the no-interest loans scheme - NILS. He is heading into that area and has an appointment there. I heard him on the radio and he was being interviewed. I wish him all the best for the future and thank him for his contribution to Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania over the past - I am not quite sure how long - 10 years or so. All the best to John and my best wishes to whoever takes over that role in the future; it is such an important part of our community.

The next thing I want to touch on is the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association. On 27 March 2019, after six years as president, Wayne Johnston has stepped aside; he spent 10 years on the board, six years of those as president. Wayne has done a wonderful job in being that focal point for Tasmanian farmers and graziers. It has been a pleasure to work with Wayne and his team over those years. I congratulate him on his effort and his commitment. I read something that is worth putting on the public record. He is going to devote some more time to his new role as Mayor of the Meander Valley Council, and I know he will do that with the same enthusiasm and professionalism with which he took on the leadership of TFGA. He said -

I have given a fair bit to Tasmanian agriculture ... it has been good, and I really enjoyed my time, and I'm leaving it in a great position financially. I'm proud of what I have achieved at the TFGA.

He said leaving the TFGA will send him in a different direction, which will allow him to focus more on his role as mayor of the Meander Valley Council. Past vice-chair Marcus McShane, who

runs a mixed farming operation in the Midlands, was elected the new president. Ian Sauer was voted in as the new vice-chair.

I congratulate Marcus on his elevation and Ian on his new role as vice-chair and wish the organisation continued success. They are the peak body for agriculture in Tasmania and they represent the entire cross-section of those agricultural industries - dairy, cropping, sheep, the pig industry and the beef industry. I look forward to having a productive relationship with the TFGA in future and congratulate Wayne Johnston on his time as president. He has not left us wondering what TFGA needs. This is a copy of the letter he sent to the Honourable Peter Gutwein, the Treasurer, and it lists a number of areas in which they are looking for support from the Government. The Treasurer would have looked at that significant list.

The funding of \$500 000 for the four-year funded project for an agriculture education and training industry development officer. We need people in the agriculture industry who are appropriately trained and skilled to undertake their work. If you have the right training and the right skills, you know your OH&S and you know everything about your job, you are likely to carry out that work in the most effective way and enjoy your job. I would be surprised if that program is not supported by the Government and I look forward to the announcement in the budget. Thanks to the TFGA for providing the same advice that was provided to the Treasurer. I will be matching the budget with what has been asked for.

As to the truck washes and effluent pit sites, we know that the Powranna truck wash opened last October but did not operate until March, and then it was not able to do the job it was meant to. I have had a lot of communication with Gordon Williams, who has been in charge of that project. I appreciated the correspondence I received because I received a number of phone calls from cartage contractors saying, 'This is not working, we are spending over two hours trying to clean out the trailers and there is no pressure'. They put in two new pumps last Friday and I have not had any phone calls since Friday. I hope all is well and they have been able to address the issues. Things do not always run smoothly when you start something new, but it was modelled on the Smithton truck wash at Greenhams. I am not sure what happened but I am hoping it is all sorted.

Returning to the Premier's State of the State Address, I will finish on a reasonably positive note. There has been a fire response initiative, Love Autumn in the South campaign, to bring local and visitors back to the southern parts of our state, which bore the brunt of a very hot summer and those dreadful fires. I congratulate the Government on this approach to inviting us and any visitors to the south, showing support to the many businesses that need our support.

I was speaking with one of my fellow Women in Agriculture members today. They lost their packing shed, their crates - they lost everything in the fire. It is terribly sad. There will be no harvest for them this year, they have no shed and no bins to put produce in. This family were completely wiped out for this season, but she still had a smile on her face and you can only wonder where they get the strength from. She told me the insurance company will honour the insurance claim but they have all this time, a whole season, and they cannot do anything with their product. There will be a loss of income for the whole season. We all need to support the southern community. The Love Autumn in the South campaign is a great initiative. I will take the chance to visit the Huon valley and try to provide some support and take my wallet with me in the next month or so. They need our support, so let us push anyone that way.

I appreciate the opportunity to bring forward a number of matters - whether they are specific to a community area or more general, they are all important. I look forward to working proactively

with the various ministers, departments and the community toward a successful outcome. I thank you and I support noting of the State of the State Address. I move -

That the debate stand adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Mr President, I move -

That at its rising the Council do adjourn until 11 a.m. on Wednesday 10 April 2019.

Motion agreed to.

The Council adjourned at 5.28 p.m.