



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Tuesday 25 August 2020

REVISED EDITION

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The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

MEMBERS RETURNED

The Clerk laid on the Table writs for the return of the following members of the Legislative Council.

Joanne Lesley Palmer (Rosevears)

Bastian Manfred Seidel (Huon)

MEMBERS SWORN

The member for Rosevears, Ms Palmer, and the member for Huon, Dr Seidel, took and made the oath of allegiance and affirmation respectively as required by law earlier this day and took their places.

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

Welcome to New Members

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, I take this opportunity to welcome to this House the newly elected members for Rosevears and for Huon, and I wish them well in their roles representing the people who have duly elected them.

I know I speak on behalf of all members, Chamber officers and staff when I say we are ready to support, advise or assist you in any way you require, particularly in the early stages of your elected term where it will all seem quite strange for a little while until you settle in. Please do not hesitate to ask any member of this place for assistance.

I know you will find your time here very satisfying and rewarding, not only as you get the opportunity to assist the people you represent, but also here in the Legislative Council to contribute to legislation that will benefit people of the state.

I know you both very well. It is a tremendous privilege and great honour to be elected to the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Tasmania. Knowing you as I do, I know that you will both be very effective members and represent your electorates well over the next six years and beyond.

PETITION

Wildlife Safety Measures on Tasmanian Roads

[11.08 a.m.]

Mr Willie presented an e-petition from approximately 1649 residents of Tasmania, concerned with wildlife safety measures on Tasmanian roads.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

The following answers were given to questions on notice.

42. EXPUNGEMENT OF HISTORICAL OFFENCES ACT 2017

Ms WEBB asked the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council -

With reference to the Expungement of Historical Offences Act 2017 and, in particular, section 32 under which the Minister for Justice is to cause an independent review of the operation of the act to be completed within six months after the second anniversary of its commencement -

- (1) What progress has the minister made towards the review of the operation of the act, noting that it is required to be completed by October 2020?
- (2) Have the persons who will carry out the review been appointed, noting that section 32(1) of the act requires that a majority of these persons must not be employees of the state or of any agency of the state?
- (3) Will the persons carrying out the review include persons with legal expertise and, in particular, expertise in the laws and practices that have affected the LGBTI community in Tasmania?
- (4) Will the persons carrying out the review include persons who are members of the Tasmanian LGBTI community with experience engaging with and representing the views of that community?
- (5) Will the terms of reference for the review include -
 - (a) feedback from all applicants for expungement and from those who are eligible but have not yet applied;
 - (b) comparative analysis with other jurisdictions; and
 - (c) consideration of possible additional 'restorative justice' initiatives, in addition to the expungement of criminal records, that could further address the harmful legacy of the historic laws covered by the act?

- (6) In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, does the Government intend to seek an extension to the deadline for the completion of the review to ensure a comprehensive review process can take place?

Mrs HISCUTT replied -

(1) to (6)

The Tasmanian Government introduced the scheme as an important step forward in addressing previous laws that were unfair and unjust for many people in the community who endured disadvantage, discrimination and stigma.

As has been stated, section 32 of the Expungement of Historical Offences Act 2017 requires an independent review of the operation of the act to be completed within six months after the second anniversary of the act's commencement.

Former magistrate Melanie Bartlett has been appointed to lead an independent review of the operation of the Expungement of Historical Offences Act 2017. Ms Bartlett was a full-time magistrate based in the north-west from 2009 to 2015 and previously served as a temporary magistrate from 2005.

Ms Bartlett has also served as a member of the Mental Health Tribunal, the Guardianship and Administration Board, the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal and the Legal Aid Commission, as well as serving as president and vice-president of the Law Society of Tasmania.

The act, which commenced on 9 April 2018, provides a scheme enabling the expungement of charges and convictions for historical homosexual and cross-dressing offences.

The review will report on the implementation of the act and assess whether it is operating effectively and as intended. It will include public and targeted consultation, and a call for submissions from stakeholder representative groups.

Women's Legal Service solicitor Taya Ketelaar-Jones will assist Ms Bartlett with the review.

At this stage, the Government's intention is for the review to be completed within the required time frames set out in the act.

43. COVID-19 - POKER MACHINE OPERATIONS

Ms WEBB asked the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council -

In relation to the planned reopening of Tasmania's poker machine rooms on 26 June 2020, and the Government's apparent protocol of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with an evidence-based approach based on Public Health advice -

- (1) Does the Government acknowledge that the resumption of operation of poker machine gaming rooms in Tasmania is not comparable to the resumption of the

other food, beverage and event aspects of the hospitality industry as, in addition to managing COVID-19 health risks, evidence points to the use of poker machines presenting additional and unique economic and social risks at this time?

- (2) Has the plan and time line for resuming the operation of poker machines in Tasmania been data-driven and based on health, economic and social impact analysis?
 - (a) If so, please provide that analysis
 - (b) If not, please provide the full rationale and factors considered in making the determination that the resumption of poker machine use was appropriate to occur on 26 June?
- (3) Noting the clear evidence from the global financial crisis in 2008-09 where government stimulus payments were shown to have been diverted to poker machines causing losses to spike substantially, what impact analysis has been done to assess the risk that restarting access to poker machines at this time will erode the effectiveness of both federal and state government economic stimulus efforts (including, but not limited to, increased JobSeeker payments, JobKeeper payments, and early accessed personal superannuation lump sums) designed to ensure household essential requirements are met and local economies most effectively supported?
- (4)(a) Has the Government been lobbied to reopen public access to gaming rooms?
 - (b) If so, by whom?

Mrs HISCUTT replied -

- (1) When the COVID-19 public health restrictions caused many businesses and services to temporarily close, the reopening of these businesses and services was informed by Public Health advice that it was safe to do so. Electronic gaming machines are legally permitted to operate in Tasmania. The reopening of gaming venues, including those operating EGMs, has been determined as safe based on Public Health advice.
- (2) On 26 June 2020, gaming venues, including those with EGMs, were allowed to open under the stage 3 easing of restrictions, along with many other legal businesses, subject to Public Health advice. Each venue is operating under a COVID-19 safety plan that implements the public health measures required under the COVID Safe Workplace Guidelines for the Gambling Industry.
- (3) EGMs are a well-regulated gambling activity in Tasmania. Based on the 2017 Social and Economic Impact Study of Gambling in Tasmania, Tasmania has a relatively low incidence of problem gambling (estimated at 0.6 per cent of Tasmanian adults) compared to other Australian jurisdictions. EGMs are legally permitted to operate in Tasmania and the reopening of gaming venues was based on Public Health advice that it was safe to do so.

- (4) The reopening of gaming venues was based on Public Health advice.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP - APPOINTMENTS

The following members were appointed to committees -

Privileges Committee

Ms Rattray.

Government Administration Committee A Joint Library Committee

Dr Seidel.

Government Administration Committee B Legislative Council Select Committee on TasWater

Ms Palmer.

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

COVID-19 - Chamber Etiquette

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, I remind you that we are still operating under COVID-19 conditions in our Chamber. We have kept up to the standard as much as we can in the limited space we have available here.

I apologise to the new member for Huon who cannot actually assume his seat yet and to other members who are seated away from their seats, but that is just the way it is at the moment. I also apologise to both new members that we cannot have vast crowds of people in here for your inaugural speeches, but we will work around that the best we can.

I remind members when that when they are at the lectern, we have turned them around so it is easier for their papers. We have provided wipes, so members can wipe the lectern down before and after their contributions. I ask them to then dispose of their tissues in the bins provided and remember to use the hand sanitiser.

We have the increased challenge of the member for Launceston and her mobility issue, so there will be times where we will work through how we can best hear the member for Launceston.

Ms Armitage - I can make it to the lectern.

Mr PRESIDENT - We will allow extra time for that to occur. We will make sure we give the member every opportunity, so I thank members for their patience and understanding. It is going to be a very different special interest session, I think - for the first time for most of us, we will not be having a contribution from the former member for Rosevears. All of us who have been here, probably everyone in the Chamber, has actually lived through the Kerry Finch hour, but now it will give other members the opportunity to have special interest. I am not sure if the new member for Rosevears will be as prolific, but that is yet to be seen.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Bill 2020

[11.19 a.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I last spoke about the consultative process regarding the end-of-life choices legislation in March before the COVID-19 pandemic commenced in earnest. I referred to the 40-plus information forums that I presented in February and early March across the state and the opportunities provided this place for members of both the upper and lower Houses to attend. It is pleasing to see that nearly every MLC has attended a forum, as have a number of the MHAs.

I intended to present more forums in the intervening months but obviously this was not possible due to the pandemic; however, it has been pleasing that I have also had teleconferences with a number of community organisations, including doctors, nurses and fourth year medical students at the Burnie Rural Clinical School campus.

Last week in the other place, a petition was tabled which had been signed by 13 082 Tasmanians in support of voluntary assisted dying. I sincerely thank and acknowledge the tremendous work undertaken by Jac and Nat Gray and their families in their efforts in coordinating a petition; no small feat and one they have undertaken on behalf of their dying mother. They lost their mum nearly 12 months ago in terribly sad circumstances and they have worked tirelessly to fulfil their mum's wishes to see voluntary assisted dying legislation passed in Tasmania.

I take this opportunity on behalf of Jac Gray and myself to acknowledge and sincerely thank the many friends, family members and supportive Tasmanians who not only have signed the petition but who have also volunteered to letterbox drop 120 000 pamphlets.

In a recent question and answer session I explained the bill in this way -

For those who wish to choose VAD, the Bill provides an opportunity for them to do so. It makes the practice neither compulsory nor encouraged.

For me it is simply about individual choice. When I was presenting the statewide forums, I always commented that I was not trying to influence anybody into agreeing or disagreeing with voluntary assisted dying. I was presenting it just as background information about VAD nationally and internationally, and information about my bill and the parliamentary process. However, it was evident at the forums that people wanted to be involved and they made very clear to me that what they wanted would be reflected in the legislation.

I believe the legislation should reflect what the people desire. Too often bills seem to be distant from or irrelevant to the communities we represent. This bill is palpably relevant.

In response to people's desire to be involved, I initiated the end-of-life choices - EOLC - email address to which people could forward their story or their opinion to me and I would table those documents in this Chamber.

Initially I was going to table these writing in late June before the winter break. However, with COVID-19 a few things did not quite align. I also made known at the forums that I would table all writings sent to me in favour and not in favour of the legislation. I believe that is the correct process in a democratic society, one where respectful debate and opposing arguments all need to be treated fairly. I was also satisfied that releasing my draft consultation bill in January was a very good starting point for consideration and community involvement.

An updated draft version with amendments was placed on my website in June with another four weeks for feedback. Obviously, a number of suggestions and amendments have been made since the original January draft, reaffirming that this bill has had a very thorough extensive and transparent process. Some of the suggestions I agreed with and some I did not. However, the resultant bill I will table on Thursday in this place is one that I believe is thoroughly considered, just and robust.

I personally thank the thousands of people who have supported this bill, have forwarded their viewpoints, and have contacted and spoken to me regarding this issue. My special thanks to the many doctors and nurses who also support this legislation.

Obviously, it was not easy to have access to the Office of Parliamentary Counsel because of the huge amount of legislative work required during the pandemic. I cannot thank enough the work undertaken by Chief Parliamentary Counsel Ms Robyn Webb. All of us in this place have the highest regard for OPC. Approximately 200 hours of OPC's time has been needed to expertly craft this bill.

Today I will provide Hansard with copies of the writings primarily of fellow Tasmanians who have wanted to share their story or circumstance. I imagine that many people who read this document will be deeply impacted by the writings. I can only thank those who have contributed to this document because I understand that in reflection there is often pain associated with not only the past and the now, but also the immediate future.

What inspired me with each and every person I was in contact with was their complete willingness to provide evidence and proof. Tasmanians deserve a right to choose. The EOLC bill should pass and become law in Tasmania. It is perhaps too late for many of the writers but they do not want other Tasmanians to experience what they or their loved ones have been through.

On behalf of the thousands of Tasmanians who support this legislation, I sincerely thank each and every one of the writers for their contribution. I wish those who have challenges ahead of them all the very best. I know many people who take the time to read the documents will be touched by the circumstances. I also trust all politicians will avail themselves of the opportunity to read all the documents before the End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Bill 2020 is debated. Each member of the upper and lower House will receive it as

soon as possible. For listeners and those interested, the document will also be available on my parliamentary website.

Mr President, I seek leave to table the document, including writings from 109 individuals.

Leave granted.

Fay Ralph - Tribute

[11.25 a.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, I begin my special interest matter today on a lighter note. During the COVID-19 pandemic, one very community-focused person by the name of Ally Mercer undertook a project named Humans of Dorset Tasmania. I thank you, Ally, for your work, which included an interview with Fay Ralph, a local resident in the north-east and a fine artist. The interview took place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020 and was posted on social media, receiving wide-ranging interest from across the community and beyond. I enjoyed learning more about Fay and her earlier life and was most interested in the four epidemics Fay has lived through.

Fay was born in 1931 at the top end of Brisbane Street, Launceston. I can assure members Fay is a spritely 89 years of age, and is often seen working in her very large garden at Bridport. In later years she lived in Tamar Street, Launceston when the trams were running. One of 10 children, Fay is a direct descendant of Annie Isobel Johnson who was herself a direct descendant of Dolly Dalrymple Briggs Johnson. During the war years of 1939-45, living in Tamar Street, clothing and food coupons became the safety net for many families. Fay was eight when the war began and 14 years old when it ended. She remained living in Tamar Street until she married Edward George Ralph, known as George, who, I might add, worked for *The Examiner* for 50 years before retiring.

Fay shared in her interview that in all her time she considers what is happening today is probably the worst she has ever seen. That is saying something considering she has gone through four epidemics, but this is the first pandemic. Fay was a girl of only around six when the polio epidemic hit Australia. Fay and her sister were sent to Scottsdale to get away from it and she recalls there was the St Giles polio hospital in Launceston where people were put on lung machines.

Back in the days people did not hear about world crises, so this current pandemic, she says, is much scarier. When Fay was about nine or 10, the world had its next epidemic - diphtheria, which Fay caught. She had to go to the infectious diseases hospital in Mulgrave Street and still remembers having to have numerous injections all night long. Her mother used to come and visit through a window. She added that at least with diphtheria, although rampant in the community, there was a vaccine.

One funny thing Fay remembers about getting diphtheria - I am sure there are not that many funny things - is that she had to go to hospital but her family did not have a car. Fay's parents asked many people if they would take her. They all said no. In the end the undertaker came and away Fay went in the hearse. The horrible part was the family home had to be fumigated. Just when things were getting back to normal, there was an outbreak of tuberculosis - consumption. By that time Fay was 19 years old and working at the general post office as a telephonist. One of the girls in the office got TB, which meant all the girls were required to

have skin tests to see if they were carriers. Only one girl had it and she had to go to a chest hospital for around two years out near Perth. All the telephony equipment had to be sterilised with Dettol and people were a little scared. Back then employees did not have individual equipment, there was one big box and every morning you picked out a headset.

Life was so very different when Fay was a youngster. Back then they lived in what people called Swamp Town, now Inveresk, Invermay. It was so wet and slushy - there were no big suburbs back then and no such thing as toilets in the house - they were all down in the backyard, and they used cut-up newspaper. No such thing as hoarding toilet rolls like today, she said.

She nearly forgot the next epidemic - that was the German measles outbreak, which was also very bad and was out of control for a long time here in Tasmania, and then came the rubella vaccine, which changed things so much.

While not the same type of virus, Fay remembered back in the 1980s when AIDS and HIV epidemics were unknown. Now the latest pandemic is a coronavirus, which, in Fay's words, is a worry.

When it was first heard about, a few people thought it would be all okay. COVID-19, as we know, has flu-like symptoms, but so much worse, with a very bad fever - and older people are so much more vulnerable.

Self-isolating has been a challenge for Fay - not being able to be out and about, going for a drive exploring the wilderness, doing the shopping, and just being free. It has been hard. What has been lovely is how friendly people have been to each other, making the best of a bad situation. Everyone says 'Hello, hope you are doing okay', and Fay says this is the one good thing to come out of the pandemic.

Since not being able to go out, Fay has taught herself to use Facetime and Messenger, and she and her family call up and do video chats. Recently on her birthday, seven people and four windows were on the video chat. Fay is not shy about using technology; it is just a matter of remembering what to do to allow those special family catch-ups.

Eight of Fay's 10 siblings are still alive, and she enjoys catching up with them on the phone. Technology is so very advanced these days, she says. We can look at each other so we can feel connected and together while being located everywhere in Australia and beyond. A lot of people do not really use their phones to their benefit. It is a great time now to get better at it.

Fay's life has been a long one, and she remembers all the world events, from world wars to the start of television, rock and roll, bushfires, the man on the moon, eclipses, nuclear testing and royal visits, including Princess Diana and her death.

In World War II, they marched down to Princes Square from Charles Street Practising School to the trenches, in case Launceston was ever bombed. Fay very much remembers the black and white television and the Mickey Mouse Club. I recall one or two of those myself.

Fay remembers clearly the change of pounds and shillings to decimal currency, and still today she uses pounds and ounces and says she cannot be dealing with those kilo things. She

loves cooking and baking, and with coronavirus, most people have had to do much more home cooking.

One thing is for sure: when the restrictions are eased, the first thing Fay plans to do is go for a drive, get a haircut, go to Probus and have a trip to Flinders Island - all in that order - and hopefully visit extended family. Like so many, Fay and her family are planning a large family gathering.

Fay believes people have become very caring through the COVID-19 crisis. It has been wonderful that people are thinking of others during this time, and she was overwhelmed about how people are helping. Fay herself had many calls, texts and people asking if she was doing okay, and did she need anything; this time has brought us all together, she says. I expect Fay was part of the community phone tree. I was, and it was lovely to receive a call and make a call.

Fay's life has been full, doing lots of things every day. One message she would like to share is to just get out and do things - do not sit around. Life is too short. Most of all, be respectful. Smile at people and they will give back twofold. Be truthful to oneself and follow your dreams.

Wise words and very good advice, so thank you, Fay Ralph, for sharing your life and special memories. I am going to provide both a video and hard copy of this to Fay, so thank you, Fay.

Members - Hear, hear.

Desmond Manning - Tribute

[11.34 a.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - Mr President, I was extremely saddened to learn of the passing of Desmond Manning, a local stalwart in the Southern Midlands region who passed away this year in June at the ripe old age of 95.

For almost 70 years, Des worked on his farm named Miena, located at Lemont about 20 kilometres east of Oatlands. Miena was founded in 1953 by Des and his wife Lois, fulfilling Des's lifelong ambition to become a sheep farmer and a producer of superfine Saxon Merino wool. At the time the lush green pastures of Tasmania's Midlands were dominated by sheep farms which were the backbone of the local economy. As the years went by and the demand for wool decreased, the farmers of the Midlands began transitioning from farming sheep to mixed farming and crop production.

Des, however, refused to follow the herd and remained committed to raising sheep and producing superfine Merino wool. As a result of generations of selective breeding, Des's Saxon Merino sheep produced one of the finest wool clips in Australia, which he sold to some of the most prestigious clothing manufacturers around the world. The wool produced at Miena eventually became so highly prized that in 2015 the Italian company Vitale Barberis Canonico inducted the farm into its highly exclusive Wool Excellence Club, guaranteeing Miena a premium price for its wool crop. Miena is one of the only three farms in Australia to be a member of this club.

As age took its toll on Des, he passed on the management to his son, Michael, grandson James and daughter Marie Boadle, but always kept a very watchful eye over the farm's operations.

Today, Miena is home to over 12 000 superior-bred Saxon sheep and the farm covers over 3500 hectares. When Des founded Miena in 1953, it was no different to the other sheep farms of the Southern Midlands but through nothing other than hard work and commitment to his craft, Des transformed Miena into one of the most prestigious farms in the world.

Des was also a very dedicated member of the Southern Midlands community through his involvement with many organisations, including the Oatlands RSL, the Oatlands District Football Association and, predominantly, local government.

Des was a member of the Municipality of Oatlands from 1971 to 1993 and the Southern Midlands Council from 1993 to 2005. He served as deputy warden for the Southern Midlands Council from April 1993 to December 1993 and as deputy mayor for Southern Midlands Council from January 1994 to 1999. On council he was a member of a number of committees, including the Chauncy Vale management committee, the administration and finance committee and the Oatlands water scheme subcommittee.

As deputy mayor he formed an effective working partnership and close friendship with my father, Colin Howlett, a former mayor. Des was a very loyal friend to our family and also a very loyal friend to members in this Chamber and in the Chamber downstairs as well. Des was an absolute gentleman and he will be very dearly missed.

Emergency Service Personnel and Health Workers - Exposure to Disease

[11.38 a.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, a special welcome to our two new members: the member for Rosevears and the member for Huon. It is great to see them here in this Chamber. The President did it well in his welcoming, so well done.

I bring to the attention of this Chamber an issue which is affecting our state, in particular our emergency service personnel and health workers. Quite often in the course of their duties, emergency service personnel and health workers - henceforth, I will refer to them as the workers - come into contact with bodily fluids from a patient, client or perpetrator. This may come about from a needlestick injury, being spat on, being bled on or being vomited on. None of these are pleasant incidences in the first place, but it is happening frequently.

Adding to the stress of these incidences is the unknown threat of whether the person projecting the bodily fluids has a communicable disease. Currently, in Tasmania there is no legislation to protect the workers by mandating compulsory testing for disease. This means that the affected worker has no idea they have been exposed to any life-threatening disease. I hear many stories about police personnel who have been exposed to a perpetrator's blood, either through a violent physical act or by being attacked with a blood-filled syringe. I have been there and had this occur.

This sets up many months of stress and lifestyle changes for the worker, in this case the victim and their family. They become involved because they need to stop all sexual relations with their partner and stop close contact with their children, their own family members. They

also must have recurring blood tests. More often than not, they also seek counselling of sorts to help them cope with the possibility of contracting a life-threatening disease. In many cases, the stress of the whole situation leads to weeks and months off work while waiting for the incubation time of the disease to be over and getting the all clear from doctors. I know of cases where it has meant the person has not been able to come back to work. That is the impact it has.

This is an unacceptable situation. Most states in Australia already have legislation for mandatory blood testing of the offending party. Western Australia has its Mandatory Testing (Infectious Diseases) Act 2014, which states a police officer or other public officer can make an application to a senior police officer not involved in the case, for a disease test to be taken by the perpetrator. Under this legislation a perpetrator can be held for as long as is required in order to have that test carried out.

The Northern Territory has a similar process to Western Australia under its Police Administration Amendment Act 2016. Queensland has a similar process under its Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, except the power to direct the taking of a blood test needs to come from a magistrate. South Australia has similar legislation, the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Act 2007, under which a senior police officer can direct that a blood test be undertaken if they are satisfied a prescribed offence has been committed and the police, emergency worker or healthcare provider has been exposed to a biological material capable of transmitting a disease.

Victoria has a section in its Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and associated regulations 2009, which gives the power to make orders that compel a person to be examined or tested if it is believed this person could have a specified infectious disease and could have transmitted it to a custodian or caregiver during the course of their duties. Unlike other states, this act gives that power to the Victorian Chief Health Officer instead of the police.

New South Wales is currently in the process of introducing mandatory disease testing legislation.

This, in fact, leaves Tasmania on its own. It is time now for the Government to introduce legislation to protect Tasmania's frontline workers - legislation that will make it compulsory for a person responsible for a body fluid exposure to another person, police, emergency worker or paramedic to be tested for a communicable disease.

These workers and their families should not have to worry and suffer unnecessarily. This means the victim and family become the victims of this. I am hoping the Leader can take this on. Something needs to happen and it needs to happen fairly quickly because of the stresses involved in this occurring.

Wombat Mange

[11.43 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, today I speak about our wonderful Tasmanian wombats and the plight they face with the infectious wombat mange. Having taken this matter over from the previous member for Rosevears, I will be able to pass it to the new member for Rosevears.

On that note, I welcome our new members, Jo Palmer, member for Rosevears, and Bastian Seidel, member for Huon. It is very good to have you in the Chamber. I am sure you will enjoy your time here.

The common wombat, found in all regions of Tasmania, has the distinguished honour of being the largest burrowing herbivorous mammal and is a uniquely Australian symbol. Their little faces are extremely recognisable with their characteristic buck teeth, small ears and short whiskers. Our Tasmanian common wombats can be around 85 centimetres long and 20 kilograms in weight and, with their short legs and large powerful paws, are masters at burrowing their way underground. Like all marsupials, wombats carry their babies in a pouch until they are large enough to venture out into the world.

Wombats are further distributed in other areas outside Tasmania, including southern Queensland, eastern New South Wales and eastern Victoria, with remnant populations in areas of South Australia. As a result, we have to make sure we care for and protect these uniquely Australian icons.

Our wombats need our help. Wombat mange, caused by a parasitic mite, is a condition that causes thick, crusty skin and hair loss, and appears to be accompanied by significant irritation, pain and loss of orientation. The mite burrows into the skin of the wombat to live and reproduce; it causes uncontrollable itching, which leads to secondary infections and wounds - and eventually a slow death from organ failure. It has substantial health and welfare impacts for individual wombats, and in turn our wider wombat populations.

It is believed that the sarcoptic mange parasite was introduced to our native species by early settlers and the animals they brought with them. If you are so inclined, I recommend doing an internet search to see just how severely affected and disfigured wombats' bodies, eyes, ears and feet become when they are overcome with a case of mange.

Being highly infectious, we have already seen just how devastating this disease can be, with some 94 per cent of the wombats living in the Narawntapu National Park in the state's north being decimated by the condition.

I understand the Tasmanian Government has committed a number of resources towards mange treatments, including \$30 000-plus in current support to the University of Tasmania, and \$100 000 provided in 2017. Spotlight surveys, annual strategic targeted surveys and various camera monitoring activities are undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment to gather data. Right now, the University of Tasmania's School of Biological Sciences and a vanguard of dedicated volunteers seem to be all that stands between our wombat population and disfigurement and death from sarcoptic mange. Recently, trials using a product known as Bravecto, commonly used to treat parasitic infections in domestic animals, have been used to treat wombats, and I believe preliminary field trials are afoot.

We have an opportunity to prevent sarcoptic mange from driving our wombats into steep decline, and the positive results we are seeing from Bravecto trials are extremely encouraging. To this end, I sincerely congratulate the hard work of those at the university's School of Biological Sciences, and reserve my special thanks and gratitude to the volunteers who work at the coalface with our precious animals. Often we do not see the mental and emotional toll

that caring for sick animals takes on our volunteers, especially when a wombat's condition is so severe that it needs to be euthanised. I think I can confidently speak on behalf of all members here that we are extremely grateful for the hard, often unpleasant, but extremely vital work that they do.

It is going to take sustained effort and a collective willingness to take responsibility to act if we are to manage this disease and protect our wombats. This is an issue that will not solve itself, or go away quietly on its own. We have already experienced the existential and moral panic associated with saving unique and precious Tasmanian species with the Tasmanian devil facial tumour, which made news all around the world. It is not even 100 years since the thylacine became extinct.

Our action in protecting and treating our wombats reflects on our image to the world, and says something about our collective character and willingness to intervene in an ecological calamity that, at this stage, is almost certain.

We owe it to our little furry friends, and each other, to ensure that we futureproof our precious Tasmanian flora and fauna.

Disability Voices Tasmania

[11.49 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, today I recognise a fairly new but growing organisation in our state, Disability Voices Tasmania. This organisation was created to give Tasmanians with disability a powerful collective voice. Disability Voices aims to set the agenda on the key issues for people with disability, and build capacity to create change in our community.

About a quarter of all Tasmanians are living with a disability, one of the higher rates in Australia. In spite of the numbers, many people with disability commonly experience barriers contributing to and participating in the ordinary everyday life many of us take for granted.

Too many Tasmanians with disability have been denied access to opportunities, felt their views and hopes have not been respected, have been excluded from education or employment and found it hard to exercise their rights.

Disability Voices seeks to address these issues and open up new opportunities for our state to benefit more fully from the potential of all community members.

Importantly, this organisation has been established and managed by people with disability. The project team currently working for Disability Voices comprises Fiona Strahan, Matty Wright and Ann Reimer who are supported by a planning group of six people.

Membership is open to all Tasmanians with disability and the organisation welcomes the contribution of its members to help shape and build it further.

It will continue to develop as a diverse and powerful collective voice of and for Tasmanians with disability. In my role prior to being elected, I was pleased to be involved in early discussions and workshops that explored the potential establishment of a statewide

representative organisation for Tasmanians with disability. I admire and congratulate those community advocates who were persistent and effective in achieving that early vision.

Disability Voices Tasmania was first funded as a pilot project through the Department of Communities Tasmania in 2018. In 2019, it was successful in gaining three-year funding under the National Disability Insurance Agency's Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grant. This grant is being used to fund three projects each year.

Those projects will build skills, knowledge, confidence and collective voice of people with disability in this state. The first project being undertaken by Disability Voices is called Pitch Perfect. It is a series of workshops about using personal stories to influence decision makers.

The second project is exploring the value of inclusive tourism in Tasmania and investigating how lived experience stories can be used to assist local tourism businesses to become more inclusive. I look forward to the insights from this project being shared and the rollout of future projects under the grant funding.

It is important to recognise why an organisation such as Disability Voices Tasmania is necessary. For decades people with a disability have advocated on the basis of nothing about us without us. Too often the voices of people with disability were not appropriately respected. Their knowledge and experience were not well valued and their contributions not readily welcomed.

Too often people with disabilities were spoken for instead of being listened to. Indeed, when participants in the pilot stage of Disability Voices Tasmania were asked if they felt their voice was heard the vast majority responded with a resounding no. A mother of a son with a disability summed it up beautifully when she said, 'My son says his voice is a squeak in the noise.'

Our community is richer with the voices and contributions of all its citizens. Diversity is vital to a responsive, engaging and successful democracy and although people with a disability are individually as diverse as any group of people, they have some commonality of issues and shared experiences. They are the experts on their lives, their strengths, their challenges and on the way forward to meet those challenges.

Disability Voices Tasmania explains that having a voice means being able to ask a question and have an answer - being heard when you have an answer and for your experience and knowledge to be respected and used.

Tasmanians with disability are a vibrant part of our community. They are energetic, thoughtful and determined advocates. They are problem-solvers and contributors. Like all of us, they want to participate in a gender setting and effect change in their community on issues that affect them.

Disability Voices Tasmania recognises the power to effect change lies in the united collective voice. This is a voice which will add value to our whole community. I welcome it wholeheartedly and suggest all of us take the opportunity to listen up.

MOTION

Consideration and Noting - Tasmanian Irrigation Annual Report 2018-19

[11.54 a.m.]

Ms **RATTRAY** (McIntyre) - Mr President, I move -

That the annual report of Tasmanian Irrigation be considered and noted.

Mr President, I place on the public record my congratulations to the member for Huon and the member for Rosevears on their election to this place. Congratulations to you both. It seems to have been quite a while we were waiting for the outcome of elections in this place. Finally we have members here.

In saying that, I also acknowledge and extend my best wishes to the former member for Huon as he has not been returned to this House. He certainly made a significant contribution to the committee process. I spoke about that when we wished him all the best at an earlier time, before even a date was finally set for the election. I certainly want to place on the record my appreciation for his work and friendship during his time as the member for Huon.

I did not want to waste all those words in my five minutes. I probably went over time as it was. Mrs Ralph's amazing story was very important - fancy living through four epidemics. It certainly touched me. I have seen Mrs Ralph working her large garden at 89 years of age. A well-lived life and going strong.

Now to this long-awaited Tasmanian Irrigation annual report. Another annual report is almost due, probably in print as I speak. Obviously it was overtaken by unforeseen events. This report is still important, not because I have taken quite a bit of time to look at it during the break between Christmas and the New Year, but also because I have such an interest in the agriculture sector. The former member for Western Tiers would not be very happy if I do not pick up his baton and continue his strong advocacy for the agriculture sector in this state.

I also want to apologise to the member and my new seat partner here, the member for Hobart; he is unfortunately going to see a lot of my back for probably some time into the future. I cannot wait to get back to that lectern. I did try this morning and was told flatly no. I understand what is required, but it is a challenge to stand here, something I am not really used to doing, particularly when I am going to refer to a report, but I will do my best.

Today I will share with members my observations of the 2018-19 Tasmanian Irrigation annual report. Tasmanian Irrigation is a state-owned company that supports our agriculture sector. My observations have raised a number of questions that I would appreciate having answers to, acknowledging the Leader may need to take some of these questions on notice. I am sure somebody is listening and making notes as we speak. Interestingly, over the parliamentary break I read that the value of agriculture production in the year to June 2018 was \$1.6 million, 9.1 per cent higher than the previous year. I think I might have a mistake there already, Mr President. I will check that.

These figures are from a statistics report as of 31 October 2019. That is a significant increase, and again, according to the report, the Tasmanian agriculture sector is on track to reach \$10 billion by 2050. This growth in the value of agriculture production and predicted

increase in growth is, in my view and of many others, a result of increased water development and is heavily reliant on completing the proposed water development scheme.

In that context let us take a look at the report.

My first comment is about the statement on page 5, where the report states Tasmanian Irrigation 'develops, owns and operates irrigation schemes in Tasmania' - that we know - 'and where feasible and appropriate, to facilitate local community management of these schemes.'

It also goes on to state -

With an increased level of operational responsibility, Tasmanian Irrigation continues to transition the focus of the organisation from developing and building irrigation schemes to working in partnership with local communities and irrigators to manage the delivery of water.

That is a really important point, so I repeat -

Tasmanian Irrigation continues to transition the focus of the organisation from developing and building irrigation schemes to working in partnership with local communities and irrigators to manage the delivery of water.

We know that there will only be so much water development that can be undertaken by governments in conjunction and in cooperation with communities until it is no longer viable. So there will always be that opportunity to move to a management role, if you like. There is also that commitment that the organisation will facilitate local community management of these. As we know, people who have a vested interest and are invested in something are well placed to manage that particular organisation, entity or whatever that may be. That is an important point.

Recommendation 1. of the Legislative Council Select Committee on Tasmanian Irrigation's final report in 2018 was to facilitate a clear pathway for each scheme to determine its own future, whether it be self-management, a hybrid model using the resources of TI - again that cooperation - or management remaining with TI.

We know a number of those schemes around Tasmania have chosen not to get involved in management as such. Obviously, it is not something that can be done lightly and it also needs resources. There are three proposed models - self-management, and some schemes are very keen to self-manage; the hybrid model using the resources of TI; and leaving management with TI, which obviously that comes at a higher cost.

Facilitating local community management is one of the functions discussed at length during the 2018 Legislative Council Select Committee inquiry into TI, where the committee examined at some length the various options of community management. I quote from the report -

In order to take over management responsibilities of an irrigation district currently managed by TI, the owners of at least two-thirds of the land in the irrigation district and TI would need to make a joint request for substitution of water entities under section 181 of the Water Management Act.

The management of irrigation schemes can be complex and there are certain aspects that TI is well set up to address, such as dealing with environmental obligations and certainly the financing issues. Any substituted water entity would also need to undertake these.

The report goes on to state -

... there are significant degrees of complexity around providing irrigators with a greater role in managing or operating publicly owned irrigation schemes, and each situation will require careful consideration

In my mind, this indicates a way forward which would achieve recommendation 1. of the select committee report.

My questions begin: How many local management committees are in negotiations to establish self-management? How many committees have indicated their intention to either be self-managed or take up any of those options? This is one area that I am keen to understand more. When I read the next TI annual report, it may well give me some of those answers but I am sure they are at the fingertips of the TI organisation as we speak.

I go to page 6 of the annual report.

The chair of Tasmanian Irrigation is Samantha Hogg, who indicated in the report -

Tasmanian Irrigation successfully constructed 10 irrigation projects as part of Tranche One, and a further four (plus another under construction) as part of Tranche Two.

These schemes have the capacity to deliver more than 150,000 ML of high-reliability irrigation water to Tasmanian farmers.

We know those schemes must have that high reliability in place to be able to comply with federal government requirements to enable the funding to come through.

One of the really big things that all those schemes had to meet was high reliability. Of course, that is important when you are undertaking agriculture in those areas. If your crops do not have water and you have a very dry season, it is desperation for those farmers. We know what has happened on the big island. .

The report goes on to say -

In 2019 we officially opened the Duck Irrigation Scheme (delivering 5200 ML of water in the Smithton region) -

The member for Murchison was most likely involved in that or at least is aware of that -

... the North Esk Irrigation Scheme (delivering water to about 57 farmers in the Evandale, Nile, White Hills and Relbia areas) ...

Part of that is in the electorate of McIntyre. I believe that the member for Windermere has Relbia. Do you have Relbia?

Mr Dean - I have a part of Relbia.

Ms RATTRAY - You have part of Relbia. Obviously, there are some significant agriculture opportunities there. It is good dirt, flat, and it is close to services so it ticks a lot of boxes. It has certainly been well supported so 57 farmers just in that Evandale, Nile, White Hills and Relbia area are significant.

The Swan Valley irrigation scheme is delivering 2000 megalitres of water to farmers north of Swansea on the east coast. That was once part of all of the Apsley electorate but now I just have a little smidgen of that area since the boundary redistribution. The member for Prosser would be watching the growth in that area from that delivery of 2000 megalitres north of Swansea with interest.

Tasmanian Irrigation prepared strong business cases for proposed tranche 3 irrigation projects known as the Pipeline to Prosperity. It acknowledged that it is extremely thankful to the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government for the commitment of \$170 million to enable the first phase of tranche 3 as well as additional planning on a further five projects as part of the second phase.

The report goes on to say that the five projects currently being assessed as part of phase 1 for tranche 3 are Don, Northern Midlands, Tamar, Fingal and the Sassafras Wesley Vale Irrigation Scheme augmentation.

This was some time ago, but the report goes on to say that -

In the last four months of this reporting period, community meetings have been coordinated at Don, Northern Midlands and Fingal. Working groups consisted of volunteer local representatives have been formed to enhance two-way community engagement.

We know that without that two-way engagement and that commitment from farmers, because they need to put up-front, at the beginning of the process, their indication of how much water they would be prepared to purchase from any scheme - that is important to enable a scheme to get across the line, encompassing all those other aspects as well, when we talk about environmental flows and that high surety of water supply into the future.

Moving on, the chief executive officer's report was quite informative. On pages 8 and 9, he reported that TI has delivered 14 projects as part of tranche 1 and tranche 2, with the final \$57.3 million scheme at Scottsdale now under construction, with water to flow in early 2020. Being a local member, I am reliably informed that the water has not flowed for this irrigation scheme. When you consider the significant amount of pipeline to be installed - in the order of 92 kilometres all up - plus the installation of air valves, scour valves, and the 105 property outlets through which 86 farmers will take their water, it is not surprising there have been some delays and leakage in the line.

These issues have all contributed to the late delivery of the water scheme. Property owners provided access to the contractors two years ago now, and not surprisingly they are

keen to see the works completed in preparation for the next agriculture season. I would welcome an update on this scheme, and the status of the assessment process of the proposed next tranche of projects that will benefit the McIntyre electorate - which are the Northern Midlands and the Fingal proposals.

There have been significant delays. I am interested in how much extra those delays - particularly in the Scottsdale scheme - have cost in dollars. Have we had a blowout from the \$57.3 million scheme? I would expect there probably has been, and I am interested in how much that is, and what impact that might have on those other schemes moving forward. I am not sure how you are going to get a lot of money out of the Tasmanian Government to top up your funds, and certainly not the Australian Government. We are in the midst of a pandemic, and money is flying out the door like there is no tomorrow.

I was well assured recently by someone is an economist and who has that significant background - because I was quite worried for my family and myself about the future of our country, and I was thinking, 'How are we ever going to be able to repay this?'. This particular person said, 'Do not worry about the money - our country is well placed to borrow significant amounts of money and to be able to repay it in the future.'. I have not taken that approach myself with my household budget, because it is not in my DNA to do so.

Mr PRESIDENT - Shoe budget?

Ms RATTRAY - I have not purchased a pair of shoes for as long as I can remember. It is quite serious, actually.

Mr Dean - You have lost the nickname 'Imelda'.

Ms RATTRAY - We have not been able to go anywhere, so you do not need anything new, and online shopping does not do it for me. They look fantastic in the pictures and they arrive and you think, 'Oh my goodness'.

Mrs Hiscutt - You need a bit of retail therapy.

Ms RATTRAY - I have not been in Hobart very much, let alone Launceston. It has been one of those times when people are somewhat confined in what they do. We feel like we need to show some leadership and not be out and about so much, because we are expecting other people to be cautious, so perhaps we are taking a cautious approach as well. When I am feeling more confident, I will see if I can purchase myself a pair a shoes.

Back to the matter at hand, Mr President.

Mr Kneebone, the TI CEO, reports that tranche 3, the Pipeline to Prosperity, submissions to Infrastructure Australia have been finalised. They now have grants from the Tasmanian Government of \$70 million, and the federal government of \$100 million, for the project. There is more about that on page 26 of the report, if anyone wants to take the time to head there. I know the member for Montgomery has a huge interest in it. She is probably flicking the pages as we speak.

So yes, I am very interested in how those funds are coming along, and particularly whether there has been any overrun when it comes to the Scottsdale scheme, and what impact

that will have on the next tranche. These areas were certainly identified under the consultation processes as benefiting greatly from water development, and they would not have got to this stage had there not been a strong commitment from those farmers - and potentially irrigators and even people who potentially want to buy up some water rights.

As we know, the Scottsdale scheme was not fully subscribed. It looked like it might not go ahead. Dorset Council put its hand up and said it would buy some water to make sure the scheme proceeded to the next stage. Now, possibly, it will onsell those water rights. We know they are a tradeable commodity, and that will help in the future. Other people who are not necessarily on the land can make a purchase if they wish, at a price. It is an interesting journey, but banks use it as collateral, particularly the ones dealing in the agriculture sector.

As mentioned earlier, Mr Kneebone, the CEO, also noted the key recommendations of the Legislative Council committee's final report, and is pleased that as an organisation TI has embraced this advice to better position its services and underpin its sustainability.

Mr Kneebone then lists six of his priorities for TI on page 9 of the report. I will list them, but I will not fully explore each one. They are worth listing under those continuous improvements, but I also acknowledge that it is often implied we do a lot of committee work in the parliament, particularly the Legislative Council. They are never afraid to take on a committee. You know that well, Mr President, from your time sitting on committees. So here we have the CEO of an organisation acknowledging the recommendations of a Legislative Council select committee's final report, and acknowledging that his organisation has taken on board some of the information from that report.

We welcome the newly elected member for Rosevears to the TasWater select committee this morning. As a member of that committee, I thank you for agreeing to be on the committee. I have not had a chance to sit down and have a one-on-one with you as yet, but it a useful process, and again we have been able to provide, through that committee process, some significant recommendations that have been acknowledged in the annual report of that organisation. If anyone says that the work of parliamentary committees is not valid, take them to page 9 of this annual report and I can say they are valid.

Back to those continuous improvements for TI and those six priorities. Safety is obviously at the base of everything. Even in this place, we are practising safe procedures in regard to the pandemic. They have a target of zero for lost time injuries. I expect every business would have that target as zero, and TI is working towards that.

In any business customers are the number one priority. Without a customer you very rarely have a business. Again, I certainly appreciate and understand that. People - Mr Kneebone says -

I am here to listen, learn, support, mentor, encourage and challenge so we set, plan and achieve our agreed vision and objectives.

We know a culture in any organisation is very important. An organisation and a business are only as good as the people who are part of it. If you do not look after, respect and take care of them, you very rarely have a very successful business.

Communication - we know that communication channels are so important. Even if your suggestions are not always taken on board, you feel you have had the opportunity to communicate and deliver a message. Going on the journey, if you like, is so important, even if the outcome is not always to your liking. Communication is absolutely vital.

Ongoing funding - obviously without ongoing funding, it is going to be difficult to move TI forward through the next tranche of development. Australian Government funding is vital, but without the Tasmanian Government funding, the confidence from irrigators, landowners, farmers and the like to say we are prepared to put up funds is going to be a really important aspect of those future developments.

Simplification - we have heard in this place about simplification over and over again, and is what people want. They do not want it to be so hard that you put your hands up and say, 'I am done.'. You want it to be simple as possible. Certainly once it is simplified, it saves time. If you take time out of things, it reduces the cost. We know time is cost in a lot of organisations and businesses.

These are six very important priorities for this organisation. I am certainly pleased I could read those and clearly articulate it. I am happy to support those.

As I have outlined, the improvement areas are important. I would be interested to see where TI is on that journey when the next report is released, before we know it.

On page 10, for anyone who is following in its annual report, Mr Kneebone indicates they have a relatively small team who have achieved all these highlights. I will touch on staffing numbers a little later on. I have already really talked about the highlights, which are the actual number of irrigation schemes, the tranches, the federal funding, and certainly the amount of megalitres that have been put forward. Operational entitlements increased to 123 323 megalitres for the in-season supply. Impressive numbers when it comes to water development and access to water.

On page 13, the statement of corporate intent, there are four strategic expectations. I have written down 'ensure activities are consistent with the Tasmanian obligations under the National Water initiative'. Does this mean the Farm Water Access Plans - WAPs? I am interested to know that is what they are. It says 'National Water initiative'. I assume that is possibly what this is, but I would like some clarification.

We know the WAPs have come from the development of water in Tasmania and are part of the federal government requirement that you have a water access plan for every crop you put in the ground or whatever you do with the water taken from the scheme and I wonder how that process is going. There was some trepidation around the implementation of water access plans. It is something new, and not all our men or women on the land, the landowners, embrace some of these new requirements. I am interested to know where they are with those.

It has been suggested some are very inflexible because if a farmer changes their planting routine and tries another paddock not included in a water access plan regarding the auditing, they can find themselves in hot water, so to speak, because you might think you are going to put some potatoes in paddock x and then for some reason something happens and you might need to put it in paddock y . Is the auditing process for those water access plans inflexible? That does concern some of the people I have been speaking to.

On page 14 of the statement of corporate intent, the second bullet point, is to retain ownership of irrigation scheme infrastructure. This is most appropriate because the money comes from governments of all levels to build the schemes, and it would be most inappropriate to give the infrastructure to groups of irrigators, along with the management. As I have said, management is a totally different subject, so I support retention of ownership of the infrastructure, which is totally appropriate.

The final bullet point on page 14 of that statement of corporate intent says -

prudently and responsibly manage liabilities associated with the fixed repayment plan offered to some irrigators in the Greater Meander scheme.

What does that actually mean? Prudently and responsibly manage liabilities associated with the Greater Meander scheme - as we know the Meander Dam took some time to get off the ground or get in the ground. What does this actually mean and what does that relate to? I could not find any more detail.

Information about the TI performance agreement is on page 15. It talks about being a not-for-profit business -

... so there is no expectation to return a dividend to the Tasmanian Government. Any underlying profit will be directed to reduce debt levels. This approach is consistent with the expectation of the Shareholding Ministers.

Why cannot any profit be returned to the farmers by way of reduced fees? After all, they are the ones who put the money up to enable a profit in the first place, so why could you not have a reduced fee if there was excess money generated?

Some of the schemes have connected mini-hydros, so I expect that in itself would bring some level of reduced cost to running the scheme to make sure those irrigators do get any benefit from it, albeit that it says that there are no expectations for the company to return any dividends. I understand that.

Good old key performance indicators. It is almost a religion now that there are KPIs in annual reports. I will not go through every one of them, but I thought it would be interesting to look at a couple of them.

On page 15, under Commercial, and entitled 'Reduction in Corporate Expenses Per Water Entitlement Issued', the target in 2019-20 was -29 per cent, while the actual for 2018-19 was -7 per cent. That is a -22 per cent difference. Yet the targets for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 are back down to very low percentages of -3, -2 and -4 per cent.

I would like some understanding of what has caused the huge blowout here. Why is the target so high when even the actual for 2018-19 was only -7 per cent?

Under Reduction in Fixed Water Delivery Expenses per Water Entitlement issued, again, the actual for 2018-19 was -9 per cent and the target for 2019-20 was -13 per cent. Again, the target for the three ensuing financial years drops back to -6, -3 and 0 per cent. How are those targets arrived at?

Key performance indicators are fantastic and they are good to look at, but if there is no real meaning to them, they are hard to decipher.

Ms Forrest - They are in Estimates and GBEs and KPIs in Administration Committee B as well.

Ms RATTRAY - A note would be useful.

Ms Forrest - A meaningful KPI that measures an outcome and not an output too.

Ms RATTRAY - Yet the average debtor days from 2018-19 right through to 2022-23 are all 45 days. It does not look like those numbers have affected the average debtor days. I am interested in having a note on that.

On page 18, employees - noting 46 FTEs and 16 new employees. I already mentioned that TI indicated it is a lean organisation. I am interested in what the areas of the 16 new employees were. I noted that 16 employees had five+ years of experience so that means that they are holding on to some. An explanation would be useful.

Mrs Hiscutt - Just for clarity: you want to know the 16 new employees and what areas they are in?

Ms RATTRAY - What areas they were allocated to would be useful.

On page 27: water delivery 2018-19 - key highlights were that 16 schemes are now operational, including three new ones. I have already indicated the total capacity of entitlements, which was 123 323 megalitres. That is certainly well done.

Water delivery is always tricky in the height of the season. Some farmers try finishing off crops, such as pyrethrum and poppies, while others try to maintain growth in vegetable crops, like carrots and spuds, which use a huge amount of water while they grow. This is where a local area management committee can be of great benefit, because they know their area and circumstances best. Again, in my view, this is another solid way of supporting local area management committees.

Page 30: the environment. It is pleasing to see no incidents of environmental harm were recorded. Farmers would have to be the biggest environmentalists around. Without it being sustainable, there would be no food. We know that farmers have a great focus on sustainability.

I mentioned the water access plans earlier and highlighted that deviation from the plan can be troublesome if that deviation is detected during an audit. I presume it is the Farm Water Access Plan specialist mentioned here in this area who does the audits. I trust that they are sensible and not so rigid as to be too constraining on a landowner. I believe it is a requirement, as I said, of the federal funding that a WAP has to be done. Again, I hope it is flexible enough to accommodate moving farming practices and rotations, yet still account for the environment.

Page 31: water quality and aquatic health. Nice to see no problems were detected here. They sampled 68 scheme waterways and 13 groundwater bores; they were all good. The environmental monitoring programs were reduced by eight because the results showed over a length of time that nothing had changed and continued monitoring would be unnecessary. This

must have saved some time and money for TI and showed that its activities had very little impact.

Monitoring public species like the green and gold frogs, native and pest fish, aquatic habitat for species such as the burrowing crayfish and the giant freshwater crayfish - if you can find them. They are hard to find. We used to have them in the Forester River, as you would recall from your days in the north-west. We have not seen one for some time.

Ms Forrest - There are a few up our way. In the north-west there is a good number.

Mrs Hiscutt - I was going to tell you where I could find some, but I will not say.

Ms Forrest - We will not tell you where they are, will we?

Ms RATTRAY - I do not want anyone to tell me where they are.

Ms Forrest - We will not tell you what used to happen to them either.

Ms RATTRAY - Mr President, they are also developing monitoring programs to look for any damage to native grasses and to test soil salinity. We know that has been an issue through the Midlands area over many years. The soil salinity for that area has been much talked about.

They are even looking at the habitat of the swift parrot. I am not sure if this is above and beyond the call of duty of TI. It is certainly being a good corporate environmental citizen, I expect. It is an interesting one - that they make sure that the habitat for the swift parrot is all there.

It is being seriously considered and acted upon. Even during construction of the Scottsdale scheme, TI had four second-party environmental audits and numerous inspections done on contractors while they undertook this construction of this scheme. The environmental team also assisted the Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania team on heritage identification and legislative requirements prior to the commencement of transferring projects.

The section goes on to talk about audits, weed and pest management, chemical storage, biosecurity, water licence data records and future training of all operators on necessary requirements. They certainly undertake a lot of work in that regard. There is a new app for water quality sampling data. I expect that in this day and age, and with the way smart phones work, it is very useful for people working on the land and within this industry to have that data available on their phones. Again, it is a useful tool and many of the younger farmers - and possibly some of the older ones - have embraced that technology. The former member for Western Tiers had about three weather apps on his phone and could match them up against each other and know exactly what was happening with the weather when he was here. I am sure there are plenty of that vintage of farmers who have embraced this technology, so well done.

The safety record - on page 34 - is fairly good, with only three minor injuries recorded, one being a bee sting and not much TI could do about that, I expect. Safety training seems wrapped around employee mental health, acknowledging this is a must nowadays. Seven hundred and fifty hours were dedicated to training delivery, which at first glance is about 20

weeks a year. Without any more detail, that seems excessive so I would appreciate some feedback or comment on this.

I refer to page 48, which is good old Consultancies. It would be remiss of me not to at least talk about those. Consultancies are interesting. I can say that refreshingly most have been identified as saying they are Tasmanians. Out of the eight of them, all but two are Tasmanian so well done on using Tasmanian businesses. I would like to see more of it in more organisations.

Mr Dean - It makes you wonder why they could not get a Tasmanian consultant for agriculture and environmental advice and went to Victoria.

Ms RATTRAY - They are roaming around the whole of the state and they are called farmers; they know what they are doing about agricultural and environmental advice. The only saving grace, honourable member, is that it is not over \$100 000.

Ms Forrest - It may have been a specific task.

Ms RATTRAY - The project management is probably the one that needs a little focus on. Project management from Queensland: how is something like that being adhered to at this time if it is still ongoing? I do not know if it is an ongoing, but it is \$324 500, so that is not peanuts. It is big dollars. That in itself needs a question and response. Other than that, I am quite comfortable we are using as many Tasmanian companies as possible for that consultancy.

Mr Dean - The issue there is: What is it they gain from those consultancies? What changes did they make? What do they get from it? What have they put into place?

Ms RATTRAY - In regard to the project management, for \$324 000 I hope they have gained a lot.

Ms Forrest - They have probably built an irrigation scheme if it is a project management.

Ms RATTRAY - It will be interesting to see which one of those schemes needed Queensland project management, whether it has been completed and whether, with COVID-19 restrictions, they were classed as essential workers. I do not know. It does not give me enough detail in the annual report.

Ms Forrest - This was well before COVID-19.

Ms RATTRAY - I am not sure if it is ongoing. Is that a one-off that is already completed? That is what I am asking. I do not know if that was a one-off, and was there anything with that, because the Scottsdale scheme - and I do not know if that was a Queensland project management - was not completed on time and is still to be completed, so I do not know whether that impacted or not. That was the question.

Page 54 of the report, Operating and financial review, and billing sheets, there is a B2 note, revenue from contracts with customers, and that is check the audit report. That is revenue from the sale of water entitlements, and an impairment expense for non-current assets. Under the Directors' Report on page 54, I have some information from the Auditor-General, but I am

mindful that other people have contributions to make today, so I will not delve into that at this time. We will have a look at the next report when it comes through.

Page 68 of the report talks about the government dependency, which I have already touched on. The company receives contributions, as I said, from the state Government and the federal government towards construction, and they are significant contributions. The state Government has undertaken to provide the company with ongoing specified equity, and the company is dependent upon receiving such funds, so I am interested to know - given that we have had a very large pull on government finances - whether that will continue to be able to be provided in future, or whether that puts any of the proposed tranche schemes in the next tranche under pressure.

Page 74 has interesting figures in regard to revenue from contracts with customers. For example, increasing irrigation water charges from \$6.76 million in 2018 to \$8 million in 2019 - an increase of approximately \$1.3 million. Is the increase due to increased water fees with more schemes online, or attributed to increased charges on existing schemes, noting the total revenue from contracts with customers for 2018 is \$23.7 million, increasing to \$32.3 million in 2019? I am just interested in where those increases have come from.

On page 77, Other operations and maintenance expenses. In 2018 it was just shy of \$800 000, and in 2019 was \$1.7 million. That is an increase of \$900 000, so what has caused this significant increase? The note indicates that the expenses are higher due to the increase in the volume of water supplied this irrigation season, compared to the prior year. Given the customer pays, this appears to be a significant increase. Is it possible to have an explanation with regard to page 77?

Page 83, Property plant and equipment. In 2018 TI spent \$1.2 million on the Scottsdale irrigation scheme. In 2019 it was \$29.9 million. As we know, the scheme is \$57.3 million - so, as I have already asked, is it on budget? If not, what is the total estimated cost of the scheme, once completed and operational?

So, quite a few questions amongst that extensive information. I look forward to receiving answers to those questions in the near future. As I indicated, a briefing from TI at any time on some of the specific questions raised in my contribution would be appreciated, though I am not sure whether it is worth doing that at this time, given this was something I thought I would deliver to the Chamber in March, and now it is August - almost September - with a new annual report not too far away.

As always, I appreciate the opportunity to note this Tasmanian Irrigation annual report, as I do with any other annual report. It is something I challenge myself to do through the time we have away from parliament, from when we receive annual reports to when we return to the parliament in the new year. I thank members for their interest in the importance of water development to our agriculture sector, and I thank them very much for the opportunity to discuss these issues.

[12.51 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I will not repeat too much of what has already been said. I welcome the new members, but also I thank the member for McIntyre for raising it to commend the previous member for Huon, Robert Armstrong - affectionately known as Boggles - for the work he did in this Chamber. Not only here, but the work he has done for

Huon over a very long period - I think he has been in public life for 26 years. I want to put that on the record, and my commiserations to Robert.

I also wanted to say, 'If you are working with chainsaws, it does not matter how small the job is, wear eye protection.'

Ms Forrest - And everything else I bet you do not wear.

Mr DEAN - I do not. I was cutting down a huge tree, and there was a small limb I had to cut off, and I did that without putting my helmet on.

Irrigation Tasmania has done a good job, if you look over a long time. The changes that have occurred around Tasmania as a result of these irrigation schemes are amazing. One of the areas I know very well is the Dodges Ferry and Lewisham area - the south-east scheme. It is the member for Prosser's area. Irrigation has transformed that area. Not that long ago, you really could not grow anything down there - they had the cherry orchard, and that was about it. During summer, there was no grass at all, but now it is a very productive area. A lot of vegetables are being grown, and there is a lot of activity and a lot of employment. It has transformed the area; they are doing a great job.

The member for McIntyre mentioned the Select Committee on Tasmanian Irrigation. I was part of that committee, and the member covered a number of recommendations that came out of that. It is good to see that those recommendations were, in the main, picked up by Irrigation Tasmania and put in place. I think that has helped make it a better organisation.

I remember there were three very important points. One was the salinity issue - which I notice has been given much attention in the annual report, which is very good. You can use water, but if you start using water in areas where it had not been available previously, it brings other things to the surface. That is what you have to be very careful of. You have to manage that as well. It is not just a matter of ploughing all the water into the ground to get all this growth and to do what you want to do,

Mrs Hiscutt - Through you, Mr President, while you are talking on salinity, the member for McIntyre is talking about the WAPS. Salinity is part of the audit system, part of the WAPS. So yes, it is looked at.

Mr DEAN - I remember the salinity issue.

The other one was the private ownership of these schemes. Once they were sorted out, once they were up and running, water rights known and so on, we had quite a lot of evidence in relation to those schemes being run privately by a committee of farmers, users and so on. I am not quite sure if that happens.

At the time of our committee, I think one scheme was being run privately. I remember from that committee that I clashed with the CEO a number of times. That was on the record as well. We did not see eye to eye on a number of issues.

Ms Rattray - It is okay to ask the hard questions and expect an answer.

Mr DEAN - That is what we are here for.

Ms Rattray - That is what we are here for.

Mr DEAN - The CEO, at the time, did not enjoy some of those questions. Anyway, the CEO has parted ways with TI; that happened not long after. I am not quite sure why we never had an answer to that. The only other thing I want to do is to thank the member for bringing this motion forward.

I frequently stand here saying that annual reports should be brought into this place. If they are not discussed here, they are written and that is about the end of it. In a lot of these reports, all you do is read all the good stuff. You seldom read any of the things that have gone wrong in those reports. We need to look at these reports. I thank the member for bringing this report forward. I always bring the police annual report to this place, as you are aware.

The member has mentioned the consultants used. I do not need to go into that again; it has been mentioned. My staff picked up a couple of points for me, but those matters have also been addressed by the member for McIntyre. One was on the environmental monitoring programs. The note from my staff was, 'big effort into helping the environment'. Indeed, that is the case. Tasmanian Irrigation has to get ticks all the way through, coming out of the report, for some of the things that it has done.

TI has given much attention to the green and gold frogs. That is an interesting one. Green and gold frogs pop up at just about anything and everything that happens. If they are so prevalent, I am not too sure that we should care that much about them. They must be all over the place.

It reminds me of a position with a previous member of the Launceston City Council, now deceased unfortunately, Jeremy Ball, a great person, wonderful man, who kept raising this issue. I used to attack him every time, saying, 'If they are that prevalent, Jeremy, we do not need to worry too much about them.'

The green and gold frog, native and pest fish. We know that there are a many areas there: the aquatic habitat quality for burrowing crayfish and giant freshwater crayfish are all matters that environmentalists and conservationists bring up on a frequent basis. It is great these things are being attended to by Tasmanian Irrigation. It is not avoiding them at all. The member for McIntyre also mentioned the planting program to assist and improve swift parrot habitat. That is receiving a great deal of publicity too; there has been much in the press about that lately. I understand one of the parrots' main habitats is the blue gum. That is, I guess, a plantation that is occurring here.

Having said that, the irrigation schemes are running quite well. I spoke to a number of people when the member put this matter up as a motion. The feedback I received was that things are going quite well and nobody had any issues they wanted me to raise here, which I think means everybody is satisfied with the way TI is going. Well done. I certainly will be supporting the motion.

[12.59 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, first, I should put on record that I am part of the Dial Blythe Irrigation Scheme. It is absolutely wonderful, when you are setting up your irrigator, to turn the tap on

and get 80 psi coming out of the irrigator. It is one of the best things we have ever invested in over the years.

Ms Forrest - Acknowledge the new members while you are waiting.

Mrs HISCUTT - I welcome our new members. I sit here next to the new member for Rosevears. I am saying, 'How wonderful to see you here and all that sort of stuff.'

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

QUESTIONS

COVID-19 - Improving Digital Inclusion and Equity in Regional Areas

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

[2.31 p.m.]

The Tasmanian Government strategy for digital transformation, titled 'Our Digital Future', on page 5, under the heading Community Major Actions, states -

this strategy will improve telecommunications' infrastructure, particularly in rural and regional Tasmania.

As a representative of many rural and regional communities that continue to live with inadequate and inconsistent mobile and internet services, how are these improvements going to be achieved, particularly given these areas are not seen as a priority by providers and therefore these communities are continually overlooked for telecommunications upgrades, with the exception of Tullah?

ANSWER

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

The COVID-19 pandemic experience has reinforced the indisputable truth of modern life: that we are more mobile, more connected and more reliant on technology than ever before.

The Tasmanian Government's first digital transformation strategy, Our Digital Future, was released in June 2020 and includes the commitment that telecommunications infrastructure, particularly in rural and regional Tasmania, will be improved.

On 20 July 2020, the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council - PESRAC - released its interim report which detailed a range of recommendations designed to provide advice on how best to support Tasmania's short-, medium- and long-term recovery from COVID-19. Recommendation 54 identified that addressing critical regional mobile and internet blackspots was instrumental to improving digital inclusion and equity

across Tasmania's communities. The Government has committed to implementing all the identified recommendations, and a range of opportunities are being explored.

In 2018, the Tasmanian Government committed to increase mobile phone coverage to at least 95 per cent of the state's Great Eastern Drive between Buckland and Binalong Bay. Is that where some of it is?

Ms Rattray - Yes.

Mrs HISCUTT - Following a tender process in 2019, the Government has partnered with Optus to build 15 mobile base stations along the length of the Great Eastern Drive. The Government has committed \$3.4 million for this project and Mobile will itself contribute more than \$7.5 million, including GST. Importantly, Optus has already offered co-location to other carriers to all 15 sites, providing an opportunity for other carriers to also improve their services to this region. The new mobile base stations are expected to be commissioned in 2021 and will improve coverage in the communities of Falmouth, Four Mile Creek and Binalong Bay. It is anticipated that the new coverage will provide increased opportunities and service levels to local communities, improve mobile access for tourists visiting this popular region of Tasmania and increase safety for users of the route.

Additionally, the Tasmanian Government is continuing to work with the Australian Government under the well-established Black Spot Program to improve and extend mobile coverage in regional and remote areas.

As at 24 August 2020, 58 Tasmanian blackspots have been funded under the first five rounds of the program. Of those, 35 have already been commissioned and, at this stage, the remaining 23 locations are expected to be progressively completed by 2022. Blackspot funding has been awarded to locations across the state. For example, in the state's north and north-east, funded locations include Goshen, Rossarden, Pyengana, Musselroe Bay, Mole Creek, Blessington and Pioneer.

Other examples around the state include Companion Hill in the north-west, Granville Harbour in the west and Fortescue Bay in the south. The Government previously supported Flinders Council's application for project funding under round 1 of the Australian Government Building Better Regions Fund. The \$10.5 million Telcoms Transformation project was completed earlier this year and has significantly improved communications on Flinders and Cape Barren islands. A total of 83 kilometres of fibre were laid, including the routes to eight new mobile tower stations that provide 3G and 4GX mobile technology capability across the islands. Improved telecommunications will transform life on the islands and enable a much broader range of opportunities to be made available in health services, education and emergency management.

While the next round of the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund has not yet been announced, on the 28 July 2020, the Australian Government's Regional Connectivity Program was launched. This program will provide up to \$53 million of targeted investment in place-based telecommunications infrastructure projects which maximise economic and social opportunities in regional, rural and remote Australian communities. Applications for this funding are now open to interested parties from the telecommunications

industry, regional communities, regional development organisations and local businesses as well as local state and territory governments.

Education - Unauthorised Absence Rates

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

[2.38 p.m.]

From 2020 young people need to stay in education or training until they finish year 12, or receive a Certificate III or reach the new minimum leaving age of 18.

- (1) What is the unauthorised absence rate for years 11 and 12 in high schools and colleges in 2018, 2019 and in 2020 to the current date?
- (2) Can the Government provide an unauthorised absence rate across grades for 2020 for each state high school and college?
- (3) How many conciliation conferences have occurred in 2020?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Elwick for his three questions.

Answer to Question

COVID-19 - Improving Digital Inclusion and Equity in Regional Areas

Before I launch into my answer to the member for Elwick's question, I inform the member for McIntyre, further to her question, that the program has a community noticeboard where community members can upload their project proposals throughout the application period to form partnerships with the telecommunications sector to develop applications for the program funding. The applications close on the 20 October 2020, if you have any members you would like to alert to that.

In answer to the member for Elwick's question -

- (1) Absences are recorded by schools as unauthorised when the -
 - (a) Parent or guardian or independent student has not provided a reason for the absence.
 - (b) Student is absent for a reason that is not an excusable circumstance under the Education Act 2016.
 - (c) Student is identified as being truant.

The unauthorised absence rate for year 11 and 12 students in schools and colleges was 13 per cent in 2018; 13.8 per cent in 2019; and 17.6 per cent as at 14 August 2020.

In 2020, attendance recording by schools and colleges in term one was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the figures reported for 2020 are not comparable to previous years.

'Learning-at-home' attendance codes were introduced in term 2, but prior to this some absences were recorded as unauthorised.

- (2) I have a table, which I will table and incorporate shortly, which shows the unauthorised absence rates for students in years 7 to 13 in schools and colleges as at 14 August 2020. With that table, please note that due to the small cohort of students in some schools, providing complete datasets could lead to the identification of individual students.
- (3) In 2020 to date, the Office of the Education Registrar - OER - has conducted a total of 36 new compulsory conferences, with a further 20 conferences reconvened for further requirements to be issued, to provide ongoing support for re-engagement. Between now and the end of term 2, seven conferences are scheduled to be held.

Mr President, I seek leave to table the table and have it incorporated in the *Hansard*.

Leave granted; document incorporated as follows -

Table 1: Unauthorised absence rates for students in years 7 to 13 as at 14 August 2020

Year Level Groups	Absent - Unauthorised
Years 7-10	7.2%
07	5.4%
08	6.8%
09	8.2%
10	8.5%
Years 11 and 12	17.6%
11	17.7%
12	17.4%
13	21.3%
Overall	9.7%

COVID-19 - G2G PASS

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

Regarding the state border management application 'good to go' pass - G2G PASS - please detail -

- (1) Was consultation undertaken with, and/or advice sought from, independent digital privacy and cybersecurity experts in the development and implementation of the G2G PASS in Tasmania?
- (2) What measures have been taken to ensure the protection of Tasmanians' personal data, and the prevention of any secondary use of that data in the operation of the G2G PASS?
- (3) What protections are in place to ensure Tasmanians' personal data will not be accessed by secondary users, or onsold to third parties?
- (4) What protections are in place to ensure any Tasmanian's data collated by the G2G PASS app is not used for any purpose other than its primary function of managing applications for exemptions to COVID-19 pandemic quarantine or isolation restrictions, including for any potential unrelated criminal offence investigations?
- (5) Regarding the retention of any Tasmanian's personal data collated by the G2G PASS app, specifically -
 - (a) how long will data be stored;
 - (b) how long can stored data be used by Tasmanian authorities; and
 - (c) are measures in place stipulating automatic deletion of any collated data, either on rejection of an application, once travel has been completed, or on request of an individual?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Nelson for her five questions.

- (1) The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment completed a risk assessment of the service to be provided prior to the implementation of the system. Tasmania has adopted the system following its development and successful implementation in Western Australia.
- (2) Protection measures include using accepted industry security practices and data encryption levels.
- (3) A confidentiality agreement is in place as part of the service contract, and the system has measures in place for DPIPWE to monitor and verify that the conditions of the service agreement are being adhered to. The data cannot be onsold or provided to third parties.
- (4) Data collected through this app is only used for border entry and quarantine compliance. The data may inform part of a prosecution regarding an offence under the Emergency Management Act 2006.

- (5) All records will be stored and disposed of in accordance with the disposal schedule for COVID-19 disease emergency records, which is under DA2532. This information is publicly available through the website - www.informationstrategy.tas.gov.au/publications

The records will be retained for a minimum of two years, as the information falls under the administrative arrangements under reference 1.3, then destroyed unless required for compliance or prosecution.

My Education and myfuture Programs

Mr WILLIE QUESTION to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.45 p.m.]

- (1) What is the current teaching allocation for My Education at each school?
- (2) What other funding and support does the Department of Education provide for the My Education program, including curriculum and IT support staff?
- (3) What professional learning is provided to staff?
- (4) How many Tasmanian student myfuture accounts are there?
- (5) What is the cost of the myfuture platform each year?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Elwick for his five questions.

- (1) My Education is embedded as part of the school curriculum as a whole school approach. It is tailored to the local context of the school. There is a minimum of one teacher per school, who is the point of contact for My Education in every Tasmanian government school across Tasmania.
- (2) My Education provides curriculum resources from K to 12 across all Tasmanian government schools in Tasmania. There are 78 curriculum resources from years 7 to 12, and 30 curriculum resources from K to 6. In addition, there are three FTE My Education managers who provide support across the state, and one FTE systems support officer.
- (3) The department has provided professional learning to build teacher and leadership knowledge, skills and understanding in career and life planning, including -
 - (a) the Graduate Certificate in Career Development Practice qualification has been offered to support teachers and school leaders to build professional-level knowledge in career development;

- (b) plans are underway for intakes Certificate IV in Career Development qualification throughout 2020-21;
- (c) Introduction to Career Development Practice online courses are available to all DoE teachers and school support staff, to build knowledge and understanding of career development;
- (d) other professional learning for My Education includes -
 - (i) network meetings K to 6 and 7 to 12;
 - (ii) the delivery of online and offline learning;
 - (iii) Career Education through the General Capabilities;
 - (iv) work studies; and
 - (v) supporting the year 10 transitional plan and myfuture.
- (4) Every Tasmanian government school years 7 to 12 student has access to myfuture, using their DoE account credentials and log in.
- (5) The cost of the myfuture platform for 2020-21 is \$28 364, excluding GST.

Roadside Clean-up Work - Backhoe Use

Ms RATTRAY QUESTION to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

I want to preface this question by saying that I actually witnessed this, and it looked like it was quite painful.

Following the recent heavy snow event in the north of the state, and significant damage to roadside vegetation requiring substantial clean-up works to be carried out -

In undertaking these works, how efficient does the Government believe it is to use a backhoe with a bucket - in preference to a grab - to pick up broken debris and limbs that are scattered on the roadside? I can tell you it is not very efficient.

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for McIntyre for her question; I think she will find the answer very interesting. I think we need to follow up on it.

The Department of State Growth road maintenance contractors advised that backhoes and buckets were not used to pick up the broken limbs and debris that were scattered on state roads after the recent snow event.

If the member for McIntyre would like to provide further details, such as specific locations of concern, State Growth can investigate and provide further advice on this matter. I suggest you do that.

COVID-19 - Payment for Two-Week Isolation

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

I would like to preface my question, and when I ask the question you will understand why. This question was submitted on 23 June so I understand things have changed significantly since then.

The Victorian Government has announced a new \$1500 payment for those who have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or are a close contact of a confirmed case, but who are unable to rely on sick leave. This is intended to make sure there is no financial reason for these people not to isolate and to go to work instead. The Queensland Government offers casual workers who do not have access to sick leave a \$1500 lump sum payment if they test positive for coronavirus.

Is the Tasmanian Government considering introducing a payment for confirmed cases or close contacts who cannot rely on sick leave to ensure they can safely isolate for the two-week period?

ANSWER

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

Casual workers who are permanent residents or temporary visa holders are able to access the Pandemic Isolation Assistance Grants and emergency accommodation for frontline workers. Under the PIASG, a one-off payment is available to low income persons who are required by Public Health to self-isolate due to the COVID-19 risk. The amount depends on the size of the household. It is \$250 per adult and \$125 per child with a maximum capped at \$1000 per household.

In relation to Tasmania's State Service employees, on 7 April 2020 the Tasmanian Government introduced leave on account of COVID-19, which is provided pursuant to regulation 25A of the State Service Regulations 2011. This leave can be accessed by all Tasmanian State Service employees, including permanent, fixed-term, casual, seasonal, sessional and relief employees.

The leave on account of COVID-19 provides a period of paid leave equal to four working weeks or 20 days pro rata and it is available in circumstances where:

- (1) The employee has exhausted their personal leave entitlements and has contracted COVID-19 or is required to provide care or support to a member of their immediate family or household who has contracted COVID-19; or

- (2) The employee is required to enter isolation in accordance with a Public Health or Emergency Management direction, or
- (3) The employee is responsible for providing care or support to a member of the employee's immediate family or household who is unable to attend school or other care arrangements due to the school or care arrangements being unavailable due to COVID-19 - i.e. school or childcare centre is closed - or
- (4) The employee is unable to work for any other reason relating to COVID-19 and is unable to work from home.

Under the regulation, heads of agencies have a discretion to grant additional leave beyond the 20 days pro rata period should they consider it necessary. Casual employees accessing this leave are paid at their normal salary rate, including casual loading, for the period of the leave. The Tasmanian Government understands the unique challenges many people are facing during this time. Access to leave on account of COVID-19 will ensure that Tasmanian State Service employees who cannot rely on sick leave have no financial reason not to isolate because they contract COVID-19 or if they are directed into isolation for other reasons.

DPIPWE Wombat Working Group

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

[2.53 p.m.]

My question relates to previous questions I asked about wombat mange. It seems to be very topical today, certainly picking up the baton from the former member for Rosevears.

- (1) How many people are on the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment Wombat Working Group - WWG?
- (2) Of these people, what specific areas of department level are they from?
- (3) Are there any community members or non-employees of the Government on the WWG?
- (4) What are the aims and objectives of the WWG?
- (5) Where can details of the WWG's work be located for public scrutiny?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for McIntyre for her five questions.

- (1) There are currently 11 members of the DPIPWE Wombat Working Group.

- (2) The areas of the department represented by members of the group include the Natural and Cultural Heritage Division, Biosecurity Tasmania, Game Services Tasmania, and the Parks and Wildlife Service.
- (3) The University of Tasmania is represented on the working group.
- (4) The aims and objectives of the DPIPWE Wombat Working Group are to work collaboratively in the development of information resources, collection and analysis of information, provision of advice and consideration of management options and responses.
- (5) While the working group is largely a DPIPWE working group, the details of the meetings are internal government documents. However, many of the outputs of the group are, and will continue to be, available to the public via the comprehensive information on DPIPWE's website, www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/wombats.

Wombats - Narawntapu National Park

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

[2.56 p.m.]

Following on from the wombat matters, I think the member for Launceston and I might be looking after the same constituent in our endeavours to get as many answers as possible.

- (1) How many wombats currently reside at Narawntapu National Park? I will refer to it as NNP.
- (2) What is the current main status of wombats in NNP? How was this assessed?
- (3) On the DPIPWE webpage showing wombat data, table 1 of the Research and Monitoring Report synopsis, under the central north region, shows two locations for observation and cameras. Where exactly are these cameras located? Do the two include a camera at NNP?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for McIntyre for her three questions.

- (1) The department continues to monitor wombats at Narawntapu National Park via annual surveys with motion-activated cameras. Information collected over the past three years continues to inform the existence of a small but apparently healthy population of wombats in the national park. This information was collected as recently as July-August 2020, when the cameras revealed 32 images of wombats, including an adult female wombat with a large young at foot, indicating that successful breeding is occurring in the park. The images from these cameras,

which were retrieved on 20 August 2020, are currently being analysed in more detail.

- (2) Examination of the images of wombats obtained by the cameras in the park over the past three years has been assessed for visual evidence of mange. To date, between 2018 and 2020 there has been no evidence of mange-affected wombats assessed from these images.
- (3) The locations referred to in the table comprised -
 - (a) at a property in Evandale surveyed via spotlighting; and
 - (b) in the national park, surveyed by 24-hour motion-detection cameras placed within a one-kilometre grid square.

MOTION

Consideration and Noting - Tasmanian Irrigation Annual Report 2018-19

Resumed from above.

[2.59 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, before the lunchbreak I welcomed the new member for Rosevears and I was about to tell the new member for Huon how nice it is to have him here. I am sure there will be many intense and robust conversations to come, all on good terms, as it usually is.

First, I would like to thank the member for McIntyre for the opportunity to speak on Tasmanian Irrigation - TI. As I said before, it is one of the best things that has ever happened on our farm.

Enabling Tasmanian landowners to expand, diversify and value-add through the provisions of high-surety irrigation water is a responsibility that TI takes very seriously.

There is no doubt that Tasmanian Irrigation is playing a key role in assisting the Tasmanian Government achieve its ambitious target of increasing the farmgate value of Tasmania's agricultural sector to \$10 billion by year 2050. It is pleasing to note that Tasmanian Irrigation has taken on board and is actively pursued the majority of the recommendations from the Legislative Council Select Committee on Tasmanian Irrigation's final report. The organisation's 2018-19 annual report reported that more than 64 000 megalitres of water were delivered to irrigators in the reporting period, with an excess of 123 000 megalitres of water still available.

I must admit my copy of the annual report looks a bit like yours, member for McIntyre, very dog-eared. I was very pleased to read through it.

Tasmanian Irrigation also reported that all irrigation schemes with issued entitlements opened with 100 per cent allocation percentages in the 2018-19 financial year, allowing irrigators access to full entitlement during the season. Tasmanian Irrigation's ongoing focus on

cost reduction resulted in the actual cost per water entitlement sold being almost \$1 under the target at \$19.96.

I am pleased to inform you that Tasmanian Irrigation also achieved 100 per cent compliance with all environmental permits and approvals during the reporting period. In terms of construction, 14 projects have been successfully completed as part of tranche 1 and tranche 2 and the final tranche 2 project, the Scottsdale Irrigation Scheme, will see irrigation water flow for the first time at the start of the 2020 irrigation season.

In 2018-19, Tasmanian Irrigation officially opened three schemes: the Duck, which delivered 5200 megalitres of water to the Smithton region; the North Esk Irrigation Scheme, which delivered 4600 megalitres of water to 57 farmers in the Evandale, Nile, White Hills and Relbia areas; and the Swan Irrigation Scheme, which delivered 2000 mega litres of water to farmers north of Swansea on the east coast.

These first two tranches represent an investment of \$417 million to deliver more than 100 000 megalitres of water to farmers around the state, in the north-west, the north and north-east, the Midlands, the Southern Highlands and the south-east and the east coasts. With the Tasmanian Government's increased \$15 million commitment, the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government have now committed \$185 million - that is, \$100 million from the Australian Government and \$85 million from the Tasmanian Government - for the first phase of tranche 3 of the Pipeline to Prosperity project.

The joint government commitment, plus investment from farmers, means that the first phase of at least five irrigation projects will proceed while Tasmanian Irrigation continues with the planning for those proposed schemes. Development of the first five schemes is well underway with the water sales for the Don Irrigation Scheme having recently concluded. For members' information, I attended the original meeting for the Don Irrigation Scheme. It was well attended with a lot of interest.

Tasmanian Irrigation aims to tender and award construction for this scheme towards the end of this year with construction expected to commence in the first half of 2021. The Northern Midlands, Fingal, Sassafras Wesley Vale Augmentation and Tamar schemes are all progressing well.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to continuing detailed investigations into the south-east integration project and the Southern Midlands Irrigation Scheme. I am pleased to report that demand for irrigation water identified through the expressions of interest process for all of the first tranche 3 schemes has far exceeded expectation, in some cases almost double initial estimates. This, again, proves the value that our farmers are placing on reliable irrigation water to grow their businesses and best position the Tasmanian brand in the global marketplace as one of extraordinary quality.

All irrigation schemes developed by Tasmanian Irrigation are designed to last 100 years, deliver water at an average reliability of at least 95 per cent and are built to satisfy demand in each region.

Fundamental to the success of the planning of delivering the operation of this vital irrigation infrastructure is the partnership approach between the state and federal governments, Tasmanian Irrigation and our irrigator communities.

In terms of looking forward, as mentioned earlier, it is heartening Tasmanian Irrigation has taken on board the recommendations from the Legislative Council inquiry, and has a new senior leadership team under the management of the CEO, Andrew Kneebone, to drive success further. Some of these next points might cover some of the questions you asked, member for McIntyre.

In terms of by-laws, I can today report the Winnaleah Irrigation District By-laws 2019 were prepared and approved pursuant to section 46 of the Irrigation Clauses Act 1973 for the Winnaleah Irrigation District and were consented to by Her Excellency the Governor in Executive Council on 17 December 2019.

On 24 December 2019, a notice was published in a special gazette advising of the making of the by-laws for the Winnaleah Irrigation District and in accordance with section 47(3) of the Acts Interpretation Act 1931; copies of the by-laws have been tabled in each House of parliament and will be considered by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation pursuant to the Subordinate Legislation Act 1992.

The Duck Irrigation District By-laws 2022 and the North Esk Irrigation District By-laws 2022 were drafted and subsequently approved by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and by Treasury; they are in train for Executive Committee consideration and approval and gazetting pursuant to the Subordinate Legislation Act 1992.

In terms of self-management, I can also report today Tasmanian Irrigation has been working with the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment to determine the best steps to develop a model for community self-management of its irrigation schemes.

Tasmanian Irrigation has identified powers and obligations that may be delegated to a scheme entity or alternatively where Tasmanian Irrigation would authorise a self-management entity to carry out particular actions on behalf of Tasmanian Irrigation to enable self-management of the scheme pursuant to the services agreement. I am sure the member for McIntyre and members of that committee will be pleased to hear this.

Tasmanian Irrigation and DPIPWE are continuing to work together to progress this matter and I can report that legislation to facilitate community management of Tasmanian Irrigation schemes is currently being drafted.

Tasmanian Irrigation has also refined its communication and consultation processes over the past 12 months ensuring the organisation has a firm grasp of the needs of irrigators and how it can better work with land owners to deliver the product and certainty they need to grow their agribusinesses. There is no doubt this has been another outstanding year for Tasmanian irrigators.

I congratulate Tasmanian Irrigation and its focused and hardworking team and the predominately Tasmanian-based contractors for delivering these complex irrigation projects and managing the delivery of irrigation water to the state's farmers.

We look forward to hearing of the successful planning, construction and operation of the tranche 3 irrigation projects and the ongoing transition of Tasmanian Irrigation enabling community management of its irrigation schemes where feasible and appropriate.

I have quite a few answers the member asked for sent to me by text, which is wonderful. It seems I now have them in print. Starting from the top, I think we have covered everything -

How many of the local management committees are in negotiation for self-management and how many have indicated their intention to be self-managed? The Winnaleah and Dial Blythe irrigation schemes are working towards self-management and there have been no other formal requests.

The member would be aware of the Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Limited which has operated since the mid-1980s under self-management arrangements through an elected board. Following the Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Augmentation that commenced operation in October 2012. Tasmanian Irrigation became the responsible water entity appointed under the Water Management Act of 1999. Currently the Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Limited administers the operation of the irrigation district, while TI oversees the management of the scheme. TI is working with the Winnaleah board to establish an operating contract to formalise the scope of its self-management responsibilities.

The next question was an update on the Scottsdale costing situation. Water will flow on the final tranche 2 scheme, the \$57 million Scottsdale Irrigation Scheme, later this year. The global budget across a number of tranche 2 schemes is within estimated costs. It will have no impact on tranche 3.

Another question was on the statement of corporate intent, the WAP included, how the water access plan process is going. Yes, it does include the water access plan. That was one of the conditions - it had to be included for the federal money received. I had a close look at our WAPs in the last couple of weeks.

Update of the Greater Meander Valley Irrigation Scheme fixed payment plan, plus the small hydro pumps - does this mean reduced water costs for irrigators? The Meander Dam, or Lake Huntsman, was constructed in 2007 to provide water to the Greater Meander Irrigation Scheme. The scheme is now managed by Tasmanian Irrigation. The Meander Dam currently contributes towards the operating and maintenance costs of the Meander Dam, thus reducing the costs recovered from irrigators. Yes, the mini-hydro schemes are installed where appropriate and viable to reduce the costs to irrigators.

The member went to page 5, the reduction in corporate expenses per water entitlements issued in 2019-20. There was a 29 per cent reduction. Why such a difference? During the reporting period executive management turnover resulted in some one-off costs to ensure a transition to new management team. TI continues to ensure overhead costs remain as low as possible for irrigators. TI is now confident the management team in place will continue to deliver much-needed irrigation schemes across the state.

Another question was: why can any profit not be returned to the farmers in regard to reduced fees if excess money is generated? TI operates on a cost-recovery basis and does not generate a profit. Each scheme is operated as a separate contained cost centre. Any over-recovery of costs are shared back with irrigators in future years as part of consultation around pricing. TI gives discounted prices to schemes that have produced surpluses. The Midlands scheme, for example, received discounts due to power station profits.

There were 16 new employees, where do they work? New employees are mainly replacing staff turnover - new management teams, but also additional scheme operators for new schemes and additional engineering and maintenance support across the board.

Then we spoke about health and safety training seeming excessive. The member asked for some feedback on this. Health and safety - there were 700-plus hours of training; why so many hours? TI makes no apology for putting the health and safety of its staff and stakeholders at the forefront of everything it does. With a significant number of new staff, there was increased demand for training and support. This will also include important initiatives around mental health and driving. I will seek some advice as they have licences. Because there is a lot of four-wheel driving included, they have courses on how to handle four-wheel driving safely. The total number only equates to 14 hours or two days per employee for that year.

Other questions were: What was the benefit of expenditure on consultants and project managers from other states? Are projects complete or ongoing? Queensland consultant for \$323 000. Ninety-four of all Tasmanian Irrigation's expenditure for 2018-19 was with Tasmanian companies, which is very high. The Queensland contractor provided specialty linear mapping, a type of geographical imaging system technology used for mapping. I can see the member for Hobart nodding. He understands that.

No Tasmanian firm could do that specific imagery work -

Ms Forrest - They are going to need to do the roads too, I think.

Mrs HISCUTT - I cannot answer that yet.

The member talked about financial statements. Page 54 deals with increased revenue from contracts. Page 74 talked about the increase in irrigation water charges in 2018 from \$6.76 million to \$8 million in 2019. Is the increase due to more water being delivered or to higher charges? On page 77, other operation and maintenance expenses of \$900 000 extra. Why?

The increased revenue, shown on pages 74 and 77, are due to the delivery of a number of tranche 2 schemes. Water delivered has increased significantly.

I would like to take a briefing from TI as a way to answer it. TI is more than happy to provide a briefing to honourable members if they wish, even if it just a private briefing. Please email my office and we can organise that. Having said all that, I hope I have answered most of your questions.

Mr President, the Government has considered and notes the TI annual report 2018-19.

[3.16 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, I was not expecting to have all those answers provided in such a timely manner. I very much appreciate the support the Leader has received today with that. I provided the questions before lunch through my notes, so thank you very much.

I particularly want to thank the member for Windermere and the Leader for their contributions and other members for their interest in the report.

Just to clarify one point: as I first began my contribution I said that the value of agriculture production in the year to June 2018 was \$1.6 million, 9.1 per cent higher than the previous year. I had an 'm' instead of a 'b' in my notes. As soon as it came out of my mouth, I knew it was not right and I had made a mistake. It is \$1.6 billion and that is a significant amount of money that agricultural production provides to this state. It is worthy of our efforts and consideration, I believe. I very much thank honourable members and the House for the opportunity to note the annual report of TI. Thank you.

Report noted.

MOTION

Family Violence

[3.18 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I add my welcome and congratulations to the newly elected members for Rosevears and Huon. I wish them well in their endeavours here. It is difficult when we are spaced out as we are in here at the moment. At least the member for Rosevears is close to the Leader; the member for Huon is stuck out there on his own a bit. I hope things will change over time. I wish you both well. It is an honour to serve in this place. Over time, you will both come to see that it is a place where much hard work is done, but I am sure neither of you will shy away from that, so all the best.

Mr President, I move -

That the Legislative Council notes -

- (1) Family violence is evidenced by any of the following types of conduct committed by a person, directly or indirectly against that person's spouse or partner:
 - (a) economic abuse;
 - (b) emotional abuse;
 - (c) intimidation;
 - (d) breaching any existing orders relating to Family Violence;
 - (e) assault (including sexual assault);

- (f) threats;
 - (g) coercion;
 - (h) verbal abuse;
 - (i) abduction;
 - (j) stalking; or
 - (k) an attempt to do any of those things.
- (2) The Government's ongoing commitment to the prevention of family violence with Premier Gutwein holding the portfolio of Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence;
- (3) The need for a whole-of-parliament, nonpartisan, whole-of-government approach to:
- (a) raising awareness of family violence and violence against women in all settings and challenge attitudes that promote the status quo;
 - (b) the consideration of further law reform to promote and support the safety of victims, predominantly women and children;
 - (c) provide whole-of-community, evidence-based, appropriate and targeted education programs in all areas of the Tasmanian community that:
 - (i) support gender equality;
 - (ii) increase awareness and understanding of the need for cultural change;
 - (iii) improve accountability mechanisms; and
 - (iv) reduce the stigma and silencing of those who have experienced family violence;
 - (d) promote gender equality awareness and training in workplaces;
 - (e) provide adequate resourcing to support the victims of family violence, predominantly women and children, to access:
 - (i) safe shelter;
 - (ii) financial support;

- (iii) social support;
 - (iv) access to justice and legal aid; and
 - (v) psychological and therapeutic support.
- (f) provide support for and access to evidence-based programs for perpetrators to modify behaviour; and
 - (g) role-modelling of respectful relationships.
- (4) The important role of police and emergency services as first responders to incidents of family violence and domestic abuse.

That includes abduction, stalking or an attempt to do any of those things.

Mr President, before commencing my contribution on this substantive motion I wish to acknowledge the grief and loss many families are currently experiencing as a result of family violence. I am not sure what the figure is today; I think as at yesterday it was 36 women killed this year in Australia,. It goes on. I offer my condolences and heartfelt sympathy to all those who have been impacted, particularly in recent times, by the scourge that family violence is, a scourge that has resulted in more than one woman a week being murdered by a current or former intimate partner.

I also declare my particular interest in this area as a member of the board of Engender Equality. Most members here would be aware the work of Engender Equality. However, I will outline our work in this space under the leadership of Alina Thomas, the CEO, and her dedicated and very hardworking team. Engender Equality provides counselling, education and support to individuals and groups affected by family violence, along with advocacy for systemic change to gender and equality and to reduce violence against women, working towards the elimination of violence and abuse in Tasmania by providing a suite of integrated and specialist responses to family violence.

Engender Equality's practice framework is informed by an evidence-based understanding of family violence, intersectional analysis and supporting frameworks, including human rights, social justice, anti-oppressive practice and trauma-informed practice.

To return to the motion before us, I think we are all aware of the national crisis we are facing with regard to family violence, a crisis that has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. I am sure none of us can forget the sickening murder of Hannah Clarke and her three children at the hands of her ex-husband. The horrific murder of Hannah Clarke and her children deeply impacted her family, friends, neighbours and almost all Australians, and caused the nation to stop and reflect on this national crisis and shame that we face as a nation.

As I noted in my opening comments, more than one woman a week is murdered at the hands of a current or former intimate partner, and many more experience other forms of family violence as listed in the motion - economic abuse, emotional abuse, intimidation, breaching of existing orders related to family violence, assault, including sexual assault, threats, coercion, verbal abuse, abduction, stalking or an attempt to do any of these things.

Violence against women is a serious and widespread problem in Australia and within Tasmania. It is also the case that violence against women is preventable. What is crucial to understand is that to prevent violence against women we need to understand it. This is one of the reasons why I brought this matter to parliament for debate. We all have a responsibility to be informed and educated about the reality, the evidence and the extent of this critical issue. We need to inform the public through our work here in the parliament and in the broader community.

According to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women -

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

We need to be aware it is the threat that is also family violence. You do not have to follow through. It is the threat. I will come to that towards the end -

In Australia, violence against women is called many different things, including domestic violence, family violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

While different terms may be used, we need to be clear that however described, family violence and violence against women are at crisis levels and are deeply rooted in gender inequality, and we have an obligation to address it.

Our Watch is an independent not-for-profit organisation established in 2013 by the Victorian Government and the Commonwealth Government. Since then, all state and territory governments have joined as members.

Our Watch is an initiative under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22 and implements the work of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. Their website has a lot of evidence-based advice, including policy advice, data and resources for anyone in the community or governments to access. They have also produced free research tools and resources to help others embed gender equality and prevent violence in settings like education, workplaces, sporting clubs and the media.

The Our Watch website provides some key statistics on violence against women in Australia -

- On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner.
- 1 in 3 Australian women (30.5%) has experienced physical violence since the age of 15.
- 1 in 5 Australian women (18.4%) has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

- 1 in 3 Australian women (34.2%) has experienced physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by a man since the age of 15.
- 1 in 4 Australian women (23.0%) has experienced physical or sexual violence by current or former intimate partner since age 15.
- 1 in 4 Australian women (23.0%) has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

If you look around the room and see how many women are in this place, Mr President, take note -

- Australian women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner.
- Almost 10 women a day are hospitalised for assault injuries perpetrated by a spouse or domestic partner.

Ten women a day!

- Women are more than twice as likely as men to have experienced fear or anxiety due to violence from a former partner.
- Almost one in 10 women (9.4%) have experienced violence by a stranger since the age of 15.

Clearly strangers are not as frightening as the people in their home -

- Young women (18–24 years) experience significantly higher rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups.
- There is evidence that women with disability are more likely to experience violence.
- 1 in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women aged 15 and over has experienced physical violence in a 12-month period. Over one-third of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who have experienced physical violence in the year preceding 2014-15 identified an intimate partner as the perpetrator of their most recent experience of physical violence.
- There is a lack of comprehensive, population-wide data on violence experienced by LGBTIQ people; however, existing data and research suggests that rates of violence experienced by LGBTIQ people are at least comparable to that experienced by wider female population. For example, one study has found that lesbian, bisexual and heteroflexible women are at least twice as likely to experience physical violence by a partner than heterosexual, cisgender women.

- In 2017-18, the number of women making calls to elder abuse helplines across Australia exceeded men, with emotional and financial abuse most commonly reported.

Finally -

- There is lack of comprehensive population-wide data on prevalence and impacts of violence against women from migrant and refugee backgrounds. Specific studies suggest high prevalence rates and specific issues of complexity, such as a partner using a women's temporary migrant status as a means of violence.

These are very sobering statistics. We simply cannot ignore them or take the view that it is not something we can do something about. We can and we must do all we can to prevent this unacceptable violence.

If you look more specifically at Tasmania's statistics, work undertaken by Campo and Tayton, George and Harris, Wendall et al in 2015, it informs us that -

- Women in regional, rural and remote areas are more likely than women in urban areas to experience domestic and family violence.

When you think about our dispersed population and the number of women living in rural and remote areas, there are more women, percentagewise, at risk in Tasmania because of that.

- Women living in regional, rural and remote areas who experience domestic and family violence face specific issues related to their geographical location and the cultural and social characteristics of living in small communities.

These include barriers to accessing service, higher rates of gun ownership, fears of stigma, shame, lack of privacy, and social values and norms that suggest family violence is a 'family problem' and should not be spoken about. This can also be an issue for religious families where patriarchy is a feature.

Tasmania has the most decentralised population nationally, where 'traditional gender norms in rural communities may be more narrowly defined than in urban areas', and act to normalise male abuse and control.

We really need to be aware of this. I speak with counsellors working in my region and other regional parts of Tasmania, and it is much more difficult to break through the patriarchal structures and cultural norms that exist within our rural and regional areas than it is perhaps in more urbanised areas.

As we know, Tasmania supports a large regional and remote population, with 60 per cent of the population living outside the greater Hobart area. These authors suggest that it is therefore imperative that family violence responses in Tasmania focus beyond the capital and other regional centres, as crisis accommodation for women who have been made homeless due to family violence are currently concentrated in the major regional centres and cities of Tasmania - with the exception of Warrawee in Ulverstone, which is not in a major centre.

In a 2017 ABC story, we were informed that -

Hundreds of Tasmanian women and children fleeing domestic violence are being turned away from shelters each month because of a lack of spaces, service providers say.

The ABC article states -

In 2015, when the State Government launched its Family Violence Action Plan, advocate Rosie Batty predicted there would be a 'tsunami' of women seeking help.

Eighteen months on and a greater awareness of domestic violence and a tight rental market in the south of Tasmania is putting women's shelters in the state under extreme pressure.

Hobart Women's Shelter chief executive Janet Saunders said demand for places had never been so high and not everyone could be helped.

'In 2015, we were averaging around 60 a month, that then went to 100 in 2016 and this year we are seeing over 200 a month,' she said.

'In January alone we had 291 unassisted requests for accommodation.'

That is 219 unassisted women they could not help -

At Hobart's two other women's shelters about 100 women and their children are being turned away each month.

In the north of the state, about 180 women cannot be immediately helped each month, while the north-west is only just coping with demand.

...

Major Brad Watson from the Salvation Army, which runs two women's shelters in Tasmania, said more housing stock was needed.

'The hardest thing for all of our services, domestic violence, rehabilitation, whatever they may be, is when you know that someone desperately needs your help, but the resources, the funding or the accommodation capacity may just not be there to support them,' he said.

I have also heard from those working directly assisting women and children seeking to escape family violence that the shortage of suitable accommodation remains an issue, particularly in the north and north-west of the state.

In answer to a question I asked in June this year, the Leader informed us -

With regard to safe and secure housing for victims of family violence when escaping a violent and/or unsafe living arrangement on the north-west coast, how many victims escaping from family violence are waiting for safe

housing in each local government area? How long has each person or family been waiting?

The Leader answered -

As at the end of May 2020, there were 75 applicants on the housing register in the north-west who identified as being impacted by family violence. In Burnie there were 19, the Central Coast there were 17, and Devonport there were 21, and 18 in other various locations (note, these numbers are not disclosed due to the potential to identify applicants).

Mr President, there was no comment regarding the length of waiting times for those 75 women or families. That was part of the question. I am hearing these waiting times are long, and we know the very real risk there is to women and children if they are unable to source safe accommodation when they need it. Clearly, we do need more work done in this space to provide safe housing for these women and children as part of our response in this national crisis.

We also need to be very cognisant of the barriers to women leaving family violence situations. Most members would be aware that the most dangerous time for a woman in a violent relationship is at the time she makes a decision to leave, and as she is leaving. That is when they are most likely to be killed, and we see that in Tasmania.

Many of these reasons are compounded in rural and regional areas. That includes small, discrete rural and remote population centres, a lack of affordable public transport, affordable housing and specialist domestic violence services.

We also know that without appropriate long-term accommodation and support, many women trying to escape the cycle will return to their abuser. Domestic and family violence has long-term and far-reaching consequences. Women who experience family violence face poor overall physical and psychological health and wellbeing outcomes, and children who witness family violence are subject to psychological and behavioural impacts, health and socio-economic impacts, and intergenerational transmission of violence and revictimisation.

I want to pause here and give a brief account of an interaction I had with a school principal who taught in a lower socio-economic area within the state. He was at a primary school. There was an incident in the school where a little boy physically hit or assaulted a little girl. Both families were called. When the mother of the little girl came to pick up the child, her response to the principal was, 'For God's sake, she is going to have to grow up getting used to being hit.' There was a sharp intake of air from me at that point. I found it unconscionable that we have families who are so used to being abused, that this is the only expectation for that mother to have for her little girl - that her life was one of accepting being beaten up by men. How sad.

Mr President, we must not overlook the fact that the effects of domestic and family violence reverberate through the whole community. We must all work together to ensure we have enough relevant services to respond to this crisis, that take into account Tasmania's unique challenges, to effect long-term change against a complex and pervasive social problem.

In working together to address these matters, we must be well informed about all forms of family violence, as I have referred to earlier. We must do all we can to address the

underlying factors, including gender inequality, particularly through effective primary prevention.

Gender inequality and disadvantage is still evidenced through the appalling reality that Australia's full-time gender pay gap is 14 per cent, with women earning on average \$241.50 less than men per week. On average, women spend nearly 32 hours a week on household labour and caring for children, compared to nearly 19 hours by men - a statistic that may prove to be even more inequitable when we get the COVID-19 data related to this measure.

Furthermore, women comprise almost half - 47 per cent - of all employed persons in the labour force; however, women continue to be under-represented in traditionally male-dominated industries, and in managerial positions across these industries.

At this point, I acknowledge the work done by Shannon Bakes, People Improvers Cheryl Fuller, Renee Donogh from Elphinstone and Jessica Richmond from Grange, and all the other education providers and supporters who worked with Shannon and I in the Stepping In project in north-west Tasmania. This was a government-funded project that supported 20 north-west women who are unemployed or underemployed to gain entry-level skills and qualifications to promote their participation in the mining, resources and advanced manufacturing sectors. I look forward to watching these women succeed in these areas that are generally more highly paid and male-dominated. I will be assisting with the presentation of their certificates - I think next week. Shannon Bakes is a male who actually drove that.

In another measure of gender inequality, in 2018 only 35 per cent of Australians who have witnessed workplace sexual harassment in the previous five years took some form of action. Clearly, we all have an obligation to speak up in these circumstances. The more this occurs, the less hidden it becomes and the easier it is for others, including the victims, to speak up and to bring about change. We cannot let it remain hidden.

Back to the detail of the motion and the need to fully comprehend the extent and impact of family violence on our society. Much of the abuse and violence women experience has remained hidden behind the walls of the family home. This has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am aware of examples of coercion and economic, social and emotional and sexual abuses that have occurred during this time, where it has been more difficult for victims, predominantly women, who have found it much more difficult to seek support, and especially more difficult for them to leave an abusive relationship. The statistics are still to come in around a lot of this, but early statistics are showing it is pretty frightening.

This was described in an very recent article in *The Conversation* on 18 August 2020. I will quote some sections of this article, as I have heard directly from members of my community. This is a very real lived experience. I have heard a very similar or identical example to what is described in *The Conversation* article from people, not just in my electorate, but within Tasmania. I quote from *The Conversation* -

Reflecting the limited opportunities to seek help, more women are making use of online chat with 1800RESPECT, while more male perpetrators are seeking behaviour change support.

...

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, significant concerns have emerged about the heightened risk of family and domestic violence for women and children.

Further -

In April, the United Nations declared this a 'shadow pandemic'. The UN called for governments worldwide to commit more funding to ensure safety from violence during this period.

During the first period of restrictions, our research with practitioners in Victoria and Queensland identified an increase in the frequency and severity of family violence.

Practitioners also reported an increase in first-time reports of intimate partner violence and the weaponising of children as part of shared care arrangements. Practitioners told us perpetrators were using children and the threat of COVID-19 infection to gain access to women, to force them to share a house with their abuser when they previously lived separately, and to control access to children.

National research by the Australian Institute of Criminology found one in ten women in a relationship said they had experienced intimate partner violence during the pandemic. Half of those women said the abuse had increased in severity since the outbreak of the pandemic in Australia.

Further -

Since the COVID-19 restrictions began earlier this year, 1800RESPECT, the national helpline, has had an increase in demand for its services nationally. There has also been a shift in how individuals are accessing the helpline.

I believe this is significant. It has also been the case with the services provided by Engender Equality, we have seen an increase in demand and contact through our data as well.

The Conversation article says -

One of the notable changes compared with the pre-COVID period has been the increased use of the online chat function ...

The other key change in help-seeking that the 1800RESPECT data show is the increased volume of calls placed late at night, peaking around midnight. This may reflect that women are waiting until their children and/or abusive partner are asleep before they seek help. Anecdotally, however, counsellors report that callers at these hours are seeking help to deal with trauma, including nightmares, flashbacks and/or sleep disturbances. It is believed the COVID-19 restrictions are exacerbating experiences of trauma as being

confined to their homes triggers victim/survivors' memories of being or feeling trapped.

The impact of COVID-19 on families experiencing family violence will last long after the pandemic. We must maintain adequate levels of funding and resources in these areas to address the very real issues that women and children will face for years to come. As we saw initially in Tasmania during our shutdown, Victoria is also reporting a slight decrease now, in their second lockdown, of reports of family violence to police since the beginning of that second lockdown. We must remember the second lockdown is harder than the first lockdown in Victoria. The article notes -

Since stage three restrictions were reintroduced in Victoria in July, Victoria Police have reported a slight decrease in family violence reports around the state.

This may reflect that the restrictions make it more difficult for victims to report abuse. If living with their abuser, they likely have less time on their own and significantly less time out of the house. The fact that previously separated couples are once more having less in-person contact may also be a factor here.

Potential or actual perpetrators of family violence are also increasingly seeking assistance, which is a positive thing. They are actually seeking help. There is an urgent need to ensure these services are well resourced to support predominantly men because we really do need to help those that do reach out. To prevent family violence should be the ultimate goal.

The article from *The Conversation* says -

No to Violence, the peak body for men's services, reported a spike in requests for services during the initial period of stage three restrictions in Victoria.

While calls to the Men's Referral Service slightly increased as Victoria re-entered stage three restrictions, it has not been at the same level as earlier in the pandemic.

Despite the growing awareness of family violence and abuse, I believe there remains in our community a lack of full knowledge of the extent and attributes of the forms of family violence and abuse. The article in *The Conversation* notes -

Neighbours, friends and family can also play a critical role in supporting victims and helping them access supports during periods of restrictions. Recognising this, we need to enhance the capacity of bystanders to know what to do and how to help in safe and effective ways.

Securing women and children's safety during COVID-19 requires a whole-of-community response.

For instance, coercive control is only recently becoming more understood. The very serious nature of this form of abuse cannot be underestimated. It can often occur in the

complete absence of physical violence. However, it often leads to very serious physical violence including murder.

Those of you who have not read Jess Hill's book *See What You Made Me Do* really should. It is a difficult read in many parts, including a chapter I found particularly harrowing to read. Jess provides a warning regarding the content of that chapter at the beginning of it but I encourage you to read it because we need to understand. We must be aware of what is actually happening. We owe it to the women and children and families of those who are the victims. We must be willing to speak up and work together to address the underlying causes, including gender inequality.

We all need to fully understand the signs of all forms of family violence; support those impacted; ensure the safety of victims, predominantly women and children; and provide services and support to modify behaviours of perpetrators. We need to ensure our laws adequately protect those who need it and service providers who provide support and services to victims, survivors and perpetrators must be well and adequately resourced.

I commend the Premier for assuming the portfolio of the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence. I know he is very committed to addressing the crisis. I appreciate the opportunities he has already provided to me to meet with him to discuss my concerns and suggestions.

At a meeting some months ago - it feels like about three years ago now because it was pre-COVID-19 - I discussed my desire to establish a nonpartisan, cross-party approach to addressing this challenge. I was encouraged by his positive response to the suggestion, noting that he had been considering a similar approach. I am hopeful he may be able to say something further about this in his contribution on this important debate. I do accept we have been busy with other things as well but we cannot not act on this.

I mentioned earlier Our Watch, the organisation the Government has partnered with is doing some phenomenally important work in the way we change society and the way we change culture. They have said that in order to prevent violence against women, we need a shared, consistent, mutually reinforcing approach where all levels of government contribute with business and community to create a safer Australia built on respect and equality.

We talk a lot about women being careful, alert and aware when we go out and about especially at night alone and in not well-lit areas. We often hear of women needing to be situationally aware of needing to protect themselves. We really should not have to worry about our safety in areas like that but we do. Not that I can go to Melbourne at the moment, but I would like to, but walking from my son's place at Albert Park into the city when it is only just dawn, if I went through the park it would be much quicker. I do not; I go up the main road. I should not have to do that, but Eurydice Dixon did it. She went through a park.

However, it is important to recognise that most of the murders related to family violence take place in the woman's home and they are often the final brutal act after a long history of violence. We know in many of these cases women have reached out to service providers, who have not always been funded well enough to meet the demand. Resourcing services to assist those impacted by family violence must be a priority of our Government as must primary prevention.

Sadly, the deaths we see are just the tip of the iceberg for thousands of people living with family violence. It is a national emergency and needs our urgent attention. There is compelling need for long-term secure and ongoing funding across the entire violence against women sector. As Our Watch states, particularly with our response and early intervention work, if we tell women to leave and we do not support them, we are culpable in what happens to them.

As point (3) in the motion states, we must take a whole-of-parliament, nonpartisan approach to addressing this crisis as not to do so will result in ongoing harm to women and families at a significant cost to society. The Our Watch website outlines the impact and cost of violence against women. The violence against women takes profound and long-term toll on women's health and wellbeing, on families, communities and society as a whole.

They note on the website that intimate partner violence is the third greatest health risk for women aged 25 to 44, with the first being childhood abuse and neglect. In 2014-15 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were 30 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence assaults than non-Indigenous women. Based on 2015 analysis violence against women in Australia is costing Australia \$21.7 billion a year; that money could be better spent on providing services for them.

Women who experience partner violence during pregnancy are three times as likely to experience depression, and we know the pregnancy actually escalates violence in many cases. Domestic and family violence are a leading driver of homelessness for women.

In 2016, the Australian Bureau of Statistics - ABS - conducted a personal safety survey collecting information from men and women aged 18 years and over about the nature and extent of violence experienced since the age of 15. It also collected detailed information about men's and women's experiences of current and previous partner violence and emotional abuse since the age of 15, some I have already referred to - stalking since the age of 15; physical and sexual abuses before the age of 15; witnessing violence between a parent and partner before the age of 15; lifetime experience of sexual harassment; and general feelings of safety.

I will share some of the findings from that survey I have not shared previously as we often hear about what is called 'whataboutery' - that is, 'What about men? They can be victims too', and, yes, they can and they too need support when they are the victim. We need to ensure our resources are appropriately directed to where the major need is.

Furthermore, to quote Jessica Eaton, a doctoral researcher in forensic psychology who along with her husband established a charity to support only adult men needing with support mental health and wellbeing following the suicide of her father-in-law - it was named the Eaton Foundation in the United Kingdom. She says -

'Whataboutery' comes from a place of misogyny. An arrogant, derailing technique used to respond to a campaign, video, research study, intervention, organisation or communication that screams 'I don't care about women, talk about men!!'

Whenever I raise this matter, I often say men are victims too; that is what I am talking about here. The proof Dr Eaton says is in the comments she receives when she speaks about men's and women's issues separately, and she has done an enormous amount of work on women's issues as well as men. She says -

We need to get to a point where we can talk about women's issues and get the same level of respect we get when we talk about men's issues.

Until then, your 'Whataboutery' is unwelcome here.

I will quote some data from the ABS that considers gendered violence, particularly family violence and intimate partner violence. More than one in three Australians experienced violence by a male perpetrator since the age of 15, 36 per cent, compared to one in 10 by a female perpetrator. We are talking about who perpetrates the violence there. Approximately one in four, 23 per cent, of women experienced violence by an intimate partner compared with one in 13, or 7.8 per cent, in men. More than one in four men, 27 per cent, experienced violence by a stranger compared to one in 11 women, 9.4 per cent.

It is important that we understand these statistics as we know men do experience violence. They are less likely to experience it in their homes. They are much more likely to experience it out in the community. So, on the question of experience of violence, as the ABS reported, in the most recent incident of physical assault by a male, men were most likely to be physically assaulted by a male stranger, 66 per cent. The location of the incident was most likely to be either a place of entertainment or a recreational venue, 28 per cent, or an outside location, 28 per cent. In the most recent incident of a physical assault by a male, women were more likely to be physically assaulted by a male they knew, 92 per cent. The location of the incident for women was most likely to be in their home, 65 per cent.

In-depth information was also collected about men's and women's experience of violence by a partner since the age of 15 in the Personal Safety Survey. Women were nearly three times more likely to have experienced partner violence than men, with approximately one in six women, 17 per cent, and one in 16 men, 6 per cent, having experienced partner violence since the age of 15. One in six women, 16 per cent, and one in 17 men, 5.9 per cent, experienced physical violence by a partner.

It is important to put some of these statistics in context. With regard to men's and women's experience of emotional abuse by current and/or previous partners since the age of 15, results from this survey noted that one in four women, 23 per cent, and one in six men, 16 per cent, reported experiencing emotional abuse by a current and/or previous partner since the age of 15.

There is much more data on the ABS website to inform us. We need to ensure that we do not perpetuate myths or detract from the key arguments and urgent matters. If we are to be well informed, we must work collaboratively to achieve real change. We need to listen to the research, be well informed about all areas of family violence and abuse and act accordingly.

When writing her book *See What You Made Me Do*, Jess Hill interviewed dozens of abused women, domestic violence sector workers, male perpetrators, children's advocates and system experts over five years. If you listen to her talk about the toll it took on her to write it, that is not insignificant either. Following the release of the book she was asked some questions about issues arising from the murders of Hannah Clarke and her three young children. I quote from some of her comments. They shine a light on what coercive control is and what it looks like. I quote from Jess Hill's interview -

Coercive control is a very particular kind of domestic abuse. It's not a 'reaction' to stress, nor is it triggered by alcohol or drugs. It's an ongoing system of control, in which the abusive partner seeks to override their partner's autonomy and destroy their sense of self. The end game - whether the perpetrator knowingly sets out to achieve it - is to make their partner entirely subordinate; a 'willing slave'. To do this, they isolate, micro-manage, humiliate, degrade, surveil, gaslight and create an environment of confusion, contradiction and extreme threat. The feeling victims have, as the British survivor-advocate Min Grob tweeted the other day, is that the rug has been pulled from under your feet. 'You become disoriented, hyper vigilant, confused and most likely sleep-deprived. You are walking on eggshells. Afraid you're going mad. Afraid to make them mad. Afraid. All the time. Sometimes not even knowing why you're in fear but the panic is there. Always.' This abuse can also be incredibly hard for the victim to detect, because it happens slowly, bit by bit. It's the total mental dislocation of coercive control - which Amnesty International has classified as torture - that is the hardest thing to recover from.

Coercive controllers may use extreme physical or sexual violence; or, as was reportedly the case with Rowan Baxter, no physical violence at all -

It is important to remember that. He never hit Hannah. He just murdered her at the end -

For more than 40 years, women and children have been saying that except for extreme violence, the coercive control is the worst part. In fact, one of the most common refrains from victims of coercive control is 'I wish he'd just hit me'.

Sadly, there are many women who identify with this reality. When commenting on why women stay in these abusive relationships - people often ask, 'Why did she stay?' - Jess Hill said -

Many women don't know they are experiencing abuse until they are already in situations that are incredibly dangerous - partly because coercive control is so poorly understood, but also because the perpetrator makes it invisible.

By the time victims realise the danger they're in, many believe no system will ever be powerful enough to keep them safe. If they do report to police -if something reportable actually occurs -

which is difficult - you cannot report someone watching you in a certain way, or you can, but the police probably will not respond -

... they are making a terrifying gamble.

Jess Hill also covers some of the underlying challenges related to gender inequality we must address if we are to alter the outcomes -

Men don't abuse women because society tells them it's OK. Men abuse women because society tells them they are entitled to be in control. In fact,

society says that if they are *not* in control, they won't succeed - they won't get the girl, they won't get the money, and they will be vulnerable to the violence and control of other men. It says that if they fail to assert themselves like 'real men', they will end up poor and alone.

Clearly, we need to change societal approaches to masculinity and manhood. We need to share power and not see being in control as the only state that matters. We also need to be aware of the impact of trauma, especially experienced in childhood. Jess went on to talk about this. She said -

Trauma-based entitlement is very common in people who are abusive - the notion that 'I had to go through so much, so f**k you, you just have to deal with whatever I do to you.' When that entitlement is thwarted, there is this notion of being defied, of being humiliated - of being shamed. This is what has been called 'humiliated fury' - when insecurity, toxic shame and entitlement combine. That is a very dangerous emotional state

There is much we need to understand if we are to undertake effective primary prevention, as well as provide adequate and effective resources to assist victims.

Mr President, Project O, run by Big hART, is a successful primary prevention model that was piloted in Wynyard in 2015, in a family violence hotspot, and is now a national strategy that has generated strong bipartisan media and public interest.

Project O has enabled young women, many of whom who have been directly impacted by family violence, to build the confidence and skills to become change-makers in their community. I have watched these young women really step up. It has been life-changing for them and their families, and our community. We need to support similar successful models.

Jess Hill also commented on ways to detect and assist those impacted by coercive control, acknowledging that these women may be in quite dangerous situations. She said -

When you first hear those red flags - isolation, micro-management, rule-setting, financial control - you need to respond carefully. Listen without judgement. Criticise their partner's behaviour, but don't condemn their partner - that may only make them defensive. Comment on the changes you've notice in them personally, and why you're worried about it. Most importantly, don't give up. The perpetrator wants their partner to be isolated - don't enable them. Stay in contact, if you can. Remember always that your friend is the expert in their own experience, and they don't need you to take over. Let them know that if they are thinking of leaving, they should get in touch with a domestic violence caseworker, so they can develop a safety plan. Lastly, don't make your friendship conditional on your friend leaving - they may take months or years to leave, or they may never leave. Just let them know you will be there for them, no matter what. Jess also makes some suggestions on the way forward and the role of police.

She suggests -

We need practical action, at the coalface, that encourages - and supports - women to seek help, keeps them and their children safe, and removes the loopholes of impunity for perpetrators.

If the government wants new ideas, here are some bold new strategies - proven to reduce domestic abuse here and internationally - that we should be seriously considering.

First, the introduction of police stations for women, which are solely dedicated to policing family violence (and provide a one-stop shop for women and children, including therapeutic, legal and financial help), have been proven to reduce domestic homicide in countries across South America, and crucially, they get women reporting earlier.

Second we should look very seriously at criminalising coercive control, as has been promised by the Queensland opposition leader, Deb Frecklington, and urged by New South Wales MP Anna Watson.

Tasmania has been a leader in this area. The Government is to be commended for its action in this matter. We need to make sure all police are equipped to respond effectively and appropriately to keep women and children safe, and to really recognise coercive control when they see it.

Jess also suggests -

Criminalising coercive control is not just about locking people up. It's about changing the paradigm on domestic abuse and requiring police to investigate and report on the entire arc of a relationship, instead of isolated incidents. Globally speaking, Scotland is seen as the world leader, as all of the harms of domestic abuse are included under the one charge.

Third, I'm also a big advocate of localised strategies, like focused deterrence and justice reinvestment, that develop close and constant collaboration between the community sector - domestic abuse, substance abuse, homelessness and so on - and the justice system. These strategies break down silos between sector groups that often work at odds with each other, they close loopholes in the justice system, and they deliver a strong message to perpetrators that unless they accept the help that is on offer, and make the rational choice to stop their offending, they will feel the full force of the law.

Last, fix the family law system. The Australian Law Reform Commission has delivered a set of reforms that will make children safe. Implement them.

Go with Jess's suggestions about what could be done.

When asked what could we do today, right now, to urgently improve the situation and prevent more murders like Hannah Clarke's, Jess Hill stated -

The good news is we know that change is possible.

Here are some critical changes the federal parliament could introduce now. To begin with, straightaway announce enough secure funding for the women's refuge sector to ensure no woman or child is denied vital protection. Allocate proper funding for affordable and transitional housing so they can move into homes they can afford. Reverse funding cuts to community legal aid - we just saw \$130,000 in funding removed from Victoria Legal Aid, which has cancelled the Court Network of volunteers who help family violence victims at the family law courts; community legal aid is already woefully underfunded.

Mr President, these things are not just related to Tasmania. These are around other parts of the country as well, but the principles are the same.

This motion in many ways speaks for itself. We need to take a united nonpartisan approach to consider necessary legislative change, police educational training, timely access to safe shelter, justice and social and psychological support for victims of family violence.

We need to be well informed, address underlying drivers - particularly gender inequality - and we must role-model respect for relationships, both inside and outside this place.

I will close with the words of some local north-west women who were willing to share their lived experience. These are real women with real stories, and they highlight their lived reality and identify some problems they experienced in areas in which we could do better.

Sadly, there are thousands of stories just like these. Those working in the areas of supporting victims of family violence inform me these experiences are not unique, and they often have very similar key themes.

One of the themes is perpetrators not experiencing consequences for their abusive behaviours or breaches, particularly of their family violence orders, and these behaviours do not stop when the woman manages to leave the relationship. Typically, they can continue for many years.

The workers inform me that from the moment perpetrators are not held to account, and their behaviour does not change, the harm they cause the women and children in their lives is traumatic and enduring.

At this point, I can also identify the behavioural patterns of abusive men. You see these in these few accounts. I am only going to read parts of them. They are quite long accounts. They are practically textbook.

Rather than repeatedly giving the benefit of the doubt, and chance after chance to change, these men who are the perpetrators should be presumed to be a danger to women, and intervention should address that until accountability is established and behaviour change is evident.

Both women I will quote from identified the need for police to have family violence training, or to create a specialised unit for that. Their experience with police who clearly

understood the elements of family violence were vastly more helpful, and in some cases they felt safer with those.

They suggest that if all officers had more training, it might actually help. One of the women here mentions 'shark cage' training. This training is available for women to help them identify red flag behaviour early and develop enough self-worth and confidence to walk away.

Family violence workers inform me that many women who have done this 'shark cage' course feel like the information was incredibly useful, but coming too late. They wish they had it when they were not in an abusive relationship. So we are supporting an initiative to facilitate a version to be delivered in schools so that young women are aware.

I will finish with some of the words of these relatively young women from the north-west coast, acknowledging their stories are not unique. The first one is a woman who was talking about the frustrations with frequent breaches and how long it takes to be sorted out. I am only going to pick out bits of her comments. It is not a direct quote. She said that one of things significant for her is the police taking things seriously -

Some do, some don't. It takes hours every time you go to do a breach -

It is the time taken. So, they are reluctant to report breaches because it takes so long -

It's just going on a file for record and that's that. But the thing is the more he breaches and gets away with it, the more he'll think 'Okay, I got away with that.'

She talks about family violence orders. She said -

[the family violence order she had] only protected me at home so he couldn't drive past my house. He couldn't go near my house, but he could see me in the street and come up to me or he could see me here and do whatever but then I was told they can't strengthen it unless there is a significant incident.

So basically, something has to happen first and then they will consider strengthening it.

She goes on further, and there are quite a few comments about those aspects of it - the emotional part of it is part of the coercive control. In terms of the emotional abuse she said -

He'd just muck with your head and you wouldn't know what was up what was down. He'd make you feel guilty for things that you know you didn't need to feel guilty for. Just nothing things. It's hard because it's just that a web of everything, but yes, he'd make you feel guilty or he'd cry at you or things like, if I'd sleep in the other room because I had trouble sleeping'.

It goes on -

It makes you question, like even now I will question. I don't believe myself. Like he's made me not believe things that I think. Like I question everything. Do you know what I mean? Like even doing simple tasks I think, God is that

right or is it not right? I shouldn't have done that. You don't trust your own mind anymore.

Then she talks about the use of children. She said -

Even when the child was little and we'd go to the park, I'd see him several times sitting up on the hill, just watching. It is always like he has to be somewhere. Like there's no escape. He's letting me know there is no escape. He is letting me know he'll always be there, still.

And then the threats. Threats like, 'I'll make sure you get a bullet'.

Another one -

I've got video evidence of us having sex. I took videos so don't even try to say it didn't happen. 'I'll show everybody.' Like now I know he doesn't have any video or anything but at the time I was like, 'oh my God he's going to show this video to everybody and probably put it on Facebook'. I was really scared. Now I know he's full of crap, just a way of control.

Then the verbal abuse, the name calling - he said to her things like -

You are mutton dressed as lamb. You think you are special. You're ugly. You're fat. Once I got a new jacket and he said, 'it's a wonder you got one to fit around you'.

She talked about the varying experiences with the police when reporting aspects of her experience.

To speak about another one - a woman who entered a relationship with a guy who apparently had a significant history of violence, but she had no idea when she started the relationship of his history and the drug use -

The violence in our relationship began within two months. The control and financial abuse started not long after. In order to fund his drug habit, he would take my bank card on the day I was paid and empty my account without my knowledge, take my money, offer to pay bills or buy groceries and then spend it, leaving me with a bad credit history.

Further on -

During the first year of our relationship I was physically, emotionally, psychologically, sexually and financially abused. Strangulation was his go to method of physical attack on me and it happened regularly.

We need to criminalise strangulation. I think the Attorney-General was looking at that. I hope so -

I often feared for my life. I had been held in the house against my will. I had been threatened and intimidated on a regular basis. He took my car keys,

phone and wallet and would not let me leave the house. One year into the relationship I became pregnant with twins.

The violence escalated, as it often does -

Two PFVOs were placed during my pregnancy. He insisted that I went to Centrelink with him and ask that we put all the family tax benefit for the children in his name. During our relationship the police were called to the house many times by others hearing arguments and abuse. Of threats I received from him, one was constant. If I had an argument with him and caused him to go to jail, I would be f**ed.

If I had an argument and wanted to leave he would threaten that if we weren't together he would be able to go harder on what he was doing to me, as he was holding back. I had no doubt I was being seriously threatened and that things would get worse if I left. The final six months of our relationship was not the worst of the abuse. It was when I realised if I do not get out I am doing to die, whether it's by him or myself, I had been living with this for seven years.

It goes on. Even when she did leave, he broke into her house, took photos, sent them to her, all those sorts of things. Then, some time after they had been apart, he sent death threats by the phone. I will read this next bit -

He became convinced I was seeing someone. In the space of 24 hours he sent over 150 text messages. This was classed as harassment and another breach was determined. He then went on to call and leave voice messages and text messages approximately 100 more times, more breaches. The messages ranged from, 'I love you, I want you back' to 'I want to see the kids' to 'how could you do this to me?', just a barrage of abuse.

There is much, much more there. These are sadly not uncommon stories. We need to address this national shame, this national crisis. We need a community response. We need a whole-of-parliament and whole-of-government response. It is up to all of us. For anyone listening to this contribution, or is reading this on my website or in *Hansard* at a later time, who has been impacted by what they have read or heard and needs assistance, please call 1800RESPECT, or triple zero if you are in immediate danger.

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, before I call the member for Huon, I would just remind members that, this being the member's first contribution in this place, members should extend the usual courtesies and allow the member to be heard without interjection.

[4.18 p.m.]

Dr SEIDEL (Huon) - Mr President, thank you very much indeed. May I commend the member for Murchison on her outstanding advocacy in this matter? It is an issue close to my heart and of significance to and for my community. We all must do better.

I take this opportunity to deliver my inaugural speech in the Legislative Council of Tasmania today, on 25 August 2020. I start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land we are meeting on, but I also acknowledge the Traditional Owners in my electorate. I

recognise Aboriginal people on their own land still face unjust and unfair inequalities to this day. I do like to pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Together we must commit to making a difference in our communities. I also congratulate the new member for Rosevears, the honourable Jo Palmer. Today really begins a new chapter for both of us. Congratulations.

We are living in challenging times - I know that - but standing in this Chamber today, with my wife Alex, the honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the House of Assembly in the Gallery means everything to me. It is an absolute privilege to be the elected member for Huon. It is Australia's southernmost electorate and includes the Huon Valley, Blackmans Bay, the Channel, Bruny Island, and, of course, Macquarie Island. It is Tasmania's most spectacular electorate too.

Members laughing.

Dr SEIDEL - I knew that was coming. But how lucky am I to live in an area of outstanding beauty? How lucky am I to live in a community that is welcoming kind, close-knit and at times a little bit quirky?

Many families in the Huon have been living there for generations but over the last few years more people have been moving from interstate or from other countries. Some even have similar accents to mine.

Of course, we can hear that I was not born in Tasmania. Forty-five years ago, I was born in a small town in Germany's Ruhr Valley. My parents Gisela and Manfred were our local greengrocers. I have two older sisters, Bettina and Birgit. They are a kindergarten teacher and a nurse.

Of course, I went to the local public schools. I did my national service in the army. I was the first in my family to go to university. I did a medical degree and later obtained a doctorate in paediatric immunology. I studied, trained and worked in South Africa, England, the USA and Hong Kong. I came to Australia on a medical research scholarship, but knew that once I visited Tasmania I was never going to leave. I actually had a made-up Tasmanian passport from my community way before I had the official government passport.

It all sounds great but it has not been that straightforward. Without a good amount of resilience, optimism, the support of my friends and the love of my family, I would not be here today.

The Huon has become my true home. I just love it. It is where I live and work. It is where my fabulous wife and I are bringing up my two cheeky sons, Henry and Freddie. Our future is very much in the Huon. When I used to travel to the mainland, people asked me where my accent was from and I would proudly answer, 'I am from Mountain River in Tasmania's Huon Valley. We all talk like this'. Of course, the good mainlanders would easily believe me. Anything was possible when you claim to come from the Huon.

I pledge to represent my community with commitment, courage and competence. I will represent the values and the interests of the people of the Huon, and I pledge to be a very vocal advocate for my community here in the Legislative Council of Tasmania.

As a local GP, I have cared for thousands of people over the last 10 years in Huonville, Cygnet and Franklin and on Bruny Island. I have seen people at their best and I have seen people at their worst. I understand the concerns in my community. I have listened to many people who feel they are being left behind.

I am worried that many of us feel we are just being taken for granted. I believe that we as a community deserve better. Our community has experienced rapid change. The decline of forestry, the rise in aquaculture and tourism, the loss of jobs in our region and the rise of traffic due to ever-longer commutes to work for better paying jobs in greater Hobart. What we really need is good jobs in our region. We must offer attractive public schools and opportunities for higher education. Our children cannot be disadvantaged or sent away.

We live in an area of outstanding beauty, but we also live in a very fragile environment. The devastating bushfires in Geeveston, Dover, Franklin and Glen Huon just over 12 months ago and the far-reaching effects of smoke to our health should have been a wake-up call but not much has actually happened. Rural issues. Our way of life does not seem to matter much. That needs to stop and we deserve better.

The services in our electorate are stretched on a good day. Our ambulance services rely on dedicated volunteers and goodwill. The police presence is patchy at best and our brave firefighters are continually under-resourced and on the edge. They deserve better too.

I certainly know that health services are struggling. Funding cuts to health have disadvantaged our community disproportionately. In addition, waiting lists for the Royal Hobart Hospital are getting longer by the day. That has consequences for patients in my community. The life expectancy in regional Tasmania is the second lowest in the country, just above the Australian Outback. Nobody seems to care; I do, and we deserve better.

It is not clear to me why regional Tasmanians should be systematically disadvantaged. It is not clear to my community either. We pay the same taxes, the same levies and the same rates. There is no discounting of living costs; there should not be any discounting for health services either.

We all know that the health burden in our region is disproportionately higher compared to the city. There are many reasons for that; the population is older, public transport and access to allied health and medical services is limited. The social determinants of health are complex and hard to address without decent and continuous funding and support. That is why at the very least, and urgently, we must invest appropriately in our emergency and ambulance services.

Last year alone, over 420 Tasmanians arrived in hospital emergency departments, dead. It is a sickening statistic and should be a wake-up call for all of us. Before becoming a statistical and health policy footnote, those Tasmanians were members of our community - they were us. That was the state of our health system even before COVID-19.

The first case of coronavirus was reported in Tasmania on 2 March and shortly after in my community. What followed was a cascade of events that resulted in hospital closures, a lockdown of communities and our borders shut down. And not too soon. When you are dealing with exponential growth of virus cases the right time to act is when it feels too early.

The regional response to the global pandemic has left us all on the edge. Thirteen people have died from COVID-19 in Tasmanian; more than 500 people in Australia, more than 800 000 people worldwide. Many in our families, many of our friends have lost their jobs, many of us face a very, very uncertain future. I see the effects of stress and anxiety in my community. I feel the uncertainty businesses in all sectors experience. I am hearing the call for leadership and advocacy, but what I am seeing is even more uncertainty and also fear and anger.

Many Tasmanians are at breaking point. We cannot ignore that. That is why strategically we need to support those in our community who have been hardest hit by COVID-19. We need to get people into jobs; we need to build a fairer, kinder and healthier Tasmania. Mental health issues in our community are real. Family violence is real. We should not pretend that concerns about domestic violence in regional Tasmania are overstated. The concerns are genuine.

Over the last five years alone presentations to the Huon domestic violence service have doubled, yet the service still has only funding for two part-time staff. There is no counsellor specifically for children or adolescents.

We have a dedicated safe house in Kingston and we are forced to turn away more than a dozen women from the Huon, not per year, per month. Supporting victims and educating the public must be an absolute priority for all of us. We, all of us here in this Chamber and in parliament, represent our communities with passion and conviction. We are given the label 'politician' and far too often that automatically comes with a negative sentiment.

We are not here to choose the easy options, though. We are here to appraise the challenging issues and to make the difficult decisions. We are parliamentarians first and foremost, and there is inherent virtue in that. That is why we are here - we are here because we want to make a genuine difference to our communities, we are here because we want to advance Tasmania.

When I announced my candidature for the seat of Huon back in February, I did not expect to win. My aim was to run a credible grassroots campaign that connected with people in my community in a genuine and meaningful way.

One of my favourite phrases is in Latin, *ut desint vires, tamen est laudanda voluntas*, which basically translates as 'although strengths may be lacking, the will is commendable.'. I used to write that phrase as the last line in many high school and university assignments often to no avail, so it is with gratitude and immense pride that I acknowledge that the strength of my campaign was the many volunteers who worked tirelessly with me, out in the community doorknocking every day, letterboxing, putting up signs, making phone calls or wobble boarding on the highway in the morning at a freezing 2 degrees.

It was an extraordinary effort and made me being the candidate look so easy. I will never forget the unconditional support I had from so many. I thank my campaign committee which strategised, analysed and volunteered their time to help implement and execute our plan to the point. This is the first time since 1942 that Labor has won the seat of Huon - and it is your win, Stuart Benson, Julie Collins, Catryna Bilyk, Carol Brown, Alison Standen, David O'Byrne, Jessica Munday, Gordon Luckman and the outstanding Jane Atkinson and Morris Malone.

I thank the many volunteers from the union movement who supported the campaign. Thank you to HACSU, the United Workers Union, CPSU-PSU, ASU and my own union, the NTEU, whose members volunteered their weekends and evenings for the campaign.

I acknowledge the great support I had from the Labor Party, in particular, the very active branches in Kingborough, the Channel, Battery Point, Glenorchy and Howrah, Bellerive and, of course, my deepest gratitude is to my own Huon branch. When I joined in 2014, none of us thought I would be a member of the Legislative Council in 2020.

I know that many of you are watching this speech online right now, so thank you to Andrew, Julie, Paul, Raymond, Angela, Rodney, Eleanor, John, Marie, Peter, Ashley, Phillip, Stuart, Mary, Richard, Rod, Ian, Deidree, Gabrielle, Audun, Charlee, Dee, Trisha, Leon, Kathleen, Timothy, Robert, Brian, Tania, Wayne, Carolyn, Lee, Michael, Helen, Mick, Jacqui and Danilo. We actually did it.

I would also like to thank Angela Conley, Henryl, Shelley and Stuart Griggs, Ian Magill, Kath and Brian Shearer, Susan Fahey, Jan Simmons and the fabulous Pam Lane for your generous endorsements. Thank you to Matt Rush, Roald Versteeg, Nick Smith, Ian Nicolson Martyn and Bronwyn Summers, Phil Pullinger, Sam Meyer and Lesley Smith. You have been there when I have needed you. Thank you.

I also thank my colleagues of the Parliamentary Labor Party and in particular our Leader, Rebecca White, who is in the Gallery today, for making me feel so welcome. It is such a privilege to be part of our dedicated team genuinely committed to putting people first.

I must thank my fabulous wife Alex who is here in the Gallery today. Your love saved me. You are my true soulmate, my everything. You inspire me and you keep me pretty grounded when I am flying a bit too close to the sun. I would not be here without you. I love you.

Thank you, Mr President for allowing me to rise and speak today. Thank you to the members and the outstanding staff of the Legislative Council for your welcome, your generous support and your expert advice.

Thank you.

Members - Hear, hear.

Mr PRESIDENT - I congratulate the member for Huon on his very thoughtful first contribution in this place. I am sure his time here will be very valuable, not only to himself but also to all the people he represents. It is a great thing our Chamber has the skills our new members bring to the Chamber, and we look forward to your future contributions though I must warn you they will not always be heard in silence. That is the first and only time it happens.

Well done, and I am sure all your colleagues here look forward to working with you into the future.

[4.35 p.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Mr President, I thank the member for Murchison for bringing this motion before the Chamber for a very important debate.

Before I make a brief contribution, I acknowledge and welcome the member for Huon. Congratulations on your first contribution in the Chamber. I always find inaugural speeches to be such a valuable insight into people's motivations and what drives us all. I learnt a lot from that speech and really look forward to working with you more in the Chamber.

I would also like to welcome the member for Rosevears to the Chamber. Congratulations on your election. I look forward to your first contribution and hope you feel very welcome here in the Chamber.

This is a very timely debate. Family violence and violence against women is an enormous issue for Australia and Tasmania. It is even more important to highlight this now in the context of COVID-19 and the lockdowns we have experienced. The message we all heard is that we were asking people to stay home to save lives and staying home to stay safe. But home is not the safest for many women and children and in fact United Nations research shows that home can be the most dangerous place of all.

The extended lockdown periods we have experienced increased the vulnerability of women and children to all forms of family violence. The member for Murchison has described many of those forms and has given us a very thorough outline of the relevant statistics so I will keep my contribution relatively brief.

It was a very difficult position for us all when the best way to stop the community transmission of this highly infectious disease placed women and children in harm's way. Restricting the movement of people, requiring men and women to be at home in close quarters and often with children home from school led to an environment which saw many women and children at much greater risk of violence.

In response to this in June 2020 the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre in Monash University published a report titled 'Responding to the Shadow Pandemic'. This report gathered findings from a survey of 166 Victorian practitioners and it sought to capture the voices and experiences of practitioners responding to women experiencing family violence during the shutdown period in Victoria. The same survey was conducted and a report published in Queensland. I highly recommend members read this report. I believe the state Government is also seeking information on the response in Tasmania and I look forward to that work continuing as a matter of urgency.

The Victorian report found the pandemic led to an increase in the frequency and severity of violence against women. An increase in first-time family violence reporting by women. Less ability to seek help during lockdown period. We have heard statistics of reports of family violence have been down and some people have argued that means family violence has been down but we know that is not the case. In fact, what that indicates is it is much more likely people have been less able to seek help.

The report also found, as outlined by the member for Murchison, that a number of new forms of intimate partner violence specifically relating to the threat and risk of COVID-19 infection have occurred. These include restricting women's movements, gaining access to

women's residences, coercing women into residing with a perpetrator if they usually reside separately and controlling the capacity of women to comply with social distancing guidelines.

When you combine all of this with an increased difficulty in seeking help, it starts to look like a pretty desperate situation. What we have seen is some innovative responses from service providers. I would like to recognise those working in the sector, particularly here in Tasmania. We have seen a number of changes to service delivery, including moving online, and finding new ways for women to seek help, for example, code words and some less detectable online platforms.

It is important we not only recognise this but respond. It has been good and positive to see some additional funding from the state Government as part of its COVID-19 response, but this sector has been under-resourced for years and this additional funding has merely served as a catch-up. There needs to be ongoing commitment and funding arrangements imbedded in future agreements. There is still a lot of disruption to come. Much more stress on individuals and households as we see the financial impact of COVID-19 come to reality. Family violence and violence against women were enormous problems before COVID-19 and will continue to be and we must take this seriously. We must invest in services and work with the sector to identify and properly resource best practice models of service and service delivery.

I want to thank the member for Murchison for bringing this motion to the Council for this important debate. We cannot underestimate how important this is. One woman a week in Australia is killed by male violence, most commonly by a current or former partner. Each fortnight a child is killed by a parent. Let us not forget those devastating statistics provided by the member for Murchison. Statistically speaking, if you know six women, you know someone who has experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a current or former partner. If you know four women, you know someone who has suffered emotional abuse by a current or former partner. We cannot underestimate the magnitude of this issue and I wholeheartedly support the motion.

[4.42 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I also offer my congratulations to the members for Rosevears and for Huon. Politics aside, I think you will find this House is a gentle House compared to downstairs. We listen and learn from each other and I am sure from what we have heard from at least one today and I am sure we will hear from another member as they do their inaugural speeches, you bring something fresh and new to the Chamber. Every member who comes into this Chamber brings something different. It is important. Here we have a doctor. Here we have somebody who has been in media and when it comes to the various bills we are presented with in this House, you will all bring a different opinion and focus. That is the benefit of having people from different backgrounds whether you speak with a German accent, or a clipped English accent or whether you speak with an Australian accent.

Ms Forrest - Or a Huon Valley accent.

Mr VALENTINE - We are used to listening to all sorts of accents in here. I wish you well as you go forward in your role; I am sure you will bring forward the concerns you have that affect Tasmanians and I look forward to the different perspectives you bring. Congratulations on being elected. The people have elected you, you are here to do a job. We really look forward to your contributions into the future.

With regard to this particular motion, I rise to support the motion. I thank the member for Murchison for bringing it forward. This is one of those issues that definitely needs a multi-partisan approach. I do not think anyone in this Chamber will disagree with that. Family violence is not a respecter of persons. Whether you are Labor, Liberal, or Green, people out there are experiencing it. We, as a community, have to do what we can to support those people who are going through what is hell on earth for some.

Imagine living with the stress of not knowing when your partner is going to explode and to wreak havoc on your life. Imagine not knowing when the next blow is going to come. Sometimes it is not a blow, sometimes it is that movement of an eyebrow if you are in company. Someone makes a statement. They might think it is negative about them. They look at their partner and they lift the eyebrow. That eyebrow means so much because of the past events that might have happened within the home. Family violence is really insidious. We might all think it is the person with the tattoos and the singlets who are the perpetrators. It is not always the case. It can be the very slick gentleman who presents very well in public, yet at home might be a real tyrant, might hold that level of control over their partner. It might be a very detrimental level of control.

The partner then has to think about not only themselves, but maybe their young or even older children and how they are going to make sure they are kept safe when they are really stressed to the point of not being able to cope themselves. Turning up to that, as the member for Huon said, safe house, knocking on the door. What was it, 12 a month? Not being able to get in. A significant number of 144 a year. We have to do what we can to knock this out of the community and reduce the impact. They are very sobering statistics the member for Murchison brought up. It is something this world could do without. We really must do what we can to support moves to reduce family violence in the community.

One in four women versus one in 13 men have experienced family violence, was the statistic you brought out in some of your presentation there, member for Murchison. Think about your circle of friends. Think about the number of friends you have, then you take, if they are women, one in four. Or you take one in 13 men of your friends. Then you think, 'I wonder if they are experiencing family violence?'. Sometimes you just do not know, you do not know. It can be isolating, humiliating and it can be abusive. Some people have real control over others.

I watched a movie during the break. In some ways I wish I had not. It was actually not about family violence as such in effect, it was *Snowtown*. I do not know whether anyone has seen *Snowtown* where one man holds control over this younger person.

You just listen to the way that they talk, the way they control that individual, the way they manipulate them to go and do what they want them to do, the way the fear creeps in. It is insidious. It is not always people who live in a housing department area. These can be people who live in Sandy Bay.

Ms Forrest - It is people who live in Sandy Bay; not might be, it is.

Mr VALENTINE - It is.

They can live in the country, they might be the wife of a farmer who does not want to speak out because it is embarrassing. Their social status might stop them from speaking out. It

is not just from disadvantaged areas; it can be anywhere across our community. I support the motion. I thank the member for Murchison for bringing it forward. I thank her for the statistics because it brings it home; it makes it real. I thank her for telling the stories that she brought forward with regard to some from Wynyard. It makes it real for us; it is not just a statistic on the page.

The next motion we will be dealing with has a few statistics in it as well. The member for Windermere will be bringing it forward.

I hope, as a parliament, we can see some greater resources put in to combatting this. It is going to take a lot of effort, more resources for people who are in need, persistent education to stop this insidious almost disease one would say, in our community, and it starts with us.

[4.52 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, I welcome the new member for Rosevears to the Chamber. I am sure we will have some robust debates over the years, but it is always very good natured and we do not carry it outside the Chamber. Welcome to the new member for Huon - I am sure you will enjoy your time here and I am very much looking forward to working with you.

Family violence is a major national health and welfare issue that has lifelong impacts for the victims and perpetrators. It can affect people of all ages and from all backgrounds but predominantly affects women and children. Put simply, using internationally recognised definitions -

violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of harm or coercion in public or in private life.

As this definition makes clear, violence against woman is not only always physical, it includes psychological, economic, emotional and sexual violence and abuse and a wide range of controlling, coercive and intimidating behaviours.

On any average day in Australia, police respond to a family violence call every two minutes. On average in Australia, at least one woman will die as a result of violence. In other words, one Australian woman is murdered every week, usually by someone close to them. Family violence in this country was a national emergency before the pandemic.

I looked into a few facts and they are quite ghastly. I know some them have been stated already but I am going to share a few with the Chamber again because they are heinous in their nature. Reading through them last night, I was aghast. I have to stay across this topic quite a lot as a member of parliament but I think some of these facts are very raw and very real.

One in three Australian women has experienced physical violence since the age of 15, still children . One in five Australian women has experienced sexual violence. One in six Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violent by a current or former partner. One in four Australian women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner. Australian women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner. Australian women are almost four times more likely than men to be

hospitalised after being assaulted by their spouse or partner. Women are more than twice as likely as men to have experienced fear or anxiety due to violence from a former partner.

Unfortunately, having an office in the community, we see these things up close. It is very confronting to come across these things in society. I genuinely become fearful for some people in the community who are experiencing this. There are no easy answers. It is something that all community leaders are going to have to stand up to, including this and future parliaments, future governments.

More than two-thirds, 68 per cent, of mothers who had children in their care when they experienced violence from previous partners said that their children had seen or heard violence. I remember the former commissioner for children released a report on children's unique experiences of family violence. They are not just observers; they have their own experiences. Unfortunately, they are participants and they carry that for the rest of the lives.

Ms Forrest - The trauma.

Mr WILLIE - The trauma.

Almost one in 10 women, 9.5 per cent, has experienced violence by a stranger since the age of 15. I know the member for Murchison talked about her own fear of walking through a park at night. It should not be like that. Young women aged 18 to 24 years experienced significantly higher rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups. There is growing evidence that women with disabilities are more likely to experience violence. In 2014-15, Indigenous women were 30 times as likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women, which shows how far we have to go in closing the gap across all areas.

Those statistics are ghastly. That was before the pandemic. We are yet to fully understand the pressure cooker environments family homes have become in COVID-19 times under the stress of isolation, lockdowns, financial and emotional stress. People experiencing family violence are increasingly stuck at home with the perpetrator of the violence. Phone calls, text messages, emails and social media are all easy for perpetrators to monitor and make it very difficult for someone to ask for help.

Through this time the Tasmanian Government has allocated additional funding to family violence services. That is welcomed and acknowledged by this side of the House. However, each of those services has been chronically underfunded for years. We need to ensure that frontline community services are not just funded to cover the existing unmet demand, but resources are provided to support a significant wave of demand and complexity that will follow in COVID-19 times and beyond.

I support the member for Murchison's motion, particularly point (3)(c), concerning appropriate and targeted education programs. That is how we will end up with lasting change. I certainly acknowledge a lot of work still to do by this and future parliaments, community leaders and the community more broadly in addressing family violence.

[4.59 p.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, I join my colleagues in welcoming and congratulating the two new members of the Chamber - the member for Huon and the member

for Rosevears. It was lovely to hear the inaugural contribution of the member for Huon today. I certainly look forward to hearing from the member for Rosevears in times to come and getting to know you both better as colleagues in the Chamber. Welcome.

I thank the member for Murchison for bringing this motion for debate. Family violence is an important topic for us to give our consideration to, as its impact really pervades our community.

I begin by acknowledging any people here today and those in the Tasmanian community who are affected by family violence - those who are victims and survivors, those who are witnesses and allies, and those who provide support and assistance.

The member for Murchison provided a thorough discussion of this issue and the points covered by the motion. I support the motion fully, and I will add my thoughts on a few of the matters that it covers.

Something I am inserting into my contribution just now, having listened to my colleagues and their contributions, is something I noted as I listened - that is, we use a lot of figures in relation to this topic, a lot of data. Generally, the figures we quote are victim-focused - one in four women, one woman a week, and the like.

This in itself tells us something, because if we talk about and prompt each other to think about the fact that one in four women we may know is experiencing family violence, or has experienced family violence, we must be prompted to extrapolate that, and to think about the fact that potentially one in four men we know is a perpetrator of family violence.

I do not know about you, Mr President, and others here, but somehow, for me, I have to acknowledge when I say that aloud, it is much more comfortable to acknowledge one in four women than it is to acknowledge one in four men as a perpetrator. That is interesting. It is fundamental to what is underpinning this motion, and what is underpinning this issue.

It is representative of the sensitivity that is there, so that when we come to discuss this issue together, when we come to give it our consideration and our analysis and our investment and our true commitment, we have to acknowledge the uncomfortable parts of it. We have to have the difficult conversations with ourselves, and with each other, to move forward.

We cannot just comfortably all share a 'one in four women' and 'one woman a week' and nod and shake our heads and feel bad about that. We have to also find a way to talk about an even more important need to put accurate figures, honest figures, purposeful figures, to the however many in four, and however many in 10, however many men in our community on the other side of this equation who are the active perpetrators of this issue.

Until we do that, we are still putting barriers in front of us making general progress. We are still focusing on the wrong end of the equation, and we will still be talking about this issue for who knows how much longer into the future, until we have that difficult conversation.

That leads into the things I would like to say further about this motion. That is, Mr President, that violence against women occurs in the social context of gender inequality. It is

not inevitable. It is preventable. As a community, we can work to prevent violence against women by addressing the gender inequality that exists.

It is important to emphasise that this is not something that will happen naturally. It is not something that will happen on its own. It is something that must be done through active, thoughtful work, so that we can undo the patterns that are set, so that we can address the unconscious biases that we all hold from our socialisation - and I would pin that to the more comfort in discussing the women experiencing violence, than the comfort in talking about the men perpetrating it. The unconscious biases, so that we can also address those more overt forms of discrimination that are still held by many, and acted on by many, in our community.

The member for Murchison has already mentioned Jess Hill's book, published this year, titled *See What You Made Me Do*, and I reiterate the member's encouragement to all who have not yet read it to read that book.

In it, Ms Hill explains why she prefers the term 'domestic abuse' rather than 'domestic violence' or 'family violence'. It is partly because the use of the word 'violence' puts the focus on physical assault and physical harm. But we know the vast majority of domestic abuse that is occurring is not physical violence. It is almost like an iceberg, with physical violence the very small tip that is perhaps most visible - but the great mass of domestic abuse is actually below the surface. It is harder to see. It is the controlling behaviour, the emotional abuse, the threats, the coercion, the psychological damage, the financial and social control. These are the behaviours that have a life-limiting impact on victims - that freezes them in their potential to fully live and express their own identity and sense of self and pursuit of life and happiness.

These are the behaviours that find fertile ground in our more broadly held attitudes around gender, and the inequality that is embedded in those attitudes.

Some of the damaging societal attitudes and patterns we need to dismantle include things such as rigid gender roles and stereotypes about men and women. As a small anecdote, sometimes these things do not really 'hit you in the face', where some people overtly hold rigid gender roles - men must go and do this, women must go and do that. It can be really subtle; it is the unconscious biases that are there.

I will give you an example. I had a discussion recently with a friend. We were simply observing posts on a Facebook page about sports teams relating to girls and boys. They were all on the same Facebook page, the little comments about games of the week. We just noted the difference in language used in the descriptions of the children who were featured about each game. We noted that the language used, the verbs used, the sorts of energy in the descriptions that related to the boys who had played that weekend, were very forceful and active and strong and lively in the posts about the boys' teams.

This is a generalisation, but in the same Facebook feed, the descriptions that related to the girls and the girls' teams that had played were less active, a little bit softer, a little bit more general, a little bit less physical and robust in the way they were described.

It was an interesting observation for my friend and I to be making together. I think it points to the fact that this is not always obvious. Dismantling these ideas about how we talk about boys and girls, about how we think about men and women. It is not always the obvious, overt, discriminatory things, it is the very small things. They are things that you can tweak,

they are things that you can think about subtly. How are we describing boys here? How are we describing girls? What messages are we giving these young people about who they are and their capacity and capability and how they should be in the world?

We can do it in all sorts of ways, big and small. That is just a small anecdote to help illustrate that point.

I will move on. I was talking about the damaging societal attitudes and patterns we need to dismantle. Moving on from those gender roles and stereotypes, we also have to look at toxic forms of male bonding, and exhibitions of aggressive masculinity that directly disrespect and are hostile towards women, towards things that are regarded as feminine, and are dismissive of those things - both broadly, but also certainly within other males.

We have to look at social norms that place men more readily into decision-making and leadership roles, and relegate women's voices into subservient roles, into less featured roles, into less heard roles. We have to look at the excuses - those excuses that are made all too readily that absolve men of responsibility when they are aggressive, or abusive, or even violent in their behaviour.

This motion from the member for Murchison calls for a whole-of-government, whole-of-parliament approach to raising awareness, challenging attitudes and considering law reform. I support that call, but add this must be alongside a whole-of-family and whole-of-community approach.

It is everyone's business, but to be even more pointed about where responsibility lies, it is the business of each and every one of us every day at home, at work, at play, out in our community. Sometimes saying it is everyone's business means that it is no-one's business. I want to be absolutely explicit that it is in fact the business of each and every one of us to make the change that is needed.

It is a huge task. It is at times difficult and confronting as I have already spoken about. It takes consideration. It takes analysis, strategic and purposeful action and most importantly it will also take time. Having said that, I do not believe we have reached an appropriate level of urgency in our approach and actions to this issue.

Thirty-six Australian women have been killed in 2020. We have heard that numerous times today already. Five of those have been in the last 20 days and the physical manifestation of violence against women - particularly homicide as its most extreme expression - is just the tip of the iceberg. Every single one of the 36 murders of Australian women this year by a partner or a former partner is abhorrent. Every single one is an utter tragedy. Every single one is a shocking waste of life and it must be unimaginable painful for the families and friends and communities each of those 36 women had around them.

It is the tip of the iceberg though. It is the tip of the iceberg of that tragedy of shocking waste of life and abhorrent reality too many Australian and Tasmanian women are living.

The member for Murchison has spoken of the work of Our Watch, a national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. That

organisation works to embed gender equality and prevent violence where Australians live, learn, work and socialise.

They are an excellent organisation with excellent materials that are educative and informed. Our Watch tells us the actions that will help prevent violence against women include challenging the condoning of violence against women, not accepting that violence against women is normal, or inevitable, and challenging any social norms structures and practices that condone or excuse it. They say promoting women's independence and decision-making is essential. Ensuring women have access to the same resources, power and opportunities as men. They also say challenging gender stereotypes and roles and confirming that supporting children, young people and adults to develop positive personal identities free of those restrictive gender stereotypes is essential.

Particularly, they highlight promoting gender equitable roles in parenting, as well as in work and other areas among our community. Home is important as well as in public. As they strengthen, positive equal and respectful relationships must be part of this equation. Challenging disrespectful behaviour towards women and assumptions men should have power and control. Working with children and young people to promote respect and gender equality as they are raised at home, school and in our community.

These are valuable guideposts for us in taking action but, most specifically, I highlight the particular role government can take to provide a better and more effective support to those who are experiencing family violence now.

The section of the motion pertinent here is point (3)(e), which says provide adequate resourcing to support the victims of family violence predominantly women and children to access safe shelter, financial support, social support, access to justice, legal aid, psychological and therapeutic support.

We live in a community with insufficient affordable housing such that thousands experience homelessness, including thousands of women and children turned away from emergency housing services. We have heard about two women's services delivering emergency accommodation to Hobart women - one in the Kingston area and one in the Hobart area. Twelve women a month from the Huon region was the figure given to us by the member for Huon, who are turned away. The member for Murchison mentioned 219 women a month are turned away from the Hobart Women's Shelter.

This is the stark reality of a lack of affordable housing, because we cannot move women through those emergency services and into more secure, permanent accommodation by which they can escape their current situation. The number of women who can only exit emergency accommodation back into situations of violence is abhorrent and astounding in a community that claims to be civilised, that claims to be a compassionate and kind society.

We also live in a community that sees women financially disadvantaged throughout their working lives and in their retirement. We live in a community in which access to justice can be traumatising to women and children and Legal Aid is in many times rationed with many missing out.

While I acknowledge investment is being made by Government in these area, the simple reality is it is not enough. We are not planning to actually solve this issue. We are not investing

sufficiently to support Tasmanian women to be safe. We are not doing enough. It is as simple as that. Tasmania is not unique in this entirely insufficient response. Indeed, state governments alone cannot be imposed upon to address this problem in isolation. Yes, it is their responsibility, but it is also a community and a national responsibility. Governments, however, should take a leadership role.

In early March this year ahead of a Council of Australian Governments - COAG - meeting of women's safety ministers from around the country, a letter was written by the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance - AWAVA - and Fair Agenda; it was signed by 67 groups from around the country. It outlined five clear areas from around our nation to the federal government and the state governments that need improvement. The five actions in that letter signed by those 67 groups include -

- fully funding specialist services that keep women and children safe
- putting kids' safety first in the family law system -

Actually make change -

- ensuring those facing safety risks can be identified and correctly referred to frontline workers
- improving AVO standards and ensuring everyone's calls for help can be heard.

The letter that had those five clear actions stated -

Women can't afford for this meeting to only result in more plans and promises of future action. Alongside long-term plans, we need these five immediate changes to urgently improve women and children's safety.

Dr Merrindahl Andrew, program manager for AWAVA said governments cannot simply point to plans that have been written as if that is all that is required in order to make women safe. She said -

The plan isn't worth the paper it's written on if it's not matched with adequate resourcing of services, and changes to the systems that perpetuate this crisis

Further, she said -

With increasing awareness of the issue, and a public focus on changing attitudes, more women than ever before are seeking greater safety and support from services. Without full funding of the specialist services that women rely on to be safe, the current national action plan is set on a course to fail.

The COAG Women's Safety Council has met numerous times since March, most recently this month. Those actions advocated for by dozens of groups nationally have not been taken up or funded in a meaningful way. National advocates and those in the sector estimate current funding needs to be quadrupled to adequately address demand.

I finish by acknowledging the essential and excellent work done by Tasmanian services providing support and assistance to women and children affected by family violence. I acknowledge Relationships Australia which provides counselling and other support to people who have experienced violence and abuse. It provides programs, groups and courses for people who have used anger, violence or abuse in their interpersonal relationships and want to find new ways of relating to others to not harm. They run the Men Engaging in New Strategies - MENS - program designed for men who have hurt or abused their partners or ex-partners and who are ready to take responsibility for their behaviour. That program is specifically for men who are perpetrators of low- to medium-risk family violence.

I also acknowledge Engender Equality, a statewide, not-for-profit organisation that supports people affected by family and domestic violence in Tasmania. It offers counselling face to face, by phone and online, and it offers, importantly, education and training and advocacy for change. It is a leadership voice on this topic in this state.

I also acknowledge the Women's Legal Service Tasmania, a community legal service offering free statewide assistance to women. It provides advice and referral on all legal matters, including family law and family violence. I acknowledge the Hobart Women's Shelter, which specialises in issues relating to domestic and family violence, gender discrimination and homelessness as it relates to women and their children in Tasmania.

The Hobart Women's Shelter is also a partner in the Mentors in Family Violence Prevention Program. This is training that promotes participants as empowered bystanders who can confront, interrupt or prevent violence. The other groups involved in delivering that program are Engender Equality, Women's Health Tasmania and the Women's Legal Service. It is funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund. I acknowledge Jireh House, which is a welcoming supportive crisis accommodation service for women and children in Tasmania.

I acknowledge Women's Health Tasmania, a service run by women for women. They provide counselling and a free call information line. It has a community nurse and provides financial assistance through the No Interest Loans Scheme. It also runs a range of very well participated in wellbeing activities such as yoga, tai chi and meditation.

I acknowledge CatholicCare which provides the Safe Choices program. It is a service for children, young people and adults affected by family violence. This is a non-crisis service that can help with decision-making, exit planning and practical support. CatholicCare also runs specialised family violence services for couples and individuals dealing with issues related to controlling aggressive, violent or abusive behaviours in their relationships. That program provides help for all the family through a service focusing on the needs and the safety of each family member.

Finally, I mention the Tasmanian Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. That is part of the Tasmanian Government's Safe at Home initiative. It has services available to anyone, including children and young people, who need support or information because of their partner, ex-partner or family member who is or has been violent or abusive to them.

That is not an exhaustive list of Tasmanian services that provide support in this space and I apologise to those I may not have mentioned. I extend my personal thanks to all those services and individuals in this state that are providing assistance and safety to Tasmanian

women. I thank the member for Murchison for highlighting this urgent and important issue and I reiterate my full support for this motion.

[5.23 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence has provided quite comprehensive notes addressing the member for Murchison's notice of motion and hopefully covering all her points and adding a lot more information that may be of help.

The Tasmanian Government remains strongly committed to eliminating family and sexual violence in Tasmania. Since the launch of Safe Homes, Safe Families, Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-20, the Tasmanian Government has made significant progress to address family and sexual violence in Tasmania and keeping women and their children safe.

On 1 July 2019 the former premier, the Honourable Will Hodgman MP, launched Safe Homes, Families, Communities, Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-22, which represents the next stage of the Tasmanian Government's long-term commitment to preventing and responding to family violence and a new response to sexual violence. Actions in Safe Homes, Families, Communities builds on efforts to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence delivered through Safe at Home, Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence and community-based specialist services funded by the Tasmanian Government.

In recognition of an ongoing commitment to reducing family violence the Tasmanian violence portfolio was maintained by the incoming premier, the Honourable Peter Gutwein MP. Safe Homes, Safe Families, Communities continues to deliver a whole-of-government response through a coordinated effort between government agencies.

Safe Homes, Families, Communities invests \$26 million over three years for 40 actions to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence in Tasmania under three priority areas: primary prevention and early intervention; response and recovery; and strengthening the service system.

The Tasmanian Government is working with the Australian Government to implement the fourth National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22, called the National Plan. The National Plan brings together Australian, state and territory governments and the community to reduce domestic family and sexual violence in Australia. The fourth and final action plan of the National Plan was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments on 9 August 2019. It sets an ambitious but practical agenda to achieve change and reduce the unacceptable acts of violence against women and their children.

The fourth action plan includes 20 practical actions under five national priority areas. They are: primary prevention is key; support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children; respect, listen and respond to the diverse lived experience and knowledge of women and their children affected by violence; respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment; improve support and service systemic responses.

Tasmania is implementing the National Plan through delivering Safe Homes, Families, Communities, Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-22 and the

Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018-21, Safe at Home and a number of other policies, programs and services delivered across government that align with the National Plan's outcome. This approach ensures our actions are coordinated across agencies and continue to address the priority areas for Tasmania as identified by stakeholders and the community.

Actions in Safe Homes, Families, Communities that raise awareness of family violence and challenge the attitudes that maintain the status quo are addressed with a new priority focus on primary prevention. Primary prevention aims to stop violence before it occurs by addressing the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence. The need to invest in primary prevention was identified in development of the new action plan through the family violence service system review and community consultation.

Action 2 was establishing an Our Watch Primary Prevention Officer in Tasmania. The Our Watch Primary Prevention Officer will build primary prevention capacity, capability and expertise in Tasmania. They will work closely with government and non-government services to implement key Our Watch projects in Tasmania, work with Our Watch ambassadors to promote primary prevention activities in Tasmania and provide organisations with technical advice and expertise on building primary prevention in their organisations and communities.

Since commencing in this role in March 2020, the Our Watch Primary Prevention Officer has begun detailed project planning and work planning, including stakeholder identification and mapping, met with some key government and community sector stakeholders to scope settings for primary prevention initiatives, and has made contact with the family and sexual violence consultative group.

Action 1, the membership of Our Watch. Our Watch is the national primary prevention organisation established to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children. As an Our Watch member, we are contributing to the national efforts to realise the vision of an Australia where women and their children live free from all forms of violence.

Action 7 is to develop a family and sexual violence website. On 16 June 2020, the Tasmanian Government launched the Safe from Violence website - Tasmania's essential information portal with clear targeted information for victims, survivors, for perpetrators, for family and friends, children and young people, service providers and workplaces.

The Tasmanian Government prioritised the development and launch of Safe from Violence, so it could reach those who need it most during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Action 10 is supporting Tasmanian Aboriginal communities to deliver targeted primary prevention programs. This action recognises that Aboriginal communities want a more meaningful role in developing programs and responses. This action aligns with a Closing the Gap refresh, which recognises that in order to effect real change, governments must work collaboratively and in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Safe Homes, Families, Communities also commits to support two national primary prevention campaigns. That is Action 4, which supports the successful national campaign, Stop it at the Start. This action supports implementation of the next phase of the national campaign, to be delivered under the fourth action plan of the National Plan.

Action 5 - support implementation of the new national sexual violence campaign. This action will support development and delivery of a new sexual violence campaign under the fourth action plan of the National Plan.

Actions that relate to providing evidence based targeted and community education programs are the following, which is Action 3 - embed respectful relationship education in all Tasmanian government schools. This action supports ongoing delivery of embedded respectful relationships education. Respectful relationships education supports students and school communities to build healthy, respectful and equal relationships, and address the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence.

Action 6 - continue to ensure that gender equality and respect are at the centre of all Tasmanian State Service workplaces. Under Safe Homes, Safe Families, six departments received White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation with three departments due to be accredited in 2019-20. This action builds on the achievements of WRWA, and aims to further support the Tasmanian State Service to ensure that gender equality and respect are at the centre of all workplaces.

Action 8 - work with the eSafety Commissioner to deliver education and training in response to technology-facilitated abuse. Under this action, the Tasmanian Government will support and promote e-safety education and training opportunities in Tasmania. The eSafety Commissioner coordinates and leads online safety efforts across government, industry and the community.

Safe Homes, Families, Communities is committed to further law reform, to promote and support the safety of victims with the following actions.

Action 30 - implement legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family and sexual violence. Safe Homes, Safe Families had a strong focus on strengthening the legislative process to family violence and several key reforms have been progressed since 2015. Additional investment under this action plan will enable the Government to continue its focus on reform to ensure the legal system remains responsive to family and sexual violence.

Actions in Safe Homes, Families, Communities that relate to the response and recovery of the victim survivors of family and sexual violence include Action 14, which is deliver Safe Choices. Safe Choices is a statewide non-crisis service that provides practical information and supports, advice and referrals to people experiencing family violence, and those who want to leave violent relationships.

Safe Choices can also be accessed by family and friends seeking information or support. Safe Choices is delivered by CatholicCare through face-to-face services based in Hobart, Burnie and Launceston, and a statewide phone line service and website. I think the member for Nelson may have mentioned that.

Action 16 - support children and their families through the Safe Homes, Safe Families support team. The Safe Homes, Safe Families support team is made up of social workers and psychologists across the state, who respond to notifications from the Safe Families Coordination Unit, and work with principals, child and family centres and school-based support staff to determine how to best support the child or the children involved. The support team is

also a conduit to Safe at Home, with the information they provide at weekly Safe at Home integrated case-coordination meetings critical to informing responses.

The support team has supported thousands of students through direct work with individual children and/or small-group intervention with siblings, and also through secondary consultation with key school support staff. This means that as well as direct sessions with children, schools have the knowledge to put structures in place to support children and families.

Action 17 - support Aboriginal families through the Aboriginal Family Safety Workers in Child and Family Centres, the CFCs. Aboriginal Family Safety Workers based in the CFCs provide culturally appropriate support, engaging with Aboriginal families to deliver activities that promote family safety and address family violence and its impact on children. Aboriginal Family Safety Workers have worked with thousands of Aboriginal parents and children since they commenced the CFCs. As well as engaging with families by leading or participating in activities with CFCs, the workers have supported women to navigate criminal justice and specialist and mainstream service systems, including transport, advocacy and support at appointments. They have supported families to attend child health appointments, and facilitated referrals to other community services, such as mental health services.

Action 18 - provide increased counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence. This action addresses findings from the comprehensive family violence service system review undertaken in Tasmania 2018-19, which identifies a need to increase support for children and young people impacted by family violence.

Since the launch of Safe Homes, Safe Families, the Australian Childhood Foundation - the ACF - has provided over 5000 hours of additional hours of counselling for children and young people. As well as working directly with children and young people, ACF is working with parents and carers to address trust-building and parenting capacity, to support children through therapeutic counselling. Under this action, ACF has also been funded to deliver a one-year pilot of group programs for families before they commence therapeutic counselling. These programs are designed to build parent capacity, and support children to be counselling-ready.

Action 19 - provide counselling services for adults experiencing family violence. This action supports ongoing delivery of statewide counselling services for adults experiencing family violence. Since the launch of Safe Homes, Safe Families, Engender Equality has delivered over 5000 additional hours of counselling.

Action 21 is to deliver the Rapid Rehousing program for people experiencing family violence. This action supports ongoing delivery of the Rapid Rehousing program, which provides supported housing options for families affected by family violence, allowing them to access safe and affordable rental homes. As part of the family and sexual findings in our Social and Economic Support package in response to COVID-19, \$260 000 has been allocated to increase the Rapid Rehousing pool by 20 additional properties.

Action 22 - deliver the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program. This program provides access to security upgrades for women and children experiencing family violence, so they can remain safe in their own home, or a home of their choice. This action is funded by the Australian Government, under the National Plan.

Action 23 - provide legal assistance to people experiencing family violence. This action supports ongoing delivery of legal assistance to ensure people experiencing family violence have access to legal advice and representation to meet their complex legal needs. Services delivered under this action include legal advice, representation and outreach services, provision of legal education and training across Tasmania, and collaboration with other legal and non-legal service providers to assist and support people affected and at risk of family violence.

The Tasmanian Government is also increasing investment to hold perpetrators to account and deliver programs to drive behaviour change including introducing the ability to require a perpetrator to complete a behaviour change program as part of the family violence order - action 25.

Police and emergency services have an important role as first responders in incidents of family violence. Police officers throughout the state have received specialist family violence training to provide enhanced service to victims of family violence. Each of the three police geographical districts have a dedicated family violence unit. Members of these teams are able to provide a range of services to support victims in crisis situations and improve their safety. Safe at Home, Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence involves a range of services working together to address the risk and safety needs of victims and children and hold perpetrators accountable. It utilises a pro-arrest, pro-prosecution policy to address family violence completed by a human services approach to support recovery and change.

Safe at Home was recognised for its response to family violence when awarded gold in the community-led category of the 2019 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention awards. The awards recognise best practice in the prevention or reduction of violence and other types of crimes in Australia and play a vital role in highlighting effective community based initiatives to prevent crime and violence before it occurs.

To further demonstrate the Tasmanian Government's commitment to eliminating family violence on 26 March 2020 the Tasmanian Government was the first in Australia to announce dedicated funding in response to family and sexual violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in addition to the \$26 million allocated to Safe Homes, Families, Communities.

Our funding commitment of \$2.7 million has been allocated across the family violence service system including \$1.9 million for Safe at Home, Tasmania's whole-of-government integrated criminal justice response to family violence, with more on the ground workers around the state in all areas including the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, the Safe at Home Coordination Unit, Court Support and Liaison Service, legal support and police prosecution. Then there was the \$260 000 to increase the Rapid Rehousing pool by providing an additional 20 properties for families and individuals leaving a violent relationship by 30 June 2020. There was \$310 000 which has already been provided to community based specialist family violence support services to increase their operational capacity to deliver support. There was \$100 000 to establish one-off flexibility support packages for up to \$6000 to support victims/survivors leaving abusive relationships access essential items and/or emergency accommodation; and \$100 000 for a communications project, which includes the development and distribution of posters and postcards promoting the specialist support services available to help these impacted by family and sexual violence and promoting key messages to the community, including that the COVID-19 is no excuse for violence.

On 29 March 2020, the Australian Government announced a \$150 million package to support Australians experiencing family and sexual violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. On 30 April 2020, the Premier and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, the Honourable Peter Gutwein, signed the national partnership agreement on COVID-19 domestic and family violence responses which will provide \$130 million from the Australian Government's package to the states and territories to support immediate responses to family and sexual violence and to ensure services can continue to support those who need it most.

Under the national partnership, Tasmania received \$1.513 million in 2019-20. This funding has been allocated across government and non-government services, including \$1.5 million for the delivery of projects and programs following a public call for a submissions process held in May 2020. We certainly support this motion and note it.

[5.45 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I am making a short contribution because my main contribution would be in the other motion I will probably move next time we sit in relation to the viewing of the electronic monitoring report and the trial, so I refer to that.

I thank the member for bringing this matter forward and certainly support it. I support the noting of it. We could have programed much stronger really when we start to look at domestic violence family violence and the fact so much is occurring.

I continually raise in this House and query the police's position on this when year in, year out we see increased numbers of people reporting domestic violence. The police have said over a number of years it is possibly through more reporting, not that we are seeing more family violence occurring.

I have a different view and think we really need to look at and find out whether that is in fact right and whether there are simply more people reporting, rather than more offences of domestic violence occurring. We could do a lot more in that area.

As a former police officer, I have worked in this area for a long time. I have seen and experienced it. I have attended homes where the victim has been bashed, suffering injuries, burns and broken bones. I have visited victims in morgues. I have visited victims in many different areas. It is an absolutely distressing and terrible situation, but it is interesting the number of females who have been assaulted and continually withdraw charges, who say, and I have experienced it many times and it would still be happening - 'I deserved it.'

A number of women make that statement - 'He was drunk.'

Ms Forrest - That is what coercive control does.

Mr DEAN - You are right. 'He was drunk; he did not know what he was doing.' That sort of thing.

Ms Forrest - Coercive control.

Mr DEAN - It is, yes. It is a control method. You are absolutely right.

Mr Valentine - It is probably quite often the case they are the breadwinner too and they do not want to lose the -

Mr DEAN - You are right. That is a good point and the victim sees that in many instances. They do not have a house. If they have to move, they have to leave the area. They do not have a house they can probably go to. Things are now changing in that area where the offender is being moved and there is more support being given to the victim in these cases.

It is not only the victim, the person who received whatever form of violence who suffers. We see children suffering. We see children dying as a result. Children suffer probably forever as a result of it and grow up with the position it is acceptable behavior. We see that happening.

Ms Forrest - Like that little girl I talked to.

Mr DEAN - It is an accepted behavior that they are entitled to bash, and particularly their partners. They grow up believing that. It is a terrible situation.

What are we really doing to get on top of this? We talk about it - education is referred to. The member for Murchison referred to education and so on, but it comes to more than education. There has to be much more proactive policing being done in this area. It is easy to talk about it because they will ask, 'What do you suggest should happen?'

Police in many instances will be able to tell you who is going to be assaulted and who the assailants are going to be. They know it in their families. They can tell you that this partner is going to be a victim of domestic violence because they know very well the family situation and the set-up. They know the nature of the person these people are living with. A lot of these male offenders are serial offenders. They move from one household to another. They do exactly the same sorts of things - manipulation, assaulting, standover tactics and goodness knows what else. It is a horrible situation.

We talk about domestic violence and family violence. The situation in Queensland the member referred to was the pinnacle of violence that we will ever see.

Ms Forrest - It shocked Australia.

Mr DEAN - That is not the only one that shocked Australia. I still have an interest in true crime. I watch it whenever I am able to. There was a program on Sunday night, I do not know who watched it, about a man who was dubbed 'The Madman'. It was an Australian crime. He has only just recently been arrested, been before the court and was found guilty of all charges, a number of murders. Some people might recall that he bombed the courthouse he was supposed to be going to the next day. This happened over many years. He was never caught up with. He was able to beat the police; he was able to beat everybody else. He shot a judge who was involved in his earlier case. He bombed the house and killed the wife of the judge. He bombed the Jehovah Witnesses' premises and killed a person there as well. This is in Australia. He committed so many horrible crimes.

Ms Forrest - They have him now.

Mr DEAN - Yes, they have got him now. He was found guilty of all these charges. He is now 60-something years of age and is to be sentenced shortly. It all started over his domestic

behaviour with his wife. She told the story of how she was assaulted by him on a fairly regular basis. Kicked and goodness knows what else. There was a child by the relationship, a young girl. When she moved out, she took the young child with her. This is when he started to commit these actions. He got rid of anybody who became involved in helping her, even the lawyer who was working for the family at one stage. He set up a bomb in her car. Thankfully, it was found before it exploded. It is a horrible situation but all domestic violence-related. It shows the extremes people will go to in some situations, the anger that they have.

We have a lot of work to do. I cannot be satisfied we are doing enough in this area. People might say, 'What more can we do?' I think there is a lot more that we can do. I thank the honourable member for bringing it forward. It is something that should be on our agenda fairly frequently in my view to get some real action being taken in relation to this.

Look at the amount of police time that is taken up involving domestic violence. I still have a son there. He tells me that a big part of his police time is taken up on domestic violence. It would occupy hundreds of police annually dealing with domestic violence issues.

Ms Forrest - And all the breaches. If you talk to the women, the breaches take two or three hours every time.

Mr DEAN - Yes, they do.

Ms Forrest - And they are breaching by video three or four times a week.

Mr DEAN - It would be interesting to know the number of people in Tasmania who are subject to domestic violence orders; who are being controlled through the courts by these restraining orders at this time. I think it would probably be thousands - not fifty, not a hundred, but thousands.

I thank the member for bringing it forward; certainly, I will be noting it.

[5.55 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I thank members for their contributions on this particularly serious matter. I agree with the member for Windermere. We should have this on the agenda regularly because we do need to keep checking in.

That was part of the desire behind the nonpartisan approach that I asked to take. I may have phased out during the Leader's contribution, which was very informative, but I do not recall her referring to that part of the motion. What is the Government's view on that? You talked about all the money, the targets, the action plan, all of those things. I am disappointed that there was not a comment. I will be following what the Government's intention and the Premier's intention is with that.

I think it is only through working together that all the good ideas are shared. No-one is the custodian of all good ideas in this space. We all, as the member for Nelson pointed out, have a role to play in this, individually, collectively, community-wide, statewide, nationwide, worldwide. I am pretty sure the Leader did not address that. I listened pretty intently, but I will be happy to hear to the contrary at a later time.

Just focusing on the Leader's contribution for a moment, I want to go back to a couple of points that were raised. It is all well and good to talk about all the actions and that sort of thing, but we do need to be reviewing the outcomes of these actions. It is all well and good to say, 'We are doing this, we are spending this, the extra money for rehousing, for example.' But I hear from the counsellors in my area that they still cannot get women into safe places. So, whilst the commitment is there, and that is commendable, the outcome of those initiatives is still falling short.

These are things that I will continue to raise. As you know I have a heart for this. That was one of the reasons I joined the Engender Equality board, because I think I can have a direct impact there. It is a matter that is a national disaster, a national shame, a national crisis. It is a state crisis and we need to address it.

In the Leader's contribution she talked about the importance of listening to women and children. That is absolutely right. They have to be believed. We have to understand the impact on them. There is nothing worse for a person in these circumstances not to be believed because they might just get the strength once, the courage and self-confidence once, to say it. If they are not heard and they are not believed, they may not have the strength to do it again. It takes enormous courage to build yourself up to a point where you are strong enough to say, 'I need help with this.' In a coercive controlled relationship that is what it is like. The focus on primary prevention is really important.

As the member for Nelson pointed out, it is not something that is inevitable. It is not something that is part of the way it is. It is, it actually occurs now, but it should not. I go to the member for Windermere's comment. It comes back to gender inequality, lack of respect, an expectation of power to be held by the perpetrator, usually male. It is this inherent right. Jess Hill talks about this in her book; that right to have the power that men in these circumstances feel. They believe it is their right.

We need to help people understand what that looks like. That comes back to the education. This is all part of it. The Leader talked about the Respectful Relationships program in schools. How often have I heard pushback from some of the Liberal members on Respectful Relationships in schools?

I commend Jeremy Rockliff, as the Minister for Education, for really taking it up with some of his party colleagues who were trying to get rid of it because they thought it was some takeover by the LGBTI community. I told him I would back him every step of the way because that is what we need in our schools. We need respectful relationships. We need the equivalent of 'shark cage'.

We need to empower our young girls and help our boys to understand what it looks like to be equal. Language is important. I watch my son and daughter-in-law raising their two little boys. Unfortunately, I cannot see them because they are in Melbourne. I keep going back to that because it is hard. There are plenty of parents doing this, but I am so proud of them. They have two little boys and their language is totally gender-neutral. When the fire alarm goes off, we see the firefighters, we see the police officers, we see the nurses who are probably male and we talk about those. Language is really important. Let's get rid of terms like firemen, policemen. They are firefighters, police officers - nurses is a gender-neutral term and we need to be clear about that because if we do not, we perpetuate those attitudes and behaviours. Women and females fit into that caring, nurturing role and men are the tough ones going off to

protect us all from harm. We have to change those attitudes and behaviours. Cultural change is difficult and hard, and we have to stand up and call it out when it happens.

In my contribution, I talked about the number of people who do not call out sexual harassment when they see it. We have an obligation to do it. I was watching what was happening with AMP recently. I do not have any investment in AMP but by the powers if I had done, I would have been on that campaign that has now seen the chair and the CEO gone. They got rid of the women on the board, basically crucified them and then they put in a guy who has been up on charges. They are gone now. Shareholders need to take a stand. I recently wrote to the Australian Institute of Company Directors, of which I am a member, because I am not happy they do not have a program that supports women who are taking time out to have a family with reduced fees. CPA do, not the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Chartered Professional Accountants, and a whole range of other organisations do that. AICD do not. They told me they have a panel looking at it now. If they do not do something about it, I am likely to resign my membership and they will be told that at a later time if they do not do something about it. I will not be part of an organisation that does not respect women the way we need to see them respected.

If men need to take time out to look after their children, the same should apply. Sometimes women are the main breadwinner in those families. In the corporate world it needs to be called out in whatever way we engage with that.

The member for Windemere said that women often withdraw charges or they say they deserved it. I want to go back to the description of what coercive control looks like and I encourage you to read to Jess Hill's book. It gives you a much broader understanding. This is a brief synopsis of what it is. It is an ongoing system of control in which the abusive partner seeks to override the partner's autonomy and destroy their sense of self. When you have no sense of self, you believe you deserved it. - 'If only I hadn't burnt the chops'; 'If only I had the floor vacuumed before he came home'; 'If only I put this curtain straight.'. There is an account in Jess Hill's book or somewhere else I read where a husband asked his wife what things she cared about in the house. She named up two or three things, thinking what is it he wants me to say here. I cannot remember the exact story. The member for Nelson might remember this account in the book, but there were three important things she named she thought he would be happy to hear she was concerned about in the house. She did not mention it was either the colour or the hang of the curtains. She got beaten for not caring about the curtains. This woman is living in fear the whole time. Fear does things to your head when you do not get a break. It almost drives you insane.

If you do not know what gaslighting is, look it up.

Mrs Hiscutt - I was looking through a really old CWA recipe book and there were tips for young housewives. 'Before your husband comes home, clean the faces of your children. Put on a pretty dress. He has had a hard day.

Ms FORREST - Get your makeup right and your hair done. Put on your pinny.

Mrs Hiscutt - It has been there for a long time.

Ms FORREST - It is a cultural thing we have to change. It is harder in some of our rural areas because those cultural norms have persisted longer than some of our more urbanised

areas, so we have work to do. But it is women who are fearful all the time of 'What is going to be the thing I need to watch?'

Who was it when they mentioned the raised eyebrow? That was the member for Hobart. That is one of the things - if you are out at a social function with a partner who is abusive and say something to one of your friends and get the look - it is often the subtlest of things, no one else might even see it and you think, holy cow, I know what is happening when I get home.

The other thing is to do this control, to turn their partner into a willing slave or subordinate. They isolate - think about your friends who might be isolated. You ring up and say you want to go out for a coffee - 'Oh, I'd love to but I can't today.' You ring up two days later - 'I'd love to but I can't today.' Micro-manage them, humiliate them. How often have you seen your friends who are women humiliated?

They then degrade them - 'Geez, you look fat in that!', 'I wouldn't have worn that', 'Did you look in the mirror before you went out?' - those sorts of comments.

They surveil them. They watch their moves, track them on their phones. If they turn off their tracking on the phone, you know what happens then. They gaslight them. If you do not know what gaslighting means, I will go into that. You need to understand what gaslighting is - it does your head in because you start to think you are going mad. You start to think you must be wrong because he keeps telling you that you are wrong. What you think you saw you did not see. What you heard you did not hear. What you thought you did not think. It is hard to imagine how difficult that is if you have not experienced it. They create this environment of confusion, contradiction and extreme threat and, as Min Grob said in a tweet, 'You become disoriented. You become hypervigilant.'

You know the people who become hypervigilant like police officers with post-traumatic stress disorder, they actually end up with mental health issues often as a result in PTSD.

You are confused. You are often sleep-deprived because you cannot sleep because you are fearful of what happens if you go to sleep. You could be raped in your sleep - you would wake up most likely, but you are walking on eggshells.

These are the sorts of things coercive control looks like and you cannot often see them from the outside. So they are the things we really do need to be aware of and we need to look at how we change cultures, language and how we deal with that power and control desired by those who perpetrate and being aware they sometimes do it out of their own shame.

Jess writes a whole chapter on shame, an enormous issue for men in these sorts of relationships. They are the families in Sandy Bay, down the Huon, up in the north-west; in the north-east, Launceston, in Circular Head; they are the families everywhere. You cannot tell by looking at them. The women who escape this recover enough to come out and to talk about it. They will tell you of the very ordinary lives they came from. It could be anyone of us, anyone of your friends. It could be anybody and it is anybody because during that process their self-worth, confidence and their sense of self has been destroyed, they do not have any money - that is also controlled so they cannot safely leave, they have nowhere to go.

On 20 May this year - we are talking about innovative things that can be done - a new rule was put out for Australians fleeing family violence to help them gain financial

independence. AUSTRAC announced a change to the AML/CTF customer ID and verification rules to help people who are experiencing family and domestic violence so women who are escaping could actually get their own bank account in their own name without having to have all the usual identity checks at the first point. This is crucially important because if you do not have any money, what are you going to do?

In this article, which came from the Austrac website, it said that financial abuse is a form of family and domestic violence that will be experienced by over 2 million Australians over their lifetime, with 63 per cent of women experiencing financial stress having a background of financial abuse. That was a really welcome change that assists bank staff to help people fleeing family violence. Often they leave in such a rush, they do not have the necessary paperwork. They just had to get out while they could.

I thank all the members for their contributions on this. We need to focus on primary prevention. We need to address the underlying issues of gender inequality. We need innovative systems to enable people to access support, code words, different ways. There are some websites you can go on to seek help, and there is a quick exit button, so if someone comes into the room you can just shut it down really quickly so they cannot see what you have been doing or searching. Women need to know that it is okay. If they get caught looking at something like that, the repercussions are quite severe for many of them.

Violence against women is not normal, and it is avoidable. We need to be alert to it at all levels. We do not know what the triggering event might be for a woman who may be experiencing coercive control, but then the next act is the final act of murder, as in Hannah Clarke's position, where she was not hit until she was murdered.

This is an article from the Women's Agenda. It highlights how triggers can be really weird. I will just read a very brief part of this story -

In the middle of 2018 Amelia [not her real name] watched an episode of *60 Minutes* with her ex-husband when a segment called Black Widow came on.

'It was about domestic violence,' she explains. A drunken man was beating his wife over the head with a frying pan. He momentarily lost control of the pan and she got hold of a knife that she held at her chest with the blade towards him.

'She did not move, she was only holding a knife and he was taunting her,' Amelia remembers. "C'mon stab me, stab me' he said and then walked onto the blade.'

The cut was only 14mm deep but he died. Amelia remembers every detail vividly because of what happened the next day.

These are her words -

'The following morning I was making breakfast in the kitchen when my ex took a large knife and pointed the blade towards me and my belly,' she says.

'I froze in fear. I was heavily pregnant, I couldn't possibly run away and I don't drive.'

The thing that worried her most was how much he appeared to enjoy watching her fear. 'He laughed,' she says.

A few months earlier she had attempted to escape and spent some time in a women's refuge.

'It was Mother's Day when I was in the refuge and psychologically that was very difficult,' she says. 'He peppered me with messages. 'Please come back.' 'I'm so sorry'. I'm so sorry.'

She went back.

'He promised so many times it would be different and apologised so many times. I thought he would change. Unfortunately the opposite happened. It got so much worse.'

Before the incident with the knife he had spoken, often, about the different ways he could kill her.

'He described in detail how I would die,' she says.

The knife was the final straw. Less than six weeks later, nursing a c-section scar and a 14-day old baby Amelia left. She called the police who picked her and the baby up. She went to the station to give a statement and a social worker then took her to a women's refuge where she stayed for nine weeks.

If it wasn't for intense fear, she asks, who would choose to run away from their home with a new baby so soon after major abdominal surgery?

Amelia now knows that her ex has a history of domestic violence, including a choking incident which is red flag for homicide.

If she had not left, she would not be here; she would be dead.

Mr President, we need to be aware that these are really serious matters and women need to be believed. I thank members for their support of the motion.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Consideration and Noting - Government Administration Committee A - Short Inquiry Process Report on Services and Supports Available to Tasmanians Not Eligible for the NDIS

[6.15 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I move -

That the report of Legislative Council Government Administration Committee A - Short Inquiry Process Report into Services and Supports Available to Tasmanians not Eligible for the NDIS - be considered and noted.

This report that the Government Administration Committee A undertook as a short inquiry process was following a request from the member for Pembroke to look at this matter - it seems like a century ago now - but it was to look at Tasmanians who were ineligible to access NDIS, or who had been unable to, and what Tasmanian Government support there was. We undertook a short inquiry process to look at the issue, and whether there needed to be a full inquiry into it. Subsequent to that, there has been a reshuffle in the ministerial positions and the minister responsible for Disability now sits with Committee B, of which the member for Pembroke was actually a member.

If there is to be a full inquiry, it is better that it is undertaken by Committee B, potentially; it is for the committee to consider. The recommendation our committee made was that consideration be given to the initiation of a full inquiry to assess services for Tasmanians with a disability who are not eligible for the NDIS, and that this report be provided to Committee B to consider that recommendation.

It is up to Committee B to have a look at this, and to decide things may have moved on, things may have changed. However, the information the committee received from the minister, which was quite extensive, and from the NDIS as well, was really helpful.

I note this report - noting it is a step in the road - for further consideration potentially by Committee B, should they wish to.

[6.16 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, a short response from the Government.

I thank the member for Murchison, being chair of that particular committee. The Tasmanian Government is committed to the principle that people with disability have the same right to access services as all Australians.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS - in Tasmania is now supporting more people with disabilities than ever before. As at 31 March 2020, there was a total of 8707 participants with a funded plan with the NDIS in Tasmania. Of these, 4164 are receiving support for the first time. Clearly this is not everyone who identifies or is identifying as having a disability in Tasmania.

The services in place for people not eligible for the NDIS are the same services and supports that were available to people before the NDIS, plus the additional supports available through the NDIS. This is because the NDIS replaced the state-funded specialist service system. People not eligible for state-funded programs receive support through the broad - the mainstream - service system in place for all Tasmanians. People not eligible for the NDIS continue to receive support through the broad service system in place for all Tasmanians. This is unchanged.

What has changed as a result of the introduction of the NDIS is that 4164 people with disability in Tasmania now receive reasonable and necessary support for the first time through the NDIS. All Tasmanian services are required to make a reasonable adjustment to support people to access these services, to ensure people can access the supports they need to live an ordinary life.

Since the minister provided the information briefing, two key roles have been established as part of the NDIS that benefit Tasmanians: the Health Liaison Officer and the Justice Liaison Officer. These positions work with these systems to support access to the NDIS if required, and to support discharge or release for participants of the NDIS. The NDIS does not only provide funding to individuals, the Information Linkages and Capacity Building framework and investment strategy provides grants to organisations to deliver projects in the community that benefit all Tasmanians with disability, their carers and families. The ILC strategy has funded nine Tasmanian-based projects worth over \$11.5 million to deliver their services to all Australians with disability, inclusive of those not eligible for the NDIS.

In addition, the LAC Partners in the Community, Mission Australia and Baptcare have been contracted by the National Disability Insurance Agency to deliver ILC supports, including working to make the community more welcoming and inclusive for people with disability.

Mr President, at this time the Government does not support a full inquiry, but that could be a debate for another day. The Government has considered and noted the report.

[6.20 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, this was put up as going to be a full inquiry. I actually put my hand up and said, no, I do not think I can participate because of the workload at the time. Then it was decided we would do the short inquiry process. I was part of the committee for that.

I found it quite interesting and informative; the briefing from Mr Will Kestin, and indeed the information from the Government was quite informative. I was listening to the special interest matter the member for Nelson brought forward this morning. Her statistic was 25 per cent of Tasmanians live with a disability of some description. That is a lot of people, that is about 128 000 people.

There are many people who are severely affected by a disability. They have the opportunity to go forward and present for inclusion on the NDIS, or fight for inclusion on the NDIS. We heard there could be as many as 3000 people in Tasmania who are not accessing that, even though they may well fit the bill. It is all about resourcing, it is all about people having the opportunity. Many people simply do not know how to go about it and need direction and the like.

A fuller inquiry, if Committee B could find the space, would be really important. You can only think what it must be like to live with a disability. To go about life, everybody needs equal access to services. I hope Committee B finds time to do it.

Motion agreed to.

CORRECTIONS AMENDMENT (ELECTRONIC MONITORING) BILL 2020 (No. 27)

First Reading

Bill received from the House of Assembly and read the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Council at its rising adjourn to 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday,
26 August 2020.

I remind members of 8.45 a.m. start again tomorrow in Committee Room 2. There has been a little bit of a rearranging of the deck chairs. Mandy has sent forward the new briefing schedule.

Mr President, I move -

That the Council does now adjourn.

President's Statement - Former Members for Rosevears and Huon - Best Wishes

Mr PRESIDENT - Honourable members, before I put the question, at the start of the day we welcomed our new members. It is the end of the day and I would like to put on record that I wish the retiring Kerry Finch and Robert Armstrong all the best for their future. I am sure they enjoyed their time with us here in the Council. Life goes on for those gentlemen.

Motion agreed to.

The Council adjourned at 6.28 p.m.