



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 2 March 2022

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Wednesday 2 March 2022

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

QUESTIONS

Integrity of Government

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.02 a.m.]

Your bluff and denials will not stop us from seeking the truth in relation to matters of integrity particularly when it comes to the integrity of your Government's expenditure of \$100 million of public money because a pattern has emerged under your leadership. You claim to believe Adam Brooks when serious allegations he defrauded women were raised. Sarah Courtney remained in France despite it becoming very clear she needed to return. Jane Howlett told you there was no conflict of interest. Are you satisfied that each of these members showed you the respect of telling you the truth and respecting your leadership?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. It was interesting yesterday after three months away from this place that, at a time when the state had gone through a transition - at times difficult - to living with COVID-19 where we had seen some disruption - in fact, with the Leader of the Opposition on more than one occasion calling for the return of parliament towards the end of January, early February because there were so many questions to ask, what we had yesterday was just muckraking.

What was really interesting, the member that sits there with the white mask on, not part of the red army -

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask you to ask the member to withdraw that reference to the red army. It is unparliamentary and completely offensive.

Mr SPEAKER - I am not sure what you are referring to but if it is offensive and they take personal offence to it Premier, if you could withdraw?

Mr GUTWEIN - Mr Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition takes offence at that remark I withdraw it. The member with the white mask there is not part of the Squid Game group here.

The point I was going to make is that the member there with the white mask, who I do not think has asked a question since about April of last year when he was leader for a very short period of time, actually asked the only sensible question that we had from that side of the House.

Ms WHITE - Point of order. Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to standing order 45 on relevance. The Premier was asked a specific question about whether he believed he had been

treated with respect and whether his members had told him the truth. He is not going anywhere near the answer which probably tells you everything you need to know.

Mr SPEAKER - That is not a point of order. The Premier has the call.

Mr GUTWEIN - The point I was making is that whilst Mr O'Byrne, 'Dobbie' as he is called around the place, asked the only reasonable question from that side of the House yesterday, one that went to what was occurring in our health system and the people who work there. Yet what we heard from the Leader of the Opposition and disgracefully from Ms Dow, was muckraking. I say to Ms Dow that if she stands by her convictions and the question that she asked yesterday, go outside and raise it. I cannot wait until you have your first opportunity.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. Standing order 45, again relevance. If the Premier is unwilling to answer the question perhaps he should sit down.

Mr SPEAKER - Again, it is not a point of order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Once again, another inane interjection. I cannot wait until you are out on the lawn and the press get the opportunity to ask you and you will see whether you are a person of conviction or not. The one thing that we do know is that the Leader of the Opposition is, otherwise she would not have forced the deputy to ask that question yesterday.

On this matter I have made my position clear. I have explained the circumstances and I have nothing further to add.

Jane Howlett MLC - JackJumpers - Alleged Conflict of Interest

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.06 a.m.]

Are you satisfied that Jane Howlett told you the truth in relation to allegations that she had a conflict of interest as a result of her relationship with the CEO of the Tasmanian JackJumpers?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, again I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I again make this point: when I became aware, as a result of the media contacting my office a couple of Fridays ago now, I raised this with Ms Howlett. She categorically denied the rumours and when she came to see me to have a discussion last week she resigned. As I said, it was a very sad moment, to be frank, that she would need to leave for personal family reasons. She provided that explanation and I believe it.

COVID-19 - Outbreaks in Schools

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, CHILDREN and YOUTH, Mr JAENSCH

[10.08 a.m.]

Yesterday, 957 Tasmanians tested positive to COVID-19. Our active case load of 5037 people has been climbing every day since 15 February when there were about 3000 active cases. You have been silent on the impact of COVID-19 in schools. Parents and teachers have no idea about how many children are infected or the impact on classroom teaching and safety. Many of them are anxious about this.

Will you give an update to the House today about the total number of COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in primary and high schools? How many students and teachers have had or currently have COVID-19? How many teachers have been furloughed or returned to work COVID-19 positive with an exemption?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Dr Woodruff for her question and her interest in this important matter. The latest figures that I have in government schools in particular indicate that as of Monday, which is the latest period for which we have full figures, of 60 000-odd students across our government school system, we have about 1600 active cases. The very good news is, thankfully, that those cases generally are experiencing mild symptoms -

Ms O'Connor - You have been told not to use that word by the World Health Organisation itself.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor, order.

Mr JAENSCH - These cases are not in our schools. These children are at home. They have been tested at home. They have been kept at home and two-thirds of them are continuing to learn from home as well, using our online platform. There is minimal disruption to their learning, which is what our school environments are all about.

Dr Woodruff - Are they primary or high schools, minister?

Mr JAENSCH - Our latest advice is that there are no school-aged children being treated for COVID-19 in our state's hospitals, which is very comforting. It is something we continue to monitor very closely but it does put the lie to some of the extreme and rather hysterical statements that Ms O'Connor made yesterday and that she has been making over the last couple of months.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I take offence at that, because the minister is implying that the reasonable comments that were made by the Leader of the Greens about the impact of long-COVID-19 -

Mr SPEAKER - It is not a time for a statement. What is the point of order? It is not a point of order. It is not an opportunity to make statement. Please sit down then.

Mr JAENSCH - What I am attempting to do is to share with the public, through this parliament, the fact that the experience of COVID-19 in our schools is within the parameters that we expected -

Dr Woodruff - You have no idea about long-COVID-19.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff, order.

Mr JAENSCH - that we have planned for. The incidence of cases is currently being managed adequately through the planning that we put in place for weeks one to five. We are under way with planning for weeks six to 10 of the school year. We are watching the daily figures very carefully. While cases have been higher among cohorts where there is less mask-wearing, where there is -

Ms O'Connor - Unmasked, unvaccinated.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, I officially warn you. I am not going to put up with this all morning.

Mr JAENSCH - less, at this stage, vaccination. We are still leading the nation in the vaccination rates for the years 5 to 11 cohort. None of those -

Dr Woodruff - None of them have been properly vaccinated.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, if you do not want to have a warning then please be silent. You have asked the question; the minister is answering it.

Mr JAENSCH - We do not have school-aged children being treated for COVID-19 in our schools at this stage. We are very grateful for that. We monitor it very closely. It is very important to put on the record that the plans we have put in place, the circumstances we have anticipated are, to a large extent, unfolding as we had anticipated. We will continue to monitor them. Our plans are adequate. They are guided by Public Health. We have had wonderful cooperation from our schools, our school communities, parents who have been listening, who have been receiving information, who have been looking out for symptoms, who have been testing their kids at home and keeping their kids at home, supporting their learning at home so that they can return with minimal disruption.

I understand that there is acute interest in the community and we share the concern. We are on this. We are watching the figures very carefully -

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I asked about the furloughing of teachers, specific information. This is not the update that was requested in the question. Will the minister provide an update for the House?

Mr SPEAKER - I cannot put words in the minister's mouth.

Dr Woodruff - No, it is not, there is no breakdown of primary and high schools.

Mr JAENSCH - Mr Speaker, I will look into further data regarding breakdowns and ensure that I have up-to-date data. We receive data from our school system as well as from Public Health and I will provide what I can.

Land Tax Thresholds - Effect on Affordable Rent

Ms JOHNSTON question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.14 a.m.]

Yesterday you announced in your Premier's Address changes to land tax thresholds. You said:

When combined with the changes made last year, it will provide about \$220 million of tax relief for property owners over the next four years - to put downward pressure on rents.

We know that last year's cuts did not result in more affordable rent, quite the opposite in fact, with rents still significantly increasing and more and more Tasmanians experiencing housing stress. What measures is your Government going to introduce to specifically ensure that these land tax cuts get passed onto tenants? Or, is this all about making the rich richer and actually does nothing to help the thousands of Tasmanian families struggling to afford to put a roof over their heads?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the independent member for Clark for that question. I make the point, as I did yesterday, that land tax is one of the first building blocks of rent. If I had announced an increase in land tax, I am certain you would say I was putting upward pressure on rents. By lowering the level of land tax we lower one of the costs that is one of the major building blocks of rent, which goes to putting downward pressure on rents, as opposed to increasing taxes and putting upward pressure. I thought the member would understand.

It gives me an opportunity to say the housing package we announced yesterday is groundbreaking. It shows more ambition in this place than any other government in the history of Tasmania has demonstrated.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Member for Franklin, order.

Mr GUTWEIN - What we announced yesterday will significantly increase the supply of social and affordable homes. With the measures that we have in place, such as the Tasmanian HomeBuilder grant and the First Home Builder grant, they will assist in building supply. Building supply has the opportunity to put downward pressure on house prices over time which, as the member would know, principally drives up rents. If the property is more expensive, you pay more for it.

I hope the independent member for Clark, who has had an interest in this area for some time, welcomes the significant package yesterday, welcomes the acknowledgement from this Government that more needs to be done and that we are going to do more.

With rent, land tax is one of the base pieces of that. We have determined that we will reduce that and that in itself provides the opportunity for downward pressure on rents.

Securing Tasmania's Future - Policies

Mr TUCKER question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.17 a.m.]

Can you please outline to the House how the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government aspirational policies will deliver better outcomes and secure Tasmania's future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker, the Chair of Committees and Deputy Speaker for that question. Obviously a very hardworking member for Lyons.

On this side of the House, we believe in Tasmania. We are proud of our state and we have aspiration for our state. I hope those in the red masks, those who are more interested in playing Squid Games, will this afternoon provide some level of support for the significant measures we laid out yesterday.

Regarding hospitals, a 10-year goal, including with what is in the Budget at the moment, there is a spend of \$1.8 billion on health infrastructure across the state.

Yesterday we made the most far-reaching, far-sighted announcement that has ever been made for social and affordable housing by a government - \$1.5 billion worth of measures. An additional 6500 houses, 10 000 in total by 2032. I hope that side of the House can support that.

There was \$1.8 billion over 10 years on health; \$1.5 billion on housing; \$750 million for a stadium that will put Hobart and Tasmania on the map, with all roads leading to it.

The other side of the House have made an art form over time of tearing things down and whingeing and moaning. This is their opportunity to stand up and back Tasmania.

We backed Tasmania in and we will continue to do so because we believe on this side of the House that young men and women, boys and girls, in this state should have a say in opportunities that kids in other states have. That is an aspiration, one that they should share.

I was very proud to provide the state of the state address yesterday because it demonstrated that we have come through two years of a worldwide pandemic and are emerging with a strong balance sheet, a strong budget, an economy that is in the top two in the country, and an unemployment rate of 3.8 per cent, which has never been heard of in this state before.

What we are going to see from the other side unfortunately - and it is what we have come to expect - is that they will be negative. I have said on many occasions that whingeing is not a

platform and complaining is not a policy, but that is what we are going to see. I urge them to get behind Tasmania, like we are getting behind Tasmania, because not only can we secure Tasmania's future, importantly we can send a message to every young boy and girl in this state that it is okay to lift your eyes above the horizon; it is okay to have long-term goals and long-term ambitions and, importantly, to have a plan to help you achieve them.

I was very pleased this morning when I heard Clarko back in our vision for Tasmania, the best coach of the modern era backing in where we are heading. The announcements I made yesterday will drive our economy, they will attract investment, they will create jobs and they will provide opportunity for Tasmanians right around this state.

Jane Howlett MLC - JackJumpers - Alleged Conflict of Interest

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.22 a.m.]

I ask you to reflect very carefully on the answer you gave earlier and remind you - as you have previously said - that in the Westminster system of government there is no more serious charge than that of misleading parliament. Are you still satisfied that Jane Howlett told you the truth when she denied she had a conflict of interest?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have answered these questions. Ms Howlett explained her reasons for leaving parliament. Ms Howlett explained that there was no truth to the rumours and that she had no conflict of interest and I have taken her at her word.

Ms White - Do you still believe her?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - I have nothing further to add.

COVID-19 - Mask Requirements in Aged Care Facilities

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.24 a.m.]

The World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 to be an airborne virus in May 2021. The Victorian Department of Health confirmed this reality again on 4 February this year. Despite this, your department's guidelines for residential aged care facilities continue to falsely claim that COVID-19 transmission is via contact with particles or droplets. As a consequence, there is no general requirement for aged care staff to wear masks to protect themselves and the vulnerable people they work for from the risk of a potentially deadly or disabling airborne virus. Do you agree COVID-19 is an airborne virus and will you immediately investigate and update the aged care guidelines to conform to international best practice?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member, Dr Woodruff, for her question and her interest in this matter. Of course, as the member alludes to, the pandemic has been challenging, both nationally and internationally, and challenging for this state as well, but we have come through the pandemic extremely well. The work that has been done across the health sectors has been outstanding in terms of our plan. That significant planning, leading up to our borders opening, has allowed our workforce, our THS and our health settings to be agile and responsive to the Omicron variant, which has been highly transmissible but, it appears, mild compared to Delta.

We have much to be proud of in Tasmania in terms of our hospitalisation rates per capita. As tragic as any death is, we have lower death rates per capita as well. Our COVID@home program has been a significant contributor -

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister is far and away from a very straightforward question that I asked him -

Mr SPEAKER - What is the point of order?

Dr WOODRUFF - about specific guidelines that are -

Mr SPEAKER - What is the point of order?

Dr WOODRUFF - Under 45, relevance - answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER - There is no point of order, Dr Woodruff. Please sit down.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order under standing order 45, relevance.

Mr SPEAKER - Please sit down. You are officially warned, Dr Woodruff. Please sit down.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of clarification, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER - There is no such thing as a clarification. I have asked you to sit down, Dr Woodruff. If you do not sit down you will be leaving the Chamber. The minister has an opportunity to answer the question. Just because he is not saying what you would like to hear, does not mean he is not answering the question. I cannot put words in the minister's mouth. The minister has the floor and he has several minutes to conclude his answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Speaker. Throughout the pandemic the health and safety of Tasmanians has been the number one priority for this Government.

As we have persistently seen across the world, aged care homes are especially vulnerable to the serious impacts of COVID-19 and we must do all we can to ensure our residents are vaccinated as quickly as possible. The Aged Care Emergency Operations Centre is working with the residential aged care sector to assist with the responses to manage and support residents with COVID-19.

Aged care workers and residents were prioritised when we first began rolling out our vaccination program. Staff seeking to work in residential aged care are now mandated as a condition of their employment to be vaccinated.

Dr Woodruff - Staff have approached you about this issue.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, I will ask you to leave the Chamber until after question time, thank you. Once you have asked a question, you must allow the minister an opportunity to answer it, not continually interject.

Dr WOODRUFF - Mr Speaker, standing order 152 -

Mr SPEAKER - I have asked you to leave the Chamber, Dr Woodruff.

Dr Woodruff - Standing order 152.

Mr SPEAKER - Unless you wish to be named, Dr Woodruff, I would leave the Chamber.

Dr Woodruff - Standing order 152 - I dissent from your ruling.

Member Named and Suspended

Member for Franklin, Dr Woodruff

Mr SPEAKER - I name the member. Dr Woodruff, there is no opportunity. Please sit down.

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the member be suspended from the service of the House, in conformity with you naming her.

Mr SPEAKER - The question is that the member be suspended from the House.

The House divided -

AYES 11

Ms Archer
Mr Barnett
Mr Ellis
Mr Ferguson
Mr Gutwein
Mr Jaensch
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Street

NOES 11

Dr Broad
Ms Butler (Teller)
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Connor
Ms White
Mr Winter

Mr Tucker (Teller)

Dr Woodruff

PAIRS

Ms Alexander

Ms O'Byrne

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, standing order 160 to take a point of order during a division: can we have some clarity from you on whether there is a new ruling on taking points of order during questions, please? Dr Woodruff's point of order was reasonable and it was reasonably put.

Ms Archer - You are doing this now?

Ms O'CONNOR - It is standing order 160. Have you not read the standing orders?

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, I will rule on the point of order after the completion of the division.

The result of the division being 11 Ayes and 11 Noes, in accordance with standing order 167 I cast my vote with the Ayes.

Dr Woodruff withdrew from the Chamber.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, on the point of order I raised, please. I refer you specifically to standing order 147 which states that:

... the Member ... shall sit down, and immediately after the Question of Order has been stated to the Speaker by the Member ...

And we are not being given a chance to state our points of order.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, Dr Woodruff was not ejected for taking a point of order. I continually asked her to be quiet while the minister was answering the question. She had made a point of order. I made a ruling that it was not a point of order. She would not accept the ruling of the Speaker and then in defiance of the Speaker she still stood and argued with the Speaker. Therefore, she was asked to leave and ejected from the Chamber.

Minister for Health, continue with your answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is a shame that Dr Woodruff is not in the Chamber because I have some very good information for her. I was making the very clear point that the first line of defence against the pandemic is vaccination and the very good work of the Tasmanian Health Service, the leadership across health and the health staff in planning and preparation for borders opening, has put us in very good stead. It has allowed us, with the various challenges that have taken place, to be more flexible.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, standing order 45, relevance. Could the minister please tell the House whether he agrees that COVID-19 is airborne?

Mr SPEAKER - Again I cannot tell the minister what to say. The question has been put; the minister has an opportunity to answer it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Speaker, and of course we take the very best of Public Health advice.

Following an announcement by National Cabinet and referring to aged care, the Department of Health established the Aged Care Emergency Operations Centre in August 2020. Since the Tasmanian border opened on 15 December 2021, the Aged Care Health Emergency Response Operations Centre has facilitated the establishment of a rapid response outbreak management coordination team to enable a cross-sector multi-agency response to high risk exposure and outbreaks.

The Aged Care Health Emergency Response Operations Centre is supported by reference working groups that bring together representatives -

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, I really do not want to do this under standing order 45. This is a critical public health question. Does the minister agree that COVID-19 is airborne? It is about the advice that is going to vulnerable people in aged care, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, I have dealt with the point of order before and indicated that the minister has the chance to answer the question. I cannot put words into the minister's mouth.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. We follow Public Health advice. Speaking of vulnerable people in aged care, I am detailing how we have supported people within our aged care sector during some very challenging times which I believe is very appropriate, thank you very much.

The Aged Care Health Emergency Response Operations Centre is supported by reference working groups that bring together representatives from key stakeholders who provide advice and expertise about issues of importance to residents of Tasmanian residential aged care facilities and the sector more broadly.

Ms O'Connor - You are a disgrace.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, it is inappropriate for you to continue to mumble under your mask. If you do that I will ask you to leave as well.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Aged Care Emergency Operations Centre has facilitated workshops, webinars, site visits to enhance the preparedness of residential aged care facilities and stress test their outbreak management plans. Infection prevention and control training provided by registered training organisations on behalf of the Department of Health has been offered to all residential aged care facility staff. This was followed up with infection prevention and control site visits. We plan to provide targeted IPC professional development for infection prevention and control lead nurses in residential aged care facilities as requested by the Australian Government.

As Public Health policy evolves, the Aged Care Emergency Operations Centre continues to support implementation of the Public Health directions applicable to the residential aged care sector. The Australian Government is offering further opportunities for the sector to enhance vaccination rates for residents and engagement with the sector of course has been well received.

The forward planning, Ms O'Connor and Dr Woodruff, if she be still listening, and preparation from the Aged Care Emergency Operations Centre at the residential aged care facilities themselves is evident by the small number of large outbreaks in the sector. I commend all those associated with preparation and planning and indeed supporting our aged care sectors across the Department of Health. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Jane Howlett MLC - JackJumpers - Presence of Support Person

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.40 a.m.]

Yesterday you were asked a direct question about who was in the meeting with you and Jane Howlett on the day she resigned and whether that person had any association with the JackJumpers. You refused to answer it. Why did you try to cover up the fact that Brad Stansfield, Liberal Party fixer and PR consultant for the JackJumpers, was also in the room?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. As I said yesterday, who Ms Howlett brought to that meeting as her support person was a matter for her and that person was there as a friend. It is as simple as that.

Ms White - And you believe that like you also believe there is no conflict of interest?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Mr Speaker, I could not be any clearer than I was yesterday. Again I make the point that it was certainly Ms Howlett's right to have a support person there. The person she brought was explained and introduced as being her friend. I know they have had a long friendship and have been members of the Liberal Party for a long period of time. I answered the question as clearly and as honestly as I could yesterday. Again I make the point that Ms Howlett had a support person there, as was her right to do so.

Ms White - Why did she need support?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - It was obviously a very difficult day for Ms Howlett and I think it was quite appropriate that she took a support person along.

Housing - Policies

Mr ELLIS question to MINISTER for STATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION and HOUSING, Mr FERGUSON

[10.42 a.m.]

Can you update the House on how the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government's aspirational policies are assisting Tasmanians into their own homes?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Braddon for his question. We have delivered 1254 more homes, including lots, under our action plan. It is being delivered as we speak.

Yesterday before attending the House for the Premier's Address, I was very pleased to attend the opening of six new dwellings here in Hobart delivered by Centacare Evolve Housing, delivered by 17 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in what I think is potentially the country's hottest social enterprise, St Joseph's Affordable Homes. Those homes are being built by 17 people in apprenticeships and they are finding their pathway out of disadvantage. They are finding aspiration and they were telling me how excited they were to become chippies, electricians, tilers and plumbers. My heart was very glad because I knew that the houses we are delivering right now at a time of incredible pressure in the housing sector is so meaningful, not just for the future occupants of those six new dwellings but for the lives that have been transformed on the construction program.

We know we need to do more and we now have the most assertive government program to deliver more housing. At the last election, quite properly, the Government and the Opposition both set the aspiration for 1500 homes by 2023 and 2000 by 2027, quite properly because they were the times, only to mention that the Opposition under did their funding by \$80 million but nonetheless, the numbers were there, but we know we need to look beyond those two horizons and do more.

I commend the Premier, who has been working so closely with me on delivering these new approaches and the very bold approaches to deliver a further 6500. Shelter Tasmania and other community organisations have been asking in their submissions to government to lift our targets to 10 000 and we are doing that. I am very pleased and grateful that it is this side of politics that is committing to these important new targets and with the wherewithal, the expenditure planning and the investments being planned and the authority to get the job done being announced yesterday, and I thank you, Premier, for doing so.

This is a moment for this House and members of it who express a concern and an interest in housing to now do something about it. This Government will get on with job, but we will do a better job if we have bipartisan support and if the Labor Party could just depart from their petty point-scoring and some of the grubbiest muckraking which I saw yesterday, and express a concern and put into practice their concern for the people of Tasmania, and get in behind this plan and give us the support that we will need as we deliver these additional houses.

We do know there is more to be done and that is why we are embarking now on a 10-year housing program worth now in excess of \$1.5 billion. The new statutory authority that was announced will be able to borrow and invest against a strong balance sheet. This will enable it to build an additional 6500 homes by 2032. Do not let people believe the lie that people have to wait till then for additional homes. We are building them now and my continuing advice is that we are on track to deliver 1500 by June of next year, during a period of increasing demand, which people like Ms Haddad gleefully point to, but they have no alternatives. There is no support, there is no pragmatism, there is no effort and there is certainly

no alternative policy. Meanwhile, we are getting on with the job during this increasing demand that we are experiencing.

Mr Speaker, we are also doing more to support people to get into home ownership and this is something that the Liberal Party believes in very strongly. Stamp duty concessions are being increased to a \$600 000 threshold in line with the rise in property prices. What this means is that for an eligible first home buyer, or a pensioner who is downsizing, they will save up to \$11 250 on property duty when buying their home. As a complementary measure, the Government is retaining the First Home Owners Grant at \$30 000 into the next year, for new builds.

Very excitingly, and very importantly for many people looking to get a foot in the door of the housing market, we are reforming HomeShare. I have to say that governments of both colours have supported HomeShare over many years. It has been a great program but we need to make it much better and we need to make it more accessible. We need to work more closely with our financial partners in the delivery of that program so that more people can see, 'Actually, maybe my long-term future is not in this rental, maybe my long-term future and for my family is to get a foot in the door of our own home.' We want to inspire them to make those decisions and to carefully consider them if they can.

One of the ways we are doing that is by decreasing the requirement on a deposit from 5 per cent to 2 per cent. I hope that is something the Labor Party, the Greens and others will support, because this will help people. Let us help those people who want to take that step. We will also improve the program by increasing the state's potential equity contribution to up to 40 per cent for new homes and up to 30 per cent for eligible -

Mr SPEAKER - If the minister could wind up, please.

Mr FERGUSON - Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will - for eligible established homes. Together with our Residential Land Release Program, which we are doubling, to support more land to come into the market, this is a comprehensive approach. I call on members opposite - while they are wearing their red masks and play their petty and grubby politics, when it comes to the things that really matter to Tasmanians, like more houses and a safe roof over the head of people who are on the Housing Register, to get in behind the plan developed by the Gutwein Liberal Government, support what Tasmanians are calling on us to do and be constructive for Tasmania instead of corrosive.

Jane Howlett MLC - JackJumpers - Presence of Support Person

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.49 a.m.]

It has been confirmed in the media and by you that the Liberal Party fixer and PR consultant for the JackJumpers, Brad Stansfield, was at the meeting where it was decided Jane Howlett would resign. Premier, do you realise how bad this looks? Do you deny that you, or Brad Stansfield, put pressure on her to resign in order to protect both the JackJumpers reputation and your own, after you had initially tried to cover up the conflict of interest by moving her out of the Sports portfolio?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I have had enough of this rubbish. I have seriously had enough of this rubbish. That was the most difficult day for Ms Howlett. Her brother died. She turned up and was sworn into parliament. A week later she came to see me and she very sadly resigned for personal and family reasons and you lot want to completely try to trash Ms Howlett's reputation.

Yesterday you raised issues about Mr Brookhouse being in the Legislative Council late at night. The reason he was here, I understand, was he was seeing Josh Willie. He had come to provide Mr Willie with some corporate material after the JackJumpers game, because Mr Willie had asked for it for his kids. I hope Mr Willie has declared that but some of this is just beyond the pale.

I raised these rumours with Ms Howlett. She categorically denied them. She came to see me and explained that she was resigning for personal and family reasons. The previous week had been particularly tough for her following the death of her brother. That is it, and yet this lot on that side want to drag a member of the upper House down into the gutter with them. It is appalling.

I said yesterday, and I thought about this very carefully overnight, if I wanted to start slinging mud in this place and raising rumours, many of them as you well know were running when you were dealing with Mr O'Byrne. Regarding the Labor Party, believe me I could name members and rumours on that side. I thought about it last night and thought, no, somebody has to be the adult in the room here.

What I put on the record is what the facts are. The Leader of the Opposition does not care about putting roofs over people's heads or fixing the health system. There are unions asking her to stop listening to Paul Lennon and stop attacking Ms Howlett. They are asking her to get on with the job she is supposed to be doing, looking after ordinary Tasmanians.

I have placed on the record the facts as I understand them. Obviously, the Leader of the Opposition wants to continue with this. I would say to her, it is grubby; it is beneath you. Again to Ms Dow, I cannot wait until you are outside and you are asked those questions.

Securing Tasmania's Future - Better Health System

Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.53 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how the Liberal Government aspirational 10-year and next generation infrastructure plan will deliver a better health system and secure Tasmania's future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker for his question. I know his considerable interest in this matter. We recently visited St Helens Ambulance Station, St Helens new hospital and St Marys as well. I know his considerable interest in rural and regional health services and infrastructure.

The Premier outlined yesterday, a very clear, very bold plan from the Government, clearly looking beyond the horizon to build a better health system. One that continues to make a real and positive difference to the lives of Tasmanians, our plan forecasts an investment of more than \$1 billion over 10 years in critical, next generation health infrastructure which improves patient amenity and increases capacity. The LGH redevelopment masterplan forecasts capital investment of \$580 million over 10 years. It includes the development of a new mental health facility precinct due for completion in 2027 and a new tower on the current Northside site. This will enable us to expand and modernise inpatient and outpatient services.

In the south we are delivering an expansion of stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment, which represents over \$200 million in new facilities, including a fit-for-purpose older persons unit, an expanded ICU, expanded emergency department and new wards. Construction of the ICU commenced in January and the refurbishment of the endoscopy unit in A block has also commenced. We are also engaging with the Commonwealth government in relation to jointly funding Stage 3 of the Royal Hobart Hospital Redevelopment, which represents a total investment of some \$665 million.

In the north west, we are progressing a \$100 million redevelopment of the North West Regional Hospital, which includes \$40 million for Stage 1 of a new mental health precinct and \$20 million for the refurbishment of the Spencer wing to provide additional wards.

We have also expanded our investment in the Mersey Community Hospital with a further \$20 million to provide a new kitchen and an additional ward providing more bed capacity, taking the total upgrade at the Mersey to \$55 million. That is the most significant in the hospital's history.

An early works package to allow major redevelopment works was completed in February 2022. A contract for construction of new theatres and an outpatient unit will be awarded later this month. Construction will be completed in 2024.

We are also investing \$20 million to replace hospital equipment across the state. There is \$9 million to upgrade the Ambulance Tasmania fleet with 30 new ambulances this financial year and \$5 million for equipment in our district hospitals to support regional and rural communities. We recognise modern, fully integrated digital health infrastructure is just as necessary as bricks and mortar for delivering quality and timely patient care. That is why in last year's Budget we committed some \$15 million to commence key focus areas of a 10-year digital transformation health plan.

The most important asset in our health system is our people. The Government has delivered more staff than any previous government.

Since coming to government in 2014, we have employed more than 1500 full-time equivalent health professionals. We have worked very hard to build up our nursing workforce, which over the last three financial years has increased by nearly 600 full-time equivalents. I want to acknowledge and personally thank the incredible efforts of our hardworking health staff, especially over the past two years as they have been on the frontline of our COVID-19 response. They have worked tirelessly to help test, vaccinate and support our community through this difficult and very challenging period.

Our plan clearly demonstrates the Government's aspiration and commitment. It is centred on our patients and our staff. We will continue to invest record funding to address immediate pressures and ensure Tasmanians get the right care in the right place at the right time.

We will continue to build upon this work over the next decade with a \$1 billion next generation infrastructure vision to deliver a better health system in every region of Tasmania.

Contrast that with the other side. No ideas of their own. No policies of their own. Question time over the past two days demonstrates they are not listening to the concerns of Tasmania when it comes to infrastructure across the state and the needs of Tasmanians. Clearly we have, over successive budgets, built a health workforce, built better infrastructure to ensure that the people of Tasmania are listened to by their Government to deliver better health services so they can get the care in the right place at the right time.

Jane Howlett MLC - Resignation from Ministry

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.58 a.m.]

As you still claim that the sole reason that Jane Howlett resigned is for personal reasons, did you try to convince her to reconsider? Did you offer her a period of leave and suggest she defer any decision that would permanently affect her career until she had some time off? Did you stress to her that all people, including ministers, are entitled to bereavement leave and that there was a professional support service available to her? Did you do anything to discourage her from resigning?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. The hypocrisy writ large in that question is just extraordinary.

Thank you for your care and concern for Ms Howlett. I will make this point. I was shocked and surprised on the day when Ms Howlett informed me that she was leaving for personal and family reasons. It was clear to me that she was in a very distressed state and that she had thought through her decision. We discussed that and she believed that it was the best one for her at the time in light of what had occurred with her brother. I come back to this point: the hypocrisy, and you even asking that -

Ms White - Your hypocrisy.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - question just beggars belief. Faux concern, faux compassion, it is just extraordinary. Again, I make this point: be very careful. Those who live in glasshouses should not throw stones.

Jane Howlett MLC - Call for Independent Investigation of Allegations

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[11.00 a.m.]

Despite that, Premier, given how persistent these allegations have been, given the reputational damage that is being inflicted upon the JackJumpers, given the question mark over the integrity of you, your Government and the expenditure of nearly \$100 million of public money, and given that less serious allegations about personal relationships with ministers have been independently investigated in the past, will you now commit to a thorough independent investigation of the allegations against Jane Howlett and review decisions that were made when she was minister to clear this mess up?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. The simple answer is no. I spoke to Ms Howlett. Ms Howlett explained to me categorically that she would deny the rumour. She made it perfectly clear. She made it perfectly clear that she denied the rumour. She came and spoke to me. She tendered her resignation as a result of the very difficult personal and family circumstances she was in.

Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team

Mr ELLIS question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mrs PETRUSMA

[11.02 a.m.]

Can you please provide an update on the work of the child sexual abuse joint review team and how this work will feature in the development in our next family and sexual violence action plan?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Braddon for his question and his interest in this very important matter. The voices of all victim/survivors matter. All victim/survivors of child sexual violence, whether historic or contemporary, need to know that they can come forward and that when they do, they will be heard and that appropriate action will be taken.

On 26 February 2021, Tasmania Police released the Tasmania Police outcomes report in regard to the police investigation of James Geoffrey Griffin. The outcomes report demonstrated that collaboration between government agencies was not optimal and services to victim/survivors needed to be improved. Tasmania Police and other agencies have acknowledged this need for improvement. As a result of the outcomes report, the Government allocated \$1.5 million for the establishment of a Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team, which was given the task of implementing the recommendations from the outcomes report, along with the need to deliver a historical complaints review process, and to also provide recommendations to government on structural reform for best practice service provision to victim/survivors of sexual violence.

The joint review team includes experienced child safety professionals, detectives and intelligence analysts. Since its inception, the joint review team has undertaken a significant body of work, including undertaking a review of thousands of records held across government agencies to assess any potential risk to children, developed MOUs between Tasmania Police, Communities Tasmania, Justice and Education, to ensure that information is shared promptly across agencies, and has also developed training and investigation guidelines for police, officers and child safety professionals.

The work of the joint review team in reviewing reports and records has been meticulous and thorough. This process has involved the review of thousands of records held across government systems and agencies, with a focus on the approximately 136 000 individuals who are registered to work with vulnerable people in Tasmania, as these individuals have access to our children through their work or volunteering.

I am advised that after all these thousands of records were reviewed by the joint review team, there have been no further children identified as being at current risk of harm. Furthermore, that reviewing intelligence holdings will continue to be a key focus to ensure that information holdings are maintained, evaluated and used to protect children and identify and respond to potential risk.

I thank the joint review team for all of the important work that they have undertaken and for their dedication to this very important task. The impact of child sexual violence is devastating and it is critically important that we provide the most comprehensive and supportive measures and responses for victim/survivors.

This Government wants to ensure that we do everything we possibly can to make sure that our children and young people remain safe and protected. Last year the Premier asked the Commissioner of Police for advice as to structural reform across government to ensure that we are providing a best practice sexual violence response for Tasmania that puts victim/survivors at the centre. Having received the Commissioner's advice, the Premier yesterday announced this Government's intention to establish next level Multidisciplinary Centres in Tasmania.

These Multidisciplinary Centres are a proven model in other jurisdictions both nationally and internationally as they ensure that victim/survivors of sexual and family violence receive immediate and integrated wraparound support in a safe place for a range of services. These new facilities will provide multidisciplinary support teams including family and sexual support and counselling services, witness intermediaries, police and other related services.

These centres will mean that walk-in clients can immediately access the support and services they need, especially counselling, and if they feel ready they will also be able to report the violence to specialist police investigators on site.

We have seen today the announcement of the results from Operation Molto, an international child exploitation operation which demonstrates that Tasmania is not immune from insidious child predators who exploit our most vulnerable. These Multidisciplinary Centres will therefore have specialist analysts embedded in them so that any and all information regarding this abhorrent criminal behaviour will be subject to immediate review and information sharing across agencies to protect our children.

In addition, these new centres will recognise the intersection between family and sexual violence by expanding the capabilities and resourcing of the Safe Families Coordination Unit to include sexual violence more broadly, creating a multi-agency response for both sexual and family violence.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in reporting of sexual violence which comes amid unprecedented public disclosure, media attention and awareness about sexual violence and consent. The provision of Multidisciplinary Centres will address the increasing need for services for both adult and children victim/survivors and I am pleased to note that funding will be included in this year's budget for the first of these centres.

This announcement is a significant outcome for victim/survivors who will be at the heart of this major reform. Planning work for this significant reform has already commenced and will be coordinated alongside the development and release of the Government's third family and sexual violence action plan.

Talking about violence against women, I have to say for the last two days what I have seen in this place has been the most extreme emotional violence against a woman that I have ever seen committed in the 12 years that I have been in this House, especially of a member of the Parliament of Tasmania who cannot come in here and defend herself against the allegations that are being made against her. Seriously, if we want women to ever become members of parliament, the emotional violence that has come from the Opposition over the last two days needs to stop because it is simply appalling.

Time expired.

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Health Crisis - New Norfolk and Derwent Valley

[11.09 a.m.]

Mr Rockliff tabled the response to the petition presented by Ms White on 26 August 2021.

See Appendix 1 on page 114.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following answers were given to questions on notice:

3. PUBLIC MATERNITY CARE OPTIONS

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

See Appendix 2 on page 116.

13. PUBLIC HOSPITALS - ACCESS TO SURGICAL TERMINATIONS

Ms O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

See Appendix 3 on page 119.

11. SALMON FARMING - WILDLIFE DETERRENT DEVICES

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER

See Appendix 4 on page 121.

6. MARINE ENVIRONMENT - PROTECTION

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER

See Appendix 5 on page 123.

TABLED PAPERS

Public Works Committee - Reports

Ms Butler presented together with the evidence received and the transcripts of evidence the following reports:

- Tasman Highway - Sideling Upgrade; and
- Royal Hobart Hospital Emergency Department Expansion Stage 1.

Reports received and printed.

CONDOLENCE MOTION

Sir Max Bingham QC

[11.14 a.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Premier)(by leave) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death on 30 November 2021 of the Honourable Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC, a former Deputy Premier from 1982 to 1984, Minister of the Crown from 1969 to 1972 and 1982 to 1984, Leader of the Opposition from 1972 to 1979, and a Member for the Division of Denison from 1969 to 1984; and places on record its appreciation of his service to this State; and further that this House respectfully tenders to his family its sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Mr Speaker, I rise to formally pass on my condolences and pay respect to Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC, or Sir Max as he was better known. A former member for the electorate of Denison in this place, now the electorate of Clark, Sir Max was a giant of Tasmanian politics, who had an extraordinary career both before and after political life.

He was born in Sandy Bay in 1927 and attended the former Hobart High School.

I noted late last year that Sir Max's life was one of incredible service and dedication in many different fields, including the Royal Australian Navy, as a distinguished legal and parliamentary representative, and to a range of community service roles.

Sir Max enrolled in the Royal Australian Navy in 1945 at the age of 18 where he served in the final months of World War II, after which he was discharged.

He took up studies at the University of Tasmania, graduating with a Bachelor of Laws, with honours, in 1950. He was a Rhodes Scholar that year, a remarkable achievement, and attended Oxford University where he completed a Bachelor of Civil Law at Lincoln College and met his wife, Margaret Jesson.

He returned to Hobart in 1953 to commence a career in private legal practice, later becoming a crown prosecutor, lecturing in criminal law at the University of Tasmania and serving on the board of the Royal Hobart Hospital among other roles.

Sir Max was elected to this place as a Liberal member for Denison in 1969, where he served with distinction until 1984, retiring after 15 years of dedicated service to his community. He was immediately, upon his election, elevated and appointed as the government's attorney-general and minister administering the police department and the Licensing Act. He was leader of the opposition from 1972 until 1979.

We all know that opposition can be a very challenging job, but Peter Hodgman has let me know of one particularly challenging day for Sir Max. He was about to leave the office for the day a bit after five. He got called back to take one last phone call. These were the days before the security we have now. He apparently left his brief case in the parliamentary foyer when he took the phone call. There was another member in the foyer at the time, Stephen Gilmore, a former member for Franklin, who had brought into parliament that day his enormous Irish red setter. I am reliably informed that despite Stephen's best efforts, the setter made a beeline for Max's briefcase, and just as Max came out of the office, he caught the dog marking his territory all over it. Max was understandably furious. Peter Hodgman reckons it is the first and only time he ever heard Max lose his cool and swear. I do not think Mr Gilmore was promoted any time after that day.

Max was an integral part of the new Gray government elected in 1982. Sir Max served with distinction as the deputy premier, attorney-general for a second time, minister for education, minister for industrial relations, and minister for police and emergency services.

He particularly relished his role as minister for education. In an article published by the University of Tasmania in 2014 he stated that:

It seems the best endowment you can give your kids is a good education.

I think we could all agree with that.

As attorney-general and police minister, he was responsible for a number of reforms, programs and innovations we now take for granted. This included justice system reforms, such as the prison education programs and establishing the first system of community correction orders as an alternative to prison. He also progressed new training for police and justices of the peace, reformed no-fault motor vehicle accident insurance and ensured that magistrates were independent of the public service.

He was respected by all sides of politics. Robin Gray said at the time of his retirement:

In the time I have been in parliament he was undoubtedly the most outstanding parliamentarian.

The deputy leader of the opposition, Harry Holgate noted:

The opposition can test the mettle of ministers, and we know that he was probably the most capable minister in his abilities, running his portfolios and debating in this House.

After his retirement from parliament, Sir Max, was a founding member of the National Crime Authority until 1987. In 1988 he was knighted in recognition of his service to the law, crime prevention, parliament and the community. It was not long after that that he found himself once again at the forefront of a new push to improve justice and integrity within government institutions.

Between 1989 and 1992, he was the founding commissioner and chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland, a crucial new body to enhance the level of security over institutions to reduce mis-conduct and corruption. He received the status of honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Tasmania in 1998. Sir Max was determined to use his skills to support organisations aligned with his interests. He served as vice president of the Tasmanian Bar Association and criminology society, was patron of the Retired Police Association, and the inaugural chair of the board of the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies at the University of Tasmania.

He was also the first patron of the Geilston Bay Boat Club, and long-term member of their associated Dad's Army group. It was clear that Sir Max was a much-loved member of the community who donated and contributed his time, knowledge and energy into many causes throughout his life.

Sir Max died on 30 November 2021 aged 94, and our thoughts have been with his family and loved ones. He is survived by his children Richard, Belinda, Peter and David.

Vale Sir Max and again I pass on my condolences to his children. Sir Max Bingham QC - a life well lived.

Members - Hear, hear.

[11.20 a.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise to offer condolences on the passing on 30 November 2021 of the Honourable Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC, and join in offering Labor's appreciation for a life lived in the service of our state.

Sir Max is remembered as a distinguished lawyer, politician and corruption fighter on the national stage. Perhaps one of Tasmania's most distinguished lawyers, Sir Max worked as a barrister, a Crown prosecutor, a magistrate, attorney-general and police minister and was a commissioner of the National Crime Authority.

In 2014, Sir Max told the *UTAS Alumni* magazine that after his separation from the Royal Australian Navy he felt an urge to, and I quote, 'do something useful for Tasmania', which led him to his studies in law with the hope of becoming a barrister. I suggest that this is a philosophy Sir Max took across his entire career, something Sir Max shares with many of us who come into this place.

Sir Max was first elected to the House of Assembly seat of Denison, now Clark, for the Liberal Party on 10 May 1969. Across his 15-year parliamentary career Sir Max served as leader and deputy leader of the opposition and was appointed deputy premier, attorney-general, minister for education, minister for industrial relations and minister for police and emergency services.

While much is made of Sir Max's contributions in the area of law and anti-corruption, it is also worth putting on record his passion for education. An understanding of the power of education is evident in his deep passion for his role as minister for education. In discussion with the *UTAS* in 2014, Sir Max stated that, 'It seems the best endowment you can give your kids is a good education'.

Sir Max himself knew the power of education. A product of Hobart High School, Sir Max was the first of his family to attend university, obtaining law degrees at the universities of Tasmania and Oxford. His enrolment as a law student in Hobart was possible only because of the assistance from the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme. The scheme, established by the Chifley government in 1944, provided vocational and educational training for servicemen and servicewomen to return to the civilian workforce. On that assistance Sir Max said, 'Without that I would not have been able to go. I simply would not have been able to afford it'.

During his time in parliament, Sir Max developed a reputation as an intelligent, dedicated and fierce member, minister and leader. On Sir Max's retirement this was acknowledged by then Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Harold Holgate, who said:

The Opposition can test the mettle of ministers and we know that he was probably the most capable minister in his abilities, running his portfolios and debating in this House.

Following his parliamentary career, Sir Max was a founding member of the National Crime Authority and was an active member from 1984 to 1987. On Sir Max stepping down from the NCA, then federal Minister for Justice, Senator Michael Tate, described Mr Bingham as an outstanding Tasmanian and said he had made a significant and important contribution to the national fight against organised crime. Senator Tate said:

He has held the great respect of Australia's law enforcement agencies and performed his role with the same integrity and distinction which marked his parliamentary career.

Sir Max utilised his legal experience and knowledge in understanding the role of founding commissioner and chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland from 1989 to 1992. Sir Max fought tirelessly against misconduct and corruption within law enforcement and politics, always working to ensure the integrity of our institutions. I believe Sir Max far exceeded his own aims of doing something useful, spending his life in service of this state and this nation.

My heartfelt condolences to his children Richard, Belinda, Peter and David and their loving families.

Members - Hear, hear.

[11.25 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Greens, Dr Woodruff and I also acknowledge the great life of Sir Max Bingham QC and his dedicated life of public service. The Premier and Leader of the Opposition have gone through his career highlights but at every stage of Sir Max's life there was clearly a dedicated commitment to public service, from his time in the military to his legal career to his very distinguished career in the Tasmanian parliament, and to the work he did once he had left parliament to tackle corruption in my old home state of Queensland, which was rotten to its core before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, which led to the establishment of the Criminal Justice Commission on which Sir Max Bingham worked.

Sir Max clearly was a man of great integrity, a truth-teller, a decent man. One of the things that clearly offended him deeply was corruption and dishonesty. We see that through his work, particularly here and in Queensland, but I also want to note that in recent years, when he was well into his 90s, Sir Max stood up on behalf of Tasmanians who are blighted by poker machines. He stepped forward in his 90s to make a case for a better way, and as we know, this parliament by number, by vote, did not choose that better way. In a statement that was shared by our upper House colleague, the independent member for Nelson, Ms Webb, he said at the time he had funded some economic modelling on the poker machine issue that showed Tasmanian taxpayers missing out on at least \$367 million to the poker machine industry as a result of the legislation that was passed by the major parties in this place. Sir Max said at the time:

Back in 1969 when I entered state parliament the Labor Party was led by Eric Reece and the Liberal Party by Angus Bethune - two men who were in politics to do something to make Tasmania better and between whom there was a high level of mutual respect.

I have now decided to make a contribution to the improved regulation of the gambling machine industry. I am sure my former Premier, Angus Bethune, would approve of action to help give Tasmanian punters a more nearly fair go, which the present level of sophistication of the machines currently denies them.

He went on to say:

I confess to another motive. The performance of both Liberal and Labor parties and the gaming machine industry in the 2018 and 2021 elections has caused me great concern and has seriously imperilled democracy in Tasmania.

Mr Speaker, the Greens were not going to let this condolence motion go by without also noting that Sir Max had the courage to take on the establishment in this place, and even in his 90s his commitment to the wellbeing and the welfare of the people of Tasmania was a driving force in his character.

I never had the good fortune to meet Sir Max Bingham QC, which is kind of curious because he has been part of public life for the 33 years I have been on this island, but I wish I had. He was loved and respected across politics, across the legal profession and in the community. He was a man who was recognised for his deeply ingrained integrity and we can all take something from the example that he set.

On behalf of the Greens, I express my deepest condolences but also my thanks to the family of Sir Max Bingham for his life. I acknowledge his children Richard, Belinda, Peter and David and their loving families. Vale Sir Max Bingham. Over a long, long life he gave it his all and he never stopped giving.

[11.30 a.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Attorney-General) - Mr Speaker, as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, I too rise to add my brief words to the Premier's very detailed speech on the condolence motion for the Honourable Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC. I extend to Sir Max's family and loved ones my sincere condolences for their recent loss. I did write to them last year extending my personal condolences to his family, some of whom I know quite well.

Sir Max leaves behind a distinguished and substantial legacy, as we have heard this morning already, with his enormous contribution and service to our legal system in Tasmania and Australia as well. As serving Attorney-General and current member of the House, I am acutely aware of the importance of his significant contribution and it is a great privilege to bear his immense legacy.

He was known as an officer of great integrity and distinction. These were the hallmarks of both his law enforcement and parliamentary careers. He is recognised for a lifetime of service and dedication to crime prevention to this parliament and to the Tasmanian community, as well as being an important influential and longstanding member of the Tasmanian Liberal Party. He showed great dedication to the Tasmanian Liberal Party from 1969 to 1984, serving as deputy premier, attorney-general, leader of the opposition and representing the electorate of Denison, as it was known then, in the House of Assembly.

An alumni of the University of Tasmania's Law School, Sir Max is recognised as one of the nation's most respected legal minds, graduating with honours before heading to Oxford in England as the 1950 Tasmania Rhodes Scholar.

He worked in private legal practice in Hobart, served as a Crown prosecutor and was also appointed as Queen's Counsel before returning to the University of Tasmania to lecture in criminal law.

As a founding member of the National Crime Authority he served as head of the authority's national office and was held in the highest regard, his appointment providing great confidence for those at all levels and persuasions of government.

He later served as chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland. His time at Queensland's Criminal Justice Commission was a remarkable achievement. There was no other model of its kind in Australia uniting the investigation of organised crime, police and public sector oversight and witness protection within one agency. It laid the very foundations for many of the structures, powers and operations that carry over to current crime investigation organisations in Australia today.

In 1988, Sir Max was rightly knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours in recognition of service to the law, crime prevention, parliament and the community. His vast and extensive far-reaching legacy will be long remembered.

Again, my thoughts and prayers go out to his children, one of whom is the former CEO of our Integrity Commission, and to Sir Max's entire family and loved ones at this incredibly sad time.

Vale the Honourable Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC.

[11.33 a.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Mr Speaker, I stand to associate myself with the remarks of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens and the Attorney-General and others in this place who have such a high regard for Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC. I pass on my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Sir Max.

I first met Sir Max when I was studying law at the University of Tasmania between 1980 and 1984 when he was serving as leader of the opposition and then deputy premier. I was involved with the Tasmanian University Liberal Club and then became president and Sir Max was very encouraging to those involved and to the students at the university. I remember his distinguished manner. He was most astute and a great advocate for the people of Tasmania and the people of this state.

Later I had the honour of knowing Sir Max while I was senior adviser to former premier, Robin Gray. Robin served with Sir Max as premier and I know that if Robin Gray was here he would be very strongly associating himself with the views commending Sir Max and paying condolences to his family and friends.

The former deputy premier, attorney-general and opposition leader led a selfless life. He contributed to Tasmania and Australia through his incredible service and dedication in so many different fields, including the Royal Australian Navy where he served as an able seaman from 1945 to 1946. In this regard, we had some contact when I was a senator as well and he reached out to me in the last few years with respect to the campaign for Teddy Sheean to receive a Victoria Cross. He was very supportive of that campaign and he reached out to provide

encouragement and support along with many other Tasmanians. As a former Royal Australian Navy able seaman you can understand why.

He was chair of the Royal Hobart Hospital board and a distinguished legal and parliamentary representative in so many different ways through a range of community service roles.

In recognition of his service to the law, crime prevention, parliament and the community, Sir Max was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 1988. Sir Max was also awarded the Centenary Medal in 2001 in recognition of his contribution to Australian society and government. He was first elected as a member for the seat of Denison, now Clark of course, in this House of Assembly in 1969 and was a member of the Tasmanian parliament until 1984.

Before entering politics Sir Max graduated with honours in law at the University of Tasmania, then studied at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar: quite an achievement. He worked in the private sector legal practice in Hobart as well as serving as a Crown prosecutor and returned to UTAS to lecture in criminal law and was later appointed Queen's Counsel, another magnificent achievement.

After leaving the Tasmanian parliament Sir Max was appointed as a founding member of the National Crime Authority and later was a founding commissioner and chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland.

Sir Max Bingham QC was respected by all sides of politics and performed all of his roles with integrity, distinction and was eminent in every way. Like others in this place, I know his son Richard and I pay my respects and pass on my thoughts and sympathies to Richard, Belinda, Peter and David and all his family and extended family and friends during this difficult time. Vale Sir Max.

[11.38 a.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark - Minister for Racing) - Mr Speaker, I too rise to sincerely express my deepest condolences to the family, friends and those close to the Honourable Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC and to pay my respects to a man who has made such a full and very thoughtful contribution to Tasmania, to the Liberal Party, to our community and our legal profession in particular.

I am very grateful and honoured that I was able to attend his funeral which was during COVID-19 times, so a smaller than usual funeral for somebody of Sir Max's status, but it really was good to be there and to see the attendees who were many political and legal luminaries and serious people who have also themselves made a large contribution to life and politics in this state and many legal families of course in attendance as well.

There are members in this place who I am sure hold particular respect and feel a deep sense of camaraderie for people who dedicate their lives in service to their communities, our communities, as well all really do strive to achieve the best outcomes to the people we serve. Sir Max was one of those great people whose life was one full of service and dedication, and a bit of fun, as I understand it.

He served in many fields, including the Royal Australian Navy, as a distinguished legal and parliamentary representative and through a range of community service roles. As many

Tasmanians will know, Sir Max studied at the University of Tasmania and Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. It was no small thing to be accepted into Oxford. After graduating, Sir Max worked in private legal practice in Hobart, as well as serving as a crown prosecutor.

He returned to UTAS to lecture in criminal law as so many of our great lawyers do, which helps to build our beautiful law school and keep it contemporary and leading in the nation. He was later appointed Queen's Counsel.

He was first elected as a member for the seat of Denison, now Clark, in the House of Assembly in 1969, which happens to be year I was born, and was a member of the Tasmanian Parliament until 1984. As someone who, just like Max, has a keen interest in the law and politics and the electorate of Clark, as I am sure the Attorney-General does too, previously Denison, I am well aware of and have always have taken an interest in the life of Sir Max Bingham.

Sir Max served in a number of important roles during his time in public life including as Deputy Premier, Attorney-General and also Leader of the Opposition. It was with great interest that Sir Max was appointed as a founding member of the National Crime Authority and later was a founding commissioner and chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland and all of this after his time in parliament. It goes to show that careers can go on.

As many people in this Chamber will know, Sir Max was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 1988 and from recollection that was around the Tall Ships time in this town. It was a very vibrant time.

Members in this place will have heard me speak of my father, Albert Ogilvie, as somebody who has had a long connection in the law as well in a professional sense and he and our family had the deep pleasure of knowing Sir Max. He has provided me with an anecdote that I would like to share with you which I think reflects some of the loveliness of Sir Max and his nature. A. G. Ogilvie said:

I used to appear before him when he was a magistrate. He was impeccably fair, wise and courteous. In a hopeless case I raised every possible technical defence and in the course of finding my client completely guilty he generously praised my valiant efforts to raise legitimate points which however he quite fairly rejected.

After he retired from the bench and returned to private practice he contacted me one day to say he understood I had a new super-duper form of opening address in civil trials and would I share it with him. I was of course flattered by this request which I very happily agreed to and we were on friendly terms until he came to the end of his exemplary life.

I wanted to put that on the record. It is warm. It is generous and it shows you a little of the nature of the man. Of course, being a politician, he understood the power of flattery.

I know many others will have such stories of how Sir Max touched their lives in some way and I was fortunate to meet many of his family at the funeral and also to recognise their connection with The Friends' School, which was important to them. His was a life well lived of service and great contribution to his community. Max Bingham also served in many

different community roles, serving the people of Tasmania in yet another capacity, including as chair of the Royal Hobart Hospital Board, on the Tasmanian Bar Association and Criminology Society, as patron of the Retired Police Association and was the inaugural chair of the board of the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies at UTAS, which is a great thing to have done.

In talking to people who knew him well I have no doubt that Sir Max Bingham was well regarded by all sides of politics. I would like to close by expressing my personal and deep sympathy to the family and share my respect with them for Sir Max and I would like to share some words by the poet Dylan Thomas and I think Sir Max would have appreciated the thoughts. They are:

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Vale Sir Max.

[11.44 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Deputy Premier) - Mr Speaker, I rise to support the motion of condolence to Sir Eardley Max Bingham QC and support all the contributions that have been made to celebrate and acknowledge the extraordinary life of Sir Max Bingham.

As I reflect on Sir Max's distinguished career as a member of parliament, member of a government between 1969 and 1972, again a member of a government between 1982 and 1984, over the course of those 15 years in parliament, people have spoken to me about Sir Max's contribution to the parliament.

They have also spoken to me, as has been reflected today in the contributions, of a man with immense integrity, intelligent, articulate and a very decent person. As Ms Ogilvie reflected as well, wise and courteous. His contribution within parliament in his significant responsibility, deputy premier between 1982 and 1984, but also the very important and challenging portfolios of minister for education, police and emergency services and others. I know, I understand and I have been informed that Sir Max served in those responsibilities with absolute distinction, as he did in this House for 15 years, and further on after his retirement from parliament and becoming the founding member of the National Crime Authority. Later he became the founding commissioner and chair of the Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland.

His contribution to public life and parliamentary life was acknowledged in 1988 when he was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and was awarded the centenary medal in 2001. He sat on many boards aside from his time in this place, served boards and committees and organisations across the community with absolute distinction. He was also a stalwart of the Tasmanian Liberal Party, as Mr Barnett has reflected, and a great mentor, no doubt, to many parliamentarians. He was a leader of the Tasmanian Liberal Party for a significant amount of time, seven years between 1972 and 1979, and in a very challenging role as leader of the opposition.

Born in Tasmania, his love of Tasmania never waned, even in later years. Without a doubt he was regarded as a man of integrity. His life is recognised by many years of service,

both inside the Tasmanian Parliament and beyond. He really demonstrated immense love, passion and dedication to his community and the state. Sir Max to his friends and family never stopped being passionate about Tasmania and the issues important to him. I convey my deepest condolences to the family of Sir Max Bingham, the much-loved husband of Margaret and father to Richard, Belinda, Peter and David. He was also a loving grandfather and great grandfather. I recognise a significant contribution of a man of immense dedication and integrity and a love of Tasmania. Vale Sir Max Bingham.

Motion agreed to nemine contradicente.

Motion by Mr Gutwein agreed to -

That a copy of the foregoing resolution be forwarded to the family of the late Sir Max Bingham QC.

CONDOLENCE MOTION

Mary Lindsay Caroline Willey

[11.50 a.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Premier)(by leave) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death on 14 February 2022 of Mary Lindsay Caroline Willey, former Member for the Division of Bass from 1979 to 1982 and places on record its appreciation of her service to this State, and further, that this House respectfully tenders to her family its sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Mr Speaker, I want to pass on my personal condolences and pay respect to Mary Willey, former member for Bass in this place, who served for close to three years. Ms Willey passed away in Melbourne on 14 February this year at the age of 80, having lived a full and extraordinary life.

She was born 6 May 1941 in Warrawee in New South Wales and undertook her education at the Prouille Catholic Primary School and Santa Sabina College. She spent time in a number of different states throughout the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the Northern Territory. At one stage she even moved to Papua New Guinea to teach in a Catholic mission school. In 1974 she decided to settle in Launceston, working later as a PR consultant.

Ms Willey was elected at the 1979 state election as a Labor member for Bass and soon established herself as one of the more colourful members in this place at the time. In her maiden speech she spoke of her pride at being elected. She said:

I am deeply aware of the trust placed in me by the electors of Bass and I hope to serve them well in this place.

She also spoke of the need to be future-focused in our decision making when here and to have vision and foresight and have the best interests of Tasmania and Tasmanians at heart. She said:

Tasmania's future depends now on some hard decisions and hard work. What we do and what we fail to do in the next decade will determine for a long time the direction of this state. It is a time for careful political judgments. We as parliamentarians must take up the challenge of outlining the age-old problems and the new ones in seeking some solutions.

We could all agree with that. There has been much written about Ms Willey recently, especially her passionate advocacy for Tasmania's environment. This culminated in Ms Willey famously crossing the floor of the House of Assembly over the Franklin Dam debate in 1981. She later resigned from the ALP to join the crossbench to sit the remainder of her term as an independent before re-contesting the 1982 state election, this time as an independent.

After a time as a parliamentarian, Ms Willey did not miss a beat, remaining prominent in Tasmanian public affairs as a journalist and commentator, as well as, I understand, an adviser to the Greens for a period of time in state politics. There is no doubt that she was well-liked by her journalistic peers. There was a very good article written by former Mercury chief political reporter Wayne Crawford recently that recalled Ms Willey's *Sunday Tasmanian* column which was titled 'SOB'. Mr Crawford notes that this stood for something I think he said that he could not print, but which would not pass muster with the types of language for our views in this place. I think that SOB also reflected her invented pen name, Sandy Onslow Brown.

Former ABC journalist Judy Tierney said, 'Ms Willey had the courage of her convictions'. Barry Prismall also wrote a very good piece in last weekend's *Sunday Examiner* in which he spoke very warmly of her indeed, saying he had, 'Never met someone so unique and vibrant in politics'. He described her as having, 'An outrageous, irreverent sense of humour'. Our thoughts are with her family and loved ones at this time. Vale Mary Willey.

[11.53 a.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise to offer my condolences and the Labor Party's condolences on the passing on 14 February 2022 of Mary Willey. Mary is remembered by many as a colourful and passionate character, grounded in her conviction.

Mary was elected as a Labor member for Bass in 1979, only the fifth woman elected in this place. In her inaugural speech Mary advocated for contemplation of new ways of dealing with housing, job creation, health and economic planning; many of the various same issues that preoccupy the time of Labor members to this day. I wanted to take the opportunity to read an excerpt from her inaugural speech. This is long but in remembering Mary it is very important to reflect on the values that she had and also her motivations. When Mary was speaking about the views in the electorate that the Liberal Party and the Labor Party were no different, she very eloquently described how this was a superficial point of view. I will quote now from her inaugural speech:

The aim of this government and of our party is for a prosperous, economically independent Tasmania, with a sense of purpose and a direction based on principles of equality and justice for all of our citizens. We seek a sane balance between the private and public sector and we would like a fairer distribution of the wealth and resources of this nation so that our state can develop a society where the citizens are not divided by social barriers or by

extremes of wealth and poverty; a society that is marked by cooperation, with a genuine opportunity for all, where the old and young and the sick and the handicapped in spirit or in body are lovingly and generously accepted as the responsibility of the whole community; where those who cannot produce goods, not through their own fault, can at least share in the production of the society; where the unemployed are not a mere percentage of the workforce - a statistic - their frustration buried beneath layer upon layer of economic jingoism.

By contrast the federal Liberal government through its aims and policies, its meanness and intellectual poverty, is condemning far too many of our citizens to a life of economic hardship which buries the human spirit and has so diminished our sense of pride in this nation that national respect is having to be marketed on television like cornflakes.

Mr Speaker, there is no denying that Mary had a way with words, was incredibly eloquent and articulate and had no difficulty in expressing her views and her values. Many of the views that she held then are held still today by members in this place.

On the news of Mary's passing, my colleague, Michelle O'Byrne, astutely observed that Mary was a member of parliament during some of the most challenging times in Tasmanian politics. Ms O'Byrne went on to note that Mary was very much driven by those causes she was deeply passionate about and always remained true to her beliefs. Mary will be remembered as a woman of conviction and a fervent advocate for Tasmania's wilderness, having notably crossed the floor in 1981 and having then sat as an independent for the rest of her term. Mary contested the 1982 election and was defeated but remained passionate about those causes that she held so dear.

Prior to entering parliament Mary worked as a teacher and as a public relations consultant, spending time living and working in nearly every jurisdiction in Australia, including Papua New Guinea. Following her parliamentary career, Mary continued to contribute to our state's public affairs as a political commentator and journalist, including writing a weekly column in the *Sunday Tasmanian* under the pen name Sandy Onslow Brown. Former *Mercury* chief political reporter Wayne Crawford recently recalled Ms Willey as having an outsized impact on Tasmanian politics. He said, 'It can't be understated. It was significant. She was one of a kind, very passionate, both an extrovert and intensely private'.

I agree that Mary's contribution will not be soon forgotten, undoubtedly leaving an indelible mark on our state. Our heartfelt condolences are conveyed to Mary's son David and his family.

[11.58 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Greens, the absent Dr Woodruff and I, I want to acknowledge the life and work of Mary Willey. It is true to say that Mary Willey was one of a kind. Would it not be great if there more of a kind of the type of character of the late Mary Willey?

She was passionate, articulate, values-driven and courageous. This is a Labor member who in 1981 was so moved by the beauty and the wildness of the Franklin River that she was prepared to cross the floor in parliament. We do not see that sort of courage from the major

parties or its MPs these days. As journalist Wayne Crawford had acknowledged, she made an indelible mark on Tasmanian politics. At the time her crossing of the floor was a significant moment in Tasmania's history and in ultimately preventing the Franklin Dam from being built.

Mary Willey understood the need to look after people and to look after nature. It is in part due to Mary Willey's courage that the Franklin River runs wild and free to this day. I want to read from her friend and mine, Dr Bob Brown's, statement on Mary Willey's passing at the age of 80. Dr Brown said:

Mary did not want statements about her career, but the public will want to know of her passing.

In 1981 Mary Willey, elected Labor member for Bass in 1979, crossed the Floor of the House of Assembly to oppose the new Labor Premier Harry Holgate's reversal of opposition to the Hydro-Electric Commission proposal to dam the Franklin River.

Avidly in favour of saving the Franklin River, she left the ALP to sit on the crossbench as an Independent. The move came after ex-Premier Doug Lowe, supplanted by Holgate, had crossed the Floor to become an Independent.

It left Premier Holgate's government close to collapse. In the subsequent election in 1982, Liberal Premier Robin Gray was elected on a pro-dam platform.

I just digress again to say thankfully, as we know, Gray was ultimately defeated, and the Franklin River runs wild and free to this day.

Dr Brown continues:

Ms Willey, famously wearing red-framed glasses, went on to a prominent role in Tasmanian public affairs as a journalist, commentator, and then adviser to the emerging Greens in state politics.

After a period living at Ellendale in the Derwent Valley, she moved to Melbourne to be nearer to her family.

In public life, she was courageous, colourful, and a true friend to Tasmania's wild and scenic environment. Mary was a pivotal figure in saving the Franklin River.

Dr Brown said another friend quipped that 'Mary has crossed the floor for the last time'.

I want to close with a poem that Bob sent to us that Mary Willey wrote many, many years ago, he says. She wrote:

Carry me into the forest now
And lay me there
To rest beside the river
And under the shadow of the trees

Where flowers will nod over me
And birds will sing
And the river will flow
And with tears and laughter
Go back into the city
And rejoice on this day
For I will still be with you

Vale the great and colourful and courageous Mary Willey, and our deepest condolences to her son David and her family on the loss of a great character.

Mr SPEAKER - I ask members to signify their support for the motion by standing for a few moments in silence.

Motion agreed to nemine contradicente.

Mr GUTWEIN (Premier) - Mr Speaker, I further move -

That a copy of the foregoing resolution be forwarded to the family of the late Mary Willey.

Motion agreed to.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Ministerial Code of Conduct

[12.03 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition - Motion) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: ministerial code of conduct.

Today we think it is vitally important that we continue to scrutinise the Government on matters of integrity, particularly in relation to perceived conflicts of interest and the upholding of the ministerial code of conduct, because if that document, to be worth anything, it needs to be used and applied by the Premier, whose signature is on the front cover. Quite clearly it is a document that has his endorsement. This one I have in front of me is from May 2021, and the Premier's signature is right there.

What it compels ministers of his Government to do is to behave according to highest ethical standards in performance of their duties, as they hold a position of trust, and have a great deal of discretionary power which can have a significant impact on citizens of Tasmania.

Specifically, Mr Speaker, I draw attention to the provisions in this ministerial code of conduct that go to conflicts of interests, because it says:

Recognising the convention of collective responsibility for Government decisions, Ministers are obliged to report any Code non-compliance by

themselves or by another Minister to the Premier, or in the case of the Premier, to Cabinet.

This is incredibly important, because conflicts of interest, as described in this document, are not just material conflicts of interest. They also are perceived conflicts of interest, and I go to point 2.1.4 in the document, that says:

A conflict of interest does not only encompass actual or direct conflicts of interest between a Minister's official duty and private interests. A potential or perceived conflict of interest may also constitute a material conflict of interest.

The guidelines suggest that a minister should ask him or herself what an ordinary reasonable person would do or think in the same or similar circumstances.

We all know there have been persistent rumours of allegations of a conflict of interest of a minister of the Crown, the minister who was the former Sports minister, Jane Howlett - persistent allegations.

The Premier got up here today and claimed that he enquired about them and he was satisfied with the answers provided. The same Premier enquired about allegations made about Adam Brooks and was satisfied with the answers Adam Brooks gave him. He was satisfied to the point that he endorsed him as a member of his team to run again, despite the findings of an Integrity Commission inquiry and despite the persistent allegations that were put to him during the election campaign.

This is a pattern of behaviour, almost like 'don't ask, don't tell'. That is the culture of cover-up that this Premier has allowed to fester in his Cabinet to the point where there are serious questions that persist about the integrity of his Government and the integrity of the former minister for Sport and Recreation in upholding her duties as a minister of the Crown and whether there was a conflict of interest, whether material or perceived, about her relationship with the CEO of the JackJumpers basketball team, a team that has benefited from significant taxpayer largesse of around \$100 million.

We have seen situations where the Premier has launched investigations to review decisions of other ministers where there have been conflicts of interest, either material or perceived, to make sure the decisions they made during those times were not unduly influenced because of those conflicts of interest, and Ms Courtney is a perfect example when she was the minister for Primary Industries and Water.

It would be very simple for the Government to clear up this mess and undertake an investigation upholding the code of conduct that the minister's signature is on to ensure that there was no conflict of interest with the allocation of a significant sum of public money. Looking at the code of conduct it clearly says:

Recognising the convention of collective responsibility for Government decisions, Ministers are obliged to report any Code non-compliance by themselves or by another Minister ...

I ask through you, Mr Speaker, which ones of you heard the rumours and what did you do about it? How did you uphold this code? How many of you heard the rumours, serious allegations about a conflict of interest, and when you heard them did you uphold your responsibilities in this code that is signed by the Premier? How many of you took those concerns to the Premier? In this document it plainly states that those concerns need to be put in writing to the Premier.

This is a serious question of the integrity of this Government. We saw the Premier's frustrations about this in question time today when he started to lose his temper. He lost his temper very early on. His frustration with the chaos in his Cabinet is evident. We had shouty Pete back again today, because his Cabinet is in chaos. He has had two Cabinet reshuffles in just one month - two resignations from the Cabinet in just one month. This is a Cabinet in chaos. It is plagued with scandal and the judgment of the Premier has been called into question, not just on this occasion but in his decision to back Adam Brooks. We know there is a pattern of behaviour here because past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour and this cover-up culture that has been allowed to fester by the Premier whose Cabinet is in chaos is calling into question the integrity of his Government.

The most critical thing here is that there is no way for us to be confident that there is appropriate probity around the allocation of \$100 million of taxpayer funds, and that is what is most at stake here. The community deserves to have confidence that taxpayer funds are going to be used appropriately by the Government of the day and I do not believe that you can legitimately, hand on heart, Premier, say that there was no conflict of interest, perceived or material, when it came to this matter. If you uphold the code of conduct that your signature is on, you should launch an investigation to make it clear to the public, for the reputation of the JackJumpers, for your own reputation, that there was no conflict of interest in the allocation of any of those monies, or the decisions in relation to the support the Tasmanian Government has given this organisation while the minister was in her role as a minister for sport.

Time expired.

[12.10 p.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Premier) - Mr Speaker, I thank the member for providing the opportunity to speak on this today. I will ask where the Leader of the Opposition was going in terms of \$100 million worth of funding as a starting point. Those contracts were dealt with by me and Larry Kestelman prior to the appointment of Mr Brookhouse. If your concern is about those contracts, that has finished that.

In terms of the other matters that the member has raised, I have been very clear in this place. When the matter was raised with my office and I became aware of it, I spoke to the minister. The minister categorically ruled out any fact to those rumours. Then the minister came to see me last week and she resigned for personal and family reasons as a result of the stress and pressure that she was under as a result of the grief from her brother's death.

Ms White - And you did not give her leave?

Mr GUTWEIN - Now, those are the facts that I have placed on the record.

Ms White - Did you discourage her from resigning?

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms White.

Mr GUTWEIN - I will make this point. Yesterday, in an attempt to smear the minister in the MPI, you made claims about Mr Brookhouse being here one night in the Legislative Council when he was here to see your member. He was here to see your member, that is my understanding of that.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Your case is unravelling, your case unravels. It comes back to this point: what proof do you have? You will not even go outside and speak to the media. Where is your evidence? Where is your proof? The fact that you come in day -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order. The fact is that the Opposition has raised this. You will allow the Premier to answer these significant claims that you are making in silence. Any more interjections, you will be out. The Government is backing the Premier and through your interjections. Please, all be silent and listen to the Premier. Any further interjections and I will ask people to start leaving.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Mr Speaker. Where is your evidence, where is your proof? The fact that you come in here day after day and you peddle rumour and innuendo does not make this factual. It does not provide any evidence. Yet you will not go outside. You use the benefit of privilege, which is a gift that we are all given and provided for in this place, as a political weapon. You should be ashamed of yourself. You would be in breach of our own code of ethical conduct in this place.

I remind members of that in terms of privilege. A member must take particular care to consider the rights and reputations of others before making use of the unique protection available under parliamentary privilege. This privilege should never be used recklessly or without due regard to accuracy.

Where is your proof? Why do you not put up? Where is your proof? Again, I have dealt with this and provided to the House an explanation of what has occurred. It is unfortunate that Ms Howlett is no longer a minister. As I said this morning, I was shocked and surprised. I was shocked and surprised when she resigned. I did make the point, on the day that I announced her resignation, that the pressure that she was put under within a handful of hours of her brother dying, to turn up and go through the process of ministerial swearing, was almost cruel and unusual punishment, to be frank.

As I have said in this place, I would never again ask a member of my team to go through that and I should have thought more deeply about that at the time. That is the circumstance that we find ourselves in. Ms Howlett remains the member for Prosser but she has resigned as a minister. Again, I make this point: show us your proof. Where is your evidence? You are in breach of our own code of conduct in this place because you are dealing in smear and innuendo and rumour. That is what you are doing: smear, innuendo and rumour. You should

hang your head in shame. Again, if you stand by this, if you are a person of conviction and if you believe that you are right, go outside and repeat it.

Ms Dow, as I have said, I cannot wait until you are on the lawns of parliament and you are being asked questions about that dreadful slur that you brought into this place yesterday. It is the worst that I have heard in my 20 years in this place, in terms of an attack on an individual.

Members interjecting.

Mr GUTWEIN - I make this point: do not hide in this place under privilege. Do not use that gift that we are all provided with to spread rumour and innuendo and to smear people. If you have facts, if you are confident of them, go outside and repeat them. It is a disgrace. The way that the Leader of the Opposition has attacked Jane Howlett just staggers me. Again, I make the point, as I did yesterday: the question that really needs to be answered is why the member sits over there and how long you knew and those of you on that side what you knew before you voted for him as leader? What you knew. Again, crickets, nothing, silence. Silence from that side. It is a disgrace. As I said today, I ask you to respect this place, respect the privilege that you are given -

Ms Butler - How about you do your job? You are the leader.

Mr GUTWEIN - Stop dealing in smear, innuendo and rumour. If you have evidence -

Ms Butler - Then investigate it.

Mr GUTWEIN - bring it forward, otherwise stop attempting to destroy Ms Howlett and her family.

Time expired.

[12.18 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise on the MPI because the upholding of the Ministerial Code of Conduct is an essential task for all members of Cabinet. We heard the Premier get up and basically say, 'The JackJumpers was a done deal. It was done before Mr Brookhouse was appointed CEO'. We are supposed to assume, on this side of the House, that all these contracts, you hand over \$100 million to the JackJumpers and it is a set-and-forget arrangement, that there is no ongoing management of those contracts. Government simply hands over \$100 million and backs away completely.

There are no KPIs; there are no milestones. There are no chances of variations to any of those contracts. There is no management of those contracts. There is no oversight of those contracts. If there was who would have oversight of those KPIs, milestones, variations and everything that comes along with any government handing over \$100 million or so, to what is, in effect, a private organisation? We are supposed to believe that the Premier does these set-and-forget contracts. Absolute rubbish. The sports minister has responsibility for managing those contracts and managing those relationships. That is why there is a perceived, at the very least, a perceived conflict of interest.

So, \$100 million, just handed over and do nothing about it. Hand over the sponsorship money. You do not have to - no acquittals, no nothing, just hand over the money. There is no

ongoing management. That is why this minister has a perceived conflict of interest. That is why when the Premier got up yesterday, when I asked him a question about whether Ms Howlett absented herself from Cabinet when there were any discussions, he would not answer that because if he did that would open the avenue, that would be an admission that she did not absent herself. Indeed, if there is a perceived conflict of interest, then she has breached the ministerial code of conduct. That is why the Premier would not answer that question.

We have a standard of behaviour in this place guided by the Standing Orders, which talk about ethical standards:

A Member protects and upholds the public interest by taking all reasonable steps to avoid, disclose and manage any conflict of interest that arises, or is likely to arise, between their personal interests and their official duties.

It also goes on to say:

A conflict of interest may be financial or non-financial and may be potential, actual or perceived.

So at the very least there is a perceived conflict of interest here, and we know that the ministers on that side of the House have responsibilities for creating laws in this place that we all have to abide by, and for managing some \$8 billion of government expenditure. There is a massive element of trust that the people of Tasmania have to believe that this Government is acting in the best interests of Tasmanians and not their own interests. That is why we have these standards and we have the Premier's own signature on the Code of Conduct for Ministers that he updated less than a year ago. This ministerial code of conduct was updated less than a year ago, which includes the time that Ms Howlett was a minister, and it said:

The Code reflects the expectation that Ministers, while in the service of the people of Tasmania, must uphold the highest standards of integrity ...

As Labor Leader Rebecca White also pointed out, in the guidelines of the code of conduct, which also was published as part of this document, in Annexure 1 on page 3 -

Government members interjecting.

Dr BROAD - Make your judgments, okay, do your Chewbacca defences. On page 3, 2.1.4, it says:

A conflict of interest does not only encompass actual or direct conflicts of interest between a Minister's official duty and private interests. A potential or perceived conflict of interest may also constitute a material conflict of interest.

The code must always apply. You cannot skip over and say this potential conflict of interest does not apply. It has to apply across the board.

Here we have KPIs, milestones, variations - this is what the minister is responsible for. If there are any issues with these contracts, Premier, surely the former minister's duty is to bring that to Cabinet to raise and discuss? Is this what happened or did she absent herself? If there

was any form of close personal relationship with the CEO of the JackJumpers then that is, by definition, a perceived conflict of interest. What did the Premier do about this? He tried to cover it up. We are supposed to believe there is a whole series of coincidences here. It was a massive coincidence that Jane Howlett lost the Sport portfolio after questions were asked by the *Mercury*. Here she is being the best sports minister ever, only to be dropped a few weeks later, but it is a coincidence that the *Mercury* in particular had raised questions about her conduct and at the very least a perceived conflict of interest, which would breach the ministerial code of conduct. That is a coincidence.

Today we heard there was another coincidence that the PR representative for the JackJumpers just so happened to be in the room when her resignation was being discussed. We are supposed to believe this is all pure coincidence. I think that this is rubbish.

Mr Ferguson - I dare you to mention the brother.

Dr BROAD - Oh, come on! There is a perceived conflict of interest here that this Government is not dealing with. The people of Tasmania need to have trust in the Government. They need to know that those \$8 billion you are spending every year is in the best interests of the Tasmanian people and not in your personal interests. That is why we have a code of conduct that spells it out, even down to the level of perceived conflict of interest. Perceived - do you know what that means?

Mr Winter - I do not think they do.

Dr BROAD - They do not. Basically what they are saying is that unless you have slam-dunk proof then we are not allowed to raise these issues. It is pure coincidence that she got shown the door, that you sacked her as sports minister right after the *Mercury* started asking these questions and that the PR spin doctor and your Liberal fixer just so happened to be in the room. It is his instructions that you are operating by. This whole thing is a disgrace.

Time expired.

[12.25 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, well, this is a grubby business and we have heard a lot of shouting. I would simply say this to the Premier: if there is not an issue, if there is no conflict of interest, then lay the contracts on the table in this place and this problem will go away for you. I believe it is that straightforward.

As we are talking about the ministerial code of conduct, I wanted to raise an issue out of question time this morning that is of much more concern and relevance to Tasmanian people, particularly people who live and work in aged care and those who love them. If you go to the ministerial code of conduct, the Premier says on the first page:

The Code reflects the expectation that Ministers, while in the service of the people of Tasmania, must uphold the highest standards of integrity and be honest, professional and accountable in the performance of all their duties.

It also says:

Ministers must not deliberately make statements that mislead Parliament or the public and in line with Parliamentary practice are obliged to correct the record in a manner that is appropriate to the circumstances, as soon as possible after any incorrect statement is made.

Dr Woodruff stood up in here this morning, an epidemiologist, the most qualified person in this place, to ask questions about the Government's COVID-19 response. She asked the Minister for Health to simply confirm what has been confirmed by the World Health Organization, leading independent experts and the Victorian Health Department and that is that COVID-19 is airborne. Throughout the course of the past two years, Dr Woodruff and I quite happily stood by Public Health advice. Some of that Public Health advice is truly baffling when you have a look at the growing body of evidence about this virus. There is a document that is distributed to aged care providers in this state that has the false statement that COVID-19 is transmitted through contact and droplet transmission. The World Health Organization has made it clear that it is airborne. We cannot even get the Minister for Health to acknowledge a scientific fact in this place.

We have an entire document here going to our aged care providers which, at multiple points in the document, gives advice on how to prevent the contact and droplet transmission of an airborne virus. It is disgraceful and disrespectful that the Tasmanian Health minister cannot just acknowledge a scientific fact and commit to directing Tasmanian Public Health to update its outdated and dangerous advice to aged care providers. It is scandalous.

We have here the OzSAGE, a group of more than 400 independent experts who have written to every state premier, health minister and public health official to call for an urgent change of approach that accepts that COVID-19 is airborne and in order to prevent transmission hospitalisation and death we must clean up the air that people breathe. There was no response to the OzSAGE letter about airborne transmission of February last year. We have looked for it and we have asked the OzSAGE group of experts whether they received a response. They did not.

This letter says:

Despite overwhelming evidence to support airborne or aerosol transmission of SARS-CoV-2, this has not translated into appropriate and consistent public health and infection prevention control measures across Australian jurisdictions. While other countries promote the "3 Cs" (avoiding close spaces, crowded places and close contact settings), Australian guidelines continue to stress droplet and contact transmission ... which have led to a focus on measures of limited or insufficient effectiveness, such as deep-cleaning, handwashing, surface disinfection and 1.5-metre physical distancing.

At the back of this correspondence, which the Tasmanian Government received, are the names, qualifications and institutions of about 400 independent health care experts: infectious diseases specialists, immunologists, epidemiologists, calling on Australian governments to accept the science, and in accepting the science, reduce the rate of transmission and save lives. We cannot even get our own Health minister in Tasmania to acknowledge that truth. It is the truth. So, why is Tasmanian Public Health advising companies, providers who look after some of our most vulnerable people, with the wrong information about how to prevent transmission?

It is a question this Health minister must respond to. We have been asked to ask these questions by people who work in aged care, who are being sent into unsafe settings in surgical masks against the advice of independent health care experts. If Mr Rockliff thinks he is going to get away with not acknowledging the truth, I just need him to know that we will be back.

Time expired.

[12.32 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, it is true that if the Labor Party did not have double standards, they would have no standards at all. These are the most disgraceful two days that Tasmanians have witnessed in their parliament for a very long time. It is grubby, it is personal, it is low. In fact, it is even beneath those opposite.

We want them to hold themselves to a higher standard because that is what the Tasmanian people expect of us in this place: some basic human decency, some real standards and to present to our community the kind of people that we are in our heart of hearts. We are all human, we all have families. That should not be forgotten in this so-called debate. It is another day of yet another Labor matter of public importance that is there to deflect and to muckrake. They have had weeks and weeks to think about this, to think about the serious questions that they might bring to this place of interest to the Tasmanian people. Certainly, my constituents have asked me about a range of issues over the past few months: health, housing, COVID-19, education. Instead the Opposition asks about rumours and innuendo and hold it up as some kind of high-minded ideal. They paint themselves as Woodward and Bernstein but really they are just acting like an episode of *Gossip Girl*.

It is a disgrace and it says everything about Labor and how far they have fallen from the standards of basic human decency. We know who they are. The Premier has already spoken of the importance of holding high integrity for all of us in this place who have access to parliamentary privilege. In the federal parliament they are using parliamentary privilege to bring to light serious issues around phone interference which affects the national security of this country. In the Tasmanian state parliament, in this term of parliament, we have seen some of the most baffling, bizarre, low-rent behaviour from the Labor Party as well as the Independent member for Clark that is unnecessary, most of the time wrong and without the sense of needing proof.

It was telling that the shadow treasurer, Dr Broad, said, 'And now you expect us to show proof to use parliamentary privilege'. That is telling of the standards these people hold. We have not yet heard from the shadow attorney-general, someone who, versed in the law, should be able to provide us with some kind of proof - if it exists. The only contribution she seems to want to make is endorsements for people who she knew had serious accusations against them from people who she claims were her friends. That is the kind of standard these people hold themselves to. They ask who knew, what, when?

We know the Leader of the Opposition has serious questions about what she knew in relation to Mr O'Byrne and her endorsement of his leadership. What did she know? When did she know it? Where were those accusations? Were they on your desk? Were they on your computer? Will you tell us? You told us you would give us an explanation in the last question time. You did not do it then. You did not do it after. You did not even do it in the adjournment. Tell us what you knew. Explain to the people of Tasmania if you have the integrity which you claim you care so much about.

The Government takes matters of integrity seriously. The Government has worked to ensure that the code of conduct for ministers is strong and reflects community standards. The code is available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website and the Premier has stated that the code applies to himself and every minister. More than that, it gives us a standard we should all hold because we, in this place, are meant to be leaders in our community. It is based on a framework that was adopted by the Government in March 2014. It has been updated in 2018 and again in 2021 following the election. We take it seriously. We want to make sure that that code of conduct is contemporary and is constantly being reviewed.

Throughout our time in Government we have acted consistently on a number of key accountability measures to ensure that Tasmania's elected members are held to high standards. I wish those opposite would make the choice to live up to them.

We have improved disclosures around declarations of interest. We have allowed the media to report on election day. The Government has resourced and is progressing crucial reviews and investigations into integrity. We established the commission of inquiry which is about protecting young people in the Government's response to child sexual abuse in institutional settings. It was something that was not done under the Labor-Greens government.

We have established an independent review into parliamentary practices and procedures. It has been welcomed by stakeholders across the board because we want to keep all people who work in this place safe and know that they are respected and in an inclusive environment. Labor's record on this is just a long list of complaint shopping.

In 2017, Labor made disgraceful accusations against the former premier, Will Hodgman and Education minister, Jeremy Rockliff. They were dismissed by the Integrity Commission. They are often done so in this place.

Labor Leader, Ms White, has failed to again explain or apologise for her misleading statements last year, where she continued to misrepresent the statements that she made to the ABC. You were called out as incorrect by the Integrity Commission. That says more about you. You have failed to correct the record in this House. You have failed to explain yourself. Your members have failed to explain why they endorsed Mr O'Byrne despite some of you knowing of those accusations and despite serious reports put in your place. We have to remember there are people and families involved in this matter.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Motion to Note

Continued from 1 March 2022 (page 51).

[12.40 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, as a reflection of our recognition of the deep history and culture of this island, I wish to acknowledge the traditional

owners, the palawa people, of the land upon which we stand today, lutruwita/Tasmania. We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people who have survived invasion and dispossession and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Aboriginal rights. I acknowledge any Aboriginal people who are here today, your elders past and present. I reaffirm Tasmanian Labor's commitment to treaty and justice for Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and our sincere hope that we can work together for truth telling and reconciliation.

I take this opportunity to reflect on world events and in particular the war that has erupted in Ukraine as a result of Russia's aggression. As federal Labor leader, Anthony Albanese said when he was speaking recently about this issue while in Tasmania, this is not just an attack on Ukraine, it is also an attack on the principles that have underpinned peace and prosperity since the end of the Second World War. Our thoughts are also with the Ukrainian people, and particularly Australians of Ukrainian descent. Australia condemns and is united in condemning this action.

In standing united in our condemnation of the actions taken by Russia, I recognise the bravery of those Russians who are protesting against the actions of Vladimir Putin, noting that thousands have been reported arrested as they demonstrate in support of peace. The uncertainty this war creates for our world comes at a time when we are still reeling from the global shockwaves that continue to ripple out from the impact of COVID-19. It is a reminder that even as an island off an island, we are not immune from world events that continue to disrupt life as we once knew it.

As we progress into our third year with COVID-19 in our state, I recognise and convey my thanks to the workers in Tasmania's public sector who have maintained the delivery of public policy and public services that have helped to make Tasmania one of the safest places in the world. There are not enough thank yous that can be given to convey our gratitude to those who have worked tirelessly to help us navigate our way through COVID-19 and continue to do so. We are so grateful for all they have done to help us stare down this unprecedented global challenge. I believe that this parliament has shown, and will continue to show, that when global challenges need to be confronted, we will combine to confront them.

We also have an obligation to focus on the here and now, on getting the basics right when it comes to the economy, addressing the rising cost of living, declining real wages and deteriorating levels of home ownership, on ensuring the Premier and the Government deliver what they said they would, whether that be infrastructure projects, government policies or more fundamental promises about the character of this Government. I am holding this tired, out-of-touch government to account when it loses its way on core matters of integrity. Most of all I believe that we should be focused on building a better future for our children and through them, for our state.

This is a Premier and a government that is no longer getting the basics right. They have lost their way when it comes to the management of the Tasmanian economy. Six months ago, in my budget reply, I stood in this place and told the Premier that living costs were on the rise and that he needed to start taking action. I spoke of how average annual rents have increased more than \$6000 since this government came to office, and of the enormous pressure this is placing on household budgets. I spoke of how petrol prices had risen 30 cents a litre in the previous 12 months. I noted that Tasmanians pay the highest power bills in the country, groceries have been going up and that council rates are on the rise.

I was highlighting how the Premier was losing his grip on the most basic economic issue there is, the cost of living. What did he do? Did he instruct the Attorney-General to urgently implement the petrol price legislation that he promised more than a year beforehand? Did he work with government businesses like TasWater and Aurora to try to bring down utility prices? Did he tell his Cabinet he would not accept any new taxes on Tasmanian families? Did he get back to basics when it came to the Tasmanian economy? No, he did not. What an insult that is to the families who are fighting every week just to get ahead, families, who in the six months since, have seen the cost of basic household expenses continue to rise and rise.

Today, petrol prices are over \$2 a litre. That is 80 cents a litre higher than 18 months ago. Never in their lives have Tasmanians paid this much for fuel, yet still the Premier refuses to keep his promise to bring in petrol price legislation.

TasWater has announced that it will be putting water bills up by 15 per cent over the next four years. That is \$450 extra they will be taking from Tasmanian families. It is \$450 taken from household budgets with the approval of the Premier, Peter Gutwein.

Aurora announced every Tasmanian will be required to fork out \$20 for a new app whether they use it or not. A new charge in your power bill endorsed by the Premier and his government. The Premier also announced a new tax on every Tasmanian's garbage collection. He teamed up with the Greens and the Greens independent, Kristie Johnston, to ram it through this house. Their next tax will mean higher council rates across the state and yet more pressure on household budgets with no incentive to reduce waste because you pay just the same no matter what, all while rent increases continue to push families to the brink.

Since my speech last year, Tasmania has officially become the least affordable state in which to rent a home, whether in the cities or in the regions. Renting a house is now less affordable than it was before the pandemic and the average family spends 34 per cent of their income on rent. That is three and a half days of work a fortnight just to pay the rent and when so much of your income is going on rent it means making difficult choices when it comes to the basics. It also means cutting back on the little things. It means not going to the restaurant for a family meal, it means working on the weekend when you would rather spend time with the children.

Keeping a lid on the cost of living is a fundamental issue for the Labor Party. It is an issue that goes directly to the living standards and economic wellbeing of Tasmanian families and we are not going to let up on it. We are not going to let the Premier get away with increasing taxes, hiking up utility bills and reneging on his promise on fuel prices because when the Premier and his government do not get the basics of economic management right, it is Tasmanian families who foot the bill.

Finding a way to pay all those bills is getting harder because last year Tasmanians experienced a real wage cut of 1.5 per cent. Wages went up 3 per cent but living costs went up 4.5 per cent. Tasmanian families went backwards and many of them went backwards because of the deliberate policy of this Government. While private sector wages went up 3.2 per cent, public sector employees saw wage increases of just 2.6 per cent. That is nearly a 2 per cent real wage cut for the nurses who have worked so hard during the pandemic. It is a 2 per cent real wage cut for the paramedics who are doing double shifts, a 2 per cent real wage cut for the cleaners who come into this building every morning to sanitise our desks and keep us safe, a

2 per cent cut for the teachers shepherding students and parents through the toughest start to a school year in living memory. What a way to say thanks.

Tasmanians understand that if they are going backwards, the Premier has dropped the ball on the basics of economic management and if he is not getting the basics right, he is not the right person to be managing the economy. When incomes are not keeping up with inflation it is not just weekly household budgets that suffer. It is the long-term economic security of Tasmanian families. For most Tasmanians the basis of economic security is home ownership. It is how families build wealth over the course of their lives. It is how they start getting ahead. It is how they might access finance to start a business and it is how they can be sure that they might be able to provide the basics for their children.

But right now, and right across our state, a whole generation is being shut out of home ownership. For them, and for their families trapped in a rental cycle, the dream of home ownership is becoming just that, a dream. The effort of hard work and aspirations of home ownership, security and a comfortable retirement is being broken under this Government.

How are young people and renters who are already paying \$1000 a fortnight in rent, meant to save the best part of \$100 000 for a deposit? How are they meant to do that when all the basics just keep getting more expensive and when their wages just are not keeping up? This is a premier and a government that are not getting the basics right.

On top of that, this is a premier and a government that just do not deliver. Look at the major infrastructure projects that are delayed or over-budget. The Bridgewater bridge, announced more than a dozen times by this Government yet it still has not even received planning approval and while we wait for its action, the budget is blown out by another \$170 million.

The ship loader at Burnie was supposedly shovel-ready in 2019, and now will not be delivered until 2024. The Cradle Mountain cableway is years behind schedule. The new Tamar Bridge is nowhere to be seen, and, it is probably in the same place as the underground bus mall and the four-lane Midland Highway.

Northern suburbs passenger rail was a promise that would be delivered by next year, apparently, and there was \$25 million from the federal government to make it happen, but instead Premier Gutwein looks set to abandon the whole thing.

Macquarie Point has had \$78 million spent on it to date, and what has Premier Gutwein delivered for all of that money?

At the election he promised \$580 million for a new Launceston General Hospital, and yet he still cannot say who is actually paying for it.

Delays to infrastructure projects cost jobs. They hurt businesses. In fact, some are being sent to the wall, and when Premier Gutwein does not deliver what he promises, it means Tasmanians do not get the improvements to traffic congestion, health care and economic potential that they voted for.

But the promises just keep getting wilder and wilder. The Premier yesterday announced grand plans for 10 000 new social houses when this Government has delivered just 251 in the

past year, and really has never met any of its promises on new social housing deals. Thousands of Tasmanians continue to languish on waiting lists for a safe place to call home. There are tents literally set up in the church grounds opposite the Premier's office in Launceston. 'No matter', he says, 'we will simply take Housing Tasmania out of the hands of the incompetent minister Ferguson and make it an independent statutory authority'.

Members interjecting.

Ms WHITE - You could not find a clearer admission that this is a government incapable of delivering, yet they also apparently have a plan to deliver a \$750 million floating stadium in Hobart within five years. I will add this to the list of other infrastructure projects they have announced but never delivered. It is nothing more than a massive distraction from a Cabinet in crisis, a massive distraction from a Premier who has not learned that an artist's impression is not actual infrastructure. This is a Premier who does not deliver.

It is not just government infrastructure projects that are not being delivered. Here in Tasmania we have some of the most abundant renewable energy resources in the world. Having already achieved net zero ourselves, thanks to our hydro power and past actions taken by government and community, we now have the chance to use our renewable energy resources to decarbonise the national economy and promote Tasmania as an attractive place to invest. Here in Tasmania we can use these resources to power an entire generation of prosperity.

We could be a world leader in the manufacture of key components for renewable energy developments. We could be the home for skills training and renewable industries. We could export engineering and scientific knowledge, and we could use further developments to ram home our market advantage as a clean, green destination, attracting new industries and discerning tourists to our state.

Members interjecting.

Ms WHITE - Yet this Government has not delivered a thing when it comes to renewable energy. Project after project seems mired in red tape. Nation-building infrastructure has not been built. We have vast renewable energy resources, a never-ending resource that could help power the state's wealth for generations, but this Premier just does not deliver. He thinks that his renewable hydrogen action plan is the same thing as real action. He thinks backing in Marinus is the same thing as building it. He thinks that announcing pumped hydro for the fifth time is the same as constructing it, but brochures and bluff and holding things is not the same as grasping the opportunities currently before us. Only delivery will do that.

Members interjecting.

Ms WHITE - Mr Speaker, Tasmania has a Premier who not only does not deliver the projects he promised, but one who does not deliver on the policies he promised either. Last year, he went to the election promising in black and white that there would be no new taxes on Tasmanians, yet here we are, after the election, and we find the Premier is teaming up with the Greens to slap a brand-new tax on Tasmania's garbage collection; a new tax will put rates up, put rents up and will increase costs for businesses. It is another promise he failed to deliver, but why should we be surprised?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order.

Ms WHITE - This is the same Premier and Government who promised that there would be no moratorium on the salmon industry. They said to do so would cost jobs, yet here we find ourselves after the election with a moratorium on the salmon industry, while salmon companies announced to their shareholders that they have given up on any new investments in Tasmania.

We see aquaculture going gangbusters in Queensland. Premier Palaszczuk and her government have declared 8000 hectares of aquaculture development areas to give certainty to investors. They have set up an aquaculture industry development network to help coordinate approvals across departments and support proponents through the investment process.

Members interjecting.

Ms WHITE - They have backed the industry with more than words and the jobs in their sector are growing by 10 per cent a year.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order.

Ms WHITE - 'Fish farm jobs frenzy,' screams the headline in Queensland. That could have been us, Premier, but instead we see aquaculture investment fleeing north and we all know what investment leaving Tasmania means.

Mr WINTER - Point of order. I note that the Premier was able to deliver his Address yesterday in relative silence, but all I hear during this from the other side is interjection.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - On the point of order there has been significant interjection and I ask that all members listen in silence, from both sides.

Ms WHITE - Thank you, Mr Speaker. We all know what investment leaving Tasmania means. The Government knew it when it promised not to impose a moratorium on the industry but then he backflipped. Our regional communities are the losers, jobs are the losers and Premier Gutwein has betrayed the very people who voted for him, costing jobs and failing to deliver what he promised.

The events of this summer following the opening of Tasmania's borders bring into question whether the Premier has delivered on the promises he made to Tasmanians about how his Government would manage COVID-19. On numerous occasions, I have thought back to the end of 2021 to a time when the Gutwein Government was preparing to open the borders and to the questions we asked in this place about our state's preparedness. We asked a lot of questions, and we were not the only ones.

I distinctly recall Premier Gutwein saying that the state had levers it could use to keep the community safe from COVID-19. Those levers were contact tracking and tracing and restrictions. The Government assured Tasmanians that they had a plan. They even had a fancy name for it. They called it the Delta Shield Plan. It sounded like science fiction and it turned

out to be a work of fiction. The plan was thrown out the window within just days of the borders opening, with the Government abandoning contact tracking and tracing, one of the key levers they said they had at their disposal to keep our community safe.

We saw case numbers escalate beyond 2000 a day. Hospitals were ramped up to their highest COVID-19 escalation level. Health services were cancelled. There were lines for hours to get tested at sites right across the state, with testing sites sometimes closing before they had officially opened due to the high volume of people lining up in their cars waiting for a test. The system was overwhelmed in days.

People were told that they could use a Rapid Antigen Test but no-one could find one, and if they could they were paying massive out-of-pocket costs. Businesses closed. Casual staff were left without shifts and without income. Tasmania went into a shadow lockdown with confidence dropping through the floor. If this was Premier Peter Gutwein's plan it was a failure. They simply did not deliver what they said they would.

If the Government thinks that COVID-19 is over then they should go back to school, because it is in our schools where COVID-19 continues to have the most profound effects. At the end of last year, Labor asked a number of questions about the preparedness of schools to cope with the borders opening and the return of COVID-19 in Tasmania. At the time, the former Education minister, Sarah Courtney, said an audit had been undertaken to see whether windows in classrooms 'work as intended'. In the words of any regular person, Mr Speaker, that means whether they open and close.

There was scant detail provided by the Government or the former minister about what the audit found or whether the work would be completed to make sure classrooms were safe for school to return in term one. It was at this time that Peter Gutwein said that the start of term one might be delayed. Then he backflipped on that just one day later to say that they would commence 'as planned.' The Government was in a spin. There was a lack of leadership and they were making things up on the run because they were clearly incapable of delivering what they said they would.

We all know now what happened over the January period. The former minister for Education took an overseas vacation.

Debate adjourned.

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

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Motion to Note

Resumed from above.

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I was at a point in my speech before the lunch break where I was reflecting on what happened over the January period. As we all know, the former minister for education took an overseas vacation to France at a time that parents and carers were worried about their children's safety; teachers and support staff

were worried about their safety and the safety of schools; and the community had questions about what to expect but there was no-one there to answer them. Sarah Courtney was eating cheese and sipping wine while other state servants had been told to cancel their leave because they were needed to respond to the escalating COVID-19 situation here in Tasmania.

The lack of leadership from the Premier, Peter Gutwein, could not be more starkly expressed than the moment he granted leave to the former education minister to go on an overseas holiday when the work for the return to school had not yet been completed. The endorsed absence of the former education minister during this critical time points to his lack of judgment as premier and his lack of seriousness about what he and his ministers said that they would deliver for Tasmanians.

The failure to deliver runs deeper still because the Premier is failing to deliver on the core promises he made about the character of his government. He told Tasmanians the Liberals were the ones to be trusted to manage the budget. Yet after inheriting a budget completely free of net debt, after Labor cleaned up the Liberal's last debt disaster of the 1990s, we now find the Premier borrowing \$2 million a day every day for the next four years, more than \$1 billion of debt, even before anyone had ever heard of COVID-19. What has the Premier delivered for all that debt? Traffic congestion and the condition of our roads are worse than ever. Homelessness is at record levels. School results are going backwards. The health system is sinking deeper and deeper into crisis. Real incomes are falling and every time the Premier faces a political problem out comes the credit card again.

We saw it again yesterday when the Premier gave the most expensive speech in Tasmanian history, the centrepiece of which was a floating football stadium for Hobart. Where is the money coming from? All while the Premier's budget is riddled with waste, \$43 million spent on government advertising just for a start, \$31 million for consultants to produce reports that get stashed in a bottom drawer somewhere, grant after grant to make problems go away with no evaluation done to see if the money was well spent.

The Premier simply has not delivered on his promise to be a strong steward of our public finances. He also has not delivered on his commitment to be a champion for Tasmanian businesses. He promised them that he had a plan to reopen the borders. He did not deliver. When they had their toughest January on record he left them in the lurch. When a salmon industry found itself under attack from the Greens he gave in to try to win a few votes in Clark. He failed to deliver the legislated sawlog quota to our timber businesses. He failed to deliver a real solution for our mining businesses being threatened with disruptive protest, instead choosing to play politics at every turn. He would not listen to our breweries and drinks distributors when it came to his minister's container refund scheme, needlessly costing them millions and again, giving the Greens everything they wanted.

The business community in Burnie feels so abandoned by him over the court issue that they have started developing their own plans for this redevelopment, a point he belatedly acknowledged with his wholly inadequate promise yesterday to meet with the council and the business community to better understand their concerns, mopping up the mess left by the Attorney-General, Elise Archer. With a premier like this, who now approaches every issue by wondering what response would help him to hold two seats in Clark and cling on to power, it is becoming increasingly clear. Tasmanian business owners need a new champion because Peter Gutwein has simply stopped delivering for them.

The most fundamental promise this premier made to the people of Tasmania was that he would lead a strong, stable majority government and what he has delivered is absolute disarray. Total and complete chaos. Two MPs in nine months have resigned from the Cabinet in disgrace and there have been multiple Cabinet reshuffles.

Mr Ferguson - Who resigned in disgrace?

Ms WHITE - Adam Brooks; I think you might remember him. First there was Adam Brooks who the Premier backed to the hilt, an MP -

Members interjecting.

Ms WHITE - Mr Speaker, I think the minister is interjecting and asking me whether or not the Premier backed Adam Brooks to the hilt and the resounding answer to that is yes, at every opportunity. The Premier backed Adam Brooks to the hilt, an MP who had been found to have used fake identities to begin relationships with women, who faced weapons charges and who was facing court on a family violence matter. This is the sort of person the Premier said would make an excellent member of his Cabinet. This is the sort of person the Premier thought would deliver stable government.

Then there was Sarah Courtney, who the Premier backed to the hilt. An education minister who abandoned her post for a soiree in France at the same time staff across the public service were having their leave cancelled to help manage surging COVID-19 numbers. An education minister who thought the weeks before the most challenging start to a school year in living memory would be the ideal time for a trip to Europe. This is the sort of minister the Premier thought would deliver stable government and now the former minister, Ms Howlett, whose actions and those of the Premier have put the integrity of the entire government under a cloud.

As I expressed yesterday, I do convey my condolences to Jane on the passing of her brother and I passed it on to her in person but I do not for one second believe that that was the sole reason behind her decision to resign. There are serious questions that remain unanswered about the alleged conflict of interest regarding the relationship between Jane Howlett, as minister for Sport, and the CEO of the JackJumpers basketball team, who's also CEO of MyState Arena. The only way for this matter to be cleared up is for there to be an independent investigation looking at the expenditure of \$100 million of taxpayer funds in ways that directly benefited the JackJumpers.

It should also look at what the Premier knew and when. What did the Premier know and when? The Tasmanian community deserves a premier and a government that acts with integrity at all times, not a premier and a government that has the stench of a coverup culture. After nearly a decade in government the scandals are piling up and the shine has certainly started to wear off this government.

It is becoming increasingly clear that Tasmania has a tired, an out-of-touch government, led by a tired out-of-touch premier. We are at the point now in this government's life where the scandals keep piling up; where ministers start dropping like flies; where the backbench lacks the talent to fill the gaps; where the problems that they promised years ago would be fixed, remain unsolved. New problems, like the skyrocketing costs of living, are not tended to. Excuses and spin prevail over the provision of real solutions and the tired Premier spends so

much of his time trying to paper over the cracks of his tired Government that he loses touch with the issues that truly matter to Tasmanians. He gets himself tangled up in their mess. He forgets the basics of economic management, costs of living, jobs and wages, budget management, home ownership. He is so busy wondering which of his ministers will be engulfed in a scandal next that he drops the ball on his real responsibilities.

Tasmania right now is at a critical juncture. The world is changing and Tasmania is well-positioned to benefit from that change and perhaps more than any other point in our history we have a real chance to shed our skin as the poorest state in the nation. We have the opportunity to deal with some of the most difficult long-term problems. We have the opportunity to make lasting change in the lives of Tasmanians, an opportunity to create a truly better future for our state, but we need to be willing and able to grasp it. I fear that this tired out-of-touch government led by a tired out-of-touch premier will squander this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I fear that we will wake up in 2030, the world will have moved on and Tasmania will have been left behind again. I am determined that that will not be our fate.

I know that the Labor Party was not at its best in 2021 but I also note that right now I lead a united team brimming with talent and energy: a united team with new ideas and a new-found sense of purpose; a united team that understands the challenges facing Tasmanians that has the drive and determination to address them. A team that sees the opportunities and grasps them. A united team that cares about good outcomes for our community and will work hard to achieve them. A team that believes in the importance of public services and equity of access. A team that looks at business owners as allies in the bigger fight for a better future for Tasmania. A team whose priority is ensuring that our economy is strong, is growing and that it works for all Tasmanians. A team that Tasmania can trust to lead our state. A team that stands in stark contrast to the tired, out-of-touch government on the other side. A team that understands that our greatest obligation is to make sure that we are leaders not just for today but for future generations.

I have spoken today a lot about Tasmania's economy, about how Peter Gutwein and the Liberals are not getting the basics right when it comes to economic management and the impact that is having on Tasmanian families; about how Peter Gutwein has not delivered the infrastructure, the tax and regulatory policies, the support to small businesses or the sensible budget management he promised Tasmanians; about how his tired, out-of-touch Government is too busy dealing with its own internal crises to address the real challenges facing Tasmanian families, workers and businesses.

Perhaps the biggest economic failure of Peter Gutwein and the Liberals is their lack of vision for the future. Ensuring that our children get the best start in life is the single most important thing we can do for our state's economic future. A government that is capable of raising its gaze beyond the daily news cycle will see that providing a good education for every young Tasmanian is not only in their best interest, it is the best investment that we can make for the Tasmanian economy.

Sadly, we do not have such a government. Instead we have the worst education results of any state. We are the worst performing state across every age group for reading. We are the worst in every age group for spelling. We are the second worst in every age group in writing and the worst in every age group in grammar and punctuation, and the worst in years five, seven and nine in numeracy.

As Tasmanian children move through our education system, they fall further and further behind their mainland peers. Over the past 10 years, the majority of which this Government has been in power, Tasmania's results have gone backwards in 14 of the 20 indicators measured by NAPLAN. We are at the bottom of the class and under Peter Gutwein we are falling further behind. They are holding back our children and our future.

We can already see the consequences of this for our children and for economy. We can see it in the fact that 39 per cent of school leavers are not engaged in work or further study - nearly double what it was when the Liberals came to power. We see it in the fact there are more than 4000 unemployed young Tasmanians and the fact that our youth unemployment rate is higher than the national average. We hear it from our key industries: building and construction, agriculture, tourism and hospitality whose pleas for help addressing the skill shortages that are holding back their future have fallen on deaf ears.

I do not believe that it has to be this way. In fact, I know that it does not have to be this way. Not that long ago Tasmania was renowned for the quality of its education system. People used to come from overseas to study what we were doing here, to marvel at what we were doing for our children and their future. While they might not be coming any more, I know that we can turn things around. So much is possible in a small state like ours.

Our relatively small size makes it easier to make real and relatively rapid change, change that ensures we are giving our children the best start in life and the brightest prospects for their future. First we have to stop accepting these terrible outcomes. We have to stop accepting a premier and a government whose policies are holding back our children's future. We have to stop accepting the fact that a child born in Tasmania is twice as likely to be unable to read or do maths by the time they leave year 9 than a child born on the other side of Bass Strait.

Most of all we have to understand that our children's future is our state's future. This Government might not get this, but Labor does. More importantly, we will do something about it because it is the right thing to do for our kids. Ensuring that every child from every suburb gets a good education, is safe, has a roof over their head, is loved, is the foundation of a fair and just society. It is also the only option if we want to have a strong, modern economy in the years to come. The cost of failure for our state is just too high. Building a better future for our state has to start by investing in our children and their future.

If we are going to build a better future for our children and for our state we need a premier and a government who are focused on getting the basics right when it comes to the Tasmanian economy. Basic issues that affect Tasmanians are the cost of living, jobs and wages and home ownership. We need a premier committed to taking real measures to reduce the big expenses faced by families, which are currently going through the roof. We need a premier committed to seeing wages grow faster than inflation because workers are currently going backwards. We need a premier committed to arresting the significant decline in home ownership among Tasmania's young people. We cannot expect to build a better future for our children and our state if the Government cannot even get the basics right when it comes to the Tasmanian economy.

If we are going to build a better future for our state, we also need a premier who actually delivers, a premier who delivers the health, transport and education infrastructure our communities need and have been promised. We need a premier who delivers the policies that he said he would deliver to give certainty to businesses and to prevent nasty surprises for

households. Above all, we need a premier who delivers the sort of stable, responsible government that is required for our state to thrive, not the disarray we have been dished up recently.

We have a Premier and a Government who are tired and out of touch. Tired because they are stuck in the cycle of scandal, resignation and reshuffle and have given up addressing our state's most serious problem. Out of touch because they appear to be obsessed with billion dollar distractions like the Commonwealth Games and floating football stadiums for Hobart when basic economic issues are not being solved. Being tired and out of touch does not bode well for the future of this Government or this state.

My desire to see a better future for our children is the reason that I get up in the morning. Investing in the potential of those who will come after us is how we will create a fair and more just society. Ensuring they are brighter, wiser, more creative and more ambitious than us is how we can be sure we can handle whatever the future throws at us. It is how we will fulfil the most basic responsibility of any government, ensuring the next generation is better off than we were. It is how we will look after our own future too, because our children's future is Tasmania's future.

[2.49 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Deputy Premier) - Mr Speaker, I am very excited about the state of the state address. I commend the Premier on what was an inspiring speech yesterday, full of aspiration, commitment and acknowledgement of the challenges that we have been through as a state in recent times, with the pandemic, and the magnificent commitment right across all areas of responsibility. I will come to mine in a moment. The Government is committed to making a real difference to Tasmanian lives. We have done so across a range of areas, particularly in the area of health care. The 2021-22 state Budget included a record \$10.7 billion investment into health over four years, a significant investment and \$900 million more than the previous year.

As the Premier indicated, while much of this funding has been targeted at immediate needs such as reducing the elective surgery waiting list, opening more beds and employing more staff, we are also very firmly focused on planning for the future.

I am very excited about our billion-dollar health infrastructure plan, but before I speak about that I would first like to take a moment to touch on those immediate pressures we have been focusing on because a lot has been and is being achieved, despite considerable resources being diverted into our COVID-19 response.

We have developed a four-year elective surgery plan to bring the elective surgery waiting list down to a sustainable level and to ensure more Tasmanians get the surgery they need within the clinically recommended time frames. It is so important, and despite the negativity opposite, the results are encouraging with respect to the wait list, decreasing by some 2000 people over the course of the last 12 months. We are now taking a similar approach to addressing the challenges that we have with the outpatient waitlist.

We have also introduced new and innovative services such as the Police, Ambulance and Clinician Early Response (PACER) service. We committed to this excellent initiative in May last year throughout the election and we are very pleased that in a relatively short time we commenced this service earlier this year.

PACER provides a rapid specialist response to acute mental health or behavioural concerns in the community. The PACER service aims to improve patient outcomes and reduce the demand on emergency services and emergency departments by helping people in the community. Programs and investments such as this are important but it is also important to look at the evidence and data where we can demonstrate that these innovations are positively working. In the first five weeks of operation, PACER responded to call-outs to some 138 people. The majority, 67 per cent of these people, were supported to remain in the community. That is tremendous.

It was a great privilege of mine a number of weeks ago to meet members of the PACER team across all those areas of responsibility in terms of police, ambulance and clinical early response and to really get from them how excited they are about being part of what is a truly innovative model, a great investment that is working, and the data certainly demonstrates that.

We have also undergone a major recruitment drive across our health system to support new and expanded services, as well as our COVID-19 response. More than 872 full-time equivalent new health staff were employed between July 2020 and the end of last year. These are extremely important investments. We know we need to be looking further over the horizon so we are planning now when it comes to the health infrastructure needed in the future. Indeed, when it comes to the health infrastructure that we have achieved already including the rebuild of the Royal Hobart Hospital, this Government and all those who have supported across the Department of Health need to be commended for an incredible amount of health infrastructure that has been invested in and built in recent times.

We are forecasting an investment of more than \$1 billion over 10 years into critical health infrastructure to ensure that generations of Tasmanians to come will be able to access care when and where they need it. Modern health facilities also help attract and retain staff, which is also incredibly important when it comes to providing services.

The Royal Hobart Hospital master plan, the recently completed Launceston General Hospital master plan and the North West Hospital master plan which is currently underway are all informing this investment into modern health facilities which improves patient amenity and increases capacity.

The Launceston General Hospital redevelopment master plan forecasts capital investment of some \$580 million over the course of the next 10 years. It includes some very exciting new developments that will deliver significant benefits to the community and support the delivery of contemporary care. This includes a new purpose-built mental health precinct on the Anne O'Byrne site. The precinct will co-locate inpatient and community mental health services and the mental health precinct will be co-designed with consumers, carers, family members, staff and other key stakeholders with modern facilities to support safe, therapeutic and recovery-focused care.

The 2021-22 Budget already includes initial funding of \$12 million over the forward Estimates to commence this major project, with the mental health precinct due for completion in 2027. A cornerstone project of the LGH master plan is a new tower, which will be built on the current site of the north-side mental health unit. The tower will enable us to expand and modernise inpatient and outpatient services and allow other important facility upgrades and expansions so we can respond to current and future demand of health services. Now that the

LGH master plan has been completed, a fully staged program of works to implement the master plan will be ready for public release in coming months.

Our Government has also worked productively with the private sector to enable the delivery of a new \$120 million private hospital adjacent to the LGH health precinct, maximising the benefits of arrangements to ultimately improve health services in the north of the state. I am confident that Calvary's development will deliver a mix of health services that complement and relieve pressure from the Launceston General Hospital. It will also deliver efficiencies in terms of staffing, bolstering our ability to attract and retain specialists and other health professionals to the region.

Subject to development approval, Calvary Health Care has agreed to deliver the following facilities from commencement: 128 inpatient beds; 40 day patient spaces; eight day oncology infusion spaces; 10 operating theatres; two procedure rooms; and two catheterisation labs. Services to be offered include general medical, elective surgery, gastrointestinal endoscopy, interventional cardiology, mental health, palliative care, gynaecology, oncology infusions, radiology and pathology, and provision of space, for example, for a proposed extended care GP service operated by a third-party arrangement following consultation with stakeholders. There is also potential for an integrated care hub out-of-hospital service to be developed.

As I have said before, we are open to any positive and new ideas about how we can improve our health system and deliver services efficiently by strengthening our relationships with private hospitals. We are managing the peaks in demand in the public system by purchasing some services as appropriate from private hospitals.

In the south we are delivering an expansion of stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment, which represents over \$200 million in new facilities, including an additional 90 inpatient beds, a fit-for-purpose older persons unit, an expanded ICU, an expanded emergency department and new neurology stroke and medical subspecialty wards

Construction of the ICU commenced in January 2022 and the refurbishment of the endoscopy unit in A Block has also commenced. A tender for J Block to deliver a contemporary space for cardiology and a new sleep studies unit was issued in November last year, with construction due to commence this month.

On advice from clinicians we are super-sizing the expansion of the Royal Hobart Hospital emergency department, which we announced around budget time last year. This will ensure the number of beds and treatment points in the expanded emergency department can support staff to respond to this new level of demand. Importantly, we are accelerating the opening of 25 new emergency department beds as a first stage by the end of 2022 to help our clinicians respond to demand.

While much of the focus is currently on stage 2, we are also turning our minds to the next step and engaging with the Commonwealth Government to provide joint funding for stage 3 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment. This will deliver an estimated \$665 million to establish a new campus at the Royal Hobart Hospital for increased mental health services and specialised multidisciplinary sub-acute services including rehabilitation, palliative care, geriatric evaluation and management care as well.

We have already commenced our \$20.7 million commitment to the redevelopment of the Peacock Centre and new St Johns Park integration hubs which together will provide 27 new mental health short-term recovery beds in the community, and the Australian Government's commitment of \$10 million for the Tasmanian Eating Disorder Service also located within the St Johns Park development. The Peacock Centre redevelopment was about 65 per cent complete at the time of the significant fire which occurred on 24 December 2021. I am pleased to confirm that while the fire is obviously a setback and will delay the centre's scheduled completion, the Tasmanian Government is committed to this project, and the rebuild is going ahead. Work has recommenced and we are currently anticipating completion of the building works by the end of this year providing short-term recovery of beds and an integration hub bringing together a range of care and support services.

The fire on Christmas Eve last year was a tragedy for all those involved. A lot of work and a lot of effort has gone into the project design and those involved with the project in its renovation and building, and a lot of community support as well. Just a few days after that fire I visited and toured the site. Quite clearly, that extensive damage was visible. What was also encouraging, which I picked up, was the absolute commitment of the builders, architects, and others who have been involved in that project. Even someone in the community who lived nearby and was walking past reflected their personal devastation as well given the long history of the Peacock Centre. They expressed how sad we must all be feeling as a result of that fire damage.

We will rebuild, and as I have said work has recommenced and we are anticipating completion of the building works, hopefully by the end of this year.

The new St Johns Park facility will include 15 short-term recovery beds, and a second integration hub for the south. The facility will also include the Tasmanian Eating Disorder Service, consisting of a residential component and day and evening programs. The detailed design of the facility is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the middle of this year, with construction to commence by the end of this year.

In the north-west, we are progressing a \$100 million redevelopment of the North West Regional Hospital which includes \$40 million for stage 1 of a new mental health precinct adjacent to the North West Regional Hospital to replace the ageing Spencer Clinic and \$20 million for the refurbishment of the Spencer Clinic to provide additional hospital wards. This facility will also be co-designed with key stakeholders and will be a hub for delivery of integrated mental health services in the north west. It is expected that stage 1 will be completed by the end of 2025, with an expansion plan and footprint for stage 2 which would provide for the co-location of community mental health services similar to the Peacock Centre and St Johns Park integration hubs in the south.

As a government, we are excited to be progressing the construction of these much-needed mental health facilities that will help ensure seamless integration between inpatient mental health services and community-based services. These new facilities will offer a contemporary environment to help grow and retain our workforce and will better enable the provision of best practice, more holistic care to consumers of mental health services in the right place and importantly, at the right time.

We have also expanded our investment in the Mersey Community Hospital with a further \$20 million to provide a new kitchen and additional ward, providing more peak capacity. As

I said this morning, this takes the total upgrade of the Mersey to some \$55 million, the most significant, I am advised, in the hospital's history. Additional car parking and critical lift upgrades were completed in 2020. An early works package to allow major development works was completed in February 2022. A contract for construction of new theatres and outpatient unit will be awarded in March with construction to be completed in 2024.

We have also committed some \$20 million over three years to assist in replacing and upgrading critical hospital equipment, including diagnostic equipment across Tasmanian hospitals. An audit has been undertaken across our hospitals in the south, the north and north-west to identify a list of equipment for priority replacement. Our focus is to replace surgical equipment first to assist us with ensuring that more Tasmanians get their elective surgery again within the clinically recommended time frames. This is part of our investment in strategic asset management to ensure we upgrade and maintain our hospital assets and equipment effectively over time to make the most of our investment.

We are also investing some \$9 million to upgrade our Ambulance Tasmania vehicle fleet and deliver the contemporary equipment our paramedics need. We have invested in 30 new ambulances in this financial year alone. This will rapidly update the ambulance fleet and allow Ambulance Tasmania to have vehicles on standby to respond to increases in demand related to COVID-19.

Our district hospitals play such a key role in caring for Tasmanians in rural and regional areas of the state and we are providing some \$5 million in additional funding for new equipment. This will help support healthcare in communities which are close to the world-class mountain bike tracks and also at Swansea which is seeing an increase in tourism. We are also working closely with the district hospitals to determine the need at each facility and procurement to progress in line with agreed priorities.

Listening to people on the ground across our state to the needs that they require in their respective healthcare setting is most important. We recognise modern and fully integrated digital health infrastructure is just as necessary as bricks and mortar for delivering quality and timely patient care, which is why in last year's budget we committed some \$15 million to commence key focus areas of a 10-year digital transformation in health. The Government's digital health strategy will outline a 10-year road map for transforming Tasmania's health system through digital technologies and enable consistency between care settings and regions, while also delivering high quality health services that are safer and more efficient. The benefits are wide-ranging, not only for our health system but for consumers also. These include improved patient experiences all the way from scheduling of appointments through to accessing health services, communicating with providers and allowing patients to manage their own health information and improved clinician experience by removing paper-based processes. Through removing these processes clinicians will benefit from productivity gains, meaning that they will have more time to spend with patients.

By moving to a digital setting, we also make it more attractive to recruit and retain clinicians in a digitally enabled health service. It provides better health outcomes for patients through the implementation of a single source of patient information that can be accessed across different settings from acute to community and primary care. This improves communication between the different care settings and clinicians, leading to improvements in patient safety. Supporting more care in the community is a key priority from the Government's Our Healthcare

Future. An holistic approach to digital health plays an integral role in achieving this very key objective.

Sustainability in our health system capacity comes from workforce productivity, decommissioning of avoidable ICT costs and a potential reduction in duplicate tests and medication wastage. With the evolving nature of health care, digital technologies will transform the way we work, unlocking new ways of caring for the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians. I am excited and pleased to see that is on the Government's agenda.

With demand increasing for health services statewide, it is vital we use every available service to find ways to reduce pressure on our public hospitals. That is why we committed \$20 million last year to establish a fund to enable private hospitals to support our public hospital system to better manage demand. We all recognise the increasing demand on our health services. That is why we are experiencing the pressures in our health system. That demand has increased over the course of the past decade and will continue to increase with our ageing population. That is why it is all the more extraordinary that we have worked our way through while the number one priority was keeping Tasmanians safe throughout the time of the pandemic.

I am very proud of our health workforce for working so hard to keep Tasmanians safe over the course of the past two years, particularly the work done in that pandemic environment to ensure to reduce the unacceptably high elective surgery waiting lists of some 12 200 or more people over the clinically recommended time frames we were presented within January 2021 by 2000 over the past 12 months. To do that is extraordinary given the pandemic environment we have.

There is more to do to reduce those elective surgery waiting lists, which is why I am very excited about the clinician-led patient-focused, four-year elective surgery plan; consistent investment across the forward Estimates. It is the first time we have had consistent, increasing investment to support a very clear plan for 30 000 additional surgeries across the forward Estimates. We recognise that the waiting lists are high but we are investing and working with our clinicians consistently.

Many of the arrangements that we have already commenced are helping to relieve pressure and further identify innovative ways to manage increasing demand, demonstrating how the public and private hospital systems can collaborate successfully to achieve those positive outcomes. The most important asset in our health system is our people. The Liberal Government has delivered more staffing than any previous government. Since coming to Government in 2014 we have employed more than 1500 additional full-time equivalent health professionals. We have worked very hard to build up our nursing workforce, which over the last three financial years has increased by nearly 600 full-time equivalents.

I acknowledge and personally thank the incredible efforts of our hard-working health staff, especially over the past two years, as they have been on the frontline of our COVID-19 response and have worked tirelessly to help test, vaccinate and support our community through this very difficult and challenging period.

Our plan is centred on our patients and our staff. We will continue to invest record funding to address immediate pressures and ensure Tasmanians can get the right care in the right place at the right time. We will continue to build upon this work over the next decade

with a \$1 billion longer-term vision that sees a better health system in every region of Tasmania.

Ms FINLAY - Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Before I was interrupted I was talking about the investment in health infrastructure in our regions. I have mentioned the Mersey Hospital, I have mentioned the mental health precincts.

I now turn to Braddon. I acknowledge and thank the Premier for his commitment to work with the Burnie City Council and the north-west business community to look at what investment may be needed to revitalise the CBD of Burnie with a relocation of the Burnie Court. I am also excited about what these discussions may produce and understand the keenness of people across the region and Burnie for that revitalisation of the CBD.

I am proud of the investments we are making, not only in infrastructure across the north-west coast and across Tasmania but also in the people, in our schools, in our hospitals, in our services, our housing investments. The Government keeps its ear very close to the ground understanding the needs of Tasmanians. It is responding with a very clear commitment and very clear aspiration over the course of the next 10 years.

I am proud to be part of a forward-thinking Government with a long-term vision to secure Tasmania's future.

[3.19 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, another year, another state of the state speech, another raft of announcements from this chaotic Government. While I understand the importance of sport, and in particular football for the Tasmanian community, the Premier's announcement yesterday on the \$750 million floating stadium for Hobart does nothing to instill confidence in this Government's ability to address the crisis Tasmanians face each day in health, housing and education. This announcement will benefit the south and less so the north and north-west.

Arguably economic benefit from such a significant investment should be distributed equally across the state. Think about the houses that could be built with this money, the investment in our health services and upgrades to schools across the state.

All this aside, let us not forget that this is just an announcement. There are lots of ducks that need to be lined up for this announcement to be delivered. I am sure Tasmanians will be watching this development very closely, just as they were on our bid for the Commonwealth Games, and look how that turned out.

Let us not forget that right now we were due to have an election in Tasmania and I cannot help but think of the irony of this. The need for an early election was supposedly for stability, but we all know Ms Ogilvie was lined up for Liberal preselection and now a year later she is in the Cabinet. What was the real reason for an early election? The events of the last year tell a very different story; yet another example of the lack of integrity of this Government.

The state of the state speech is an opportunity for the Premier to talk up his Government, but ultimately it is a reflection or appraisal of the performance of those opposite, the government of the day, its leadership, its vision, its integrity, its economic management, its ability to deliver on its commitment, its ability to get the basics right, like health, education and housing, and its ability to make a difference to the lives of our children and our future generations. On all these measures the Gutwein Government is performing poorly. It is very clear Tasmanians need better leadership.

Tasmania is a state of beautiful landscapes, talented people and tremendous opportunities and possibilities. We must think big, think differently and have the courage to face up to our challenges and plan together as a community for our future. This Government has no long-term plan for Tasmania, no shared objectives or goals and no insight into what is really important to all Tasmanians. Instead, this Government continues to make announcement after announcement, never delivering on their major infrastructure projects or election commitments.

I am saddened that in Tasmania, a place of such beauty and potential, there is so much disadvantage and that so many of my fellow Tasmanians are being left behind by a government that has been in power for almost a decade, a tired, stale government that simply cannot get the basics right for Tasmanians.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as the House and you will know, I am from the beautiful seaside city of Burnie, a city whose economy and community were built on our traditional industries and the value of workers and their families. I recently took a stroll along the Pulp Paper Trail at south Burnie which features the history of our city and the foundations and values that enshrined APPM as the largest employer in our city and our region. Sir Gerald Mussen was instrumental in the planning, development and operation of the mills. I think he had it right with his social welfare policies that focused on the importance of a happy and healthy workforce, the personal and collective reward this would bring and the economic growth that it generated.

This philosophy is as true today as it was back in 1911, when Sir Gerald Mussen said:

The object of life is happiness, not money. ... [I]t is essential to happiness that each individual should have secured to him health, education and a good home.

This was taken from his keynote speech on the humanising of commerce and industry in 1911. These still today are the fundamental building blocks of an economy and society.

The need to have a healthy population to have a healthy economy has been a centrepiece of the COVID-19 pandemic. It could not be clearer that there needs to be a greater value of workers in this country and a greater value of their health and wellbeing. Fast forward to 2022 and we find ourselves in a Tasmania where we have a government that does not share the same values as Sir Gerald Mussen.

Labor thinks Tasmanians need better leadership. Health, housing and education are key pillars of the Tasmanian economy that are critical to the prosperity of future generations. Peter Gutwein's economic management simply is not working for Tasmanians. Peter Gutwein cannot even get the basics right. Our health, housing and education outcomes are the worst in the

country and heading in the wrong direction. This Government is not taking us to the next level. By doing nothing differently, it is ensuring we are left behind our mainland counterparts.

This Government claims to be spending record amounts on health, housing and education, and that we are in a sound financial position. They claim to be good economic managers, but the reality is that little has changed for Tasmanians in almost a decade and if anything, things are worse and our financial position continues to deteriorate.

The Gutwein Government has no vision for the future of Tasmania. It is void of new ideas and seeks to divide communities rather than unite them on issues that are important to all Tasmanians. It is a tired, unstable government with the esteemed record of losing two ministers in as many weeks, a record that is simply extraordinary, quite frankly, that even the most outrageous sporting announcement cannot detract from, although it is a wonder the Premier did not try with an Olympic Games bid for Tasmania just for good measure.

When it comes to errors of judgment, this Premier has form. In fact, Peter Gutwein's error of judgment has been on full display over the last 12 months. First, there was Adam Brooks - or should I say Terry Brooks - in Braddon; Sarah Courtney in Paris; and now many unanswered questions about Jane Howlett in Prosser.

There are loads of unanswered questions and little to no answers coming forward from this Premier, playing dumb and pretending there is nothing to see here, but this goes to the heart of the integrity of this Government under the leadership, or should I say lack of leadership and integrity, under Premier Peter Gutwein, and as they say, the culture starts at the top.

Why was Adam Brooks endorsed to run in Braddon? When and what did the Premier know about Terry, sorry, I mean Adam Brooks' alleged activities when he backed him in and preselected him in Braddon? The voters of Braddon were taken for granted by this and I think they deserve an apology.

Why was Sarah Courtney granted leave to fly overseas on vacation at the peak of a pandemic in the weeks leading up to the beginning of the most challenging school year in living memory? I want to put on the record that I do not begrudge anyone the right to have a holiday and a break away and it is true our job is all-consuming, but it is a question of timing, accountability and responsibility as a minister. This was not the right time to take leave. As a responsible minister, Ms Courtney owed it to Tasmanian parents, teachers, support staff and students to be here in Tasmania to support and provide reassurance for the return to school and to outline the Government's plan to safely reopen our schools for our children.

What other reasons contributed to the shock resignation of Sarah Courtney? That is not entirely clear, but when the time came to return to the community and Cabinet, Ms Courtney chose to leave the sinking Gutwein ship and what a mess that left for the Premier. Rats leaving the sinking ship. Probably the easiest place to find a rat in Tasmania right now is leaving the Gutwein Government, especially if you live in a rural and remote community. Then a fortnight later we see another ministerial resignation. Another week, another ministerial resignation. Who will be next?

Jane Howlett's demotion from Sport minister raises a lot of questions, many the Premier is not willing to answer. Her subsequent resignation as a minister obviously came at a very difficult time for her personally, and I do want to acknowledge that, Mr Deputy Speaker.

As has been said in this place, there is little public interest in a minister's private life. I agree, but there is genuine public interest in any potential conflict a minister might have in their role managing and administering Tasmanian money or funds.

Tasmanians deserve answers to the questions being raised about Jane Howlett's potential or perceived conflict of interest as Sport minister. Tasmanians expect the highest standard of their MPs. Our conduct must be of the highest standard. It is in the public interest to know if there has been a breach of this confidence and trust in public office. As others have said, there is a lot at stake, \$100 million of investment in the JackJumpers - public funds. There must be scrutiny of the decisions made by this minister and an investigation to uphold public trust, at the very least.

Mr Deputy Speaker, another latest CommSec State of the States Report does not mean much to the young Tasmanian who cannot get a foot in the door of the property market; the young mum who is homeless with her five kids living in her car; the man waiting two years for his hip replacement and living in pain; the woman who waited a year for her dentures to be replaced - a year without teeth, unable to eat, unable to smile, unable to speak; the young school leaver on the west coast who cannot do a TAFE course locally; or the woman who was told she would need to wait four years to see a specialist, all the while living in chronic, excruciating pain.

Peter Gutwein's economic management is not working for Tasmanians. Tasmania is spiralling into debt with absolutely nothing to show for it. No infrastructure. No economic or social reform. A broken health, education and housing system. Not even the reannouncements in the state of the state can provide the immediate solution to fix the structural economic issues facing all Tasmanians.

I wish Peter Gutwein was as passionate about health, education and housing as he is about sport. Elite sport is this government's go-to as a distraction as a measure of its progress. This Government has all but given up on the targets they set themselves when they came to office, like Tasmania being the healthiest population by 2025. What happened to that goal? There are only three years to make that happen.

This will be the legacy Tasmanians remember Peter Gutwein by. Not test matches, not AFL footy teams, or even a failed Commonwealth Games bid. Whilst these might have been used as distraction from the chaos in Peter Gutwein's Cabinet, the fact is this Government is failing Tasmanians every day and they simply cannot get the basics right. As I said, I wish the Premier was as passionate about the fundamental, social and economic importance of health, education and housing as he is about sport. Peter Gutwein is far too distracted by the instability and chaos of his government and the resignation of his successor to turn his mind to the matters that concern and are most important in the everyday lives of Tasmanians.

Tasmanians need better leadership. This Government cannot get the basics right. When it comes to the cost of living Tasmanian families are struggling with increased living costs. Life is getting more expensive for all Tasmanians, whether it is at the checkout, or the petrol bowser, or your power bill. What is this Government doing about it? Very little. Living costs are soaring with inflation in Tasmania the highest in the nation, yet our incomes are the lowest in the country. Under Peter Gutwein's Government Tasmanians are indeed going backwards. The Premier himself promised to intervene when petrol prices were deemed to get high, but as we see petrol prices rise to \$2 a litre there has been little done by this Government to assist

Tasmanians doing it tough, despite the Premier committing to do so. Cost of living keeps going up but Tasmanians' wages do not.

The housing crisis in Tasmania is starving Tasmanians of basic human rights. Home ownership and housing are critical components of our living standards and the dream of owning your own home in Tasmania is almost gone. Tasmanians are struggling to get a rental. Burnie has the tightest rental market in the country. Our shelters are full and are no longer just for crisis accommodation. There is limited transitional accommodation available to people in their local community and Tasmanians are living in their cars. The number of Tasmanians on the housing waitlist continues to increase. There are now 4300 Tasmanians on the housing waitlist. This Government is failing to deliver for these Tasmanians. A lack of housing is holding back economic growth in regional Tasmania and I will speak more about that in my contribution later.

There is the inability to provide essential services such as suitable and adequate government housing for health professionals and teachers in our rural and remote communities. Land tax cuts are one thing but the benefits must be passed on to tenants to ensure the benefits are for everyone and this truly impacts our housing crisis.

The Government's planning reform has all but stalled and yesterday we heard that because the Government has not done the work when it should have, it will now bypass the full review of the regional land use strategies and fast track rezoning through the Tasmanian Planning Commission. This Government has not delivered on planning reform and the housing crisis is one example of the consequences of this Government's failed planning reform. They have had almost a decade to complete their planning reform process. No amount of spin, or a new statutory housing authority can detract from the fact that this Government has failed to deliver on its promises to build more homes for Tasmanians. By putting housing now at arms-length they do not want to be accountable. That is quite clear from the announcements that were made earlier in the week.

Despite the Premier's reference to COVID-19 and its role in the housing crisis, let us not forget the housing crisis stems back way before COVID-19. I can remember in 2018 when being elected to this place there were tents on parliament's lawn in protest against the way this Government was treating homeless people. Also, the fact that we were in the midst of a housing crisis. Not much has really changed. COVID-19 may have exacerbated the issue but it is not responsible for it in its entirety.

The Gutwein Government does not deliver. The Government has had great difficulty in getting major infrastructure projects off the ground and out the door. In fact, this has been a hallmark of this Liberal Government. This is concerning as this is the one-dimensional approach the Government is taking to stimulate the economy and create jobs pre and post COVID-19.

It is disappointing that the Government has failed to deliver on light rail or invest efficiently in our ports with the ship loader project at Burnie port being significantly delayed. These two projects are an excellent example of intergenerational infrastructure investments this Government is not making. No infrastructure investment for future generations. It is one thing to allocate funding but as this Government has demonstrated time and time again, it is another to actually build the projects that the funding is allocated to. Some of the important delayed projects which come to my mind include the northern suburbs light rail, the Cradle Mountain

cableway experience, Macquarie Point, the Bass Highway upgrades, the Cooee 'crawl', the Burnie and Glenorchy ambulance stations, the underground bus mall fantasy, the ship loader at Burnie Port and the new *Spirit of Tasmania* ships. I am sure there are more that my colleagues will point out in their contributions later today.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on our lives and I extend my thoughts to all those who have lost their loved ones to COVID-19 across our state. This has been a difficult time and it continues to be a difficult time for all Tasmanians. I also make note of the tremendous stress that has been put on Tasmanians who have largely lived COVID-free for 18 months when the Government opened the borders on 15 December. What a shock it was for Tasmanians and there was such a level of fear and concern in our community. To be honest, it felt like the Government turned its back on Tasmanians. This was a time when Tasmanians clearly needed better leadership from its government and they got very little, only mutterings that the plan was working well, everything was going to plan, when clearly it was not.

The Premier did not get the basics right. In this place it was stated that we had the capacity to do up to 5000 tests a day. The testing system crumbled in the first couple of weeks. Contact tracing was abolished. The COVID@home program was completely overrun, so was the Public Health hotline. These were a few basics that come to mind, critical components for keeping Tasmanians safe, but this Government failed to address a resource adequately. I thank each and every one of the staff who were involved in testing, contact tracing and our vaccination programs across our state. They have done a tremendous job. They have worked under incredible pressure and they deserved more support from this Government at the critical point in time when demand was clearly exceeding supply. It caused a lot of undue stress for those staff and for the Tasmanians who they were trying to assist.

What was the plan, Premier? You did not appear to have one and it was Tasmanians who felt the full brunt of this. The economic consequences of COVID-19 were of a scale not seen since the Great Depression and the ongoing economic impact is not yet quite clear as our community and businesses continue to operate in a COVID-19 safe environment and the challenges that presents. It took the Government far too long to act to support small business and workers over the Christmas period. Even when it finally did provide support it was not enough and that was the feedback we had from small businesses. It was arduous to apply, particularly for businesses that were already under incredible pressure and stress and time poor.

It was too late and nowhere was that more evident than on King Island. Islanders were let down by this Government. There was no direct communication with the island about Public Health orders or advice about not travelling to King Island when they had their outbreak. They were bitterly disappointed about that and they were bitterly disappointed by the lack of support they received from this Government. Even now they do not feel that the support that has been provided was tailored to their needs. There was no consultation with them and the mayor expressed her disappointment passionately. The Government has a lot of work to do with the people of King Island and I would encourage them to do that because they have let them down significantly when tourism was one of the key industries on the island. Once more, I want to put on the record that altogether there was no support from this Government for workers who had lost hours or lost their jobs. That is unacceptable.

We abandoned the Delta shield. As I said, testing was chaotic. You could not get a rapid antigen test for love nor money wherever you went. People could not get one yet they were

being asked to use them. People were driving for hours from Queenstown, Strahan, other regional parts of the state to get a test, then turned around because the testing clinic was shut. Why should those people have had to travel unwell all that way to get a test? Why were those services not provided in their local communities?

Contact tracing was almost abolished. There have been no details about the health surge plan put in place by the Government and the provision of health services. We saw services cancelled. Child health appointments cancelled. These are critically important in the development of a child, yet they were cancelled because staff were being pulled out to fill in the gaps that existed in the vaccination program. The Government said it had recruited 870 additional staff to make sure it could provide an adequate response when our borders opened. Clearly they did not have enough staff and it was Tasmanians and the services that they rely on that suffered.

There was no information throughout this. The clarity of information provided to the people of Tasmania by this Government has been appalling. They did not know if they were coming or going. Information was changing daily and the goalposts kept changing significantly each day. The Government really lost control of communicating what was left of the plan they announced prior to the borders opening on 15 December.

The vaccine rollout has been poor in regional areas. You only have to look at the vaccination rates for years 5 to 11 children in the north-west to see that they are lower than other parts of the state. There is a need to make vaccination clinics available in more rural and regional areas. Schools are a good place to start to work in partnership. We have spoken about the importance of community pharmacists being involved in the vaccination program. To date, the Government has not done that. We would like to see that made available to people across rural and regional Tasmania.

You can have all the ventilators and ICU beds in the world - and it is great that they were provided - but they are not much use if you do not have the staff in the hospitals to provide the care. Everything that has happened since our borders reopened highlights the fact that this Government has not invested in staff across the health care system. They are not clear about what vacancies exist, even being asked to reveal the modelling around surge capacity for staffing. It was the lack of staff that led to services being cancelled; elective surgery being cancelled. The Government committed to employing 180 additional staff for its elective surgery blitz. How many of those people have been recruited and why has elective surgery not been ramped up again since our escalation rate is back at stage three? There should be no reason why that is not happening, yet still we see more than 10 000 Tasmanians waiting for elective surgery across our state.

You do not have to look too far into my shadow portfolio areas to see where this Government has failed to deliver for Tasmanians. No local government reform, despite talking about it for nearly a decade. Mr Jaensch has walked away from the reform process, or been demoted from planning and local government. There is significant conflict in the Huon Valley about local government. That has not been managed well by your Government. The code of conduct reviews are up in arms. The review of the act has been put on the backburner. Nothing has been achieved. No economic reform.

Now we have Mr Ferguson at the helm who, it is fair to say, has an even worse record of delivery. What hope is there for the development of a fit-for-purpose modernised model for local government in Tasmania?

Local government deserves better. They should be thanked for the work they have done across our communities during the pandemic. I want to extend my thanks to local government, to those working as elected representatives on behalf of their communities and to those working behind the scenes operationally in local government, providing the services that Tasmanians rely on every day.

There is no statewide planning scheme or planning policy coming from this Government. The local provision schedules were not completed by Christmas, as was committed to by the Government. This is another broken promise and the Government has not delivered. This failure to deliver planning reform is holding back economic growth and contributing to the housing crisis across Tasmania.

When it comes to health, it is a wonder the Government does not have vertigo. The amount of spin on health in this Government could make you dizzy. It is incredible, yet Tasmanians continue to suffer.

The elective surgery wait list now sits at over 10 000. Every day I am approached by people who are waiting for elective surgery, quite often in agony. More needs to be done by this Government to address that. Productivity of about \$120 million is lost each year due to delays in elective surgery across our state. That simply is not good enough and demonstrates again that poorer health outcomes have significant economic outcomes. Our specialist waiting list, or should we say the hidden elective surgery waiting list, is over 60 000 people. Those people at some stage will require surgery.

The recent Productivity Commission report shows that Tasmanians are suffering with fewer mental health beds and less spending on mental health services than a decade ago. What does that say about this Government?

There is no money for the Launceston General Hospital master plan and the co-location with Calvary. Pie in the sky. There are no time frames around it yet you continue to reannounce it. When is it going to happen?

It was great to see you acknowledge the need for a hospice in the north, which we committed to at the last state election. Now you have come on board to support that.

I want to thank our health care workers across the state for their contribution, ongoing but also during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Let us look at where the Liberals are failing Braddon. The Cradle Mountain cableway, the Burnie Court. We have heard a lot about that lately. You changed your tune on it. I would like to see you entirely backflip and make the commitment to keep it in the Burnie CBD, because that is what the business community wants. That is what the broader community wants, and that is what the legal fraternity wants. That makes great sense. That is what you should commit to do.

The Cooee Crawl, the Western Explorer. What has happened to that report, Mr Ferguson? It has all but disappeared.

The West Coast is crying out for additional aged care beds that were committed to be provided by this Government almost three years ago.

They cannot house health professionals on the west coast because of the housing stock. They would love to have a jobs hub to connect their local people to employment opportunity, but instead you are centralising that in Burnie, and giving them a 0.5 position to cover that.

The Burnie Ambulance Station, Montello Primary School. No action on those announcements. This Government is falling apart. Old governments lose their integrity. Cabinet is in chaos.

In contrast, Tasmanian Labor is a united, talented team, committed to getting the basics right - good economic management that works for Tasmanians and their families. We understand Tasmania needs better leadership than this Government.

The most important task of government is to ensure a better future for our children. We must begin by asking ourselves, what kind of future do we want for our children in Tasmania? We have not had that conversation as a community under the leadership of Peter Gutwein. You only have to look at our educational outcomes to see how the Liberals are letting down our children.

About 48 per cent of our population is functionally illiterate. If you want to talk about aspiration, this is where you should start. If you want to talk about the building blocks of an economy and a society, then this is where that should start.

It is a disgrace. Tasmanians should have a community value of education. It should not matter where you live, you should have access to a world-class education in Tasmania. Our teachers and support staff should be supported to enable this. That is aspirational.

In Tasmania, there are so many kids who do not get to play weekend sport because they live in poverty. They do not have the means to access weekend sport, let alone the aspiration to elite sport. This Government is so out of touch.

Time expired.

[3.49 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Finance) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak on the Premier's Address. It is an annual part of the parliament's program. It ought to be a time of exchanging different points of view on how the state is going and where the priorities need to be established, and maybe even emphasised. We heard an exceptional and comprehensive address from the Premier yesterday.

I have been a member of this House for 12 years and I have heard a lot of Premier's Addresses from different premiers. Without wanting to compare one with another, it can only be said that the Premier's Address yesterday was visionary, long into the future and dealing with the priorities that our growing state needs. I applaud the Premier and all of my colleagues, Cabinet and non-Cabinet, for their contributions towards the Government's reinvigorated

agenda going into 2022, not 12 months since the people of Tasmania soundly and strongly re-elected this Government to continue delivering our plan to secure Tasmania's future, and it is working.

I will be brief in my criticism of the Leader of the Opposition's remarks earlier today but what a complete waste of the parliament's time. I kept expecting that maybe there might be some new policy development, some new announcement about a different priority, some new guarantee, some new promise, but it was as empty today as the Leader of the Opposition's annual budget reply - no alternative and certainly no vision, but a lot of grizzling. I sensed a lot of personal attacks in that address as well, if you could call it that, from the Leader of the Opposition, who has put her own integrity on the line in the last two days and sent out her poor deputy, who ought to have had some courage to say, 'No, I won't do that', but she did.

It has been an appalling week for this parliament, based on the behaviour of members opposite - appalling for this House. To bring in some of those statements that have been made has brought this House to a low I have not seen before, and I have seen a lot. There was no alternative, just a bitter Leader of the Opposition who, it is very apparent, has still not got over her consecutive election losses and the fact that she presides over a party that is toxic, declared so not last year but this year by former member, Bastian Seidel, who relinquished his seat in January, because it is so very toxic.

That is the Labor Party. On the Liberal side, we are very glad to be focused on the needs of Tasmanians with a very optimistic and positive plan that encourages and inspires Tasmanians everywhere to reach what, for them, is their next life goal. We have a focus on increasing housing supply. That is important and we need to do more of it for a longer period of time. We are triple right now in investment in housing to the last year of the Labor-Greens government. In the Labor-Greens government's last year, I believe the figure was \$29 million of expenditure. We are now triple that.

Ms O'Connor - How many have you built since 2014? How many have you built in eight years?

Mr FERGUSON - I am happy to check the record as always. We are building these properties. We are also building new infrastructure. It is a very lazy Opposition that would dare say we are not building infrastructure. Did you see the minister for Crown lands this morning with the new set of acquisitions? They were 48 inches thick when they were presented to the Clerk. We are building infrastructure across the state.

Let us be clear, when you have no policies you only have this juvenile behaviour of laughter when the Premier is outlining the delivery of the strong program that we are doing. We are improving public transport. We took the most comprehensive and strong plan on public transport to the election and we are implementing that. Those services are now being established and some of them for the southern suburbs commenced in January of this year, with more to come.

Strengthening local government and implementing planning reforms are jobs that the Premier has given me to do and I am very grateful for these roles but, my word, I am busy. There is a lot happening in this state and a heck of a lot happening in these portfolios, and I am very pleased to be able to perform that role for the Government and indeed for the people of Tasmania.

We are turbocharging the economy. The record infrastructure program is working and look at the numbers, it is pretty clear. Look at the unemployment rate - 3.8 per cent - people are at work right now. As we recover from the pandemic, our mission has been to stimulate the economy and create jobs and that is occurring. We do not make any apologies to members opposite for our \$5.7 billion infrastructure program of works from last year's budget. It has provided industry with record confidence and a strong pipeline of work that they know they can employ for and get on confidently knowing there is plenty of work in the pipeline so they should continue to employ and train.

The budget also has \$2 billion for our roads and bridges program and that program is on track and doing extremely well. Some of the very large projects are ahead of schedule. Anyone from Sorell or the southern beaches would know and be amazed at the progress of the south-east traffic solution being implemented. Mr Deputy Speaker, I know in your electorate people are seeing that take form right now. The Midway Point junction improvement has actually carved out entire new lanes off that cliff face and created an entirely new view, if you like. It is a stunning piece of infrastructure. Take that together with the airport interchange, it is a stunning piece of infrastructure which is taking shape and was opposed by the Labor Party, who wanted us to fall prey to unentitled demands that were being made of us.

The \$585 million Midland Highway action plan is progressing ahead of expectation. The facts are very clear. You cannot argue with them; more than 100 kilometres of the 153 is done. The remaining 50 kilometres construction is commencing and we have awarded contracts right around the board to complete those remaining stages. We have now seen a significant increase to that highway being reached to a three-star AusRAP rating. When we came to government there was something like only 9 per cent of that highway with an AusRAP three-star rating. It was a dangerous highway; that was the Labor legacy. We are investing and delivering. There are extra lanes, the doubling of the overtaking opportunities, the wire rope barriers which are avoiding, virtually eliminating, the risk of head-on collisions, which is one of the major risk factors for death and serious injury on that highway.

I am pleased to talk about the Bridgewater bridge because we are building that bridge. Those scoffers doubted, but we are delivering. That project was awarded last December. I saw a federal MP waving around a sign that said it does not even have a design. Well, that is funny. Maybe go and take that one up with the company that won the tender, McConnell Dowell. They won the tender in part on the basis of their innovative design. Yes, we are going through the planning system. I do not understand the criticism implicit in Ms White's ridiculous address today. Doesn't she want it to go through the planning system? That is just strange.

That is going through the planning process, as it should. We look to see that project, the state's biggest ever transport infrastructure project, commencing mid this year. As we have previously committed, you will see vehicles driving on that bridge in 2024. The extra investment is transforming that project so that you will have far better interchanges on both sides of the Derwent. That did not get a mention this morning, did it, when Ms White was mocking us for the extra money that we are putting into that project? Well, tell that to the mayor of Derwent Valley, tell that to the mayor of Brighton. Those communities are thrilled that we have improved those interchanges with far better junctions and far better, more effective on-ramps and off-ramps. They asked for it. They called on us to do it and we have responded and the bidders responded in kind. The Opposition ought to welcome it but they are dead against this project because they hate seeing the Government delivering it, so much so they do not want me to speak.

Ms DOW - Mr Deputy Speaker, I call your attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Labor Party is so toxic that they cannot stand to be told their history. Our Government has now committed \$280 million to improvements in the Bass Highway from Deloraine to Devonport, Cooe to Wynyard, right through to Marrawah. I drove every metre of that highway over summer and I am really pleased with the repairs that have been effected and the long-term repairs that are being effected but I am more excited than ever about the improvements that have been effected on that highway. They did not get a mention in Ms White's speech. I do not think she has driven the Bass Highway lately and the community has been crying out for better treatments - wider pavements, better overtaking opportunity and junction improvements and we are now delivering. As we speak, men and women of the civil contracting industry are on the job right now.

In the north, we are delivering on our initiatives we took to the election. We are now progressing more projects on both sides of the Tamar. Earlier this year, I released the West Tamar Highway Corridor Improvement Plan with my friend and colleague, the honourable Jo Palmer, member for Rosevears. That improvement plan is very exciting. It has identified 14 proposed improvement opportunities and we packaged those on the advice within eight projects focused on improving traffic flow, particularly through the busy urban areas like Riverside and Legana, road safety outcomes and increased corridor accessibility.

Through the election commitments, we are investing a further \$416 million in our roads over seven years, including targeted investments across all regions of the state. I am so pleased because this was further boosted within weeks by the Morrison Liberal Government in the 2021-22 Budget, a further \$322 million from that government to support our program.

Labor has a shameful record on infrastructure investment delivery. If you look at last year alone, compared to Labor's last year in office we are now spending 245 per cent more infrastructure delivery on our roads and bridges program. The figures, if you are interested, are \$317 million delivery versus Labor's paltry \$129 million. Of course, they did take the state into recession because they constantly do deals with the Greens and they destroy industries like forestry and they send people away from the state looking for jobs. The unemployment rate then was 8 per cent. That is their history. That is what happens when you have a Labor government.

I did not mention public transport. We are transforming it in this state with a range of initiatives to boost patronage and to deal with traffic congestion. There are too many to go through them all in detail but we have already implemented improved bus networks now in each of the three regions, in all cases leading to a network that is more responsive to what passengers have told us that they want.

I acknowledge that you cannot provide a bus network that meets everybody's expectations in every street at all times but nonetheless, you try to do the public transport piece so that it provides the best service to the most people that you can. That is what has occurred.

We also have significant funds for extra school and commuter buses on busy routes, funds for new park and ride facilities which are now being built; \$10 million to upgrade all access and all-weather bus stops at priority locations. Importantly, we moved to a modern bus

ticketing system here in Tasmania with the common ticketing solution which is now in the market.

We have now completed the \$45 million modernisation of the Metro bus fleet and it has been done here in Tasmania. It is fantastic, particularly for the people of the north-west coast to have so much pride in the work of Elphinstone, in particular, in partnership with BusTech. This has made the Metro bus fleet one of the youngest in Australia. Unfortunately, that did not get mentioned in the Leader of the Opposition's response.

In January this year, we introduced an extra 43 express bus services between Kingborough and Hobart. I genuinely hope that the member for Franklin who often criticises, because he looks for opportunity to criticise the Hobart City Deal, will be good enough to acknowledge that. It is a growing region and it is a great community and a growing community needs more services, particularly for transport. I hope that Mr Winter would be good enough to acknowledge that.

In addition, last July we went out there on a cold day with the Mayor of Huon and we launched the new 16 daily express Tassielink services from Huonville to Hobart and their feedback on that has been that it has been adopted in great numbers. Combine that with the new park and ride facilities, combine that with our transformation piece which is the end-to-end piece to provide that extra lane on the Southern Outlet, right through the bottleneck, right down Macquarie Street, with bus prioritisation initiatives there and you actually start to look like an end-to-end solution.

I was really glad to see one thing in Mr Winter's piece, because I did read it in the *Mercury* about a week ago, but apart from all of his whingeing he did leave one little nugget in there. He held out hope that Labor might actually support this initiative if it provides a cost benefit, if he is satisfied with the cost-benefit analysis. He wants to know what the cost will be, fair enough, but that is interesting because his colleague has been saying that Labor opposes it and they have been telling people on Dynnyrne Road, 'Labor opposes it.'

Mr Winter - We do.

Mr FERGUSON - The nugget has gone. Mr Winter is not going to be persuaded on a cost-benefit analysis at all. He is actually dead against people in Huonville, the Huon Valley, Kingborough having better transport infrastructure through the out-of-date Southern Outlet. What a shame.

Mr Winter - Your promise is out of date. That is four years ago.

Mr FERGUSON - He held it out but for only a moment. It did not last a week. What a shame. As we progress this, Mr Winter will have egg on his face. We will minimise the number of properties that need to be acquired and we will maximise the extra infrastructure for public transport. It used to be the case that those on the left wing of politics would champion public transport. Those days are over. The Labor Party is opposing a public transport initiative that will help deal with congestion on the Southern Outlet. It is for him and only him to explain why he would stand in the way.

Bus priority lanes, such as the one that we plan for the Southern Outlet, will only enhance public transport offering. I have often spoken -

Mr Winter - You are getting rid of a bus lane and putting in a T-3.

Mr FERGUSON - of the need to make the bus experience a more enjoyable one for passengers. They are not going to get on a bus that is stuck in the usual traffic. They need to have some travel time incentive and that is what the initiative is all about. I look forward to sharing more with the community at the very earliest that I am able to, as we carefully work through the engineering scope that is underway. Again, I make the point that those idiotic statements that 17 houses will be demolished are completely false.

Mr Winter - That is the community of Dynnyrne saying that. Are you calling them idiots?

Mr FERGUSON - They are idiotic statements from the Labor Party which have been denied, repeatedly, but they continue to make out that false argument. They will be proven wrong and they will then have to account for the lies that they have told.

Mr Street - Been a while since he has been at the Sandfly intersection complaining too.

Mr FERGUSON - The Sandfly intersection is a good one, the minister, Mr Street, thank you. I will mention in passing that we had the usual suspects saying that intersection treatment will not work. It was true that it was an innovative solution that we borrowed from another state, I think it was Queensland, to deal with the very unusual typography, an unusual way that those side roads would enter on to the Huon Highway.

We saw the usual suspects saying it would not work. No intersection is zero-risk. I cannot eliminate a risk from any road, but the evidence is pretty clear and I spoke to a person whose daughter had a terrible crash, with a head-on or more like a T-bone collision into the side of her car and this gentleman was telling me it is a very good treatment. The family are very pleased with it. I have had no negative feedback. I do not know if you have?

Mr Street - Not one piece.

Mr FERGUSON - Not one, but it is just the case unfortunately in politics, such as it is in Tasmania, that the usual suspects will whinge, whinge, whinge and then they will find something else to talk about.

Importantly, the ferry. Mr Winter and his previous friend Mr O'Byrne said that it was being set up to fail. That is not true. It has been set up to succeed and 65 000 people have now taken the ferry since it started last August.

It has not even gone through its first year of the pilot. We said we would establish it as a pilot for one year. We also said that if circumstances call for it, we might need to continue that trial for a further year. It has been a great success. I hope everyone has had a chance to catch the ferry. It is a good Tasmanian success story. Let us talk it up. Let us not rubbish it. Let's make it permanent and even look at opportunities to expand it to more destinations in the area and in the river. That is exactly what the trial was designed to achieve; a positive impact. The advice to me is it has had a positive impact on congestion for the Tasman Bridge. So. members for Franklin and Lyons, in particular, whose constituents would use the bridge on a daily basis, found relief when that ferry commenced and that is one of the big reasons that we need to keep it going. We will engage with the council on the future of expanding that and

there is a lot more work to be done on that case but we will not wait for the pilot. We are locking it in right now.

In the time I have remaining, I want to acknowledge my new portfolios, Local Government and Planning. There are a lot of positive synergies with my other portfolios about building for Tasmania. I thank Mr Jaensch for his tireless work in this area, which is so often unacknowledged, particularly by people who have experience in local government. They know how these things work but nonetheless have taken unfair pot shots. I thank Mr Jaensch for his work here, particularly the work he began before I took on this work in the Local Government Review and the board. I know that he has worked diligently on this and I intend to maintain the same posture. We will do everything that we can in planning, particularly as we look to these 10 000 houses: to look for new and innovative ways to get product moving; to get product being built.

Importantly, we have acted on our commitment to comprehensively review the Regional Land Use Strategies. We have softened the urban growth boundary in the southern strategy to allow land adjacent to the boundary to be considered by the commission for residential development. That is a big step forward and it should be acknowledged.

In the northern strategy we have made changes to allow land already identified for potential urban growth to be similarly considered. We have also recognised that there is more we can do, particularly in the smaller regional settlements, to help unlock land and provide for appropriate growth. There are mechanisms to achieve that. I also point to the activation of residentially zoned land, which is already zoned residential but, for whatever reason, has not been released to the market. Our Residential Land Rebate is all about bringing that product to market. It does not need rezoning. It needs development. It needs subdivision, it needs headworks and it needs to go to the market - all things that are sympathetic to each other.

I recognise that government is working hard on land supply. Government intervention is required to not only identify areas for infill development but also to make it happen. In relation to the Housing Land Supply Act, the changes that we have made now provide us with a way that we can achieve that. I believe that bill went through parliament unanimously and thank you to those who played a role. It is a good thing. We can now buy land, rezone it, work it through the process and then commence development, both on our own land and in partnership with the private sector. We can set an example.

My call this morning in answer to the question was again: everyone has an interest in housing but with what is in front of us, the Government will be able to do an even better job if we can get as much support for these approaches as politicians who are not in government can bring to it. We can set an example for how these developments can successfully occur. It can be acting as a catalyst for further infill and we need to see that occur. I know the City Deal partners are very keen on that in the south. We have made commitments to provide more housing for Tasmanians than has ever been the case. This is another way we are delivering on that commitment.

As we all know, there is a lack of centrally located infill housing occurring in our cities. Developers and others often tell us that it is easier to develop a greenfield site on the edges of our towns and cities than it is to develop an inner site closer to all the amenities. This needs to be turned around if we are to encourage people to live and play near where they work. Active government intervention is required and we will be throwing ourselves at this task throughout

this year and into the future. I will mention that we are activating in a number of areas, in particular around Macquarie Point, additional funding that has been secured through last year, and an Antarctic and science precinct is being progressed: the first development application is close to being lodged. That site has now been practically entirely remediated - it did not get a mention this morning in the Leader of the Opposition's address - and we have released to the public knowledge of Milieu being the preferred developer. They are now in contract negotiations with the corporation to make the escarpment building a reality and I think that members here should welcome its progress, and it is only 10 per cent of that site as we continue to progress the master plan; there is a lot more to come.

In closing, I want to refocus my comments back around housing. As we have continually stated, we need more homes. It is as simple as that. We need to build more, we need to buy more, and we need to partner more with community housing providers. All of the side arguments are unhelpful. They do nothing to help people who genuinely are waiting, for example, as priority cases on the Housing Register. The Housing Register is under pressure.

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - We need to build more homes. The only way to deal with that demand is to build more homes. We took to the election last year a record investment of \$615 million out to 2027 to build 3500 new homes in that time. Minister Jaensch started that process, in fact Minister Petrusma before him as well, but we know there is more to do and we want to look past 2027. The package the Premier has announced builds on our existing reforms and takes further action to provide affordable housing. A new statutory authority that was announced as well will be able to borrow and invest against a strong balance sheet, allowing us to build an additional 6500 homes and units on top of that current target, leading to the construction of a total of 10 000 new dwellings by 2032.

Play your politics but get on board. Support us so that you can support Tasmanians in need. Help us to promote the new approach, the new package, so we can genuinely help people with where they are at. There has been far too much negativity expressed by members opposite, when the Government is meeting its targets. In fact, if you argued that our targets were bipartisan at the election, because we had the same numbers, the Opposition should be saying, 'Well done. You're meeting your targets on the 1500'. But no, it is just negative, negative, negative. Now there is a duty - if you want to be so negative then come up with a better policy and we did not hear that today, did we? The speech from Ms White fell short in that case.

Importantly, the Leader of the Opposition falsely claimed declining homeownership rates in Tasmania. We are bucking the national trend. Tasmania has a homeownership rate of over 70 per cent compared to the national rate of 66 per cent. It is a little like the speech Ms White gave last year where she claimed that car registration was skyrocketing when in actual fact it has sat still.

Our state is going strongly. Our people are optimistic. Our community and our industry are working well together. Our unemployment rate is at the lowest level in this state's recorded history. Our economy is nation leading and we have challenges, largely consequent on coming off the back of the pandemic and a growing population, which puts pressure on our infrastructure. We will work through these challenges with optimism and real teamwork, not pretend red masks but people who actually like each other, enjoy working together and are focused on our plan. The contrast could not be more stark. We are a strong and united team

delivering our plan. In contrast, all we see opposite is a rabble with no alternative, no plan and no teamwork.

Time expired.

[4.19 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Thank you, minister, for that entertainment for the afternoon. It is sometimes like walking in and listening to someone from another universe describe how things are going. The contention is that if we all just believe it, if we all just get in behind it, if we just try our best and be the new word, 'aspirational', then it will be fixed. Just plan for it. Just put it on a piece of paper. You do not have to actually build anything, you just have to believe it. I do not believe it because I have seen enough - almost 10 years of this Government. Tomorrow it will be four years since the 2018 election. Today they unveiled their new word, 'aspiration'. They aspire to be a good government. They have not been. The biggest acknowledgement is that they have not been a good government but they aspire to be one. Line up the Dorothy Dixers so they can use the word 'aspiration' or 'aspirational'. 'We aspire to be a good government'. No-one believes it.

After almost a decade in office they have come out with aspiration after Tasmanians have seen the promise of a four-lane Midland Highway, the announcement that they would build light rail to the northern suburbs of Hobart, build a Bridgewater bridge. They have announced a dozen times so far that they are going to build the Bridgewater bridge. They will develop Macquarie Point. They have spent \$78 million so far at Macquarie Point and no-one believes anything is going to happen.

Mr Ferguson spoke about the escarpment project in his state of the state reply today. That project is so far from happening. It is years away. They do not even have a development application for the site. They have to get it through the City of Hobart's planning authority - good luck with that. Even worse, they have to get it through Mr Jaensch's, now Mr Ferguson's planning scheme. That is the hardest thing of all.

The Government almost 10 years ago promised a single statewide planning scheme. Where is it? The Premier finally made the right call on the former failed minister for Planning and got rid of him because nothing was happening.

More Tasmanians in homelessness, homes not being built, he was no good as the minister for Housing, no good as the minister for Planning and he was finally relieved of his duties. Thank goodness for that. Planning, particularly around greater Hobart, has been an enormous frustration to people trying to build a home, developers trying to build, for local government, for councillors, for everyone involved in trying to deal with planning because the Government has not done its homework. Everything they do around planning is based on trying to get around their own planning scheme. The planning scheme that they have not reformed. The planning scheme that they have failed to deliver on for almost 10 years.

There is a housing crisis for a lot of reasons. One of the major reasons is because the Government has not been able to achieve almost anything in planning. The Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy is still not up to date. The Premier's Address talked about yet another attempt to get around his own planning scheme. He is also a former failed planning minister who failed to deliver planning reforms. He started off the failed planning reform eight

years ago and handballed it when it got too difficult. Only recently he had to relieve Mr Jaensch of his duties in that portfolio because enough was enough for everyone involved.

Four years ago the plan to build a tidal lane on the Southern Outlet, which was later advised to be a fifth lane, is still in consultation. No plans, no costings. I think the minister promised that one day we might see how much it will cost - \$35 million. As if. That is not going to be enough to cover the amount of work they have to do, the acquisitions they have to make. Whether it is 17, seven or three it is the community there that are raising the biggest concerns.

I asked Ms Ogilvie for her support not so long ago. As I understand it, she provided her support. They are still at a loss to understand why voices are not being heard and why the Government still does not know what the benefits of the project are going to be. There is no cost-benefit analysis.

I think I found the underground bus mall in Hobart yesterday, Mr Speaker. In the Premier's plans for the floating stadium in Hobart there is, as I understood from the TV news last night, talk of an underground bus mall underneath the floating stadium. The underground bus mall is perhaps moving from wherever it does not exist - imaginary land - to under the floating stadium that will never happen.

They talk about aspiration. How could anyone believe anything in that speech, when, after eight years, they continue to not deliver? The Cradle Mountain cableway, the new Tamar bridge, Project Marinus. We have not had a DD from the minister for Energy this week yet, but I cannot wait to hear what he comes up with next. I do not think he has talked about pumped hydro for a very long time. We are waiting to see the report that comes back from Hydro about Lake Cethana and whether that project is viable. He has been very quiet on pumped hydro lately. He has been sticking to his script, as he always does on Marinus.

We have seen the timelines on that now slip away as well. Project Marinus will be finished in 2031. Absolutely extraordinary. This Government never delivers. Who could believe that these projects will ever go ahead? When they get in trouble they send out something new - Commonwealth Games. We are in trouble today, media is against us, we will announce the Commonwealth Games. The Commonwealth Games will be coming to Tasmania. The next morning I listened to Leon Compton, as I always do. He tried to speak to the mayor of Launceston and the lord mayor of Hobart about the project. Neither of the councils had ever heard of the proposal. The Premier had announced we were going to go for the Commonwealth Games without letting the councils know.

Commonwealth Games are held in cities, they are held by cities. It is really important that you get the cities on board with the plan. The least surprising thing of all, perhaps to the relief of members of his team, the bid failed a couple of weeks after it was launched. Perhaps it was the lack of homework? I think the ABC put in an RTI for the plan. The response was that there was nothing to RTI. The department had not even been told about it. What a joke.

Then we get to more controversy in this Government, more chaos. More chaos with the resignation of Ms Howlett. What did they do? They announced a new floating stadium in Hobart. It will never happen. Look at the heads down, they know this will never happen. The minister for Sport is over there, he knows it will never happen. He is the poor guy who comes into the ministry and two things happen to him. They cut his own department, they cut the

Department of Community Services and they announce that he is going to build a stadium in Hobart with a roof on it, floating on the Derwent. Good luck with your career, minister for Sport. I do sincerely wish you luck with that, but it appears as though you have your work cut out for you.

Mr Street - I do not need your assistance or advice, mate.

Mr WINTER - Tasmanians are frustrated, the priorities of Tasmanians that I speak to are the basics. Tasmanians talk to me about real wages. They talk to me about the cost of living. They talk to me about housing. They talk to me about congestion. When they see the main component of the Premier's Address being to build a new stadium, they are frustrated that he does not appear to be listening to them. He is not worried about the basics any more. He has given up on education, given up on health. He could not fix them. You only have to go back to the infamous alternative budget of 2013-14 to see the extraordinary promises that the Liberal Party made to Tasmanians, the promises about the education system, promises about the health system, about elective surgery. The only thing that has happened, after eight years of this Government, is that things have become worse.

The NAPLAN results that were released in August last year were absolutely terrible. They could not have been much worse for Tasmania and Tasmanian students, who deserve to have a government that is focused on them and on the basics. That seems to be something this Government has forgotten. In the lead-up to the 2018 election the Liberal Party pledged, that by 2020, Tasmanian students would be at, or above, the national average in reading, writing, and maths.

Yet in 2021, when the NAPLAN results came out, our results were the worst of any state across every age group in reading, the second worst in every age group in writing, the worst in every age group in spelling, the worst in every age group in grammar and punctuation and the worst in years 5, 7 and 9 in numeracy.

We have not heard a single word from them about how they are going to fix it. In fact, they have just changed education ministers to a new Education minister, and we have not heard any plan from him about how he might try to fix it.

Perhaps we will hear this in the state of the state. Maybe we will hear an acknowledgment that education has got worse. Our students performed worse in 2021 than they did in 2008. You cannot blame previous governments anymore. You have been here for eight years, eight years of your Government. The students in year 10 this year were in year 2 when you started.

The promise of a focus on education and health that this Government came into office with, almost a decade ago, they have given up on. They decided they could not fix it. Just like they could not fix the planning scheme. Just like they could not fix congestion. Just like they could not deliver infrastructure. All they have now is aspiration. Aspiration that they might become a good government one day. I am struggling to believe it.

Mr Ferguson wants us to believe. I am choosing to believe, that is what the speech all rounded up to. He was choosing to believe that things will be all right if we just focus positively and thought nice positive thoughts about the Government's track record.

I think it was Dr Broad who said the best indicator of future performance is past performance. Was that it, Dr Broad? Well, we have seen almost a decade of a failure to deliver, a failure to deliver on promises. That is why we are frustrated, and it is not just us, it is Tasmanians who are frustrated. You must be hearing the feedback about the plan for the floating stadium in Hobart.

Tasmanians just want to focus on the basics. They want to see a better health system. They want to see a better education system. They do not want to be stuck in traffic. They want to see a government that will actually deliver on their promises, not just promise more stuff when their plans are not working.

I want to touch on the last three months, the summer of the Premier, Peter Gutwein. I certainly was not relieved summer was over. It is a great time of year to be in Tasmania, and I loved every minute of it. But gee, it felt like the Premier, Mr Gutwein and members opposite, must have been glad it was all over when it was finished.

Starting back in December, as we saw, the end of the Delta Shield Plan, and our Leader, Rebecca White, talked about it being kind of like a sci-fi name. I think she was right. It was not useful, not workable. The plan leaked like a sieve. It looked like anyone could just walk out of quarantine. Then we walked into the new plan from the Government to reopen the borders safely. We asked, and other members did, the Greens, Independents, asked about the Government being prepared for COVID-19 for the reopening. We asked about testing. We asked about contact tracing. We asked about the hospital system. We asked about the schools. Are you ready? The Government said, 'We are as ready as we can be.' That was the quote from the Deputy Premier and Health minister. We are as ready as we can be. When the borders were opened, we all knew. Every Tasmanian knows we were not ready. The Government was not ready for reopening. Our testing was not ready. Anyone who sat in a line for a PCR test for hours and hours knows we were not ready. Anyone who tried to get a RAT kit during that time knows we were not ready.

We had 18 months to get ready for this, 18 months of borders being closed, of businesses doing it tough, of Tasmanians being kept away from their loved ones because it was to keep us safe. Tasmanians accepted that. They did expect that when borders were reopened that we would be ready and it was very clear we were not.

Contact tracing. About 10 days after the border reopened, it had all fallen apart. They just gave up on contact tracing. We were told that this was one of the key pillars to keep Tasmanians safe, to keep the numbers down. It was only a few weeks later, we had 2000 cases a day, on one particular day. With no contact tracing taking part, people still being asked to check-in, and I am talking to people as they check in to places, and they are saying, 'why are we even doing this? No-one is paying any attention to it.'

The difference between what was sold to Tasmanians by Peter Gutwein, before 15 December last year -

Mr SPEAKER - By 'the Premier', please.

Mr WINTER - by the Premier, Mr Gutwein, before 15 December last year, to what actually happened was huge. All of the promises of safety measures appeared to be relaxed over time to the point where we had businesses being shut down and the moment in time that

I felt most frustrated with the Premier, Mr Gutwein was when Bar Wa in North Hobart closed its doors and Richard there made a heartfelt plea. He was devastated, for himself, for his staff, for his customers, and North Hobart businesses.

Businesses right across Tasmania were starting to lose staff and not just to COVID-19 but to quarantine of family members and colleagues who had spent enough time together in order to trigger the quarantine requirement. We started to see businesses close their doors, and the Premier's response was to blame the business. It was so tone deaf. A lot of these business people did not want the border to reopen but a lot of them did. I do not know what the split was but there were mixed feelings about borders being reopened.

For a lot of them it had been seen as the opportunity for them to get back up on their feet. For 18 months, almost two years, they had been battling away to keep paying their staff, to keep things going, to keep the economy going and they felt like this was to be the summer where they could get back on their feet, get their business back on to the same position perhaps that they started the pandemic with. What they had, as the Leader of the Opposition said, was the worst summer for a lot of them that they had ever had.

We spoke to businesses from Geeveston to Smithton. Some of them told us they were 75 per cent down in revenue. It was devastating for them. Most of them, not just because they have to, but most of them want to keep paying their staff. They want to keep their staff on because they care. They care about their staff. They care about their community. They care about their business, they want to keep things going and they were desperately trying to. These are people who were facing a shortage of staff who were in quarantine or who had COVID-19, or who had COVID-19 themselves, and who were battling along and the Premier's response was so tone deaf, so disappointing and so out of touch with Tasmanians.

He walked down North Hobart apparently, up and down Elizabeth Street. I do not know if he went to see businesses or not but it would have been great to see him engage and better understand what they were going through rather than just attack the person, attack anyone who dared to make a complaint about his leadership.

Ms O'Connor - I reckon he would not have done that in Launceston. In Launceston he probably would have popped in to see some of the businesses.

Mr WINTER - Ms O'Connor, we had the great opportunity to visit all parts of the state to the back end of the worst of it with my colleagues and we found that everyone was struggling. We did not find anyone saying that everything was fine. We found people with different levels of frustration, different levels of struggle that they were going through at the time. People saying, they were about 15 per cent down, all the way to people saying they were at 75 per cent down on revenue during that time but all with the same frustrations: getting staff, maintaining staff. These were real frustrations and they just were not listened to.

The first announcement of a COVID-19 support package that offered \$5000 - every business we went to said the same thing -

Ms White - Up to \$5000.

Mr WINTER - Every business we went to said the same thing. It is too hard to get access to the grant. There is so much paperwork. One business owner in Devonport told us he

was going to spend about \$500 in getting the grant of \$3000. That was through his accountant. That was getting the accountant to fill out the paperwork. These are the sort of things the Premier could have found out if he was out and about and I am not sure that he was in touch with the business community and certainly his public comments did not instil me with confidence that he was in touch with what Tasmanian business was saying at the time.

In my portfolios, particularly for energy, and it is a shame that the minister for Energy has left, but I am looking forward to listening to his speech so he might update us on some of those projects that he has been talking up for some time. We have not heard an update on Lake Cethana and pumped hydro for a long period of time. As I understand it, the report was due late last year and we are waiting to see what the pumped hydro plans look like. The delivery date is looking like it will be in the 2030s as well. This is another project that the Government gets to talk about positively and aspire to but will probably never deliver.

Millions of dollars have been poured into the planning of Project Marinus already. We do not have an investment decision until 2024. So, we have a huge amount of work going into this project but we still do not know the answer to the key question: who is going to pay?

I assume that the minister for energy is lobbying his colleagues in Canberra to try to fund \$3.5 billion of Project Marinus. If this project does not get funded at this federal election, I am not sure it will ever be funded. The minister has to try to make the case for this project to go ahead because it cannot be left to Tasmanian taxpayers to pay for it. It is important for Tasmanians that the cost of living does not go up, that it goes down. Any proposal for Tasmanians to exclusively pay the costs of this project is that the burden will fall on them; it will fall on household energy bills. That is not good enough.

Before Christmas, during the last parliamentary sitting we talked a lot about the Tamar Valley Power Station and Mr Barnett's refusal to deal with the Tasmanian Gas Pipeline and their requirement that they need to have the contracts in place to guarantee supply of gas to that plant. An arrangement was reached. We have not heard from the Government exactly what that is. I think the announcement might have been Christmas Eve. There has been no detail from the Government about what arrangement has been reached.

Having spoken to industry members and people within the gas industry, I understand that prices for major industrial gas users have gone up since the minister or Hydro Tasmania did this deal. Was this deal for the Tamar Valley Power Station insufficient in that it has not provided the level of certainty for the industry and led to increased prices for Tasmanian gas users? There are a lot of major industrials that use gas. It is a very important part of Tasmania's energy mix. Prices increase of 25 per cent for a major cost for any business is going to have an impact. We are looking forward to investigating what the real impact has been on those businesses.

There has been an RER update from the Treasurer recently. It is important that, during the state of the state debate, we touch on Tasmania's financial ability to pay for some of the promises. The floating stadium in Hobart is unfunded. There is no funding available for a \$750 million stadium. This is a treasurer who already has Tasmania taking on an extra \$2 million of debt every day under his current Budget arrangements, who has delivered the largest budget deficit in Tasmanian history two years in a row, yet all he can do is announce more things. He has forgotten about the basics. He is not interested in the basics; it is just the chaos of the Government. As soon as there is more chaos, he announces more things.

The current situation of the Budget is concerning in that we continue to take on debt and when I hear that the Premier and Treasurer announce things like a statutory authority for housing that he says he will work his balance sheet, it means take on debt. When he says 'work your balance sheet harder' it is his cute way of saying take on more debt. That is debt that he will avoid putting on to the general government net debt because he knows that is the first place that you look when you look for debt but you cannot hide the debt. He can play all the budget tricks in the book. We have seen him try them. We have seen him with the TT-Line. Over the course of his time as Treasurer, we have seen him play every trick in the book to try to avoid any bad news but the simple fact is you cannot hide the debt and it is building. The debt is building in relative terms. Occasionally he gets to say it is a little bit worse than expected. There is really only one reason for that. It is because the minister for infrastructure does not ever deliver his infrastructure budget. Mr Ferguson delivers about 50 per cent most years. We will wait and see what he delivers this year but, from the RER, it looks very much as though he is going to deliver about 50 per cent of the infrastructure budget.

So, when the Premier said in his Budget speech last year that he was going to deliver 28 000 jobs for Tasmanians, it was based on his infrastructure figures. He only delivers half of it, so let's say 14 000 jobs. When he says it at next budget, perhaps we should just halve everything. When he says, 'We are going to spend a billion dollars on infrastructure', just halve it. If he says he is doing to create 28 000 jobs, you can halve it. They never deliver. Tasmanians know this now. In almost a decade, this Government never delivers, it is not focused on the basics and it is in chaos.

[4.46 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Attorney-General) - Mr Speaker, I am very proud of the work that our Government has achieved particularly over the past year, despite the naysayers on the other side who cannot come up with a plan, vision, let alone any policies. I am particularly pleased that there has been a significant focus in the Premier's state of the state address and some significant announcements across each of my portfolios and in my electorate of Clark. This past 12 months has remained a challenging period for all of us. During this time our Government has ensured that Tasmanians have remained safe and that the supports that are needed have been put in place also.

I start my contribution today by focusing on our corrections system. This is a portfolio that often does not get the positive attention it deserves. The amazing work done by our correctional officers, our prison management, our therapeutic staff, our probation officers and other community corrections staff and all of the other dedicated corrections staff commonly goes unnoticed. It is important to shine a light on Corrections as the good work done in this portfolio leads to positive outcomes for offenders and helps keep our community safe.

The complexity of the corrections system means that positive change can be difficult, but it does not mean that positive change is not happening. It is very lazy to focus only on the negative as members opposite commonly do. While we continue to work to improve the system it is equally important to focus on the many positive aspects of the system and the positive things being achieved by our corrections staff, particularly within the Tasmanian Prison Service.

I am proud of the significant improvements in rehabilitation programs, in staff recruitment and infrastructure after years of under-expenditure by former governments, all of

which have resulted in a better corrections system. There is always more to do and I remain absolutely committed to addressing the challenges within the corrections system.

One of my priorities is to further boost correctional officer numbers. Recruitment actions for this year have already commenced and will remain a strong focus for the year ahead. The TPS plans to conduct four new recruit schools throughout this year, which will be the most recruit schools ever conducted in a calendar year by the Tasmanian Prison Service. This recruitment will provide a staffing contingent for the Southern Remand Centre; for Burnie; and for the Launceston Supreme Court and the Launceston Reception Prison.

Staffing levels across the Corrections portfolio have greatly increased under our Government. It is these valuable staff members who deliver the services that rehabilitate and support offenders in Tasmania.

In 2020 there were three recruit schools. A total of 79 new correctional officers were recruited through these schools, with four interstate correctional officers completing the necessary bridging courses and joining the TPS staffing complement. In 2021 two recruit schools commenced, despite COVID-19, with a total of 37 new correctional officers were recruited, 15 of whom have graduated and been deployed to their various prisons across the state. Three qualified correctional officers from other jurisdictions also applied in the 2021 recruit processes and joined the TPS in November 2021 after completing a bridging course.

The most recent recruit school of 22, that is this year - all in all there will be five this year. We have had 22 who have just been deployed and these staff will provide an additional staffing contingent to the Southern Remand Centre and Launceston Reception Prison, where they are most needed. This brings the total number of new recruits employed since 2016 to more than 235. I mention this because there is a lot of focus, and rightly so, on staff recruitment. As I have said in this place, and publicly, we are on an intensive recruitment drive and it is timely that I provide this significant update to the House and, indeed, publicly.

As well as our plan for staffing, our Government has a strong plan for improving the infrastructure of the Tasmania Prison Service, which is pretty plain to see. Having modern, fit-for-purpose infrastructure is critical to the effective operation of the prison service and allows for more rehabilitation, education and diversionary programs to be delivered. It also alleviates capacity pressures in existing facilities, which also supports these aims. We have invested heavily in corrections infrastructure over the past few years and we are continuing to do so. Our strong investment will futureproof the Tasmania Prison Service. We have already committed \$85 million for the new Southern Remand Centre and associated upgrades to linked services; \$270 million for a northern correctional facility; and I have recently announced that we will invest \$50 million to build a new maximum-security facility on the Risdon site to deal with immediate pressures.

Maximum-security accommodation has consistently been the classification where there has been the highest pressure on beds within the Risdon Prison complex for some time now and the addition of this new maximum security facility will reduce the pressures for this classification. The new unit will comply with the current standards and guidelines applicable to offender accommodation, providing a high standard of facility as well as enhanced service provision, catering to contemporary service methodologies.

The \$85 million Southern Remand Centre is very well progressed and despite the challenges presented by COVID-19 for the construction industry and for supply of building materials, I am advised that the project currently remains on track for the practical completion by the end of March, this month. Following completion of its construction, the Tasmania Prison Service will commence the specific operational training for this facility with the aim to commence operation as soon as possible.

This state-of-the art facility has been built with a focus on rehabilitation at the forefront. I have visited the site throughout the construction phase and I am extremely impressed by the design and the layout of the building, including the use of light, windows, colour, planting and more therapeutic measures. Once operational, this facility will allow non-sentenced offenders to be housed separately from those who have been sentenced, which delivers on best practice standards. The new facility will also allow for greater access to legal representation, with more facilities on site.

The northern correctional facility is another important infrastructure project that will allow for greater flexibility within our correction system and for better rehabilitation outcomes, with rehabilitation being the key focus for the design and operation of this facility. I look forward to updating the House on this in due course, with the consultation that is currently occurring specifically in relation to the Ashley site and whether or not the community embraces that opportunity. As I stress, no decision has been made until that five-week consultation has been completed.

This year I will also be making some significant shifts in the direction and focus of the correction system in Tasmania. My focus remains on education and rehabilitation but I will be ramping up this work in the coming year. We have a strong opportunity to get better outcomes for individuals, which reduces the rate of reoffending, which of course, benefits the whole community. One of the ways we achieve this is through a focus on education, rehabilitation and reintegration.

In the coming months, I will be releasing a new strategic plan for Corrections for 2022 and beyond. This plan, which is in the final stages of development, has been put together through extensive consultation with key stakeholders in government and the community and other sectors. The strategic plan will have a strong focus on education and vocational training opportunities with literacy at the core of these activities. We know that one of the key protective factors in reducing re-offending is ensuring that individuals have the skills needed to gain and maintain employment. Activities within the prison will strongly target that area and provide the support necessary to assist offenders to make positive changes.

As well as our focus on offenders in the system, the strategic plan will also have a focus on the many staff who work within our correction system and will ensure that we empower our workforce to respond with new ways of working to support the therapeutic outcomes required. All of these things I have outlined are going to have significantly positive impacts on the correction system, both across the TPS and Community Corrections.

Turning to my role as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, I am continuing to progress an extensive reform agenda to protect and support survivors and victims of crime and the broader Tasmanian community as well as further initiatives to provide an efficient and effective criminal and civil justice system for all Tasmanians.

In late December 2021, I announced reforms made to the regulatory framework that provides financial help and assistance to better support Tasmanian victims and survivors of crime. Commencing from 1 July 2022, these important reforms to the victims of crime compensation framework will introduce an annual increase in the maximum award levels in line with CPI and will remove the current total capped amounts available for multiple victims of a single incident.

These significant changes mean that all victims and survivors will be able to seek greater financial support as a result of trauma or injury suffered, easing any financial burdens during what is no doubt an extremely difficult and vulnerable time in their lives.

I am also committed to continuing to further strengthen our laws to prevent and eliminate family violence in Tasmania together with my colleague, Mrs Petrusma, an area of critical importance for all Tasmanians. I am pleased to announce that I have prioritised two significant bills for introduction at the earliest opportunity in the coming weeks, namely our family violence amendments bill 2022 and the much-anticipated Criminal Code amendments to introduce a non-fatal strangulation as a stand-alone criminal offence.

Following the introduction of a new persistent family violence offence in the Criminal Code in 2019, I am introducing further reforms to fulfil our commitment to target persistent family violence offenders. The bill will deliver on our commitment to give the courts the power to declare repeat offenders as persistent family violence offenders, introduce the ability to mandate participation in behavioural change programs as part of family violence orders and implement legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family and sexual violence.

This work is in addition to the bill to introduce a stand-alone criminal offence for non-fatal strangulation, choking or suffocation. The bill, which has received significant community and stakeholder support, also amends the definition of consent in relation to stealthing which has been the subject of legislative reform in other jurisdictions.

This significant suite of family violence reforms that I will be tabling at the earliest opportunity confirms we are continuing to ensure our laws are strong and robust to protect victim/survivors of family violence and ensure perpetrators are appropriately punished for the severity of their crimes.

As outlined in our recently released fourth annual progress report and action plan, my focus in 2022 is towards progressing further reforms in response to the 409 recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This includes progressing the important complex reforms to establish the comprehensive child and youth safe organisations framework, providing a consistent and best practice approach to child safety in organisations including independent oversight of child safe standards and a reportable conduct scheme.

Importantly, my department, together with all relevant government agencies, will continue to engage and assist the vital work of the commission of inquiry which is now due to report by 1 May 2023 as a result of delays in conducting hearings this year due to COVID-19, to ensure that we continue to improve our responses and take all necessary actions to keep Tasmanian children and young people safe.

Delivering on our Government's commitment to invest in significant new resources in our justice system, I am also pleased to have new magistrates and judges appointed and commence their duties. In January this year I attended an address ceremony, sitting in for Magistrate Marica Duvnjak. She is based in Hobart and replaces retired magistrate Glenn Hay, who I again thank for his dedication and commitment to the legal profession and justice system over many decades.

The appointment of two further permanent magistrates to the north and north-west of Tasmania continues to progress at present. I expect to be able to make those announcements shortly. Importantly, this will bring the number of permanent magistrates in Tasmania to a record 17, the most the court has ever had, and will also provide an equal number of magistrates between the south and north, north-west of the state. This follows the appointment of Magistrate Tamara Jago SC as Tasmania's seventh judge of the Supreme Court, who commenced on 1 November last year. Significantly, it is the first time ever the Supreme Court has had a judge based permanently in the north-west, who will also sit statewide, providing greater flexibility to hear cases in the north-west. It is also the first time we have had a full complement of seven judges since 1995.

The reappointment of our three acting judges for a further two years will also provide the Supreme Court with more flexibility to conduct a variety of cases and appeals to ensure we meet the community's expectations of timely access to justice.

One matter that has been much discussed in recent times is the future of the Burnie Court Complex. I am committed to ensuring that all Tasmanians have access to an effective and efficient justice system. That is why we are progressing plans to develop a new Burnie court complex that will provide modern fit-for-purpose courts for all court users in the north-west of the state, while also supporting local jobs and investment in the region.

We recognise that there are a wide range of views within the community in relation to the redevelopment of this court complex; however, what has become very evident is that there is an important need to revitalise the Burnie CBD, regardless of where the court is situated. Burnie does need revitalisation, no question about it. That is why we will engage further with the Burnie City Council and the north-west business community to understand the range of economic and social implications - the current CBD concerns - and, importantly, how best to ensure it is ripe for revitalisation and how Burnie can best come to life. I, together with the Premier, will be meeting with the mayor, council and the business community in coming weeks to actively consider what more can be done and what investment is needed and can be generated to revitalise the Burnie CBD, including the future use of the current court site.

The increase in statewide court resources will significantly address existing demand pressures and reduce the Criminal Court backlogs by allowing courts to deal with cases faster, whilst also addressing any backlog of criminal matters.

I remain focused on working across all pressure points in the justice system to ensure our community is a safe and fair one. We have also committed to additional funding to the legal assistance sector of \$8.8 million over four years to continue to provide free or low-cost legal services to Tasmanians who need extra help, with a further \$320 000 over four years to provide children and young people legal representation in the north and north-west when appearing in court after hours. This new funding will allow the sector to continue to provide free or low-cost services to Tasmanians who need it, and will also provide the sector with much-needed

certainty going forward. Work continues to progress well in order to deliver our \$24.5 million investment for the development of the new Astria digital solutions as part of the broader Justice Connect project, which will bring Tasmania's justice system into the digital era. All these measures will work towards reducing the backlog, reduce human error and allow the courts to deliver efficiencies and more effective outcomes for the Tasmanian community.

Moving onto my portfolio of the Arts in our great and cultural and creative art sector, I am absolutely committed to continuing to support our cultural and creative industries as we adapt to now living with COVID-19.

While the Tasmanian arts sector has shown great resilience in the face of uncertainty and significant challenges over the past two years, we know that the COVID-19 is continuing to have an impact on the sector. As its minister I have been delighted to deliver on our commitments to the arts, screen and cultural sectors in response to the challenges of COVID-19 through our comprehensive package of financial support, totalling almost \$13 million in new and ongoing support measures since March 2020.

As part of our Government's suite of support measures for the Arts I recently announced changes to our \$2 million live performance support program, providing ongoing confidence to the sector, particularly in the live performing arts, to continue to plan events and live performances until 30 September 2022. This was great news for arts organisations, festival organisers, cultural producers and performing arts venues who can continue to plan events with confidence with the assurance that our Government will continue to share some of the risk of potential lost ticket sales in the event of a cancellation or postponement as a result of Public Health or state directives related to COVID-19. As I have said previously, we constantly review and remain agile in relation to COVID-19 measures.

To date more than \$1.7 million in guarantees has been approved through the program over the past year, if it was needed, most of which has not been needed which is great because performances have been able to proceed. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the program, the resilience of our local sector and the importance of providing confidence to event organisers to continue to plan and produce events throughout the year.

Additionally, our Government has delivered over and above on our 2020-21 election commitments for the Arts in response to COVID-19 through much-needed funding to Tasmanian freelance artists and a significant increase in funding to local arts organisations.

Arts Tasmania received a staggering response to our Creative Supports Small Grants Fund, which closed in October 2021. In total, 197 artists shared in funds of over \$340 000 through this program, with our Government allocating additional resources above the original \$200 000 promised so that we could ensure that all eligible applications could be supported and that no one missed out. Similarly, the \$3.78 million our Government provided to arts organisations for activities taking place throughout 2022 represented an increase of more than 65 per cent on the amount allocated in previous years.

I will continue to work closely with the sector, consulting with artists, arts organisations, event organisers and venues to ensure our Government's support measures remain responsive and are meeting the needs of the sector throughout the challenges of COVID-19 and beyond. Over the past 12 months we have also continued to progress key actions outlined in our Cultural and Creative Industries Recovery Strategy: 2020 and Beyond.

As part of these achievements, in February I announced exciting new opportunities through Arts Tasmania's Education Residencies program. In partnership with the Department of Education the program now offers a total of eight education residencies for Tasmanian artists with a focus on regional schools, including two unique opportunities for Tasmanian Aboriginal artists and in 2022 Screen Tasmania will finalise our community engagement strategy for the state to promote Tasmania as a film-friendly destination open to all domestic and international screen producers seeking stunning and diverse film locations.

I am also pleased to see such strong interest in filming in Tasmania, to see our thriving local industry, our talent, our stories and our locations attracting exciting projects to our shores, to observe the benefits of our Government's investments in local screen industry development and what a positive impact this is having on this sector.

The growing strength and capacity evident in our local screen industry has been bolstered by our Government's additional investment of \$3 million in the 2021-22 budget with \$1.5 million of production support approved through Screen Tasmania this financial year.

As Minister for the Arts I understand that creativity is fundamental to our Tasmanian way of life. Our cultural and creative industries are vital for the Tasmanian economy, to our lifestyle, our reputation and they are a major drawcard for visitors to our state. I am confident that with our Government's continuing support for the sector through the challenges of COVID-19, 2022 will be a fruitful, productive and rewarding year for our cultural and creative industries.

I also want to quickly dedicate some time to my no less important portfolios of Workplace Safety and Consumer Affairs. I am committed to ensuring that workplaces are as safe as possible, so that workers return home to their families and friends, safe and well at the end of each day.

I am pleased that WorkSafe Tasmania will continue to monitor compliance in workplaces that have registered for critical exempt workers as a priority since the introduction of the critical worker registration program. This is an important step in supporting our businesses to operate throughout the difficulties experienced during COVID-19.

In addition, I am pleased to note that an independent review of the operation of the Asbestos-Related Diseases (Occupational Exposure) Compensation Act 2011 has commenced and the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 will also be amended throughout this year.

The Government has made significant reform to our building regulatory framework and streamlined industry regulations to ensure strong protection for consumers are in place. Tasmania is experiencing a boom in its the building industry. That brings opportunities as well as challenges.

As minister, I am already acting to strengthen the Tasmanian building regulatory framework with amendments to several acts. I am ensuring that these remain current and contemporary. While Labor continues to mislead and spread misinformation about the building regulatory framework, the work is already underway to strengthen this even further. We are getting on with the job of working closely with industry to deliver meaningful change and strengthen consumer protection. We are not just talking about it.

I am also taking further action to strengthen protections for consumers, with home warranty insurance to be reintroduced in Tasmania after Labor abolished it in 2008. Home warranty insurance covers incomplete or defective building work in the event that a builder has died, disappeared, or becomes insolvent. This has recently become a sensible measure to assist consumers in circumstances where this is now currently occurring. My department, together with Treasury, is developing a model for home warranty insurance in Tasmania. We expect to release this paper very shortly for consultation with stakeholders, including industry and consumer stakeholders and engagement with the insurance industry. It will be completed as soon as possible.

I have welcomed the views of industry stakeholders in recent months, including Master Builders Tasmania, who support the Government assessing options for the reintroduction of home warranty insurance.

In the meantime, we have acted quickly to develop a financial assistance package to assist home owners who have been affected by a small number of building companies which have recently gone into administration in Tasmania. This assistance is providing cover similar to that which would have been provided if a home warranty insurance scheme was in place.

The reintroduction of home warranty insurance will add to the range of protections that already exist under the building regulatory framework available to Tasmanians building homes. This important work will complement our suite of building regulatory reforms currently being explored to strengthen consumer protections within our building framework. This includes the changes I am already progressing and will introduce into parliament soon that reduce the cost of resolving building defect disputes, by giving the newly formed Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, or TASCAT, the original jurisdiction to handle disputes around these issues. This will make it simpler, faster and cheaper to resolve than formal court proceedings.

I have already identified a number of priority areas to strengthen protections for consumers under our building regulatory framework, with the legislation currently being drafted to include these priorities. I will have more to say about this soon.

In the few minutes I have remaining, I wanted to mention some major initiatives announced by the Premier which are particularly exciting for my electorate of Clark, which incorporates the capital city of Hobart. The Premier announced yesterday the development of a multi-purpose stadium at Regatta Point that will deliver significant social and economic outcomes and create a spectacular and iconic entry to Hobart. This will be a major entertainment, sporting and events stadium. As the Premier noted, this area holds great significance for Tasmanian servicemen and women who have served their country, as well as being the long-term home of the Royal Hobart Regatta. It is an organisation I have had a long association with both as a sponsor and a supporter from when I was an alderman on the Hobart City Council, certainly since I have been in parliament, the class of 2010, of which you are also a member, Mr Speaker. I am looking forward to continuing to work with these and other foreshore groups - I know Ms Ogilvie has an association here like the Sea Scouts - and to how this stadium can accommodate the needs of all of these groups.

This is as well as the recently redeveloped MyState Arena, which has reactivated the old Derwent Entertainment Centre in Glenorchy. These developments will lead to major sporting and entertainment events being drawn to Hobart. I am pleased to contribute to this focus on my electorate of Clark.

In conclusion, our Government has a busy and strong agenda to build and secure Tasmania's future. Whether it is as a member for Clark, as Attorney-General, or in my portfolios of Justice, Corrections, Workplace Safety, Consumer Affairs or the Arts, there is much more to do and undertake over the coming year. I am excited by the challenges that lie ahead in the significant law reform agenda that I have, if not quite overwhelming at times when I look at the list running into nine pages.

Across my suite of ministerial responsibilities, there are many exciting opportunities that await. I look forward to working with Tasmanians, with my stakeholders, with my constituents to continue to make our state one of the very best and safest places in the world to live and work.

[5.16 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the state of the state in response to the Premier's speech. There comes a time in every government when they can be judged by their own performance. There comes a time when they can no longer blame the previous government for all the ills and woes that they are facing. That is the point we have reached. We are coming up to the eight-year anniversary of this Government.

As they approach a decade in government what do we see? How should this Government be judged? I think it should be judged that they have failed and they continue to fail. Why do I say that? We have heard in these speeches talk about aspiration. The Government has been in place for eight years and has very little to show for it. Not much delivery has occurred.

What do they have to talk about now? They have to talk about aspiration. It would be more accurate to describe it as a delusion. When they first came into Government they were talking about a strong, stable majority all the time. We have seen in the past few weeks that they are anything but strong and stable. We have seen ministers flee a sinking ship. They have even dropped 'stable' from the preamble of their Dorothy Dixers. There is no talk about a strong, stable Liberal majority Government. Instead, they talk about being aspirational.

The previous spin was not to be aspirational but was to take the state to the next level. What we have seen from the results of the past eight years is the next level that they were talking about was the next level down. Why do I say that? If you compare the results of when they came into Government to the results now, education results are worse, the hospital waiting lists are worse, we have potholed roads, we have delayed projects and we have the worst debt position in history. That is why I can say with some confidence that this Government has failed. That is why they have to start talking about aspiration: aspiration to try to fix up the mess they have created and improve the failures they have had to deliver.

What do we have to show for this debt? We have worse results all round. This is the definition of poor management. As the budget has increased, as the amount they spend has increased, as the GST revenues have increased, we have worse results. More money, worse results. That is the definition of bad management.

Under this Government workers are worse off as wages fail to keep up with the cost of living. This is a tired government. Life continues to get harder, and government wages continue to fall well below the spiralling cost of living. Workers are again worse off under the Liberals. The recent ABS data showing the annual wage increase in Tasmania was 3 per cent, which fell well short of the 4.5 per cent increase in the cost of living measured through the CPI.

While private sector wages grew by 3.2 per cent, the public sector grew by just 2.6 per cent. What that shows is out of the people, the workers of Tasmania, the public sector - this is the lever that the Government has to pull. The Government is in control of the public sector and they are faring worse than the average Tasmanian worker outside of the Public Service. This alone shows how completely out of touch the Premier is with Tasmanians and the daily struggle they face. Nurses, teachers, paramedics, frontline staff, in fact, everyone across the Public Service is worse off. They have taken a real wage cut. That is what is happening under this Government. That is why I can say with some confidence that they are failing Tasmanians.

Tasmanians are effectively taking a pay cut to their incomes - 1.5 per cent on average. At the same time, the cost of living puts the fundamentals like petrol, rent and groceries more and more out of reach. Today, petrol prices are over \$2 a litre. What that means is that the cost of everything is going up. What is this Premier doing about that? Flashy new announcements which I will talk about in a minute. 'Here, look at this shiny new thing.' In the meantime, bread-and-butter issues - the cost of living, petrol, food, rent - are all going up, yet still this Premier refuses to keep his promise to bring in petrol price legislation.

I am pretty sure I heard the Attorney-General interjecting when this was raised by the Leader of the Opposition that there has been price gouging. If there has been price gouging - and I do not doubt there has - the rapid rate of increase in petrol prices has far outstripped the actual increase in the world price. The question is: if there is price gouging, what is this Government going to do about it? What price gouging means is that the cost of everything for Tasmanians goes up with petrol prices.

We have also heard that TasWater has announced that water bills are going up 15 per cent - so that is about \$450 extra that every Tasmanian family who pays for TasWater will be paying.

Aurora announced that every Tasmanian will be required to pay \$20 for the new app, whether they use it or not. That is under this Government.

The Premier has also announced a new tax on every Tasmanian's garbage bin. This new bin tax will create higher council rates across the state, again, raising the cost of living. This bin tax is a blunt instrument because there is no incentive to reduce your waste because you pay the same no matter how much garbage you produce. It is an inefficient tax.

All the while, rent increases continue to push families to the brink. Under the Premier, Mr Gutwein, Tasmania is the least affordable state. That is why this Government is failing families of Tasmania. Tasmanians deserve better than this Government. It is oblivious to the fact that life is getting harder and harder for families, in particular. Mr Gutwein is too distracted dealing with this chaos and disarray from his Cabinet to focus on things that matter for Tasmanians: earning a fair wage, paying their bills and putting food on the table. We have seen these reshuffles, ministers leaving and so on.

The Premier is very confident about the state's budget. He always talks about the state's budget. I was quite surprised to see a media release come out today about the state final demand. New data out today shows that Tasmania is also going backwards in terms of state final demand, contradicting the Premier's claims that the state economy is booming. The latest state final demand figures show that Tasmania is the only state to record a decline in state final demand in the December quarter.

Just yesterday, the Premier, Mr Gutwein, was claiming the economy was booming and business investment was growing but today's figures show that state final demand fell 1.5 per cent in the December quarter. The state's economy went backwards by 1.5 per cent in the December quarter, well below the national average which was an increase of 2.9 per cent. Tasmania went backwards 1.5 per cent while the rest of the country leapt ahead by 2.9 per cent.

Particularly concerning was a sharp drop in the private capital investment, almost three times worse than the next worst result in any other jurisdiction.

The Premier's boasting and bluster are not borne out by this data. It is clear that Tasmanian families, businesses and individuals are suffering the effects. Cost of living pressures are hurting too many Tasmanians and it looks like things are only going to get worse for the economy in reverse. The Premier is not getting the basics right when it comes to this economic management either. Record debt; state final demand figures going backwards.

I had a look at the revised budget Estimates in the December quarter report. Through luck - this Government has had a bit of a GST fairy - the income across the forward estimates increased \$487 million across the next four years, but the telling thing about these figures was, the net debt position only improved by \$91 million. That shows that the Government has decided, according to the figures in the RER, to spend the extra \$400 million. What are they going to spend that on? Stadiums? Or are they going to spend it on things that actually improve the lives of everyday Tasmanians by putting downward pressure on the cost of living?

The RER showed that the improvement was due to GST and taxes. Income went up, but debt hardly moved at all. So, this Government is still borrowing \$2 million a day, every day for the next four years. That extra \$400 million is not paying off debt, so it is obvious that spending growth is still out of control.

I have spoken a number of times in this place about the Premier showing some fiscal responsibility in his first two years. Since then spending has increased every year to a point where last budget it was around nine per cent. What is this next Budget going to show? Is it going to show that the increasing gap between the amount of money coming in and the amount that this Government is spending? There is still a fiscal gap with expenses more than income and that gap looks like it is increasing.

It looks like, once again, it will be up to the Labor Party to pay off Liberal debt, like we had to do with the Liberal debt from the nineties. Robin Gray racked up the debt. Groom and Rundle racked up the debt and it was up to the Labor government to pay it off. Despite all the bluff and bluster, we have a government here that is borrowing, borrowing, borrowing - \$2 million a day, every day, for the next four years. Record debt is what we are facing and that is why I say that this Treasurer's fiscal management has failed Tasmanians.

The Premier talks about Housing. They were going to deliver 3500 houses by 2026-27, with \$615 million to deliver 3500 houses. That is about \$175 000 a house. How do you build a house for \$175 000? How do they work these things out? They question our costings, but their costings were \$175 000 a house. It talks about \$1.5 billion to deliver another 6500 houses up until 2032. That is about \$230 000 a house. How are they working it out? Is there a fudge in the books by talking about expected new investment? Does that mean that other people are going to be paying for the rest because \$230 000 will not build you a house nowadays, let alone in 10 years time when inflation takes off.

Not only is this Government borrowing \$2 million a day, every day, for the next four years, they are promising to build three houses a day for the next ten years. This Government has a record of getting nowhere near their targets. What is the best they have done in a year? Is 200 houses the best you have done? What we see when we get the figures is that they have also sold houses and the balance is hardly moving at all. This is a government that is promising to build three houses a day every day for the next 10 years, starting now. A record of non-delivery in infrastructure: continued non-delivery across the board and yet we are supposed to believe that.

Here we have people stuck in traffic. Every time it comes over cloudy the Bass Highway falls to pieces, potholes you need a map to get out of. A ship loader in Burnie, supposedly shovel-ready in 2019 now will not be delivered until 2024. Who is going to pay for it? It is actually coming out of the Rail Revitalisation Fund. Not extra money. Another failure.

The Cradle Mountain Cableway is another failure under this Government, still years behind schedule. Then we have the pretty pictures. The projects that are still sitting at that pretty picture phase: the new Tamar Bridge; the underground bus mall; not to mention the big poster saying there would be a four-lane Midland Highway; northern suburbs rail; Marinus; pumped hydro; Macquarie Point. A total of \$78 million spent to date, a \$78 million cul-de-sac. That is literally what we have out of Macquarie Point and yet everything is about to take off; \$78 million and all we have right now is a cul-de-sac. We even heard that the reason why they are flogging off blocks of land there is to keep the Macquarie Point organisation solvent. That is this Government's record and that is why we can say with some certainty that they are tired, old and failing. They are a tired, failing government.

How many times have they launched Marinus? How many times have they pumped hydro? Quite often I see front pages of the *Mercury* with 'artist's impression'. I am wondering if artist's impression is a consultancy because if artist's impression is a consultancy they are getting lots and lots of work but nothing gets done, nothing gets past that pretty picture phase. What we see as well are delayed jobs and this is pushing businesses to the wall, businesses who tendered for jobs when prices were lower, steel prices were lower, concrete prices were lower and yet they are waiting six months, eight months, 10 months for those projects to get to the point where they can start digging and start laying concrete. What that is doing is pushing businesses to the wall because they have kept their employees on. They are having to cop a hit because prices have gone up.

Too often big projects are announced just as a distraction and this Government cannot even get the basics right. First it was building new ferries in Tasmania. You remember that one? It is the same strategy. Get everybody excited. This was about distracting from the fact that there were \$1.4 billion of debt built into the Budget. What are we going to do? Are we going to start an international shipping business in Tasmania? What we saw, the Government did not even get into the basic details that nobody had the accreditation. There was literally nowhere to dock a ship of that size to build it and it would not even fit under the Tasman Bridge. It was such a farce. What happens is that everyone gets excited. Everyone gets on board. They get the column inches and what do they end up doing? Crawling back to Finland, crawling back to the contract they had torn up. It cost us \$100 million and thankfully they are now starting to cut steel so we can see the project underway. Yet we have this fantasy and what other fantasies do we have?

We have this floating stadium. The reason it is a floating stadium is because the Government had a look at the site and figured out how deep the water is there. It is no coincidence that there is a wharf there. You could park a battle ship 100 metres off that point. It falls away quickly. It drops. Have a look at the mapping because it has been mapped. Pretty quickly it gets to 10 metres depth and a little further out it gets to 15 metres and then what does it hit? It hits silt. This stadium is going to be built, at best, on 15 metre-plus piers. That is if we do not have deep silt and we know the history of the Derwent River. How much extra did it cost to build the Tasman Bridge because of the silt? Once upon a time the whole Derwent was a massive canyon back when sea levels were lower. It gets very steep very quickly.

The Government is talking about building a massive stadium, huge construction with an opening roof. Imagine the weight of an opening roof, on concrete piers that are 15, 20 or more metres deep. It is just a fantasy. The only way they will be able to do it is if it is floating. It is just a farce. They do not even look at the basics. Okay, we will draw a pretty picture and we will show this stadium jutting 100 metres out into the Derwent but it is 15 metres deep and then it hits silt. How are you going to build such an enormous construction on concrete piers like that? It is ridiculous. It is a stadium. The stadium is significantly different from a bridge where it has a massive mechanical opening structure. You are talking about billions to build that stadium, not a \$750 million back of the envelope calculation that they have done. It is a pretty picture, fine, looks great. But the practicalities of building that - it is an extraordinary engineering challenge. That is how you would describe it. But that is not the first time.

Okay, we have a minister resign, hey, look at this pretty thing. We are going to build a \$750 million stadium. But when the Premier really lost his mind and went too far was when he suddenly announced out of the blue, no discussion with anyone, that Tasmania was going to bid for the Commonwealth Games, that in four years time the Commonwealth Games could come to Tasmania. What a joke and it did not last very long.

Let us just get through to the basics of a Commonwealth Games bid. Brisbane spent \$0.5 billion just on the athletes village; Birmingham, \$1.2 billion; Gold Coast, \$2 billion to run; Glasgow in 2014, \$1.2 billion; Delhi in 2010, they spent \$4 billion. In 2006 Melbourne spent \$1.2 billion. Imagine if the Premier was the dog that caught the car. Imagine if the Commonwealth Games Association said yes, Tassie is going to get it. Where would we get a billion dollars from? Considering the infrastructure that we have here it would not be \$1 billion, it would be \$2 billion, and we are talking about a state already with record debt. We have this Government - just pretending he can sign these cheques, signing blank cheques. It is budget mismanagement on an extraordinary scale. Imagine if Tasmania, for some reason, was actually successful.

What did he do, he doubled down. What are the basics of the Commonwealth Games bid? Where would you put 6000 athletes and coaches? Where would you put the 15 000 volunteers? In Brisbane they had 3500 police officers for the Brisbane games. Where would we get them from? What about the 4000 security personnel that the Brisbane games had? He talks about aspirational: this is not aspirational, this is delusional. A total of 1000 ADF personnel were involved in the Brisbane Commonwealth Games and 100 000 visitors from interstate visited the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. Where would we possibly accommodate 100 000 visitors? It is a farce, it is unmanageable, unbudgeted, just an extraordinary delusion, not an aspiration. It is a delusion. This is the moment where I think people can say the Premier has lost the plot.

Then he doubles down. The Silverdome is not actually up to international standard, so you would have to build a new bike track. Okay, let us just say we have a really good rowing course. I know that we have a really good rowing course. I have been around rowing courses all over the world and Lake Barrington is one of the best rowing courses in the world, without a doubt. The only problem is rowing has not been at the Commonwealth Games since 1986. I know, I probably would have gone to the Commonwealth Games.

Mr Barnett - It was 1988, was it not?

Dr BROAD - No, 1986 in Nottingham. The thing was about rowing in 1986, it was in Nottingham. Steve Redgrave won a swag of gold medals for Britain. The thing is rowing is not even on the optional sports list any more. When the Premier started getting caught out and called out, he just doubled down and said we can have mountain biking. Yes, we can have mountain biking, okay. We can have rowing. No, you cannot. Rowing is not even on the optional list for the Commonwealth Games. It is a complete joke, it is just a distraction, and if not, at worst it is reckless.

I think to myself, what would happen if, for whatever reason, the world turned in the right direction and we ended up with the Commonwealth Games and rowing was at Lake Barrington? Imagine the embarrassment when all the international rowers rocked up to Lake Barrington and found out they had to wear a life jacket. Imagine that. Nowhere else in the world. You come to Lake Barrington, you are in the Commonwealth Games and you want to row up Lake Barrington just for a training session, like you do anywhere else in the world, sorry, mate, where is your life jacket? What a joke. It just shows how this Government is completely off the planet when it comes to stuff like this.

One of this Government's biggest failures is there for everyone to see, and that is in education. There is no-one that they can blame for the education results. The education results that we are seeing in this state is shameful. Our kids are going backwards. You cannot blame the previous government for this. We have had this Government with their strategy and it has failed. Worst NAPLAN results ever. We are falling further and further behind the other states, where once we had one of the best education systems in the state.

The results are just extraordinary. The work by Lisa Denny tracking NAPLAN results for the school kids - every time they have been tested it has been under this Government - in grades 3, 5, 7 and now 9. How can it be that one in four Tasmanian grade 9 students cannot read well enough to understand what they are being taught? So, 28.5 per cent of grade 9 students in the last NAPLAN cannot read well enough to follow the curriculum. How can this Government look themselves in the face and say that they are succeeding on education with results like that? One in four grade 9 students struggle to understand basic maths - one in four. A quarter of kids in our schools are not numerate. These are grade 9s. They are getting towards the end of their education and it has been under this Government. How can they say they are succeeding in education? That is a massive failure. The state is going backwards. These grade 9s have been failed by this Government. This Government cannot even get the basics right. The Premier cannot get the basics right. A quarter of kids struggle with numbers. A quarter of kids cannot read well enough and 41 per cent of these kids cannot express themselves in writing. This is a shame. The Government should be hanging their heads in shame and yet, they still pretend they are succeeding in education.

As the 2021 Tasmanian year 9 cohort progressed through their schooling from lower primary to high school, their literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills progressively declined. That is what the report said. Under your watch, Premier. Another quote:

Year 9 NAPLAN result tests are strong predictors of year 11 and year 12 performance. While writing is the best predictor of successful school completion, spelling, grammar and punctuation are the best predictors of writing competence. Prior achievement is also a greater predictor of future performance than school or background factors.

This is a failure. If you look closer at the data, boys are doing worse than girls. How can an Education minister look themselves in the mirror and say they are doing a good job? It is a disgrace. This is another quote from the report:

... students who are exempt or withdrawn from NAPLAN testing often do not meet the expected standard in the respective domains. Combined with high rates of absenteeism which indicate struggling and disengaged learners, the 2021 results could be considered a 'best-case scenario'.

A quarter of kids not being able to read at standard, a quarter of kids not being numerate, according to Lisa Denny, is the best case. That is an outrage. What is the Premier doing about this? He has been so focused on year 10 retention he has let everything turn to custard. With all the extra funding going into the extension schools, attainment - what the kids actually end up with at the end of year 12 - is going backwards. By simply parking kids for a couple of years, they are not getting the qualifications or the university entrance scores.

This has not gone unnoticed. I went to the Hellyer College awards night. The president of the school association gave Ms Courtney a severe dressing down. He said it was very disappointing that she did not attend because she was in France. He was very disappointed that since becoming a minister she had not visited despite frequent requests. Then he discussed the teachers doing the best they can in substandard facilities. He finally expressed how he hoped Ms Courtney would find the north-west coast sometime soon. We know what happened there. Ms Courtney resigned. She will not be finding the north-west anytime soon. Maybe she heard about this when she was in France because I know that Mr Rockliff, who was doing all the heavy lifting through January, was there. Maybe he told her. Maybe this is one of the reasons why the minister decided it was all too hard and resigned.

The Government should be looking after things and it is not. The salmon industry is a classic example. The Government should be about jobs and the economy and managing the basics. It is not. Businesses get shocked when the Premier suddenly stands up, adopts all the Greens' language about the salmon industry, talks about a moratorium and how it should be moved on to land. Ridiculous. We have Tassal investing all its capital into Queensland, into prawn farms. The Queensland Labor Government is extraordinarily happy with Tassal, welcoming them with open arms. What do we have? The Government of business apparently, tells them they have a moratorium and cannot grow.

What do they do? They shift their billions of investment up to Queensland under this Government. They cannot even get the basics right when it comes to investment decisions like that. The member for Franklin, Mr Winter, spoke about small businesses and how much they were struggling through COVID-19. This is supposed to be the Government of small business

and it failed those small businesses. It did not listen to those small businesses when they were talking about having the worst January ever. We visited businesses all around the state, along with my colleague, Ms Finlay, from Bass, and we had people in tears, people wondering how they were going to manage and how they were going to pay their staff.

The Premier heard that we were talking to small businesses so he doubled the grant. That was welcome but it was not enough. It was too complicated to get those grants. As Mr Winter said, spend \$500 to maybe get \$3000. We were hearing from businesses who lost \$150 000 over that period. It just does not cut it.

Why did this happen? The Government failed. Its COVID-19 reopening plan was a failure, on any measure. The COVID-19 tracking and tracing that was going to hold back COVID-19 hitting everybody they gave up on after two days. We could not get tests. Everyone got scared. They stayed home. They did not spend. The retail spending that people were expecting did not happen prior to Christmas.

The trade did not happen in January. Thankfully things are starting to pick up. Again the Government is failing on a number of measures. It has been in eight years. By the next election it will be 11 years. What does it have to show for it? Nothing but failures. That is what the Government is trying to fudge by talking about aspirations. It is not aspirations, it is a delusion of non-delivery.

Time expired.

[5.46 pm]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Mr Speaker, it is an honour to speak in support of the Premier's Address. It is an honour and a privilege to stand here as Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction, Minister for Resources, Minister for Trade and Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

I thank Tasmania's 46th Premier, Peter Gutwein, for the ongoing support he has shown to me in all of my portfolios and in my role as a member for Lyons, the electorate which is more than 50 per cent of the great State of Tasmania, and hosts some of the most beautiful parts of Tasmania, the rural and regional areas of Tasmania in particular.

The past two years have been some of the most challenging times in a generation for Tasmanians. We have endured that under the leadership of the Premier, Peter Gutwein, and the Liberal Government. I could not be more proud of the job the Government has done. We have had a COVID-19 pandemic. Our priorities are to keep people safe and to rebuild our economy. It has been challenging, it has been tough, but Tasmania remains the greatest place in all the world to live. It is one of the safest places to live. I am so pleased that I have my family here in Tasmania, because it is the best place in the world to live. It is an honour to serve the people and we know that we are responding to the needs and the concerns of the people of Tasmania.

I want to respond to some of the wild allegations made by those opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition, including the shadow minister for energy, including the shadow treasurer. What they have delivered today regarding plans and policies is a big zero.

No plans, policies or visions for the future. All it has been is sniping from the sidelines. Knock, knock, knock. This is a time when an Opposition has the opportunity to share their vision, their plans, their policies but we have heard nothing other than criticism and knocking.

More than that, they are misleading those who are listening, misleading the public. The Leader for the Opposition did it again with power prices. She was caught out last year, talking about power prices going up. When? They have been going down. They have been going down, down, down, so much so that we are now in terms of regulated power prices amongst the lowest in Australia. She was caught out last year and then again today in her response and it was doubled down by the shadow treasurer. They have both indicated that Tasmanians are required to pay for the Aurora+ app whether they use it or not. Of course, this is a draft determination made by an independent economic regulator that is out for consultation. They are just making things up. It is optional right now for Tasmanians.

Let us be very clear in terms of power prices. They have made a big hullabaloo about the cost of living and the cost of doing business. We have brought down the cost of living and the cost of doing business in terms of electricity prices. It is critical for Tasmanians and families supporting the power and the electricity they need to keep their families warm during the winter with a 7 per cent reduction just last year for residential customers and an 11 per cent reduction for small business.

We have heard lots of talk about small business but no mention of congratulations. 'Well done. Your energy policies are delivering downward pressure on cost of living and cost of doing business.' Disgraceful, misleading and misinformation coming from the other side.

Then we have the honourable Dean Winter, member for Franklin, who we saw last year in an embarrassing Chicken Little effort on the Tamar Valley Power Station negotiation between Hydro Tasmania and asking for the Government to intervene because the sky was about to fall. Guess what happened? We know what happened. There were negotiations behind closed doors, as they should be, and a mutually agreeable outcome was achieved. That is exactly what happened. Chicken Little, the member for Franklin, was absolutely convinced that the sky was going to fall in. Of course, it did not. There was no compromise on energy security. We have done what is right and all there has been is sniping from the sideline.

It is the same thing from my shadow, Mr Winter, with respect to Basslink and the concerns he raised last year. We could say the same thing with respect to Marinus Link when everyone knows we are going through the design and approval process. Everyone knows that there is a lot of hard work taking us through to the financial investment decision. Everyone knows that the Australian Energy Market Operator sees it as a key ingredient to success when it comes to the integrated system plan for Australia. The Labor Opposition in Tasmania has no idea what they are talking about but they do have a track record of a 65 per cent increase in electricity prices under their rule when they were in government. Under us, electricity prices have come down because we put Tasmanians first and energy as a critical part of cost of living and cost of doing business.

We have had attacks on the Premier and me with respect to no action on green hydrogen. We have been working assiduously with the key proponent, with the Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone in the electorate of Bass, to advance the cause and it is progressing. We are feeling very hopeful. We have made our application. We have put forward our submission to become a green hydrogen hub for Australia. Why do I say that with confidence? It is

because I know Bell Bay is brilliantly placed. It has access to electricity, water, infrastructure, road, rail and port. It has the key ingredients to success for a hydrogen hub for Australia and it will be a green hydrogen hub because we have 100 per cent fully self-sufficient renewable energy in Tasmania, which is leading not just Australia but leading the globe.

For the Opposition to be criticising and sniping from the sideline is reprehensible. They should be getting behind our plans, supporting our efforts to become a hydrogen hub for Australia, rather than criticising.

Having said that, I will reflect on a notice of motion, the details of which I will not comment on. With respect to Ukraine, I want to indicate a serious concern with the happenings that are going on. I know Tasmanians are concerned, like others around the rest of Australia and around the world, in terms of their right to peace, freedom and democratic rule. We should condemn any aggressive action in Ukraine which endangers human life and liberty. There is no justification for this aggression, which will ultimately be borne by innocent Ukrainians. So, I express concern. I stand with other Tasmanians, certainly in this Government and I know others in this Chamber and elsewhere. We stand with them at this time of great concern and fear.

Our top priorities as a government is that we want to keep Tasmanians safe. We have wanted to and our policy objective is to rebuild our economy. We are delivering that with a brighter and more prosperous future to secure Tasmania's future. It is very clear, it is on the public record, our economy has been growing faster than other states for the last two years. This is great news for Tasmanians. The economy is growing and the unemployment figure is under four. That is great news for Tasmania. There are more jobs, unlike under the previous Labor-Greens government, which it was many years ago. It had very high unemployment and 10 000 jobs were thrown onto the unemployment scrap heap, thanks to their economic policies.

In these last two years, we have had to pivot, to adapt, to be flexible in responding to COVID-19, but we very much have a growing economy. Jobs growth is fantastic. Yes, it has come out of renewable energy and the productive industries. It is a great honour to be minister for the productive industries of agriculture, forestry, mining, fishing, and aquaculture and to be minister for trade. We have now hit another record in terms of export growth. I will touch more on that shortly. We know that exports means jobs. We have a trade strategy which is to grow our trade and our exports with other nations around the world and it is working. I am pleased and proud of our exporters who are growing our economy and providing opportunity for Tasmanians.

I wanted to reflect on a little further on energy emission reduction and our renewable energy credentials in Tasmania. I will have to come back to this after the 6 o'clock deadline.

Today, the US President, Mr Biden, pledged that he would double its renewable energy production from renewable sources. This is President Joe Biden, on behalf of the United States, following Tasmania's lead. We are already at 100 per cent fully self-sufficient in renewable energy. Guess what? We are going to 150 per cent by 2030, 200 per cent by 2040. The US President today is following Tasmania's lead. We have already legislated. We are already planning to double it. We are already progressing and it is delivering affordable, reliable, clean electricity.

I am pleased and proud that, in the State of the Union Address, President Joe Biden is picking up Tasmania's lead. He is following it. You can see the benefits. We know it is happening in Tasmania. Tasmania is absolutely shining with zero net emissions in six of the last seven years and we have a plan to be zero net emissions by 2030. We are well on track. We have big plans for renewable energy. The US President has made that very clear in the State of the Union Address today. I am delighted. Tasmanians should be honoured to know that the US President is following our lead when it comes to renewable energy. In addition to that, President Biden has an objective to have 30 per cent of the US in protected areas. In Tasmania we have around 50 per cent in reserves in Tasmania. We are leading not just Australia, we are leading the world.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Dress for Success Hobart

[6.00 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Attorney-General) - Mr Speaker, I rise on the adjournment tonight to talk about an organisation I have been supporting since its inception here in Tasmania and that is Dress for Success in Hobart. It is a not-for-profit organisation run by a small but dedicated team of staff and volunteers led by Amanda French who I have also known for a number of years from previous roles prior to her role as CEO of Dress for Success Hobart.

I have been a proud supporter of this organisation since its official launch in Tasmania which I hosted here at Parliament House, Mr Speaker, when I previously sat in your chair. At the time I was lucky enough to officially open its Hobart premises as well in 2019 with CEO Amanda French. They are located in Davey Street in the council building.

The mission of Dress for Success is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools to help women thrive in work and in life. The organisation provides work-appropriate near new and seasonal clothing as well as styling advice for women who are seeking to re-enter the workforce, usually after a long period of unemployment. They also provide advice for CVs and resumes, job application tips, interview preparation and career support workshops.

I recently joined forces with Dress for Success Hobart to assist with the organisation's first clothing drive for 2022, with my electorate office in Moonah being a collection point. The clothing drive was held at the end of January. It was a huge success with an overwhelming volume of high-quality clothes, shoes and accessories donated to my electorate office. We had to have a few collections because we had so much, including some things that I culled from my own wardrobe but, as my husband would attest to, I have not gone quite far enough yet. I still have a lot to do so he can reclaim his portion of the wardrobe. I am in awe of the generosity of my fellow Tasmanians most days but when giving my own donation of clothes I was amazed at how much we had received in my small Moonah office but, being ideally located next to the Moonah Arts Centre and opposite the post office, we were able to pass on these donations to the organisation.

I am proud to continue to support the work of Dress for Success Hobart, helping women through the challenges of finding work and being prepared for job interviews. It is quite amazing to see the sense of pride that you see in women who have a nice outfit, something they probably cannot afford and that it is appropriate for an interview. It does make the difference, if anything, in the confidence that someone can portray at a job interview. I have seen it for myself and it is outstanding work that the volunteers and the small staff contingent at Dress for Success Hobart do.

I thank Amanda French and her entire team at Dress for Success for organising the clothing drive which enables the continuation of their wonderful work. This also includes being involved in our WELCOME BACKpack Program with Tasmanian Prison Service where packs are put together for women released from prison containing essential toiletries and clothing with an introduction to this valuable service to also assist them to obtain employment if it has not already been lined up.

We have had some good success stories. I do not come in and talk about personal circumstances of people and so I will keep it generic. Suffice to say that this has been outstanding work that emanated from a group of people undertaking their Tasmanian Leaders Program. It was their idea. They approached me to put it in the Tasmania Prison Service and I wholeheartedly agreed. Now we are funding it as well within our prison service. We have taken over the funding of that. It is an invaluable service.

The support that Dress for Success provides to empower women to overcome barriers to employment is truly inspirational. I encourage everyone in the House to support the important work that they do in our community.

Ice Sports Tasmania

[6.05 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I was pleased recently to attend the launch of a new Tasmanian organisation called Ice Sports Tasmania. It is the new peak body representing sport in the state, including ice hockey and figure skating, as well as all the other activities that are conducted on an ice-skating rink. The organisation has formed with the mission to make participation in ice sports accessible for all, and to assist in the growth of ice sports in Tasmania. They are actively campaigning for the establishment of a new full-sized rink facility to be based in southern Tasmania but, in the meantime, their focus is to save the existing rink.

Members might know that right now in Tasmania there is just one ice rink and it is located in Glenorchy, in my electorate of Clark. The rink has been privately owned by the Kaitinis family for over 40 years. The family has fostered all ice sports over many decades. The Glenorchy rink is the state's only ice skating facility and is home to a small but very close knit and generous community of Tasmanians participating in ice sports.

Sadly it has come time for the Kaitinis family to put the rink up for sale. Participants in ice sports understand this very personal decision but they also fear for the future of ice sports when the rink does sell, because it is not guaranteed that when it does that any new owner would retain the facility as an ice rink. In fact, there has already been significant interest in the site and some contracts have been distributed, with all the potential buyers so far making it clear that they would repurpose the site if they bought it.

Our little rink right here in Hobart has produced Olympic and Commonwealth Games athletes, as well as countless young people and adults participating in national competitions as well. The risk of losing the only ice rink in the state would put an immediate stop to figure skating, ice hockey and all other activities that take place on the ice. This would be heartbreaking for many Tasmanians who dedicate their lives and their recreation to their sport and their athleticism on the ice. It would also put an end to the dreams of those young people who aspire to follow in the footsteps of the Tasmanians who have gone before them to represent our state in national competitions, as well as at the Commonwealth and Olympic Games. Either that, or of course some might choose, sadly, to relocate interstate where they would have access to a rink and we would lose those talented athletes from our state.

That is why Ice Sports Tasmania has been formed: to represent these sports, and to lobby governments, local, state and federal to do what they can to save the rink and save these sports.

When I attended the launch I was surprised to learn that the rink, while it is much loved and held very dear, is only about a quarter of the size of a full-size competition rink. That puts into quite a different perspective the amazing tenacity shown by Tasmanian ice sports athletes who train on this smaller sized rink before going on to compete at national and international competitions on full-sized rinks. The success of these athletes is all the more impressive as a result of that fact.

The long-term plan of Ice Sports Tasmania is to build a full-sized rink and ice sports facility in the south of the state, but in the meantime they are fighting to save the Glenorchy rink. I know the group has recently met with the new Sport minister, Nic Street, to try to get involvement from local, state and federal governments. I encourage the minister to work with Ice Sports Tasmania to see what can be done to save the rink and save these sports.

I formally recognise the current board of Ice Sports Tasmania, president, Anna Holliday, secretary, Kirra Taylerson, treasurer Kim Wilson, and committee members, Katrina Pailthorpe and Natalie Rollings, as well as Jennifer Rayner, Daniel Toohey and Malcolm Moss and many others who were instrumental in getting the organisation going and getting the board up and running.

The absolute highlight of attending the launch was watching the outstanding short film that was made by a local film maker, Sophia Bender. The film was called, 'Little Rink, Big Dreams', and it tells the story of the history of the rink and of the many people, young and old, who use it every single week. It is a bit of a tear-jerker, so do have a tissue handy. I encourage members to jump onto the Ice Sports Tasmania website or their Facebook page to watch the short film. You can also sign up as a supporter of Ice Sports Tasmania and get involved with their campaign to make sure that we do not lose the state's only ice rink, and with it the ability for people to keep pursuing their love of all sports that happen on the ice in Tasmania.

Comments by Attorney General

Ukraine - Territorial Sovereignty

[6.10 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise this evening on the adjournment to talk about some comments that I thought were beyond the pale. We know that this place has been pretty willing the last couple of days but there are probably some things that members on the other

side should reflect on. I am referring to yesterday when the Attorney-General thought it was wise to describe the Labor Party as the 'Red Army' because we are wearing red face masks. The minister thought that was a reasonable thing to say but given the current circumstances where the modern iteration of the Red Army is currently invading Ukraine and bombing them back into the Stone Age, you would have thought it would have been insensitive to describe the Labor Party as the Red Army.

It was bad enough that the first law officer of Tasmania made those comments and then was forced to withdraw them, but today, once again, we have the Premier describing the Labor Party as the Red Army and seeming to display faux indignation when we raised that it was probably inappropriate. This is not just about the Labor Party. It is about Ukrainians who are currently in the fight of their lives, where an imperialist army that massively outnumbers them has decided to go from a strategy of a quick surgical invasion to one now where the strategy seems to be to create mass havoc and devastation by bombing indiscriminately and trying to force the whole Ukrainian people into submission. Some 40-plus million people of Ukraine are currently facing that threat. I would have thought it would have been wiser not to describe us as the Red Army in those circumstances. It is not just about Ukrainians who currently live in Ukraine. It is about Ukrainian Tasmanians who are currently worried about their family members huddled in bomb shelters. It is about 9 a.m. in Kyiv. There are massive Russian armaments moving towards them in Kyiv, day in, day out. Ukrainians are fighting valiantly to maintain their independence and push back on this imperialist army, the Red Army, the modern Red Army attacking them.

This is also about the Tasmanians who lived under the Soviets, who fled as refugees or as migrants and have now set up a beautiful life here in Tasmania. It is about them. Fancy calling the Opposition the Red Army when it was the Red Army that drove them from their homes in Poland, in Ukraine, in Hungary, in those former countries under the Soviet heel. That is what this Government decided to call us. The Premier and the first law officer self-described, decided that calling us the Red Army was a wise thing to do. I push back. I say that describing the Labor Party as the Red Army is not a joke, especially in the current circumstances. This is a minister who has lost it in the past over misconstrued comments but we will not go there.

Ms ARCHER - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is brave or foolish for Dr Broad to go there, given his comments that were taken as very sleazy at the time in relation to the prison; something he got off Google and was forced to apologise for. I caution Dr Broad on where he goes with this. I find his contribution tonight very hypocritical because of that.

Dr BROAD - Hypocritical? We are talking about the minister taking personal offence. I did withdraw that, absolutely. What we had was, and it was a misunderstanding, making the comparison between that and Ukrainians getting bombed back into the Stone Age. I do not think these two things are not equivalent, Mr Speaker.

Ms ARCHER - Point of order. I do not know what Dr Broad is trying to do. My comment of how they look - to supporting what Russia is doing is absolutely disgraceful. I take personal offence and he should withdraw that comment because it was not meant in that vein.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - I ask the member to withdraw it, please.

Dr BROAD - Absolutely, I withdraw. I withdraw. She should not make comments like that to us and neither should the Premier. Knowing the other side, that might get thrown across as a comment just to barb us but it is not about me. It is not about the Labor Party. It is about people who lived under the Soviet heel. It is about the Ukrainians now. That is what this is about. This affects all of us. The world order is changing before our eyes.

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia is one of the most significant events in this century. Not only is it pushing up our fuel prices but this is going to change the world order. It is going to spark an arms race across the world. This is a very serious issue. The Ukrainian people are currently in the fight of their lives, huddled in bomb shelters 100 metres underground, wanting to know how their family is faring. The men who are staying behind are taking up rifles for the first time in their lives. For the first time in their lives they are handling weapons. They are staying behind as their families flee across the border into countries like Romania, like Poland, wondering what is going to happen to the men in their lives as the Russians invade.

This is what the world is currently facing and I would urge some caution on the other side of the room, to not be so flippant. We have red masks. Okay, great. Let us make a funny point but the reference to the Red Army is not appropriate. I urge the other side to be more cautious because it is not us who are going to be offended by this; it is Ukrainians, the people impacted by this and people who lived under the Soviet authoritarian regimes.

Answer to Question - COVID-19 -Number of Infections in Schools

[6.17 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Education, Children and Youth) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to update the House on a question from the member for Franklin, Dr Woodruff, earlier today.

I provided this morning in response to Dr Woodruff's question the number of public school students with COVID-19 as at Monday 28 February, which was the most recent data available to me from my department at the time. I have since received data current as at 1 March 2022, yesterday, and can provide the following update.

I am advised that the total active student COVID-19 cases is 1703 students in public schools across Tasmania, made up of 1292 primary school-aged cases and 411 secondary school-aged students. With respect to teachers in Government schools, I am advised there were 30 COVID-19 positive teachers and 39 teachers currently identified as close contacts. No exemptions have been granted for teachers to shorten the isolation of return to work in government schools.

COVID-19 Issues in Schools

[6.18 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the minister for providing that information without flim-flam or embellishment. It is really helpful to parents, teachers and students for government to be as transparent as possible about what is happening in our schools.

Now we have learned that there are 1703 Tasmanian children and young people who are infected with a virus that medical science is really only just beginning to understand in any kind of detail and we are only two years into this pandemic. Of the 1703 confirmed active cases, we know that 1292 of them are in primary schools. As the minister said in his answer this morning to Dr Woodruff, it is true to say that case numbers are higher among cohorts where there is less mask-wearing. It has never been explained to Tasmanians, to Tasmanian parents or students or school communities why it is that you would let unvaccinated, under-12s go back into face-to-face learning unmasked. There is no public health evidence on the table that that is the correct approach. We have said it before, and we will keep saying it. This is playing Russian roulette with our children and our grandchildren. We are only just now beginning to understand the impact of contracting this disease on children in jurisdictions like the UK and the United States, where mass infection of children and young people was facilitated by government policy.

Dr Woodruff and I would like to understand if it is the policy of Government, if it is the Public Health policy, to allow or facilitate the infection of children because there is a belief in herd immunity -

Mr Jaensch - What a ridiculous thing to say.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is not a ridiculous thing to say, minister. We have heard Public Health officials interstate like the Chief Health Officer of Queensland tell the people of Queensland it is necessary for them to get infected. It is not.

Mr Barnett - They read into it.

Mr Jaensch - Can you not just have a proper conversation about this?

Ms O'CONNOR - I cannot be responsible for the fact, Mr Barnett and Mr Jaensch, that you do not inform yourself about this virus and the impact on the human body and the impact on children. We have.

I also pay very close attention to what public health officials are saying interstate and overseas. I know that at least the Queensland Chief Health Officer is quite comfortable with the mass infection of children. The Commonwealth Chief Health Officer talked about the trade-offs in sending unvaxed, unmasked primary school students back into face-to-face learning. This is not some bizarre conspiracy theory. In fact it is an element of Government policy. That is the only way you can view this when a decision was made to send children who had not been vaccinated, without masks, into inadequately ventilated and filtered classrooms.

This is playing Russian roulette with the health of children. We are now seeing millions of children in the UK, in particular, which now has the longest data set, millions of children who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms - fatigue, memory loss, psychological problems - eight months, 12 months, a year-and-a-half after the acute infection phase of this virus. What is the rationale for allowing children to keep going back into classrooms without masks?

Just this afternoon, I know of the nephew of a close friend in a public school and the grandson of a close friend in an independent school - primary school children - who are infected with a virus that can have devastating long-term consequences for the human body. This is not theoretical. It is now a medically established fact that this virus can stay in the body for months

and months. It tricks our immune system, it gets into our grey matter, it can enlarge our heart, it is a vascular disease that travels through our body in our blood. It has been found in testicles. It has been found in ovaries. It has been found in every organ in the human body.

We need to stop being glib about this virus. We need to stop pretending everything will be fine. We are not yet in the post-pandemic world. Whatever the Premier said in his state of the state speech yesterday, we are not there. In Denmark, deaths are soaring because there is a new variant, BA.2, which is an offshoot of Omicron. Let us not try magical thinking on this. The pandemic is not over. Let us be very careful as we step forward. Let us respect the fact that parents and teachers and indeed students right now are getting infected, are stressed and are worried about the long-term consequences of their infection.

Time expired.

Health and Aged Care Services - West Coast

[6.25 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about my recent visit to the west coast of Tasmania and to Queenstown in particular. That was last Thursday. I want to talk about the discussions I had with the local community and with the local mayor about his concerns about access to health and aged care services on the west coast. We also spoke at length about access to suitable and affordable housing opportunities for people on the west coast. We also spoke about the need for a jobs hub to be established on the west coast rather than being provided as outreach to the west coast from a central site in Burnie. I want to read into the *Hansard* a couple of paragraphs from a media release that was put out on 24 February by the West Coast Council -

We need the help of west coasters to ensure that both the federal and state governments are aware that our community demands better health and aged care, that it is not okay for west coasters to have to move away from family and loved ones because the facilities and services here are not sufficient. All we want is equality on access to services with other Tasmanians. Please contact your state and federal politicians, including the Premier and the Minister for Health and let them know you demand a fair go for the west coast given how much we do for the Tasmanian economy.

This media release was prompted by something that happened three years ago, when the now federal member for Braddon, Gavin Pearce, committed \$1 million in funding to the west community for health.

It was not clear what that was to be provided for specifically but it was to be administered by the state government. To date nothing has been achieved with that money. The West Coast Council was under the assumption that the money would be used for aged care beds on the west coast. Currently there are eight people on the west coast waiting for an aged care bed. The federal Government and the state Government made commitments to provide six additional aged care beds for the west coast. That has not been delivered. What they have come back to the west coast community with is an upgrade to the emergency department which is good, but only providing one aged care bed for that community. It is unacceptable.

The west coast community is demanding that there be an additional five beds and they want the funding provided by the federal and state Governments to make sure that the needs of their ageing community on the west coast can be met. The people of the west coast who have lived there all their life contribute immensely to the local economy, the mining industry, so it is only fair and equitable that in their older years they be provided with equitable aged care services. It is not too much to ask. I am calling on the state Government and the federal member for Braddon to honour their commitment to provide that additional funding to make sure that the people of the west coast have access to aged care services in their local community.

The local government representatives on the west coast have been proactive about planning for health and ageing services in their community. They cannot do it on their own. They need the support of the state and federal governments.

This Government cannot get the basics right across rural and regional Tasmania when it comes to health, housing and education. The people of the west coast deserve better leadership and they should be provided with access to equitable aged care services.

Rural Youth Tasmania - Tribute

Les Walkden - Tribute

[6.30 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Mr Speaker, tonight I am pleased to speak about agriculture. It is growing and I want to pay a tribute tonight to Rural Youth Tasmania. Agricultural production in Tasmania has exceeded \$2 billion for the first time. The ABS commodity figures for the 2019-20 show that Tasmania's increase in agricultural growth was in excess of 14 per cent compared to the national figure of 0.4 per cent so we must be doing something right here in Tasmania. The cool climate, fertile soil, access to water is absolutely critical. Liquid gold, water, is absolutely powering agriculture and we will continue to advocate more support and funding for water and irrigation. Our enterprising farmers and agribusinesses are key ingredients to success and support for research. I am happy to share more about that at another time.

We are on track to our goal of \$10 billion for the farmgate value by 2050. We have set this goal. It is sustainable growth and it is events like Agfest and organisations like Rural Youth Tasmania that are an important part of agriculture in Tasmania. Today I recognise the important role of Rural Youth Tasmania which supports and connects young Tasmanians in rural communities. They provide important self-development opportunities, training, mentoring and social experiences for young Tasmanians between 15 and 30 years old. I recognise those key team members - the Rural Youth Tasmania State President, Josh Mison; the Agfest Chair, Caine Evans and the Vice President, Brady Robins. I caught up with both Caine and Brady just a week or so ago with a special announcement with respect to Agfest and funding support from this majority Gutwein Liberal Government.

I recognise general board members Jake Williams, Rhiannon Hennessy, Emily Nixon, Rory Eaton, Amber Bramich, Ethan Howe and Matt Ryan, and advisory appointees, Matt Crane and Andrew Parsons. I should recognise both Ethan and Jake who I have caught up with quite a bit last year and the year before regarding support for Agfest and the whole range of other past Rural Youth members. They are volunteers. They do a fantastic job.

I also recognise Rural Youth Tasmania CEO, Karen Robinson, and her team as well. Some of the important work of Rural Youth Tasmania includes the Rural Youth state ball, road trips, weekends away, tours, sport challenges and the Young Farmer of the Year Competition which I attended last year. I was delighted to join in August last year. My shadow, Janie Finlay, was there as well. We saw Andrea O'Halloran take out the top prize, and Caitlin Radford, runner up, from an outstanding list of competitors. Again, I congratulate them on their achievement.

Of course, there is Agfest. That is where our Government is the strongest supporter of Rural Youth and Agfest. It is one of the highlights of the Tasmanian rural calendar and has continued to grow in size and reputation across its 39-year history. Scheduled this year for 24 - 27 August 2022, Agfest is Tasmania's premier agricultural machinery event held at Quercus Park in Carrick. I encourage all members of the public to purchase an Agfest ticket when they go on sale which is due on 1 July this year.

Agfest is one of Tasmania's iconic annual events. The three-day event normally attracts about 65 000 patrons each year and hosts hundreds of local and interstate businesses. To emphasise again, it is run by volunteers - so important, fantastic.

Exhibitors are shown the opportunity to showcase their quality products, people, brands and services to a wide local and national audience. The event is a strong contributor to Tasmania's tourism and visitor economy and many visitors and attendees take this opportunity to spend extra time in Tasmania. As a government we have backed Agfest and Rural Youth and I have the honour on behalf of the Government to announce our funding support of \$850 000 for Rural Youth Tasmania to ensure both the continuation of Agfest and the growth and sustainability of the organisation. I emphasise the sustainability of it and it has a legacy which I think will grow well and truly into the future.

In the final moments tonight, I want to pay a tribute to Les Walkden. He is an innovative and well-respected member of the timber industry. Les Walkden Enterprises was established more than 45 years ago with bases in New Norfolk, Launceston, and elsewhere. He does so much good in a strong and sustainable forest sector. He has been integral in the supply chain of a sustainable forest industry. He has been involved in softwood, hardwood, timber supply, north and south transported timber, timber products and forestry industrial equipment.

He is also a keen figure in rally car racing in Tasmania. I was pleased to hear that Les Walkden and Johnnie Walker were both recently announced as inductees of the Tasmanian Motorsport Hall of Fame. I congratulate both of them on their induction. As a race car engineer and rally team legend, Les Walkden and his team have had great success across national and international racing series, including Les Walkden Rallying winning the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship with Cody Cocker in 2006. Les Walkden Rallying also prepare and run cars in tarmac rallying, including Targa Tasmania.

He has had a celebrative career. He has had an important role in assisting young talent and supporting safety improvements in racing. In 1997 he established Motorsport Safety and Rescue, which continues to invest in safety technology and infrastructure which is highly commendable.

I congratulate Les Walkden on his recent induction into the Tasmanian Motorsport Hall of Fame. I commend him as an outstanding and well-respected Tasmanian.

National Eating Disorders Association Awareness Week

[6.37 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I rise to draw the attention of the House to the National Eating Disorders Association, known as NEDA, which promotes National Eating Disorders Awareness Week every year. This year, NEDA ran from 22 February to 28 February. Its mission is to educate the public, spread hope for those in recovery and their families and provide resources that can help save lives.

This year's theme, Everybody Has A Seat At The Table, raised awareness of under-represented communities struggling with eating disorders, challenging systematic biases and sharing stories from all backgrounds and experiences.

All the eating disorders, ranging from anorexia nervosa to binge-eating disorder, from avoidant restrictive food intake disorder, to bulimia nervosa, and every diagnosis in between, can affect anyone regardless of age, body size, gender, sexuality, race or socio-economic status.

During the 2022 NEDA Awareness Week, and every other day of this year, those struggling with their eating disorder, and those recovering from their eating disorder, are encouraged to share their stories. It is time to remove the stigma and judgment perpetrated from eating disorders.

The number of people in Australia with an eating disorder at any given time is estimated to be around 1 million people, or approximately 4 per cent of the population. Eating disorders, when combined with disordered eating, are estimated to affect 16.3 percent of the Australian population. Binge eating disorder, and other specified feeding and eating disorders are the most common eating disorders, affecting approximately 6 per cent and 5 per cent of the total population, respectively. Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa each occur in below 1 per cent of the general population. Lifetime prevalence of eating disorders is approximately 9 per cent of the Australian population.

A recent review found that worldwide, lifetime prevalence of eating disorders was 8.4 per cent for women, and 2.2 per cent for men. The results also showed that the prevalence has been increasing over time.

Of people with eating disorders, 47 per cent have binge eating disorder, 12 per cent have bulimia nervosa, 3 per cent have anorexia nervosa, and 38 per cent have other eating disorders.

It is important to remember that these figures provide a statistical overview only. Eating disorders are highly individual and varied, and not all research will be applicable to all.

Research on eating disorders in Australia is limited. The figures below are the most recent and relevant information that I could find: eating disorders are not a lifestyle choice, a diet gone wrong or a cry for attention. Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses that affect approximately one million Australians. Eating disorders, together with substance use disorders, have the highest mortality rate of all psychiatric disorders. The mortality rate for those of anorexia nervosa is higher than any other eating disorder. Cardiovascular complications is the leading cause of death among people with anorexia nervosa, followed by suicide. The rate of mortality of individuals with bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder is lower than those with anorexia nervosa but still significantly higher than the general

population. People with anorexia nervosa are more than 31 times more likely to attempt suicide than those with bulimia nervosa, 7.5 times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population. People with anorexia nervosa are 18 times more likely to die by suicide and those with bulimia nervosa are 7 times more likely to die by suicide relative to gender and aged-matched comparison groups.

More must be done to support people who live or are recovering from an eating disorder. The Butterfly Foundation provides incredible support for families. Support is essential and the lack of accessible free psychiatric, psychological and also dietician assistance who specialise in this area, is very real.

Last year, a joint investigation by *Four Corners* and Triple J Hack highlighted how the social media phenomena TikTok exposed users to pro-eating disorder content with real-life harms whilst appearing to shadow ban other content and it was very harmful. While personalised feeds are nothing new, the investigation found that TikTok's particular powerful algorithm had pushed some young Australians into developing eating disorders.

The average time for an individual to recover from an eating disorder is seven years. It is a very long journey. We must do more as a society. It is a torture that far too many of our young people suffer and so many others continue to manage to live. Judgment and stigma are not helpful, understanding support and empathy are required. Challenging popular beliefs around the concept of thinness is a starting point, providing non-judgment support and funding recovery, not just from hospitalisation but real recovery.

Return to School Moment in Time

[6.42 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise on the adjournment to acknowledge an initiative we undertook in our electorate office across the return to school moment in time.

We know that many families are struggling with the costs of living and there are various moments in the year when the bill comes in or there is a moment where families need to prepare to head back to school. There are extra costs placed on the family household budget. We know it is a tough time for families. As good local members, it is important that all of us in this place find ways to play a role to help out our community and to support families in their moments of need.

This year I was able to take up an initiative that was commenced last year in Launceston by the Labor member for Bass, Michelle O'Byrne in having a stationery back to school drive, trying to get donations and contributions from people to support families with, ensuring that when their kids headed to school for the first day of the school year, that they would have all the equipment and the stationery that they would need to get their school year off to a great start.

We thought we would give that a go and we put out a couple of calls on social media and we were overwhelmed with the support that we received from individuals, from organisations and from community groups in support of that drive. When you are not in government, as a member of parliament you advocate for various costs of living measures by the government, if you are not able to get those through. If you are not able to effect that from within government,

it is important that we find ways to make a difference and help out. We found that was a wonderful way to support families.

Over a period of three weeks we received so much and such an amazing amount of new stationery delivered to our electorate office in Rosny. In fact, my whole meeting room was chock-full of stationery equipment that we could circulate to families. We were able to put together and support more than 150 families across the seat of Franklin in primary and high school with a stationery pack containing pens, pencils, USBs, pads: all the equipment necessary for them to have a great start to the school year.

The feedback was amazing from a number of families. It is heartbreaking that in a state like Tasmania, that some families are not able to provide their children with the best equipment when going back to school. The feedback that we received was that it was almost like a second Christmas for some kids. It was the first time that they were able to go to school with new equipment, with proper pens and pencils to make sure that they could start the school year in the best way possible.

I thank all those people who donated, from the smallest \$5 or \$10. People trickled into my electorate office with donations so that we could put together those packs and support more than 150 families across Franklin. We had a number of organisations: More Real Estate, Kirk Ashlin Transport, Office National, Tas Trotting Club, Tas Racing Club. We had Kingborough Helping Hands and the Warrane/Mornington Neighbourhood House, Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood House, Rokeby Neighbourhood House, Risdon Vale Neighbourhood House, Kingston Neighbourhood House and a number of other community groups that not only donated, but they also supported in getting the packs to the families who needed it most.

I thank those organisations and individuals who put their hand in their pocket to help families at a time where a lot of families struggle with the cost of living. Heading back to school can be such a large impost on families in terms of their household budget. I know we made a difference. The feedback was amazing. I thought it important that this parliament recognises the generosity in our community, also those businesses and organisations that donated to make a difference for families across the seat of Franklin.

Kempton Festival

[6.47 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate the hardworking committee who are behind this year's Kempton Festival that was held on 20 February. It was incredibly successful, with all indicators being that it was the best one yet. The weather was perfect. There were lots of stalls and entertainment for everyone to enjoy. As is tradition with the Kempton Festival, there was a sheep race. I know that you, Mr Speaker, sponsored a sheep in that race. I sponsored a sheep in that race and Brian Mitchell sponsored a sheep in that race, along with many other people.

Mr Barnett - I sponsored a sheep in that race.

Ms WHITE - Mr Barnett sponsored a sheep in that race. I was going to ask, what was your sheep called?

Mr Barnett - Baaaaaaarnett.

Ms WHITE - Baaaaaaarnett, how original. How long did you take to think about that one?

Mr Barnett - It was the same one as last year.

Ms WHITE - Was it the same sheep? Mr Speaker, I cannot recall the name of your sheep. Maybe you could cheekily interject.

Mr SPEAKER - It went around and around the office. I am not sure now what name we came up with.

Ms WHITE - We called ours the BaarTender. Brian Mitchell had a very straightforward name, which was Baa Baa Brian. Baa Baa Brian won, which I think is a very good omen. Baa Baa Brian won its heat and then won the grand final. The successful sheep on the day was sponsored by Brian Mitchell.

As I said, it was the twentieth year of the festival in its current format, but a festival has been held in Kempton for many years prior to that. I also understand that the raffle held on the day was so popular that they ran out of tickets, which is testament to the hard work of the volunteers who were selling those raffle tickets around the ground in the lead up to the show. I am so thrilled for them that it was such a success.

I note that I am not surprised that the raffle was incredibly popular though, because the first prize was fuel. As we all know, the price of fuel continues to go up. I am sure the winner of that particular raffle was incredibly grateful. That will come in handy.

There was also another key event that was held on the day, which has become synonymous with Kempton and the rise of the distilling industry in Tasmania. Before the sheep racing there was a barrel-rolling competition, using barrels from the old Kempton distillery, on the track.

I love the way that these country events come together, with really traditional activities that involve the community. They are lots of fun for families and are also really true to the identity of the place where they are held. Sheep races and barrel-rolling really does help to put what Kempton is about on the map and in the minds of the people who go there.

I convey my thanks and congratulations to the committee who usually start preparing about six months prior to the festival and put in a huge amount of work to get this community project up and off the ground. Well done on their efforts and their endeavours. I am looking forward to attending next year.

The House adjourned at 6.51 pm.

APPENDIX 1

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Petition No. PET21-9-HA House of Assembly

The petitioners ask the House to:

The petition of the undersigned citizens of Tasmania draws to the attention of the House the current health crisis occurring in the Derwent Valley and Central Highlands.

The Derwent Valley and Central Highlands communities therefore request the House to call on the Tasmanian Liberal Government, under Premier Gutwein, to introduce nurse practitioners at the New Norfolk hospital on full cover 24 hour per day 7 days per week. Furthermore, the Derwent Valley community call on the Tasmanian Liberal Government to advocate to their Federal counterparts to reschedule New Norfolk under Medicare and the Modified Monash Model (MMM) to a level 5.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE:

- The Tasmanian Government is committed to improving access to health services for people living in rural areas, including the Derwent Valley
- Through the 2021 State Election and the 2021-22 State Budget, we have committed \$26.7 million to boost staffing and equipment at our District Hospitals, including the New Norfolk District Hospital.
- New Norfolk District Hospital is a 14-bed rural inpatient facility managed by local General Practitioners (GPs). The facility provides sub-acute (an illness or injury that is not severe) care and cares for local acute patients who are in a stable condition.
- The New Norfolk District Hospital currently employs a full time Nurse Practitioner Monday – Friday to support the GPs in patient management.
- The Community Rapid Response Service can also take referrals from New Norfolk GPs to provide at home interventions for patients with acute conditions who are at risk of presenting to an Emergency Department. The Community Rapid Response Service model includes a Nurse Practitioner.
- Ambulance Tasmania has an established 24 hour a day, seven day a week service at New Norfolk staffed by Paramedics who are experienced in the management and transport of critically unwell patients to the Royal Hobart Hospital.
- A review of emergency presentations to the Royal Hobart Hospital during 2021 indicates that on average only three patients per 24-hour period in the non-time critical category resided closer to New Norfolk than to Hobart.
- In addition to existing health services operating in the Derwent Valley such as the District Hospital and GP services, there are a number of new initiative underway including Corumbene Care's Derwent Valley Health and Wellbeing Hub and the 100 bed health facility being developed as part of 'The Mills' development.

- The Government acknowledges the advocacy from the community for consideration of new models of care, in particular the introduction of nurse practitioners at the New Norfolk District Hospital 24 Hours a day, seven days a week.
- As part of the Government's *Our Healthcare Future* reforms, clinical services planning will be undertaken in each region offering an opportunity to bring all of the current and proposed health services together and maximise access for the Derwent Valley Community.
- Regional clinical services planning will include demographic analysis to identify health needs of the Tasmanian community at a local, regional and statewide level; stakeholder co-design and consultation; and where appropriate, review of research literature to identify future service trends.
- It is the Government's intention that clinical services planning will include the Derwent Valley.

Modified Monash Model

- The Modified Monash Model (MMM) is used by the Australian Government to assign a classification of city, rural, remote or very remote to all locations across the country. Implementation of the model allows health workforce programs and incentives to be targeted, to attract health professionals to more remote and smaller communities.
- Currently New Norfolk is classified as MMM Level 2. This is the same classification as Hobart.
- The MMM classifications are assigned to all locations across the country by the Australian Bureau of Statistics based on census data about population size and remoteness. The ABS reviews and updates the MMM after the census, held every 5 years.
- I have previously and will continue to raise with my Federal colleagues the impact New Norfolk's MMM classification has on local health providers and what further support can be offered.


 Jeremy Rockliff MP
 Deputy Premier
 Minister for Health

Date:

25/2/22

APPENDIX 2

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 3 of 2021 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, Minister for Health

QUESTION:

In relation to public maternity care options in Tasmania:

1. What percentage of women participate in the Know Your Midwife (KYM) Scheme per year?
2. What percentage of women per year participate in continuity of care programs at Tasmanian public hospitals?
3. What percentage of women per year access the following models of care within public hospitals, divided by geographic region?
 - a. South: Midwifery Group Practice (MGP), Midwife Satellite Clinics, GP Shared Care, Medical Clinic, Know Your Midwife Scheme, and the Young Mum's Clinic?
 - b. North West: Midwifery Group Practice, Midwife Satellite Clinics, and Medical Clinics?
 - c. North: Team Midwives, Midwifery Group Practice, Midwife Satellite Clinics, GP Shared Care, Medical Clinic and Preterm Birth Prevention Clinic (PBPC)?
4. What percentage of the total births in the state occurred in public hospitals?
5. Has an investigation been undertaken into the addition of publicly funded homebirth programs to maternity care options in Tasmania?
6. Is there a role birth centres play in the public maternity care options available in Tasmania, and if so, what is it? (14 September 2021)

ANSWER:

1. The Know Your Midwife (KYM) Scheme is one of a number of programs offered by Tasmanian Health Service (THS) for maternity services in Tasmania. In Southern Tasmania for 2020-21, 13.72 per cent of eligible women participated in KYM Scheme. In the North for the same period 18 per cent of women participated in the Scheme.

The North West does not use the KYM Scheme and instead focuses on the other programs that are delivered within the region. However, the North West Private Hospital offers this program for private patients and in 2020-21, 10 per cent of eligible women participated in the KYM Scheme.

It should be noted that while the regions use the same nomenclature for the model, the models may operate slightly differently based on local needs.

2. I am advised that the Midwifery Group Practice program offers the full continuity of care model. In 2020-21, 23.86 per cent of women in South, 17.6 per cent in the North and 18 per cent in the North West had participated in the Midwifery Group Practice program.
3. Regardless of the models of care offered by maternity services, all women who chose public hospital maternity care are supported by hospital midwives in collaboration with medical practitioners. Women with complex needs will have care led by the obstetric team supported by midwives.

A range of midwifery led models of care operate in Tasmania's public maternity services. The type of midwifery models are established in response to the needs of women in the community.

In response to question 3.a, in Southern Tasmania, during 2020-21:

- 23.86 per cent of women accessed Midwifery Group Practice
- 13.7 per cent accessed Midwives Clinics
- 46.36 per cent accessed the Medical model which is led by teams of medical staff
- 13.72 per cent accessed Know Your Midwife
- 2.2 per cent accessed the Young Mums clinic

In response to question 3.b, in North West Tasmania during 2020-21:

- 18 per cent of women accessed Midwifery Group Practice
- 13.2 per cent accessed Midwives Clinics
- There is no GP Shared Care in the North West.

In response to question 3.c, in Northern Tasmania, during 2020-21:

- 18 per cent of women access Midwives Clinics

- 17.6 per cent accessed Midwifery Group Practice
 - 6.1 per cent accessed Midwife Satellite Clinics
 - 6 per cent accessed GP Shared Care
 - 27 per cent accessed the Medical Clinic and Preterm Birth Prevention Clinic (PBPC)
4. The total percentage of births in the state occurring in public hospitals is reported by the Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity (COPMM) in its Annual Report. The 2019 Annual Report for COPMM, the most recent Annual Report, notes that 62.7 per cent of births in the state occurred in public hospitals.
 5. Not at this time. The current focus for Tasmanian public maternity services is on workforce planning and recruitment. Our priority is to establish a sustainable midwifery workforce through education pathways and post registration professional development.
 6. In Tasmania there is a private birth centre located in Launceston with services provided by a privately practising midwife. This private service complements public sector maternity services. There is no plan to replicate this service.

APPROVED



Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Health

Date: 25 February 2022

APPENDIX 3

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 13 of 2021 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: The Hon. Michelle O'Byrne MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, Minister for Health

QUESTION:

1. Do all Tasmanian public hospitals now provide access to surgical terminations?
2. Do any of the Tasmanian public hospitals have limits on access to surgical terminations for women determined by the hospital to be 'vulnerable', or any other such restriction, or threshold, for access?
3. If there is a threshold used for access to surgical terminations, including being determined as 'vulnerable', what are the conditions to meet these thresholds?
4. Have any women been denied access to a surgical termination, or had their request for surgical termination delayed, due to not being 'vulnerable' enough, or failing to meet the threshold access as determined by each public hospital in Tasmania, and if so, how many?

ANSWER:

1. Surgical termination services continue to be provided at the Royal Hobart Hospital and were introduced at the Launceston General Hospital in October 2021.
Similarly, termination services commenced in the North West in October 2021 and are primarily provided at the Mersey Community Hospital. Surgical termination services may also be provided at the North West Regional Hospital if there is a clinical reason for the procedure not to be provided from the Mersey (for example, for COVID-positive women).
2. All women are able to access surgical terminations at public hospitals in Tasmania, regardless of their personal circumstances.
3. As above, all women are able to access surgical terminations at public hospitals in Tasmania, regardless of their personal circumstances.

4. I am advised that no women have been denied or had delayed access to a surgical termination at a public hospital in Tasmania.

APPROVED



Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Health

Date: 25 February 2022

APPENDIX 4

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 11 of 2021 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Guy Barnett MP

QUESTION:

Dr Woodruff to ask the Minister for Primary Industries – In relation to salmon farming wildlife deterrent devices:

- (1) Are there regulations and limitations around the use of seal 'crackers' by the salmon farming industry, and if so, what are they?
- (2) Does the noise from the use of these deterrent devices travel, and if so, how far?
- (3) Is there an impact of these devices on seals, penguins and cetaceans, and if so, what is this impact?

(28 October 2021)

ANSWER:

1. Seal deterrent devices may be deployed under permit to deter fur seals from presenting an unacceptable risk to marine farm staff or interfering with marine farming infrastructure or operations.

The Seal Management Framework 2018 and associated Minimum Requirements for the Mitigation of Seal Interactions with Aquaculture Staff and Infrastructure in Tasmania 2018A (Minimum Requirements) describe how seal deterrent devices, including seal crackers, may be used by permitted salmon farming industry employees.

Cracker devices may only be deployed by holders of a valid Seal Deterrent Permit and only on fur seals (*Arctocephalus* spp.) within the boundaries of the marine farming lease or operational area defined in the permit.

Seal Deterrent Permits are issued by DPIPW under Regulation 21 of the Wildlife (General) Regulations 2010 for the purposes of Regulation 27.

Seal Deterrent Permits are only issued to salmon farming employees who have received training in the use of seal deterrent devices.

2. The propagation of noise through the water column is dependent on a wide range of physical environmental factors, including but not limited to: water depth, bathymetry, substrate type, turbidity, etc.

The distance that noise from these deterrent devices may travel, and the noise level received, is entirely dependent on the location where they are used.

3. Any underwater noise has the potential to impact on marine wildlife and the impact of the noise generated from cracker devices on seals, penguins and cetaceans is difficult to quantify.

Cracker devices are specifically designed to startle seals and encourage them to move away from salmon farming infrastructure or operations.

Tasmanian legislation requires permit holders to have received adequate instruction and training in the use of these devices to meet the requirements specified in the Minimum Requirements and a Seal Deterrent Permit.

To avoid unintended impacts on cetaceans, cracker devices must not be used on a marine farming lease when a whale or dolphin is known to be within that lease.

 APPROVED / NOT APPROVED


Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Date: 23/11/22

APPENDIX 5

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Questions No. 6 of 2021 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Guy Barnett MP, Minister for Primary
Industries and Water

QUESTION 6:

In relation to staffing of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE), are there any policy officers employed by DPIPWE who have responsibility for ensuring the marine environment remains healthy, who do not also have responsibilities related to fisheries and/or aquaculture, and if so, how many?

ANSWER:

The protection of the marine environment is delivered in a holistic manner by DPIPWE utilising the expertise of multiple divisions. This includes staff in Policy and Projects, Parks and Wildlife Service planning and assessment, Marine Resources, and Natural and Cultural Heritage and EPA Tasmania, who provide independent advice to industry, development proponents, regulators, and other stakeholders, on the management of our marine environment.

It is too simplistic to separate fisheries and aquaculture management from ensuring a healthy marine environment.

All DPIPWE Marine Resources Division officers, in delivering the objects of the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*, have core responsibilities for healthy marine environments, viz (S.7):

- (a) increase the community's understanding of the integrity of the ecosystem upon which fisheries depend; and
- (b) provide and maintain sustainability of living marine resources; and
 - a. take account of a corresponding law; and
- (c) take account of the community's needs in respect of living marine resources; and
- (d) take account of the community's interests in living marine resources.

While DPIPWE staff support direct habitat management activities such as control of the long-spined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus*), other work supports local and whole of ecosystem level management through the education and permitting of indigenous, recreational, commercial fishers and the regulation of marine farming activities.

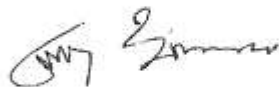
DPIPWE also works with Federal and State agencies and local organisations to ensure that marine environments are protected. For example, DPIPWE maintains a service agreement with Tasmania Police to protect marine environments from illegal fishing, which is a major threat to healthy marine environments.

DPIPWE, through its partnership with the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) at the University of Tasmania, also funds and actively participates in a significant body of multi-disciplinary marine research that underpins the sustainable management of marine resources for a diversity of uses.

Currently EPA Tasmania is a Division of DPIPWE and it is appropriate to include staff who provide policy input to marine environment matters. Staff in the Water Section, excluding those directly involved in the regulation of the salmon industry, provide advice in relation to application of the State Policy on Water Quality Management, including for marine waters.

Currently as EPA Tasmania is a Division of DPIPWE, it is appropriate to include staff who provide policy input to marine environment matters. Excluding those staff directly involved in the regulation of the salmon industry, staff in the Water Section provide advice in relation to application of the State Policy on Water Quality Management, including for marine waters.

~~APPROVED~~ NOT APPROVED



Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Date: 13 December 2021