



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 3 June 2020

REVISED EDITION

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The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

TABLED PAPER

Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts - Office of the Ombudsman and Health Complaints Commissioner

Mr Dean presented the report of the Office of the Ombudsman and Health Complaints Commissioner.

Report received and printed.

COVID-19 DISEASE EMERGENCY (COMMERCIAL LEASES) BILL 2020 (No. 19)

Amendments Agreed to by House of Assembly

The House of Assembly advised that it agreed with the Council amendments.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Special Interest Matters Called on

[11.14 a.m.]

Motion by **Mrs Hiscutt** agreed to -

That so much of standing order No. 41 be suspended to allow for special interest matters to be called on today's sitting.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

Heritage Aircraft - *Miss Flinders*

[11.15 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, until March this year when you visited Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, it was impossible to miss the heritage aircraft *Miss Flinders* prominently hanging from the ceiling. This aircraft has become an icon of Queen Victorian Museum and Art Gallery since its installation about 10 years ago.

Miss Flinders is a Desoutter Mark II monoplane with Australian registration VH-UEE. The aircraft was constructed at Croydon Aerodrome south of London and took its first flight on 30

August 1930. This particular aircraft is a three-seater design and is described by aviation historian Geoff Goodall as featuring a comfortable cabin design when most new light aircraft still had open cockpits. It was an all wooden construction with fabric-covered surfaces and was suitable for training or touring. A total of only seven such types of this original type of aircraft were built; upon licencing of the patent of this plane to Desoutter in London, modified versions of this design resulted in the construction of 41 Desoutter Mark I and Desoutter Mark II aircraft.

In late 1931 a Desoutter Mark II aircraft was purchased and flown to Australia by Harold Jeffrey and Harry Jenkins. The aircraft departed England on 27 December and arrived in Darwin on 10 February 1932, after 44 days of flying. During this time Harold Jeffrey and Harry Jenkins took turns flying and traversed half the planet, arriving in Australia via what was then British India. On 11 March 1932, the aircraft was formally registered in Tasmania as VH-UEE, christened *Miss Flinders* and licenced to carry three people. From 18 March 1932, *Miss Flinders* commenced the first regularly scheduled passenger and mail service to Flinders Island. At this time *Miss Flinders* was owned by Laurie Johnson, grandfather of Tasmanian Aviation Historical Society president Andrew Johnson. Not long after these trips commenced, Laurie Johnson and the Holyman brothers amalgamated to form the Tasmanian Aerial Services and *Miss Flinders* became part of a fleet of aircraft that would eventually become Holyman's Airways and then Australian National Airways.

In 1933, *Miss Flinders* again made history, conducting what was likely the first aeromedical evacuation from King Island to Western Junction, now the northern home of Tasmania's Royal Flying Doctor Service. This flight was undertaken by Laurie Johnson and marks a significant point in remote medical service and aviation history in Australia. In 1935, *Miss Flinders* was sold to the de Havilland Aircraft Company, based in Mascot, New South Wales; until 1938 she continued to change hands to undertake private and charter activities. In 1938, *Miss Flinders* was purchased by Charles D Pratt and, true to the nature of the Desoutter, was used in training at the Pratt Flying School at Coode Island, Victoria.

From the outset of World War II and due to the cessation of civil flying, *Miss Flinders* was stored in Essendon until 1946, at which time she returned to New South Wales and continued to be used in charter flying and instruction by South Coast Aviation Services in Wollongong. After some time in the charter and instruction sector, and continuing to change hands, *Miss Flinders* was struck off the Civil Aviation Plane Register in 1961 and taken into the possession of the Department of Civil Aviation, being formally purchased by the Australian Government in September 1965.

After some discussions, *Miss Flinders* was brought to Launceston and put on display in the Launceston Airport Terminal until 1997. In 2006, *Miss Flinders* was placed on display at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery at Inveresk, and in 2010 restoration commenced, with the aircraft returning to display in May 2011. In March, *Miss Flinders'* term at Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery expired and she was removed from display, with the Australian Government agreeing to gift *Miss Flinders* to the Tasmanian Aviation Historical Society, which is currently searching for a new home for her.

I emphasise that in the intervening years since *Miss Flinders* was first put on display at the Queen Victorian Museum and Art Gallery, the standards for maintaining and conserving heritage aircraft have been updated, and it was necessary to take *Miss Flinders* off display to ensure she is kept in the best condition to properly and safely preserve this important piece of Tasmanian history.

Miss Flinders is an historical aircraft imbued with a rich heritage; she is a meaningful reminder of the progress that has continued, and will continue, to be made in aviation. I congratulate the

Tasmanian Aviation Historical Society and its dedication in promoting Tasmania's aviation history and looking after *Miss Flinders*.

I sincerely hope it is not too long until we see *Miss Flinders* on display once again.

Circular Head Businesses

[11.19 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I had intended to make this contribution earlier this year or even late last year but missed the opportunity. Since then, the lives and livelihoods of so many people have been turned upside down, none more so than the many in small-to-medium businesses and those employed in those businesses.

We all know these businesses drive the economy in many regions in Tasmania. They employ people of all ages, often providing the first opportunity for employment of young people in our regions and they boost the local economy in a number of ways. These businesses also often use local suppliers to support their business, adding value and benefit to the whole region.

These businesses have all taken a major hit during the COVID-19 pandemic and many will continue to find things very tough during this challenging period. I acknowledge the challenges they face and I will continue to work with and support them as we recover economically from COVID-19.

My contribution today acknowledges longstanding small and medium businesses in Circular Head, one of the state's most cohesive and supportive communities. Many small and medium local business owners have been in operation for a very long time, contributing to the community by way of employing locals, generating wealth and supporting the local economy and community. I would like to recognise these businesses for being part of the Circular Head community for so long.

I will start with 12 businesses that have operated in Circular Head for 50 years or longer, noting the length of time they have been in business and the current business owners.

- Britton Timbers - 110 years - Shawn and Ross Britton
- Clarkson Sports and Cycles - 97 years - Luke Howard
- King Bros. - 67 years - Ian King
- Kingston Bros Engineering - 67 years - Trevor and Dale Kingston
- D.L. Poke Menswear - 66 years - David Poke
- Blue Hills Honey - 64 years - Robbie and Nicola Charles
- Circular Head Dolomite and Trading Co - 61 years - the Ralston Family.
- WT House - 60 years - Elaine and Ian Walters
- Wells Waggon - 55 years
- Hursey Seafoods Pty Ltd - 51 years - Mark, Jim and Valerie Hursey
- Marthick's Welding Works - 50 years - Donny Marthick
- Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd - 50 years - Alan Hansen

Eight businesses have operated in Circular Head for at least 15 and up to 41 years, and they are -

- Kays Service Station and Topshot Guns and Ammo - 41 years - Lloyd and Beverly Kay
- Wells Wragg Pharmacy - 40 years - Gerald Kay
- Cignall - 26 years - Leon and Dianne Berechree
- The Mod Shoe Centre - 25 years - Ian, Annette and Gary Cure
- The Duck Inn - 19 years - Patricia Barnes
- Smithton Plant Nursery - 17 years - Jenny and Leyton Pope
- Smithton Sports - 16 years - Sally Elliot
- E-FX Haircutters - 15 years - Cindy Bishop.

This is a total of 1012 years of experience in our local community. It is impossible to estimate how many employees have been through the doors of these businesses and how much value these businesses have collectively brought to Circular Head, but I am sure we all agree it would be significant.

I commend these businesses, their owners and employees for their dedication to the Circular Head community and wish to thank them for their contribution to the community and the economy of Circular Head. I wish them all ongoing success and longevity, especially in these extraordinary and extremely challenging times.

It is a pleasure to visit these businesses; I am really glad to think restrictions are starting to lift now, which will help them to actually get back into business. I commend their work and their contribution.

International Nurses Day

[11.24 a.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Mr President, today I recognise International Nurses Day, noting 2020 is also the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. International Nurses Day falls each year on 12 May, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, and this year it was also the 200th anniversary of that date.

Each year the day is recognised with a theme, and this year the theme was 'Nursing the World to Health'. I recognise the nurses and midwives here in Tasmania and the role they have played throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the role they play in our community each and every day.

Throughout the pandemic, nurses and midwives have truly been on the front line here in Tasmania as well as around Australia and the world.

Nurses have made extraordinary sacrifices, some moving themselves out of their family homes so as not to risk bringing the infection home to their families. Hundreds of nurses in north-west Tasmania spent two weeks in isolation to help control the outbreak at the North West Regional

Hospital. Nurses turned up to work knowing they were putting themselves at risk, working long hours in uncomfortable masks and goggles, literally putting the health of their patients and the community before their own. Nurses have been among the confirmed cases we have seen in Tasmania and in Australia picking up the infection in the course of their work. In other parts of the world, tragically, nurses have been among those who have lost their lives.

Midwives have stepped up like never before. With necessary restrictions in place on the number of support people and visitors women have been able to have with them during and after labour, it is midwives who have stepped in to make sure these women have all the support they need during this vulnerable and sometimes distressing time.

At Launceston General Hospital, midwives went above and beyond to support not only the women from their local community, but also those who were coming from the north-west. In just two weeks in April, they delivered 91 babies. In ordinary times, they would have delivered about 60 in this same time frame. What an incredible effort.

Mr President, we are in extraordinary times, but the dedication and tireless efforts we have seen from our nurses and midwives is far from extraordinary. I say that not to downplay the remarkable effort we have seen, but because the efforts they go to at all times are just as remarkable. Each and every day, these highly trained and skilled professionals work under enormous pressure in often stressful environments to provide treatment, care and support to Tasmanians at some of the most difficult times in our lives. Not just their patients, but their patients' families - countless hours of overtime, missed meal breaks, working those long hours when many of us are celebrating milestones and events, spending time with our friends and families or just home in bed asleep.

Many say that nursing is not just a job or a career, but a vocation. Something you do not for the money, but for the love of it, but we need to be careful with sentiments like this. Most people would prefer to have a job that they love, and I am sure the best kind of nurses are those who love their chosen career, but let us not let this become an excuse, as it does so often. We romanticise this idea of a vocation and a calling, and we let that become an excuse that enables the undervaluing of that work -

Ms Forrest - Hear, hear.

Ms LOVELL - particularly in fields that involve caring for others - nursing, aged care, disability, early education and care, teaching, to name a few.

Today I recognise and thank nurses and midwives, but that is not enough. Thanks do not pay the bills, and they do not keep you safe at work; they do not provide opportunities for professional development, for flexibility at work or adequate sick leave.

If we truly value nurses and midwives, we have to do more than just thank them. We have to pay them an adequate wage - not far less than every other state and territory. We have to provide them with secure work, with safe workplaces, with reasonable hours of work. We have to provide them with enough support to be able to take time off when they are sick. We have to adequately resource services and departments so they are not working endless overtime or missing meal breaks.

Mr President, while on International Nurses Day we recognise and pay tribute to nurses and midwives, and we thank them for their dedication and the sacrifices they make, every other day of

the year should be spent making sure they are safe, that they are remunerated fairly for their work, that they are supported and valued, and that they no longer have to make so many of these sacrifices.

Saints Softball Team

[11.29 a.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I bring to the attention of members of this Chamber an amazing organisation that has been playing softball in the greater Launceston area since 1976 - the Saints Softball Club.

I am fortunate to have been the club's patron for about 17 to 18 years, and over this time I have never seen a sporting club that is as close and supportive of its members. In fact the way they do their business is more like a family than a sporting club,.

Saints is a very family-oriented club, and has softball teams in the juniors', women's and men's competitions. As well as fielding softball teams, the club is also heavily involved in helping and enriching the community - so it is not just playing the game that they are interested in.

Each year, the Saints club runs many fundraisers in support of local charities, recently having donated \$600 to the WP Holman Clinic to help support cancer patients in the state.

The club runs an Easter raffle, a Christmas raffle, a lotto of sorts, and bingo nights, with all proceeds going to a charity of its choosing.

As well as running fundraisers, the club is also participating in the Government's Ticket to Play scheme. This scheme provides children aged 5 to 17 years who are listed on a government concession card with vouchers of up to \$100 towards club membership fees. This is a great initiative to enable financially less fortunate youths in our state to play team sports, and there are many missing out because they cannot pay that money.

The club is made up of the players, coaches and umpires, most of whom are volunteers. In 2018, one of its long-time serving members - and I think northern members will know this lady's name, Sheryl Burnie, or 'Shez' - received an Order of Australia medal in recognition of her 38-year service to the club and the sport of softball, at an association level and at state and national levels. A very well deserved award indeed. Shez is an accomplished sportsperson, and is dedicated and committed to seeing the revival and survival of softball in this state. She is doing an absolutely marvellous job.

More recently, the Saints Softball Club and the Northern Tasmanian Softball Association have been honoured by Softball Australia by being awarded Homeplate status. The Homeplate Status is an award to recognise clubs and associations that show best practice techniques in governance, management, membership growth and retention of players. Individual points are awarded over many categories, including growing the club, participant numbers, having a sound financial plan and budget, and having players achieve certification in scoring, umpiring and coaching, and also for having effective committee guidelines to allow for the smooth running of the club's meetings. They have all that in place.

The Saints Softball Club is currently leading the national Homeplate standings. This is a great achievement for the club, especially considering that by Australian standards, Saints is a rather small club. This is an Australian award, not a Tasmanian one. The Northern Tasmanian Softball

Association is currently second in its standings, which also earned it Homeplate Status - an excellent accomplishment for our northern association.

In 2019-20, the Saints Softball Club grew by 13 players, and the Northern Tasmanian Softball Association grew its registered player number by 15 per cent.

I formally congratulate the Saints Softball Club and the Northern Tasmanian Softball Association, both for their continued success at a national level and for the compassion they show towards the community and their donations of money to very worthy causes.

Saints is a great club. I am proud to be its patron, and with more like this club in the state - its drive, its dedication to the sport and the strong committee it retains - softball would again become a premier game. The future is certainly looking bright for softball in the north of our state.

Go the Sainters.

Buy Locally

[11.33 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I am sure members are well aware of the importance of buying Tasmanian, in particular buying local.

The message is pretty clear: buying Tasmanian-made and buying from local businesses will hasten our economic recovery from the coronavirus. The economic multiplier from buying local can be up to four times greater than buying the same goods and services from non-local sources.

I would just like to touch on a few issues today regarding this.

First, the big one in the agricultural sector at the moment is potatoes. Tasmania is the country's biggest potato producer. The very last print copy - it is still being published online - of the farmers' newspaper, *Tasmanian Country*, which is dated 29 May 2020, tells me that Australia grows about 1.4 million tonnes of potatoes, and Tasmania produces 75 per cent of the nation's crops - and to us, that is worth about \$123 million.

Mr President, I am talking about chips here. Lots and lots and lots of chips. Because of the COVID-19 crisis around the world, and the unified call to save lives and stay at home, many people have been doing just that. People are not dining out. People are cooking at home. Restaurants are suffering badly. Mr President, you know how it goes when you order a meal at a restaurant - 'Would you like chips with that, sir?' Steak and chips, chicken and chips, chips and salad on the side, a bowl of chips for the children.

There is currently a glut of chips in the European Union because of restaurant closures. It is a glut to the tune of 2.6 million tonnes of processed potato products ready for sale with no market and another crop on the way.

Two of Australia's three major potato processing factories are located in Tasmania - McCain in Smithton and Simplot in my electorate of Montgomery in Ulverstone - and they employ hundreds of people. The COVID-19 crisis has already seen our country with excess supplies of stock, and

we do not need cheap dumping of this product into Australian markets, which the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association Vegetable Council chairman, Nathan Richardson, said is a real threat to our markets.

Farmers have been hamstrung to a degree this year due to the wet season, and we do not need another problem such as dumping of cheap products from the European Union. AUSVEG has written to federal Cabinet ministers urging them to take short-term measures to limit imports of discounted chips from the EU. I urge all honourable members here, that if they are in a position to talk to any of their federal counterparts, to please mention this to them, urge them to think of the consequences of allowing cheap dumping of chips into the Australian market and ask them to take short-term measures to limit imports of these discounted products into Australia.

An interesting point - did you know that Australia has the second highest consumption of potato products per capita in the world? There are a lot of small businesses in difficulty in my electorate and throughout Tasmania and they need help. Like most members here, I have had calls from many businesses, large and small, all looking for advice on how to survive the COVID-19 shutdown. I have found that many sole traders did not know which way to turn sometimes and I was pleased to help point them in the right direction.

I must draw your attention to the jacket I am wearing today. There is a great boutique in West Ulverstone called Thomas's Boutique, which is owned by Ktreena Hamilton. I am sure all honourable members have those boutiques in their electorates -

Ms Forrest - That has been open forever, too. It is a long-term business.

Mrs HISCUTT - It has. Ktreena is a sole trader. Ktreena carries a lot of stock, all good-quality ladies clothing, so I made the effort to go to her shop and to spend some money. I asked her, if possible, to show me some clothing made in Australia. We discussed how difficult it was to buy products made in Australia and lamented over the reasons why. This jacket has a label on the collar that clearly says 'Australia', but when you take a closer look on the tag on the side it is made in India. I asked why, and the only reason we could come up with was that it was designed in Australia and made in India. Discussion of that subject is for another day.

I have placed a sample of fudge on honourable members' seats. Honourable members will remember the last bill we passed in the COVID-19 series of emergency bills, the commercial tenancy bill. The lessees of Fudge 'n' Good Coffee at Sheffield, which is also in my electorate, Vince and Ali Cooney, came to me for help because they had been having trouble coming to an agreement on their lease arrangements to enable them to stay open. Fortunately, after a shaky start, things were amicably settled. For me, it was a very interesting exercise to see how the questions and answers we share on the Floor of parliament work in real time. I am also happy to share those experiences at a later time with any member who is interested. It was not as I expected.

When I go shopping now, I put on my glasses and I read the fine print so that I am more informed as to what I purchase. As an aside, my local IGA offers two brands of cornflour. One is Kream and the other is White Wings. When you read the fine print, they are both owned by the same company. One is made from wheat and both are made from imported products. That surprised me, so I am determined to buy as much local produce as possible and to wear my glasses more often. If it is not locally made, I want to buy from a local store.

Honourable members, please enjoy your fudge and remember to buy something Tasmanian when you are next out. It is incumbent on all of us as individuals to do as much as we possibly can to help lock in the greater economic and social benefits that arise when we make our purchases locally.

Condolence - Mike Howe

[11.40 a.m.]

Mr FINCH (Rosevears) - Mr President, it is rather a sad special interest for me today because I want to pay tribute to my friend, Mike Howe. Mike was a talented journalist who worked for many years as the news editor in the ABC Launceston newsroom, where I met and worked with him for 14 years. He was many other things, too - a man impassioned by social justice causes ranging from youth justice to Aboriginal rights. He was a man whose wit, warmth and generous spirit made him lifelong friends. He was an enthusiastic bushwalker, gardener and dedicated family man. He was born in Smithton in 1941 to parents Frederick Howe, an accountant, and Jean Button, who became Labor senator Jean Hearn.

Mike helped me tremendously with the service I presented each year at the Exeter RSL. Mike's personal experience of the tragedy of war spanned two generations. He was only a few months old when his father left for overseas service with the Second AIF, never to return. For many years it was believed he had died in a prisoner of war camp in Java, then it was discovered he had survived the war, only for the Japanese POW transport ship on which he was returning to Australia to be torpedoed by the Allies at Nagasaki.

Jean, a young widow, moved back with her parents, and Mike spent much of his childhood at Fern Tree on kunanyi. We both lived in the same house but years apart. At Fern Tree, his love of gardening was instilled by hours spent with his grandfather, a gentle, peaceful man who, like many of his generation, was a traumatised victim of World War I. These experiences gave Mike a lifelong commitment, honoured every Anzac Day, to reconcile the ideals of peace with the sacrifices of those who go to war.

Mike began his career as a journalist with the Hobart *Mercury* in the early 1960s and then moved to Melbourne to work on *The Age*. In 1968 he left Australia to travel the world before settling in London and joining the BBC World Service at Bush House, where he became the newsroom duty editor. Former colleagues from 50 years ago still remember him fondly as being a first-class journalist, a valuable mentor and someone whose wit and warmth made him always great company.

At heart he always longed to come home and settle in Tasmania. In the early 1970s his family brought a large bush property at Nunamara and his dream was to lead a different sort of life there, building his own house and practising self-sufficiency. In 1984 he took the plunge, leaving the BBC and returning home with his wife and baby son. With the help of an architect friend, Mike poured his energy into building and establishing the property at Wombat Park. That pole house used such beautiful timbers as celery top, myrtle and Huon pine.

Not long after moving to Tasmania, Mike began working in the ABC Radio newsroom in Launceston. He became the northern news editor and remained there until the late 1990s. At Bush House he inspired and mentored numerous young journalists and made lasting friendships. These comments come from government adviser Tony Scott, whom some of you would know -

Mike Howe arrived 'home' to Tasmania from BBC London without the sartorial demeanour you might expect from someone just landed from a global fashion hub. It was check shirt and jeans, suitably laundered, everyday for work ...

Suffice to say ... Mike wasn't too perturbed by appearances. He was a quintessential radio man ...

Despite his long absence from the State his depth of cultural and political knowledge of Tasmania and its past was extreme.

He had connections across society, allowing him to wheedle out the story without upsetting too many.

He had a nose for news and wrote it with efficiency - accurately with an economy of words but still colour enough to bring home the story. The prevailing instruction to the many junior journalists, who appreciated him as a mentor, was to write in conversational tone.

...

But it was Mike's approach to team building in and mostly outside the office that he is most fondly remembered by his colleagues.

... Many scoops were retold and plans laid to discover the next one over sometimes elongated lunches at the Royal Oak Hotel.

Sue Bailey, ABC reporter and now *Examiner* and *Advocate* reporter, said -

Mike was a news hound. He loved the thrill of the chase. He wrote quickly, clearly and concisely and he was always looking for new angles in a story. Mike was also fair and even-handed in his reporting.

Sue gathered some thoughts from former and current ABC reporters. Bronwyn Hill -

Mike was one of those great people to work for. Never condescending, never angry if you made a mistake, kind and patient with a great nose for news and a dry sense of humour. While he worked like a demon, he never took it or himself too seriously, as evidenced by the compulsory Friday lunches at the Oak. He mentored so many young journos.

This from Airlie Ward -

I just remember Mike being really supportive, instructive in a kind way. For example, why a story was or wasn't a story. He was a true radio news man, a skill which sadly seems a bit thin on the ground these days ... He was a helluvah lot of fun. Lunches at the Oak were compulsory - team bonding, of course.

After leaving the ABC, Mike continued to use journalism skills in a range of projects, including political campaigns, media training and consultancy work with former Tasmanian premier, Michael Field, who sent these word through this morning -

I worked with Mike Howe when we provided media training for government department officials. Mike was the experienced ex professional and I was the ex media performer, who helped with enabling participants to develop skills so that they could get their message across different media platforms ...

Mike was great to work with, well prepared, thoughtful and with a deep understanding of the media in all its forms.

I really liked working with Mike as we complemented each other in skills and personalities.

Mike will be missed by all who knew him.

As at Bush House in London, he joined a group of stalwart adventurers called the Bushketeers for whom long haul walking trips in the Tasmanian wilderness were only the prelude to weeks and weekends spent at retreats where fine food, plentiful drink and good company were guaranteed.

Mike worked closely in later years with me on issues such as social justice, political reform and the environment. He particularly wrote for me in a very sad episode, a special interest speech on 21 May last year, you may remember, to acknowledge the work of our rescue services. His son Rowly was involved in a tree-felling accident at Wombat Park. Rowly did not survive but the family appreciated everyone's support in getting him to and treating him in hospital.

Following retirement, Mike was able to spend more time with his family and the German shepherds that were his constant companions. He continued to develop the property he loved and to pursue his lifelong interest in cooking, gardening and self-sufficiency, along with new passions such as beekeeping.

Mike will be remembered for his enduring love for home and family and his adventurous, generous and optimistic spirit. He had both the courage to follow his dreams and the steadfastness to hold onto them throughout his life.

He leaves a wife Louise and three living children, Tamsin, Fred and Gemma, and grandchildren Emrys, Joe, Archie, Eddie and Grace.

Vale Mike Howe.

MOTION

Consideration and Noting - Select Committee on AFL in Tasmania - Final Report

[11.49 a.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I start on a fairly safe note because I knew Michael quite well. I spoke to him a number of times when he would come into the office; and he was absolutely a true gentleman and scholar. My condolences to his family. A sad note to start on this matter.

Mr President, I move -

That the Legislative Council Select Committee Report on AFL in Tasmania be considered and noted.

Why was this inquiry set up? That is a rhetorical question because the task force and board, at the time, were not set up. This was the first time in this state that there was to be a parliamentary look at AFL football in the present time.

Tasmania has been embroiled in discussions with the AFL over a long period. A report was provided from the Senate in 2009, and there may have been other reports. The only progress has been to bail out existing clubs with financial problems. Apart from this, the AFL and spokespersons within some of the clubs have continued to say, and it is annoying, that it is a national competition. Tasmania, a heartland for AFL football in Australia, has been treated with contempt for far too long.

The AFL, of course, has been supportive of Tasmania bailing out these flailing clubs. They have been supportive of it. Why would they not be? Meetings took place - this is how this inquiry got underway. The member for Rosevears might want to correct me in a place or two as meetings took place over a period of time with attendees the member for Rosevears, the then member for Western Tiers-McIntyre, Greg Hall, and Mr Russell Hanson and myself.

We got to a stage where we said we could not continue to flounder about and allow the AFL to run roughshod and give lip service anymore without us at least attempting to move our position forward. We needed to gauge support for a Tasmanian team that could be sustainable and call on the Government to take a strong case to the AFL for inclusion of a Tasmanian team to make it a national competition. This is where this part of the inquiry originated with those meetings and there were a number of those meetings.

I now relate to Russell Hanson. Who is this Russell Hanson person?

Ms Rattray - That was going to be my question.

Mr DEAN - I asked myself the same question early in the piece because Russell was not known to me. I learned over a period that this man is probably the most passionate supporter of a Tasmanian AFL team in the country and particularly in the state. The only sad thing about Russell is he is a North Melbourne supporter and therefore used to suffering.

Russell has had a career in finances. He was the finance director for Harris Scarfe Tasmania for 13 years before moving across to the Wilderness Society for another 10 years. At that time the society was in severe financial difficulty and about to go by the way. Russell pulled them through their financial problems and got them on their feet where they are today. He did magnificent work there.

Mr Finch - There was substantial growth in membership of the Wilderness Society while he was there, from a few thousand to about 50 000 members.

Mr DEAN - It is true it went ahead in leaps and bounds. I do not know the exact number of the membership increase, but it certainly went ahead in leaps and bounds.

Ms Rattray - It is an interesting disconnect - AFL football and the Wilderness Society?

Mr DEAN - That side of it is, but the financial acumen and knowledge of Russell Hanson is they go together because of the financial position we are looking at.

Mr Finch - He loves a challenge.

Mr DEAN - He does, absolutely. It is not a good position to single out one person when you have been dealing with a number of people in an inquiry, but I am going to because the original submission received from Russell Hanson by the committee was outstanding, with presentation and material covered to an extremely high standard. In fact, I would go so far as to say it is probably, if not the best, one of the better submissions I have received on an inquiry since I have been in this place. It was an extremely high standard and it did not stop there because Russell Hanson worked with the committee and provided updates and supplementary reports throughout the next 17 months of the inquiry. I was expecting him to tell me to get stuffed with all my requests but he soldiered on, despite a wedding anniversary celebration being interrupted. I should imagine he was berated by his wife for our interference in relation to those proceedings.

He assisted with interpreting evidence and the figures regarding the financial details associated with an AFL team. His work was nothing short of amazing. He also became an important player in the task force of the inquiry led by Brett Godfrey, particularly relevant to the financial side and sustainability of a Tasmanian AFL team. His work was accepted and it assisted tremendously with our report, inquiry and the task force end report. Russell was also working closely with the board chairperson, retired Legislative Council member Jim Wilkinson, in moving things forward. I quote from one of the many statements made by Russell because it relates to our inquiry -

I personally have now devoted over 2 years to achieving a Tasmanian AFL team, which has involved direct contact with the AFL, meeting with the AFL, a submission and regular follow-up with the Select Committee and considerable involvement with the AFL Project Team.

In all of this there has been one constant and absolute theme and I have not deviated from that. Our mission: as Tasmanians, we are held to ransom by a number of excuses from the AFL to deny us - with the most prominent one being that we are divided. To that end I have pushed unashamedly that we must achieve and maintain unity and work as one. There are 2 key areas to achieve this: (1) Tasmanian home games are to be shared equitably between 2 regions; (2) the team base can only be what is best for the players. So whatever we do, whatever actions we take, whatever we do with the AFL, that question has to be asked and it must reflect the above or we will recreate the divisions of the past.

This report has not been without its trials and tribulations. The first came when the Government, soon after supporting this inquiry getting underway, put in place the Godfrey Taskforce inquiry and set up the board. That came after we started and this place supported this inquiry.

Was any of this known at the time this inquiry was being set up? It certainly was not known by me, but I do not know who else knew that was going to happen. Had it been known, would it have made any difference to the support for this inquiry? The answer to that is yes. This was evidenced by the later withdrawal from the committee by the member for Mersey. However, the Government remained steadfast in its support of this inquiry, a parliamentary select committee investigation into the state position for a Tasmanian standalone AFL team as part of the national competition.

While it is frequently referred to a national competition, it is not and cannot be until Tasmania is accepted into the competition. The territories may ask not to be left out, and for the AFL to become a truly national competition, I suspect they have an argument as well.

For those who know Tom Harley, he is now with the Brisbane Lions. He is a great AFL footballer in his own right and seems to think the Gold Coast Suns must remain for it to be a national competition. I was intrigued when I read his comments. He is obviously not aware that Tasmania exists or is a significant state of Australia, to make that statement. An oversight, I think.

The report is succinct. It is easily read and addresses seven terms of reference, all of which were designed to bring out the gritty evidence relative to the position of Tasmania having the capacity to be part of the competition and, if so, where, how and when it could all take place and be sustainable for the long term. That has been a very important matter in this inquiry - other inquiries and comments made from time to time on the sustainability of an AFL team in the competition.

It was always the intention of the committee to contact people who have had long-term involvement with the AFL and who could provide sound and reliable evidence as to what is necessary to field an AFL team.

I reiterate: we had no sooner commenced the inquiry, when the state Government announced the setting up of a project team task force to investigate recommendations to develop the framework and business case to support the granting of a Tasmanian AFL and AFLW licence. The team was to be chaired by Brett Godfrey, who is an Australian businessman and co-founder of Virgin Australia.

The terms of reference for this inquiry were promulgated at the time the task force was set up and, while the task force terms of reference covered areas we were going to look at, there were significant differences in the terms of reference. The task force report was then publicly released before we concluded this inquiry. With the benefit of hindsight, it was probably a good position because we were then able to consider findings and recommendations from the Godfrey report.

It also gave us the opportunity to target some influential people within the AFL spectrum who had not been interviewed or spoken to during the task force investigation, to my knowledge. We targeted, for instance, Andrew Demetriou, the previous CEO of the AFL, who at one time was not all that enthusiastic about Tasmania fielding an AFL team, but upon vacating that position he became more positive toward this state and us fielding a side in the AFL.

Ms Rattray - That is interesting, isn't it? He leaves the position and has a new position.

Mr DEAN - Yes, it makes you think that perhaps something else is behind it when you have that sort of situation arising.

Ms Rattray - Perhaps he was given some direction.

Mr DEAN - Yes. It was great that we were able to speak with Andrew. I will refer to that a little more in a moment, but it was a great contribution to this inquiry.

Peter Gordon - I am not sure if people in this room would know that he is the president of the Western Bulldogs. He was on our list because of his business acumen, his knowledge of finance

and the costs and struggles involved in sustaining an AFL team. As some here might know, Peter Gordon is recognised as bringing the Western Bulldogs back from the brink of financial oblivion to once again becoming an AFL powerhouse and premiership team in 2016. It was great to have Peter Gordon onside and great to talk to him. It was difficult to interrupt Peter when he was talking to us. He certainly provided a lot of information.

Mr Finch - He was saying what we wanted to hear.

Mr DEAN - Absolutely, so we did not interrupt him. We had Tim Lane, a well-known sports broadcaster and journalist and a person who is never afraid to call a spade a spade, who knew the AFL inside out.

Ms Rattray - And a Tasmanian.

Mr DEAN - A Tasmanian and a great man in his own right. His contribution to sport and other things is remarkable, as was our very own economist, Saul Eslake. We also targeted Saul and asked if he would give evidence to our committee relative to the financial issues and Saul Eslake joined the committee and talked to us. It was great to have these very influential people, who understand AFL and finances, talk to us.

I urge members who believe in or support our endeavours to get a Tasmanian team into the AFL, to read through the submissions of those people in particular. Not that you should not read all the others, but definitely read those submissions to have a good understanding and background on where we sit, and as to our opportunities and chances of getting an AFL team.

I thank all witnesses who provided written submissions, and those who did so in person and by teleconference. I thank everybody for their contributions. Tracking some witnesses and sorting out times was difficult and caused much frustration, but our secretary Nat Exel, as always, took it in her stride and did not show concern, certainly not in the same way I did. I exhibited frustration from time to time.

Findings and recommendations - we identified 14 findings in total, and a sole recommendation, which is in the report, that the Government recognise the potential social and economic benefits of a Tasmanian AFL team, and pursue all opportunities to present Tasmania's case for its own team to the AFL Commission.

As included in finding 3, the economic benefit at this stage is estimated at some \$110 million annually, and would create -

Ms Howlett - \$306 million.

Mr DEAN - Did I get that wrong? I will get that corrected. There is a substantial economic gain to this state to have an AFL team. A lot of people do not understand that. They are looking at it from the side of 'It will be all cost and there will be no real gains in it', other than for the team playing. However, I ask that people look at the significant part of that cost - that there will be 300 employees, or will it be 300 employees because of the significant changes we have seen with the COVID-19 pandemic? But it will be a place of employment for many people. Then there are the people on the side who will also be contributing in some way to a team. There are great benefits to us as a state - huge benefits.

The Government is vigorously pursuing this position, and the committee is of the position that the changes being forced on the AFL because of the COVID-19 pandemic enhances our opportunity to be accepted into the AFL; it does not detract from that position.

We are also of the opinion that 2025 remains achievable. That is what we should be aiming for, with the direction everything is going. We should not let up on that. These people who are saying the position we are going through now would see our opportunity of getting an AFL team as being not in the near future, but 2030, and others are saying longer - to me, this is not the way we should be going.

We can achieve it in 2025, and that should be our goal and the state's goal.

Ms Rattray - Nothing sooner than that? That is still four seasons away.

Mr DEAN - The member for Rosevears or the member for Huon might remember how long it took the Gold Coast Suns and Greater Western Sydney to get up. It takes a long period to put everything into place. That not only includes the right playing areas, but also getting all the infrastructure in place, getting the teams together, getting all the other people and the management side together. That takes a long time to do.

I do not think you could do it much before 2025, because the AFL would need to give Tasmania sufficient time to say, 'Right, you have a licence for 2025.'. If they said that right now, maybe it could be done by 2024, or 2023, but you then have to look at the other contracts that should be in place. It might be a question of, 'Minister, how are we going with those contracts?' because we have to look at where they are at, and when they might conclude as well. That is all part of when we should and could get a side up and running.

Mr Finch - The year 2025 was figured in there because of the new broadcasting rights that would be done and dusted by 2025, which could include the return that would come to Tasmania from the broadcasting rights.

Mr DEAN - Thanks for raising that, because that is very important. The broadcasting rights are where most of the money is generated for the AFL, so they are a significant part of this whole thing.

Ms Rattray - I will ask my other question when I get my opportunity.

Mr DEAN - The streamlining of support staff and the downsizing of club participants and player numbers are all designed to cut costs, and can only work in Tasmania's favour. These comments are not meant in any way to downplay the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the world, or the severity of what we are going through now. However, I think it does in a way assist Tasmania, not work against Tasmania.

Finding (5) refers to the projected costs to finance an AFL team for Tasmania. They are deemed to be quite accurate and support the task force position, but it is worth noting they were calculated on team costings prior to the changes the AFL is now envisaging and making. They were done before all these cost-cutting methods and the changes in staff and player numbers, and so on. It was done when the AFL was at its top in everything - players, management and so on.

The changes - and I understand they are happening - will see the overall costs associated with sustaining a team to be less - and possibly significantly so - than those referred to in finding (5). The AFL has said there has to be serious changes to AFL teams playing in this competition, and there has to be a lot of cost cutting.

I agree with Russell Hanson, who said in a telephone call to me on Friday, 22 May that the baseline or starting point for these figures should be explained or made clearer. When you look at the figures in the report - and I regret not having gone into that in a bit more detail - what baseline were they actually worked out on? During the Godfrey AFL task force report, Russell Hanson was asked to work these figures back from the very lowest annual funding provided by the AFL to an AFL club, and the figure right now is about \$13 million - that is, currently, without the changes. The highest amount paid is about \$25 million or thereabouts, and that is paid to the Gold Coast Suns.

He was asked to look at these figures from a contribution from the AFL of only \$13 million. So, the base figure to work on was \$13 million, and one would expect a new club to receive much more. As I said, the highest is \$25 million, or thereabouts.

Even now, with the changes moving forward and following COVID-19, I would be confident in saying that Tasmania, if it does get the licence - and we should get the licence - could still expect to get \$13 million at an absolute minimum. I think even now it would get more, and therefore a state contribution could be less than perhaps it is costing the state now to support Hawthorn and North Melbourne if we look at what might happen, what could happen. Russell Hanson is still involved, and I thank him for clarifying this point to me.

Mr President, I previously said we had the benefit of considering the AFL task force report. The committee predominantly accepted the findings and recommendations of the Godfrey task force report. Throughout the committee work, it was clear that any findings and recommendations should not in any circumstances create a position whereby the north/south/north-west divide could be deepened or aggravated. Whether we like it or not, this divide does exist and it is incumbent on us, in anything we do, to heal it in the best way we can, and not inflame it.

The Launceston and Hobart mayors might well have buried the hatchet, but they have not buried the rivalry of the north/south and the parochialism with it, unfortunately. It is still there.

There is reference made to blockbuster games. I will pick out a couple of points and leave it for other honourable members if they want to raise their issues.

We have not supported the task force findings that all blockbuster games be played at UTAS Stadium. Our position is that this could be a divisive move feeding the north/south rivalry and probably a difference of about 2000 people who might miss out on a game by blockbuster games being played at Blundstone Oval. That number is not worth the gamble to ensure there is healthy state support for a Tasmanian team.

The new stadium was mentioned and came out a lot in my inquiry. The member for Huon pursued this course quite vigorously in the inquiry. The Godfrey task force refers to a new stadium as a long-term aspiration, roofed and constructed in Hobart. Macquarie Point has been mentioned as a possibility where it might have been constructed.

While it was marked as a long-term aspiration, our committee's position is it should not be considered for the near or foreseeable future because of the negative connotations that would come from it.

My position is the state Government would do best by not referring to it at all at this time. They ought to park that idea because when you start talking to people and saying, 'All blockbuster games are at Launceston, what do you want to do?' - 'What about us in the south?' - and you get it from the north - 'Of course, yes, we would love that.' We have that. We need to get it right and they need to be shared. All games need to be shared equally between the two areas, and no doubt it has to be the Launceston in the north and Hobart in the south.

There was talk about where the headquarters would be. Russell Hanson said it should be where the players could best fit in. The committee's and my view was it should be Hobart, the capital city, and we made a finding on this. I think that was the view; maybe I have that wrong -

Ms Rattray - Was Campbell Town considered?

Mr DEAN - No, Campbell Town was not considered. Sorry about that.

Ms Rattray - Centre of the universe.

Mr DEAN - Players and people like Andrew Demetriou, Peter Gordon and Tim Lane and others are saying a headquarters has to be where the players and the families can get what they need in life, and the better opportunities are in the south. We have to accept that. Hobart is the capital city and probably the best place for it to be. Tim Lane had a different view than most of them.

Mr Willie - It hurt you to say that.

Mr DEAN - No. It did not hurt me, member for Elwick.

Mr Valentine - Do not prove him wrong about parochialism.

Mr DEAN - I am as much a southerner as I am a northerner. I am probably more a southerner because I lived all my early life, was schooled and worked in Hobart. I have spent a third of my life in the south, a third in the north-west and a third in the north at this stage.

Ms Howlett - And you have a holiday house in my beautiful electorate.

Mr Willie - You are not the only member of the Chamber to spend significant periods of their time in other places.

Mr DEAN - I think I am getting set up here.

Mr DEAN - Talking about the grounds and the ovals, Andrew Demetriou said, and I am paraphrasing, that it would be much better to have the current stadiums being filled to capacity and people turned away than having them half-filled or staged with many spare seats and so on. He is saying that is a much better proposition and position for us.

Ms Rattray - If I drive from Bridport to come to the AFL football in Hobart and I was turned away, that would be the first and last game I would go to. I expect I would have a lot of people coming with me.

Mr DEAN - Most people now book online and make sure they have their seats before they travel that distance, but you are right, you would be angered by it. I agree with Andrew that it is probably a better look and feeling than having stadiums at half-capacity et cetera.

Ms Rattray - I do not disagree -

Mr Finch - I don't think he meant turning people away at the gate. He meant the fact that, no, we cannot sell any more tickets because the stadium was full. That was the idea. Not literally turning people away.

Ms Armitage - Or they cannot find anywhere to park their car, if you are talking about Bellerive.

Mr PRESIDENT - There is plenty of room at Boyer Oval.

Ms Rattray - Here we go.

Mr DEAN - Parochialism creeps in. The further comment made by Andrew Demetriou was if there is or could be money for a new stadium, it would be much better spent on the current two stadiums and the state has also recognised this. Maybe, the Minister for Sport and Recreation will refer to this. The Government is considering increasing the facilities of both UTAS and Blundstone ovals should we have an AFL team.

Andrew Demetriou said it would be better spent on the current stadiums, Blundstone and UTAS, and capacity increased to the level they can. He saw this as a much better proposition than the thought of a new stadium and went further to say that any excess moneys could be used to develop and set up a new club. He reckons that would be a much better option; they were his comments and advice.

I do not disagree with this position, because a roofed stadium in the south would be seen by the north as a home of AFL in the future. For an AFL team to exist and survive here, the state must be kept together and support it, or it is probably destined to failure if we cannot get the state together as one group on this. We are doing this and it is happening. I will leave the members to raise any issues relative to the other findings.

In conclusion, in my forward I referred to the impact of the COVID-19 virus, and while the virus has had serious consequences for the world, it does provide for some opportunity on the other side. In this regard, I used the words -

This provides a golden opportunity -

and I thank the member for Rosevears for the word 'golden' -

This provides a golden opportunity for Tasmania, a founding state of Australian Rules Football, to be part of the renewal of AFL in Australia post-COVID-19 and will make AFL a truly national competition.

Interestingly, Jack Riewoldt is of a similar view - he believes COVID-19 and its impact on AFL should 'accelerate' our chances of gaining a licence. Everyone here would know who Jack Riewoldt is.

Mr Armstrong - Who does he play for?

Mr DEAN - Tigers. Jack is a Tasmanian by birth and has Tasmanian connections. He is a champion player in his own right. He understands AFL football and recently made the statement that he believes COVID-19, regardless of its seriousness, will provide Tasmania with an increased opportunity to field an AFL team.

Ms Rattray - Is that because he believes there will be fewer people running the club and doing all those things that there were in the past? They have cut back on bench coaches, coaches and the like. Is that the reason?

Mr DEAN - I understand that to be the reason, but he did not go into great depth when he made that comment. I understand that would be the reason - that the downsizing of the clubs, the management side and player lists is what he is referring to.

Ms Rattray - And the downsizing of the money they attract to play?

Mr DEAN - The AFL has said there has to be a decrease in the moneys paid to players and all those things have to be considered in particular. We will see some drastic changes made in relation to all those matters - the number of players retained on AFL lists and the availability of more players available for other clubs.

Ms Rattray - Wouldn't it be interesting if the culture again became one of people playing not so much for the money, but for the love of the game?

Mr DEAN - That would take us back to the early stages of football. I noticed in the paper John Leedham's recent death. I remember John Leedham. I was only a kid at the time, but he was a great Tasmanian icon in football who played for the passion of the game. It has changed now, and you get people playing only for the money.

Ms Rattray - AFL is a full-time job now whereas in the past you had a Monday to Friday job, probably trained a couple of nights a week and then played on Saturday. It has become a completely different beast.

Mr DEAN - It is a professional occupation now. They are playing full-time in AFL football.

Ms Forrest - Unfortunately, it is not the same for the women though, is it?

Mr DEAN - It is not. It is a good point. We are moving in that direction with the moneys they receive and support that we have given. This state is also moving towards fielding an AFL women's side. I think North Melbourne is involved in that.

Ms Forrest - North's women's team is the Tassie Kangaroos. They are notionally the Tasmanian team. They are still not paid full-time. It is rubbish.

Mr DEAN - It takes time to make these changes and the women's side in AFL has not been going for long at all. If you look at the number of years male teams have been running for, there is a huge difference - a hundred years or so, whereas AFL women's football is only recent. We all support them. I support them. I watch their games. Their skills are great and improving in every game they make.

Mr Valentine - At the end of the day, they will save the competition.

Mr DEAN - Most likely. I could not say that would not happen.

Ms Forrest - They need to be able to be paid full-time so they do not have to also hold a job.

Mr DEAN - Yes, there will be considerations of all that. It will be talked through and will certainly happen over time - I am not quite sure when.

Ms Forrest - It needs to happen in a very short time. I have made my point.

Mr DEAN - You have made a good point.

That is a good way for me to close, but I have one further thing to do and that is acknowledge and thank the members of the committee for their commitment to the inquiry and their work ethic. In particular, I want to show my appreciation to both the member for Rosevears and the member for Huon who played a big part in getting all of us together, so I thank those members and their passion. I also thank the members for Pembroke and Prosser who were there most of the way, although in one case there was a leave of absence for the birth of a beautiful baby - I have not seen the baby as yet - and in the other case, a withdrawal to take on ministerial duties. They were left with no position other than to step aside from the committee for that time. I thank them also for their contributions in putting all this together and speaking to witnesses and so on.

Ms Rattray - Having the Minister for Sport and Recreation on your committee would have been a real boost.

Ms Forrest - Good point.

Mr DEAN - We are saying the Minister for Sport and Recreation was on the committee and got the committee going. Secretary, Nat Exel, was wonderful, as is normal for her, and she learned much about AFL. I recall her saying to me when we first started this inquiry, 'I know nothing about AFL football'. She learned, including the fact the game cannot be played on horseback. Nat is a horserider and committed to horseriding. Our secretary was ably supported by Ali Waddington. She always does a great job on those committees. I thank Ali and also thank our Hansard team, IT members and proofreaders. I thank you all for your contributions.

The time is here for Tasmania to play hardball with the AFL and to negotiate a known position to move forward with, and a time line to conclude the contracts and positions with, both North Melbourne and Hawthorn clubs. Both those clubs are great clubs in their own right and have done great things for Tasmania and will do so in the future. While they are here with the financial support we give them, I might add there is a high return to the state from that in tourism and promotion of the state both economically and financially - we cannot argue against that. It is there and very rewarding for the state and its businesses. I see this as an impediment to our opportunities of getting an AFL team in our own right. The contracts with both of those clubs will have to be looked at

very closely. We need to get them right. What is right, I do not know at this stage. The minister may well know. We have to get all of that right.

I thank all members for their contributions and look forward to any further contributions in relation to this inquiry.

[12.31 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, the member for Windermere has given a very good summary of the report; he has done a great job. I want to ask one question he might consider for his summing-up. When he was talking about north and south, was any consideration given to the Dial Regional Sports Complex? It has an AFL standard football ground. I do not know whether he did and I did not see it anywhere, but the member may have considered it, maybe for practice.

Ms Forrest - A bit windy on top of that hill.

Mrs HISCUTT - But it is up to state standard and it might have been thought about for practice games or something like that. Did the member give it any consideration?

[12.32 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, I have a significant interest in football, particularly the Wynyard Football Club, which sadly is no longer - as we know, it is in recess.

I would like to make a small contribution to the report and ask some questions. I will admit I have not read every part of the *Hansard*, but I have had a look at the report and some of the extracts included.

I will head straight into the terms of reference. In the findings, term of reference 2.4 says -

Tasmanian attendance figures indicate interest in both the Hawthorn and North Melbourne AFL games in Tasmania has decreased in recent years.

What might have been put forward for this rationale? To give some an insight into a particular situation, last year I was in Deloraine attending a Kangaroos game - a team affiliated with North Melbourne - and a young guy was going around the ground during the entire senior match and for part of the reserves match trying to give tickets to people to watch the Kangaroos play in Hobart the next day.

I know if the member for Murchison had been at the ground, she would have taken the tickets and headed south because she is a North Melbourne supporter.

Ms Forrest - I went to their preseason match down here.

Ms RATTRAY - I know there are diehard supporters in every club right around the entire country. I had a chat to the guy as he came back around each time, and he went around a number of times. It was a fact that people did not have the time to be able to attend the game on Saturday and do what they do supporting their local team, and then turn around and head to Hobart on Sunday to watch the North Melbourne game. I do not recall who North Melbourne was playing in that game that particular day. When I read that particular finding, I thought 'Is it something to do with

what is being played on what day?'. They would probably not have been able to go on a Saturday either.

That particular game was on a Sunday, and I wonder whether it is about the timing of matches. Sometimes they are on a Saturday and sometimes they are on a Sunday, and I am curious to see what the committee gleaned from the submissions put forward. I appreciated the wrap you gave to Russell Hanson because as I read the report I wondered who he was and what interest he has - he obviously impressed the committee with his submissions and his work during the process.

I am interested in what the Chair of the committee and perhaps other honourable members might have to say on that. Other honourable members may also have some knowledge about that - whether people in their communities find it difficult to support local footy and turn up and support and AFL game as well.

Mr Dean - It is a good point you raise; the member for Rosevears might be able to answer a lot of that, or the member for Huon.

Mr Finch - In the early days of the broadcasting rights for television, it was decreed that the AFL content would not clash with local footy in Tassie. Local footy had a good crack at presenting its product to the public, but if you have local people going to Deloraine Football Club, they can sit at home and watch the game on television. They have already had footy on the Saturday. Why would they drive to Hobart when they can sit at home and watch it on TV? There is only so far you can go with your loyalty to football.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, before it impacts on your whole weekend and your whole time, so thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr Finch - Not only that example, but how can your local footy or Tasmanian footy compete with the product that the AFL went on to produce through television? It is outstanding.

Ms RATTRAY - It is on Thursday night, sometimes it is on Friday night, it is on Saturday, it is on Saturday night, it is on Sunday, and if you are not a big footy fan, you are certainly searching the channels.

Ms Forrest - Turn it off.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, or you are searching the channels to see what else you can find if it is not your cup of tea.

As an aside, because I think this is a terrific gesture, I read in the *Examiner* last week that, of the Deloraine Football Club, the Kangaroos, every one of those players has committed to taking no match payments for the entire season to try to -

Ms Forrest - That is what Kangaroos are like. Do you see? I rest my case.

Ms RATTRAY - I would like to think that every other club would be able to offer that as well, to put a roster together for this season. It is becoming very difficult. Not as an aside because it is really important - grassroots football will support AFL football in this state and it is going to be difficult if we do not have it. I discussed this with someone the other day. If you are only allowed to have 100 people at a football match - this is an example of what the regulations or restrictions

look like at this time - you will still need the umpires to go to St Helens. If the cost of the umpires to go to St Helens is \$1200 and you have 100 people going through the gate at \$10, you are not even going to cover the cost of the umpires.

Mr Finch - You would have to buy a lot of points margin tickets if you went.

Ms RATTRAY - It is not going to be viable to put a team on the ground.

Mr Armstrong - The Oatlands association, I think, cancelled its competition for the year this week.

Ms RATTRAY - ODFA.

Mr Dean - Darwin has as well, and that is from the member for Murchison. They have suspended their season, and the NWFA, I think. The minister might tell us more about this, but I think they are considering suspending their season as well.

Ms RATTRAY - Whatever the COVID-19 situation is, it is going to be very difficult for any of our sporting teams to put teams on the ground. The North Eastern Netball Association cancelled their season last week. They said the restrictions were so onerous they could not possibly field teams. They were not prepared to do it, so it was cancelled.

Mr Armstrong - I think you said that the Deloraine Kangaroos players have even forfeited their payments. They still have all the other payments, like umpires and footballs.

Ms RATTRAY - That is right. It is going to be difficult to get back to the stage such as, once before, when you played a sport, you paid a registration fee to play. That still happens with netball. You still pay something like \$120. A significant amount of that goes to the peak body, Netball Tasmania, which has the insurance and the like. Your club needs to pay a fee to be affiliated, and every person who plays is a registered player and also has an affiliation fee. They pay to play this sport, but very few of our sporting organisations in this state would still have a registration fee paid by the player, the person who plays.

Mr Armstrong - It usually comes out of their membership now.

Ms RATTRAY - You could be a member of the club, be a non-playing member and a playing member. It was a fantastic gesture made by the Deloraine Football Club, but it goes to whether enough teams that play in the two NTFA divisions have put a roster together because you might not have the same commitment elsewhere. I congratulate them on being on the front foot to encourage some type of roster this year. A question on notice, that one.

In term of reference (3), ongoing support for a Tasmanian team, significant funds have been put into AFL football by the Tasmanian Government on behalf of the Tasmanian people with regard to Hawthorn and North Melbourne matches. We still do not know how much North Melbourne receives because we have never been able to source it.

Ms Forrest - It is commercially sensitive.

Ms RATTRAY - I know, but still, TT-Line will not release those figures. I looked and 2016 was the last North Melbourne Football Club sponsorship deal, and that was a five-year deal. I recall

they are also providing some funding for the women's team, as well. Again, it was indicated it was commercial-in-confidence and was not readily available.

Ms Armitage - I think you were correct.

Ms RATTRAY - Thank you. We discussed that at a previous time. There is an opportunity for a renewal of that 2016 contract or sponsorship deal; it is probably coming up now. They will be in negotiations for that now. Now would be a perfect time, given what we are in the midst of. We heard the member for Mersey talking about the fact that the TT-Line has had to lay people off.

Ms Forrest - There are two sides to this. If you withdraw funding from some of these AFL clubs, they will fall over, and North Melbourne is one of them. Its balance sheet is not too good. It has a low membership base compared to a lot of others.

Ms RATTRAY - With a sponsorship deal probably being negotiated as we speak, it is probably going to be very difficult to get a long-term commitment, particularly from TT-Line when it is having financial struggles itself, as is everybody, every entity and everything around this state, this country, the world, at this time. People losing their jobs might not appreciate the fact that sponsorship is put into an AFL football team when -

Ms Forrest - It is about economic stimulus. If you take the money out, you lose the economic benefit the member for Windermere was talking about. So you have to look at the big picture, not just say that TT-Line should not be giving anyone any money, or Hydro Tasmania or Aurora shouldn't be sponsoring the stadium, whatever it is. You take that money out of our communities and you take what goes with that.

Ms RATTRAY - My raising this matter was about how are you going to go forward with securing these sponsorship deals, particularly when you are looking for a commitment elsewhere, possibly from some of these organisations, to sponsor a Tasmanian team as well. The commitment would need to be there to firm up that business case for an AFL team in Tasmania. Do they keep sponsoring those clubs, or do they transfer their sponsorship and give two or three years to North Melbourne, but then prefer to sponsor a Tasmanian team?

Those are the questions that TT-Line board members will probably be considering at the moment, and the Government and the minister are probably considering in regard to the Hawthorn deal as well. That is really the issue I am raising - that funding and how that funding that is already committed to those AFL teams transfers to a Tasmanian team and what that might look like.

Moving to term of reference (5), impact on future participation, item 14 -

Game attendance and player interest in AFL in Tasmania is likely to continue to decline if a Tasmanian AFL team is not established.

I looked at the *Hansard* and I think Russell Hanson talked about that. I am wondering where that sort of mindset has come from. For my own team, Winnaleah Football Club, the NEFU, their competition is no longer. We do not have a team. There is quite a lot of country football -

Ms Forrest - Even Smithton's team -

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, that is not happening. Smithton was a powerhouse for a long time. It was a powerhouse in country football for many years because it had a pretty strong population base. It would have had those good players from the west coast as well.

Ms Forrest - They had all the smaller towns like Redpa, Forest and Stanley, which had their own teams. Some of them still do, but it is harder to field a team these days.

Ms RATTRAY - Absolutely. There is a decline in participation.

Mr Armstrong - It is the same in my neck of the woods. The Kermandie and Channel football clubs, both successful clubs, are no more.

Ms RATTRAY - I tried to lure the Cygnet coach at one stage to come and play with Winnaleah and take -

Ms Forrest - You were unsuccessful in that, were you?

Ms RATTRAY - I was unsuccessful. He did not see a transfer from Cygnet to Winnaleah as being an option. I am not sure why five hours was a deterrent at all. I have been told he was a very good player, and it was what we were looking for at the time. Anyway, he does not have a team to play with up there now.

Again, I question whether the scheduling of some of these games is contributing to the decline in the following. I do not know if that is the case. That is the question I am asking of the evidence the committee may have taken.

Mr Dean - I think the member for Murchison knows more about this than me. I think a North Melbourne game last year, last competition, was scheduled for a Sunday evening game.

Ms Forrest - They had some night scheduling.

Mr Dean - On a Sunday night, for goodness sake.

Ms Forrest - And a school night.

Mr Dean - And who is going to travel from the north-west to Hobart on a Sunday night?

Ms RATTRAY - You wonder whether perhaps somebody - or not somebody because more than one person would be putting the scheduling together - is almost setting the whole thing up -

Ms Forrest - Designed to fail.

Ms RATTRAY - to fail. That is exactly where I was heading, without pointing any fingers.

Ms Forrest - You may as well.

Ms RATTRAY - Heading to Hobart on a Sunday afternoon to watch football in the winter is probably not likely to be a big drawcard for people. You might get some local strong supporters of AFL footy and the North Melbourne team, but if you are going to drive that far you are almost

going to have to stay overnight. If you have children, they need to go to school the next day, and you have work commitments -

Mr Dean - Particularly when you can sit at home and watch it on telly.

Ms RATTRAY - In the comfort of possibly a nice lounge with a warm fire, and most people have a very big screen these days. I know my sister - her screen just about knocks you out when you go into her room. I am thinking 'Wow, this is a big screen', and, sure, a lot of them are around. Again, it is an area I am interested in.

I was interested to read Steve Martin's contribution. He certainly has a strong interest in AFL football, and being Devonport-based - again another powerhouse team of the past, the Devonport Football Club. I know quite a few people, including some in my family, who played for Devonport when they were in the statewide league. They were terrific players and it was a very strong team. Steve also said in his contribution that sport in Tasmania has been dropping off drastically, but then he went on to talk about the increase in soccer. Young people seem to want to experience more opportunities to play sport. They ride mountain bikes, play soccer, and they do a lot more sport in different codes than possibly they did in the past. Football in the winter and cricket in the summer for the lads and now also for the girls, then netball and hockey and that -

Ms Forrest - Thank goodness for the Australian women's cricket team. It makes it look half decent.

Ms RATTRAY - They are going gangbusters and doing a great job.

Ms Webb - And the Matildas, the women's soccer team.

Ms RATTRAY - Again, Mr Martin's observation to the committee was interesting. That is obviously what he is seeing on the north-west coast. I am sure he would not necessarily be sharing it with the committee if he had not seen that.

Mr Dean - Soccer is quite strong.

Ms RATTRAY - It says here there are about 10 000 extra players taking up soccer above AFL, even though you have the AusKick, which is very popular for young tackers. My grandson loves his footy, training and doing weights ready for the season. I am not sure there is going to be a season, but he is still training and doing weights. At what age? I think he might be about 11. A good lad, doing weights and getting fit.

A couple of questions regarding the minutes. One of my questions has probably been cleared up. It is a question around the report - and I have not read the report yet - but it was to publish the betterment of the game, the compelling case report; it was provided by Chris Merridew and also by Russell Hanson. You have it provided by both people. I am not sure who it belongs to, whether it belongs to Chris Merridew or whether it belongs to Russell Hanson. As I said, I have not read it.

Caroline Wilson has been very vocal in this discussion, and you invited or decided to ask her to come, but I cannot see where she made any evidence to the committee.

You agreed to invite Caroline Wilson and the Players Association. Patrick Dangerfield is the AFL Players Association president, but I cannot see where they made any contribution. Did they decline the invitation or provide anything at all or did they decide they were not interested in making

a contribution? A couple of questions there with regard to those two witnesses, which I would expect you would think were key - if you are going to have an AFL team in Tasmania, you will have many teams coming into Tasmania and you would expect all teams would visit Tasmania and play.

Again, Caroline Wilson usually has a bit of an opinion on everything when it comes to football and I am somewhat surprised that if the committee invited her to make a contribution or submission or provide some evidence, that offer was not taken up. Was there some reason that was the case?

Mr Armstrong - If my memory serves me correct, we extended the invitation more than once.

Ms RATTRAY - It is mentioned a couple of times in the minutes so I was wondering who declined the offer and whether they gave any reason for that.

It certainly is an interesting topic. I am still not entirely sure how a Tasmanian team would work for us, but if you have enough passionate people with funds and support, I would never say never.

I often go back to this scenario, when a young fellow by the name of Greg Ramsay came to the local council many years ago and said, 'I am looking to establish a links golf course in the north-east of Tasmania.'. I thought, 'Who would come and play golf on a links golf course in Tasmania?' Well, I can tell you, when we are over COVID-19, as in the past, thousands of people will come to Tasmania to play links golf. It has been the saviour for the north-east in employment, tourism and hospitality for many years.

Greg Ramsay had the initial idea. Richard Sattler, Barnbougle Dunes, took up the baton and ran with it and now we also have the Lost Farm and they are in the process of building a third course. You do not know but when somebody has a good idea and they garner the right support, it could take off and be as popular as links golf is in Tasmania. They also have a course on King Island, so we know it is a successful venture.

Mr Dean - Barnbougle is a links course?

Ms RATTRAY - Barnbougle is a links course. It's where you lose the golf balls regularly, I believe.

Ms Forrest - King Island is where that happens.

Mr Finch - Blow it out to sea.

Ms RATTRAY - It certainly is a great opportunity. I congratulate the committee on its work. It is always a bonus when the Government supports a matter. I feel sure it will look at the information gathered through this process and put it into the work to be done when preparing for looking at supporting AFL football in Tasmania in the future, whether it is through Victoria-based clubs that also operate out of here or whether it is a Tasmanian team.

I congratulate committee members and thank them for the work they have done. I support the motion.

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

QUESTIONS

[2.31 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, during the last sitting, the member for Murchison asked four questions and I would like to take this opportunity to read the answers to those questions into *Hansard*.

COVID-19 - Remedial Deep Tissue Massage

The answer to this question by the member for Murchison is as follows -

(1) to (3)

I am advised that remedial deep tissue massage is not restricted as a service and can be provided under the Gatherings - No. 9 direction. What is restricted are the premises from which therapists can provide them.

Remedial massage services can be delivered from non-restricted premises such as health or medical facilities. Restricted premises such as gymnasiums, health clubs, fitness centres, wellness centres and other similar premises or venues are not permitted to open or operate under the Gatherings - No. 9 Direction, except in limited circumstances for physical rehabilitation services under the direction of a registered health practitioner or an accredited exercise physiologist. Myotherapists may continue to practice in Tasmania provided that the service constitutes healthcare services and can be delivered from an appropriate facility.

Restrictions on massage services are due to be eased as part of stage 2 on 15 June as outlined in the Roadmap to Recovery, subject to Public Health advice -

Members should bear in mind that this advice was delivered two weeks ago -

Ms Forrest - Less than that, but it was asked over a month ago. It has been a bit of a pain with people not being able to get their massages.

Mrs HISCUTT - It was before the restrictions were recently eased. That was true at the time it was written.

North West Regional Hospital and North West Private Hospital - Reopening

Mrs HISCUTT - Mr President, the member for Murchison asked five questions about the reopening of the North West Regional Hospital and the North West Private Hospital in Burnie. The questions were about protocols regarding movement of inpatients between the two hospitals, staffing levels at the North West Regional Hospital, personal protective equipment - PPE - training, and infection control measures.

(1) Tasmanian Health Service and Ambulance Tasmania have the following protocols in place - time-critical patient transfer; maternity transfer and bypass protocol; helicopter

arrival and departure, MCH; acuity-based ambulance redirection and early retrieval activation; and COVID-19 patient transfer.

All patient transfers require a consultant-to-consultant discussion prior to accepting the patient. In addition, a clinical handover is provided from the hospital to the retrieval or transporting team.

- (2) A staff memo has been circulated to staff to minimise the footprint on those staff who routinely work across areas. Rosters have been developed to minimise crossover of staff. In the critical areas, staff rostered to work on a COVID-19 ward are required to work the entire shift in that area.
- (3) There has been no impact with regard to staffing areas at this time. I am advised that during this time, there has been no impact on overtime hours and no double shifts have been worked.
- (4) All staff who have returned to work must have completed the new additional personal protective equipment training. These requirements include an online education program of hand hygiene, PPE and COVID-19 infection control. Importantly, staff must also demonstrate evidence on completing these requirements and have an observer certify their competency in donning and doffing PPE. These mandatory requirements are documented for each staff member.
- (5) The North West Private Hospital must meet the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care standards around infection control to maintain its accreditation as a health facility. Staff have been required to complete additional PPE training as part of return to work arrangements and documentation to that effect has been received by the regional health commander. A staff and visitor screening program is in place and commenced two weeks prior to the outbreak. The screening tool currently in place is consistent with the Tasmanian Health Service tool and also requires a temperature check.

Measures, including signage and tape, have been put in place to ensure social distancing is observed and hand sanitiser stations are placed around the hospital, including the foyer and in every patient room and assessment area.

COVID-19 Positive Cases - 19 April to 25 May 2020

Mrs HISCUTT - Mr President, the member for Murchison asked a series of questions regarding COVID-19-positive cases reported since 19 April 2020. This answer is as at 25 May 2020 -

- (1) There have been 35 positive COVID-19 cases with notification dates on or after 19 April 2020.
- (2) Twenty-five.
- (3) Nineteen.
- (4) This information is not specifically collected and cannot be reported.
- (5) There is one case whose exposure has not yet been determined.

COVID-19 Outbreak - North West Regional Hospital - Inquiry

Mrs HISCUTT - Mr President, the member for Murchison also asked about an independent investigation inquiry into the North West Regional Hospital COVID-19 outbreak. She asked about the terms of reference for the inquiry, when it would be, and whether State Service employees would be empowered to provide evidence without fear of retribution.

- (1) Tasmania has a history of proactively commissioning external independent reviews, demonstrating a culture of seeking to learn from major events. The Department of Premier and Cabinet will provide a draft set of the terms of reference to the Premier for his consideration.

In drafting the terms of reference, consideration will be given to the scope of the inquiry and the process for submissions as well as the make-up of the independent review panel heading the inquiry.

- (2) Developing a robust and well-specified terms of reference will support the independent review panel in undertaking a high-quality review and evaluation. The Premier has announced the inquiry will be appropriately resourced and will take place at an appropriate time. This means we have the time to get this right.

It is expected that a draft terms of reference will be provided to, and settled by, the Premier by the end of June 2020. This work is underway.

- (3) The independent review panel will provide advice to the Premier on how evidence will be treated. Without pre-empting the advice of the independent review panel, it is anticipated that contributions and submissions made up by State Service employees will be welcomed and confidential. The purpose of the inquiry is to learn from the situation and to make recommendations for improvement.
- (4) The Premier has publicly stated that he hopes we will be in a position well before the end of the COVID-19 pandemic to progress the inquiry, noting the immediate focus is on managing the state of emergency and keeping Tasmanians safe. That was dated 21 May 2020.

Mr President, by way of explanation, there was some comment about me tabling answers so I will now make every effort to read them into *Hansard*.

COVID-19 - King Island Residents - Quarantine Requirements

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

[2.39 p.m.]

King Island Council and residents have raised concerns about the quarantine requirements for residents returning to the island from the north-west coast of Tasmania and their families. There are community concerns regarding family members not being required to quarantine with the resident who has returned to the island from the Tasmanian mainland, namely the north-west coast.

- (1) Has the Government given consideration to two weeks quarantine for affected households for family members who reside with the resident returning to the island?
- (2) Has the Government considered covering the cost of quarantine in local hotels for returning individuals, as is the case for those returning to the island from mainland Australia?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The restrictions implemented by the Tasmanian Government in response to the COVID-19 emergency are unprecedented. In making his directions under the Emergency Management Act 2006, the State Controller has considered a number of measures that may be necessary for the protection of the Tasmanian community and the prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

Due to the unique geographical and sociological factors around King Island, Flinders Island and the Furneaux Islands, an additional direction was made by the State Controller specific to these islands to protect these communities. This direction enables residents of the island to return to their residence from mainland Tasmania on the basis they adhere to the undertakings of a 14-day period of self-isolation at home. The direction does not require their families or members of the same household to self-isolate and this is consistent with national advice and advice from Public Health.

In authorising residents to return to the islands under the direction, all persons must adhere to the conditions outlined in Annexure A and all other mandated measures stated in the direction.

Members, I will ask to table that annexure shortly -

It should be noted that from 18 May 2020 domestic-travelling Tasmanian residents will also be able to quarantine in their principal residence if it is suitable. International arrival arrangements remain in place.

- (2) As above, the policy as it relates to persons self-isolating at home for a period of 14 days after returning to the island is consistent with public health advice.

Mr President, I seek leave to table Annexure A.

Leave granted.

COVID-19 - North West Regional Hospital Outbreak - Inquiry Report

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

With regard to the independent inquiry into the COVID-19 outbreak at the North West Regional Hospital, will the report of the independent panel be made public?

ANSWER

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

The Premier will await the advice of the independent review panel and to understand any commitment that may be made on the treatment of submissions or evidence gathered as part of the inquiry. However, at this time, the Premier can see no reason why we would not release the recommendations of this report to ensure our continued focus on a culture of learning from major events.

The Government has already released an interim report into the north-west outbreak and continues to provide updates on the implementation of the recommendations made through this report, all of which have been accepted. As advised previously, the purpose of the independent inquiry is to learn from the situation and to make any further recommendations for improvements.

Rosny Hill Nature Recreation Area - Proposed Development

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

[2.43 p.m.]

My question is on behalf of the member for Pembroke. A Pembroke resident is concerned about the proposed development on Rosny Hill Nature Recreation Area. This is crown land that was declared a nature recreation area under the Nature Conservation Act 2002 and as such is bound by the objectives under that act. Given this, the member's constituent queries whether the development breaches those objectives and is therefore against the law.

Can the Leader please explain how the development is possible under the Nature Conservation Act?

ANSWER

Mr President, it is good to see the member for Pembroke still takes a keen interest, and I thank the member for Rumney for delivering her question.

To clarify where a management plan does not apply to a reserve, the obligations of a managing authority, in this case the Clarence City Council, is to manage that reserve -

- (i) in accordance with the purposes for reservation listed in column 3 of Schedule 1 to the Nature Conservation Act 2002 - NCA; and
- (ii) consistent with the management objectives for a Nature Recreation Area listed in Schedule 1 of the National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002 - NPRMA.

Both the purposes for reservation and the management objectives potentially allow for tourism development and facilities for recreational use consistent with the conservation of

natural and cultural values of the reserve. The Minister for Environment and Parks is responsible for issuing a lease under the NPRMA and needs to be satisfied that any building is consistent with the management objectives for a nature reserve area. The minister is yet to receive information from the Clarence City Council that details the assessment against requirements of the legislation.

The council and the Tasmanian Government are very aware of the assessment requirements of the NPRMA. The council has also been asked to take into account the Rosny Hill Nature Recreation Area Management Strategy and the existing lease between the state and the council.

COVID-19 - School Revitalisation Maintenance Package

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

[2.46 p.m.]

- (1) Can the Government please provide a breakdown of the works completed, works planned and schools to benefit from the \$10 million School Revitalisation Maintenance Package?
- (2) Can the Government please provide the current Department of Education capital works priority list?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The Department of Education was recently allocated \$10 million under the State Government's maintenance on public buildings COVID-19 stimulus program. Details of the approved program are included in attachments 1 and 1b.

Mr President, I will shortly seek leave to table those attachments -

The program is a priority for the Department of Education and is progressing well.

Mr President, I seek leave to table those two attachments and have them incorporated into *Hansard*

Leave granted.

Attachment 1 incorporated as follows –

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Project Management	PM Costs	Project Management Resourcing
Invermay Primary	North	Classroom refurb - Painting/Floor/Joinery/Windows/Asbestos/Light fittings
Trevallyn Primary	North	Classroom refurb - Painting/Floor/Joinery/Windows/Asbestos/Light fittings

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Kingsmeadows High	North	Infrastructure Upgrade - Waterproofing
Ravenswood Heights Primary	North	Lighting Upgrade
Punchbowl Primary	North	Lighting Upgrade
East Ulverstone Swim Centre	North West	Internal repaint
Wilmot Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Forth Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
East Ulverstone Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk Library	South	Floorcovering Upgrade
Dover DS	South	Infrastructure Upgrade - Pathway reinstatement - Stage 1
Mt Nelson PS	South	Infrastructure Upgrade - Site drainage works
Glenorchy Library	South	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk Library	South	Lighting Upgrade
Clarendon Vale Primary	South	Lighting Upgrade
Rose Bay High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Ogilvie High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Clarence High	South	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk Library	South	Painting Upgrade
Contingency	Contingency	Project contingencies
Prospect High	North	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Deloraine High	North	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Queechy High	North	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Cressy District High	North	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Mowbray Heights Primary	North	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Scottsdale High	North	Re-roof
Scottsdale Primary	North	Stage 2 of re-roof
Beaconsfield Primary	North	Stage 2 re-roof
Queechy HS	North	Switchboard Upgrade
Hagley Farm School	North	Switchboard Upgrade
West Launceston PS	North	Switchboard Upgrade
West Launceston	North	Tile roof replacement
Assorted smaller works	North	Maybe Lilydale?? TBC
Nixon Street Primary School	North West	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
West Ulverstone Primary School	North West	Fire Panel and Detection Upgrades
Wilmot PS	North West	Multiple switch board upgrades - details to be provided

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Parklands High	North West	Replace 20 x skylights and ridge capping
Don College	North West	Replace Box Gutter & Downpipe
Hellyer College	North West	Replace/Remove skylights as per College's request
Smithton Primary	North West	Replace polycarb roof sheets
Devonport High School	North West	Replace remaining roof area
Ulverstone Sec College	North West	Replace Tile Roof
East Devonport PS	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Hillcrest PS	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Boat Harbour PS	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Montrose Bay HS	South	Alcinite roof sheet replacement
Glenorchy Primary	South	Re-roof
Huonville High	South	Re-roof
Lenah Valley PS	South	Re-roof
South Hobart PS	South	Re-roof entire roof. Replaces work order # 13282
South Hobart PS (Lady Gowrie)	South	Re-roof. Site to negotiate with Lady Gowrie on suitable time to undertake the works
Dodges Ferry PS	South	Re-roof
Glenorchy Primary	South	Re-roof
Campania DS	South	Switchboard Upgrade
Gagebrook PS	South	Switchboard Upgrade
East Derwent PS	South	Switchboard Upgrade
Bruny Island DS	South	Switchboard Upgrade
Contingency	Contingency	Project contingencies
Project Management	PM Costs	Human Resourcing
Bicheno Primary	North	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Deloraine High	North	Lighting Upgrade
Deloraine High	North	Painting Upgrade
Deloraine High	North	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Flinders Island	North	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Flinders Island District High	North	Infrastructure Upgrade - Water Services - (Taswater Connection)
Launceston College	North	Lighting Upgrade
Launceston College	North	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Launceston College	North	Painting Upgrade
Perth Primary	North	Lighting Upgrade
Perth Primary	North	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Perth Primary	North	Painting Upgrade
St Mary's District	North	Painting Upgrade

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Swansea Primary	North	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
West Launceston Primary	North	Lighting Upgrade
West Launceston Primary	North	Painting Upgrade
West Launceston Primary	North	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Winnaleah District	North	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Boat Harbour Primary	North West	Resurfacing Upgrade - Bus Zone
Devonport Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Devonport Primary	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Devonport Primary	North West	Painting Upgrade
Don College	North West	Resurfacing Upgrade
Don College	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Don College	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Don College	North West	Painting Upgrade
East Ulverstone Pool	North West	Painting Upgrade
Havenview Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Havenview Primary	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Havenview Primary	North West	Painting Upgrade
Hellyer Student Residence	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
King Island District	North West	Infrastructure Upgrade - Fire door Rectification
King Island District	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Mountain Heights	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Railton Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Railton Primary	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Railton Primary	North West	Painting Upgrade
Riana Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Riana Primary	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Riana Primary	North West	Painting Upgrade
Rosebery District	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Sheffield District	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Sheffield District	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Sheffield District	North West	Painting Upgrade
Stanley Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
Stanley Primary	North West	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Strahan Primary	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Zeehan Primary	North West	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Bothwell DS	South	General Refurbishment
Claremont College	South	Lighting Upgrade
Claremont College	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Claremont College	South	Painting Upgrade
Dover District	South	Resurfacing Upgrade - Stage 2 - Pathways
Elizabeth College	South	Lighting Upgrade
Elizabeth College	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Elizabeth College	South	Painting Upgrade
Glen Huon Primary	South	Lighting Upgrade
Glen Huon Primary	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Glen Huon Primary	South	Painting Upgrade
Glen Huon Primary	South	Potable water system reconfiguration
Hobart College	South	Lighting Upgrade
Hobart College	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Hobart College	South	Painting Upgrade
Hobart Library	South	Lighting Upgrade
Huon Library	South	Lighting Upgrade
Huon Library	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Huon Library	South	Painting Upgrade
Huonville High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Huonville High	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Huonville High	South	Painting Upgrade
Huonville Primary	South	Lighting Upgrade
Huonville Primary	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Huonville Primary	South	Painting Upgrade
Lindisfarne North	South	Lighting Upgrade
Lindisfarne North	South	Painting Upgrade
Lindisfarne North	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Moonah Primary	South	Lighting Upgrade
Moonah Primary	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Moonah Primary	South	Painting Upgrade
Mount Nelson Primary	South	Resurfacing Upgrade
New Norfolk High	South	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk High	South	Painting Upgrade
New Norfolk High	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
New Norfolk Primary	South	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk Primary	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
New Norfolk Primary	South	Painting Upgrade

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Ogilvie High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Ogilvie High	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Ogilvie High	South	Painting Upgrade
Ogilvie High	South	Sewer drainage replacement
Orford Library	South	Lighting Upgrade
Orford Primary	South	Resurfacing Upgrade
Orford Primary	South	Infrastructure Upgrade - Floor repairs
Richmond Primary	South	General Refurbishment - Upgrade - Old School House
Rose Bay High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Rose Bay High	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Rose Bay High	South	Painting Upgrade
Springvale Hostel	South	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Taroona Primary	South	Infrastructure Upgrade - Retaining wall
Tasman District	South	General refurbishment - Painting, Lighting, floorcovering
Triabunna District	South	Lighting Upgrade
Triabunna District	South	Floor Covering/Asbestos Removal
Triabunna District	South	Painting Upgrade
Contingency	Contingency	Project contingencies
Launceston College	North	Lift Upgrade
Launceston College	North	Mechanical Upgrade - Pool Heat pump
St Marys District	North	Mechanical Upgrade - Pool Heat Pump
Hagley Farm	North	Mechanical Upgrade - Pool Heat pump & controls
Flinders Island District	North	Fire Services Upgrade - Fire panel and detection
St Helens DHS	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Launceston College	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Deloraine DHS	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Deloraine High	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Newstead College	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Brooks High	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Deloraine Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
East Tamar Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Exeter Primary School	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Lilydale Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Queechy High	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
St Marys DHS	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Campbell Town DHS	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Deloraine DHS	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
East Launceston Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Kings Meadow	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Newstead College	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Punchbowl Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Ravenswood Child & Family Centre	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
West Launceston Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Glen Dhu Primary	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Newstead College Residence	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Exeter High	North	Fire Services Upgrade
Brooks High	North	Roofing Upgrade
West Launceston	North	Roofing Upgrade
ECIS Launceston	North	Roofing Upgrade
Glen Dhu Primary	North	Roofing Upgrade
South George Town Primary	North	Roofing Upgrade
Bicheno Primary	North	Switchboard Upgrade
Swansea Primary	North	Switchboard Upgrade
Deloraine High	North	Roofing Upgrade
Exeter High	North	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Hellyer College	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Devonport High	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Romain Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Reece High School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Mountain Heights DHS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Ridgley Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Forth Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Penguin District School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Penguin Primary School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Smithton PS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Somerset Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Somerset Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Somerset Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
East Ulverstone Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Latrobe Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Parklands HS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Reece High	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Rosebery DHS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
School of Special Education - Devonport	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Sheffield District High School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Smithton High	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Smithton Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Latrobe High	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Miandetta Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Nixon Street	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Penguin High School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Smithton Trade Training Centre	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Ulverstone HS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
West Ulverstone Primary School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Wynyard HS	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Burnie Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Port Sorell Primary School	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Riana Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Ulverstone Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Devonport High	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Spreyton Primary	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Devonport High	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Riana Primary	North West	Switchboard Upgrade
Ulverstone Secondary	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Ridgley Primary	North West	Fire Services Upgrade
Parklands High	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Havenview Primary	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Hillcrest Primary	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Nixon Street Primary	North West	Roofing Upgrade
Andrews Creek Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Forth Primary	North West	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Rose Bay HS	South	Mechanical Upgrade - MDT Exhaust
Hobart College	South	Lift Upgrade - Block A
Hobart Library	South	Mechanical Upgrade - Allports AC Upgrade
Taroona High	South	Fire Services Upgrade
Elizabeth College	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Glenorchy Library	South	Mechanical Upgrade - Meeting rooms 2 and 3

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Rosny College	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Bayview Secondary College	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
JRLF Senior School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
South East TTC	South	Switchboard Upgrade
Lauderdale Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Montrose Bay High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
South Hobart Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Trade Training Bridgewater	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Triabunna DHS	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Austins Ferry Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Bridgewater Linc	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Cosgrove High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Cygnets Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Glenora District High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Huonville High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
JRLF Senior School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Kingston High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Dover DHS	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Goulburn Street Primary School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
New Norfolk High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Campania District School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
East Derwent Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Fairview Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Goodwood Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Huonville High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
JRLF - East Derwent Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Oatlands District School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Oatlands District School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Raminea Road Offices	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Sorell School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Blackmans Bay Primary School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Cambridge Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Collinsvale Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Dodges Ferry Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E

SITE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
Howrah Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
JRLF - Herdsmans Cove Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Ouse District High School	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Rokeby Primary	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Woodbridge District High	South	Fire Upgrades - E&E
Contingency	Contingency	Project contingencies

Attachment 1b incorporated as follows -

School Revitalisation Projects Completed to 31 May 2020

Prospect High	North	Fire Services
Queechy High	North	Fire Services
Cressy District High	North	Fire Services
Taroona Primary School	South	Fire Services
Scottsdale Primary	North	Roof Services - North
St Marys	North	Roof Services - North
St Marys	North	Roof Services - North
Nixon Street Primary School	North West	Fire Services
West Ulverstone Primary School	North West	Fire Services
Wilmot PS	North-West	Electrical Safety
Don College	North-West	Roof Services - North-West
Hellyer College	North-West	Roof Services - North-West
Smithton Primary	North-West	Roof Services - North-West
East Devonport PS	North-West	Electrical Safety
South Hobart PS	South	Roof Services - South
South Hobart PS (Lady Gowrie)	South	Roof Services - South
Trevallyn Primary	North	Classroom refurb - Painting/Floor/Joinery/Windows/Asbestos/ Light fittings
Kingsmeadows High	North	Infrastructure Upgrade - Waterproofing Building #4A Lower Ground Floor
East Ulverstone Swim Centre	North West	Internal repaint
Wilmot Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade

Forth Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
East Ulverstone Primary	North West	Lighting Upgrade
New Norfolk Library	South	Floorcovering Upgrade
Clarence High	South	Lighting Upgrade
Hellyer College	North West	Residence Security Upgrade
PROJECT	STATEWIDE	
MANAGEMENT		
COSTS		

Mrs HISCUTT - Mr President, to continue -

- (2) The Department of Education undertakes an annual process to request, review and prioritise capital work submissions from schools. The outcome of this process is in the attached capital works priority list, attachment 2.

Mr President, I seek leave to table this attachment and have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Table incorporated as follows -

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
Cambridge Primary School	1
Campbell Town District High School	1
Clarence High School	1
Deloraine High School	1
Dodges Ferry Primary School	1
East Derwent Primary School	1
Exeter High School	1
Glen Dhu Primary School	1
Havenview Primary School	1
Lauderdale Primary School	1
Lilydale District School	1
Montello Primary School	1
Mowbray Heights Primary School	1
Ogilvie High School	1
Port Dalrymple School	1
Princes Street Primary School	1
Ringarooma Primary School	1
Risdon Vale Primary School	1

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
Rosetta Primary School	1
School of Special Education North West	1
South George Town Primary School	1
South Hobart Primary School	1
Taroona High School	1
Taroona Primary School	1
Albuera Street Primary School	2
Bagdad Primary School	2
Bellerive Primary School	2
Burnie Primary School	2
Franklin Primary School	2
Glenora District School	2
Hellyer College	2
Howrah Primary School	2
Huonville High School	2
JRLF Senior School	2
Lindisfarne North Primary School	2
Moonah Primary School	2
Mount Nelson Primary School	2
New Town High School	2
Norwood Primary School	2
Punchbowl Primary School	2
Queechy High School	2
Richmond Primary School	2
Waverley Primary School	2
Blackmans Bay Primary School	3
Chigwell Child & Family Centre	3
Cygnet Primary School	3
Devonport Primary School	3
Forest Primary School	3
Glen Huon Primary School	3
Longford Primary School	3
Nixon Street Primary School	3
Ptunarra Derwent Valley Child & Family Centre	3
Scottsdale High School	3
Trevallyn Primary School	3
Ulverstone High School	3
Elizabeth College	4

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
Glenorchy Primary School	4
Goulburn Street Primary School	4
Illawarra Primary School	4
Newstead College	4
Rokeby Primary School	4
Rose Bay High School	4
Rosny College	4
Southern Support School	4
St Marys District School	4
Tasman District School	4
Yolla District High School	4
Bayview Secondary College	5
Beaconsfield Primary School	5
Bridport Primary School	5
Bruny Island District School	5
Claremont College	5
Cressy District High School	5
Don College	5
Dover District School	5
Hobart College	5
Invermay Primary School	5
Kingston High School	5
Launceston College	5
Oatlands District High School	5
Perth Primary School	5
Ravenswood Heights Primary School	5
Sandy Bay Infant School	5
Sheffield School	5
St Helens District High School	5
Triabunna District School	5
Waimea Heights Primary School	5
Warrane Primary School	5
West Launceston Primary School	5
West Ulverstone Primary School	5
Woodbridge School	5
Wynyard High School	5
Andrews Creek Primary School	-
Austins Ferry Primary School	-
Avoca Primary School	-

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
Bicheno Primary School	-
Boat Harbour Primary School	-
Bothwell District High School	-
Bowen Road Primary School	-
Bracknell Primary School	-
Brighton High School	-
Brighton Primary School	-
Brooks High School	-
Burnie High School	-
Campania District School	-
Campbell Street Primary School	-
Cape Barren Island School	-
Clarendon Vale Primary School	-
Collinsvale Primary School	-
Cooee Primary School	-
Cosgrove High School	-
Deloraine Primary School	-
Devonport High School	-
Dunalley Primary School	-
East Devonport Primary School	-
East Launceston Primary School	-
East Tamar Primary School	-
East Ulverstone Primary School	-
Edith Creek Primary School	-
Evandale Primary School	-
Exeter Primary School	-
Fairview Primary School	-
Flinders Island District School	-
Forth Primary School	-
Geeveston Primary School	-
Goodwood Primary School	-
Hagley Farm Primary School	-
Hillcrest Primary School	-
Huonville Primary School	-
JRLF - Gagebrook Primary School	-
JRLF - Herdsmans Cove Primary School	-
JRLF School Farm	-
Kempton Primary School	-

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
King Island District High School	-
Kings Meadows High School	-
Kingston Primary School	-
Lansdowne Crescent Primary School	-
Latrobe High School	-
Latrobe Primary School	-
Legana School	-
Lenah Valley Primary School	-
Lindisfarne Primary School	-
Margate Primary School	-
Miandetta Primary School	-
Mole Creek Primary School	-
Molesworth Primary School	-
Montagu Bay Primary School	-
Montrose Bay High School	-
Mount Stuart Primary School	-
Mountain Heights School	-
Natone Primary School	-
New Norfolk High School	-
New Norfolk Primary School	-
New Town Primary School	-
Orford Primary School	-
Ouse District School	-
Parklands High School	-
Penguin District School	-
Port Sorell Primary School	-
Prospect High School	-
Railton Campus	-
Redpa Primary School	-
Reece High School	-
Riana Primary School	-
Ridgley Primary School	-
Riverside High School	-
Riverside Primary School	-
Romaine Park Primary School	-
Rosebery District High School	-
Sassafras Primary School	-
Scottsdale Primary School	-
Smithton High School	-

Capital Works Review Process - 2020-21 Priority List

School Name	2020 Priority Rating
Smithton Primary School	-
Snug Primary School	-
Somerset Primary School	-
Sorell District School	-
South Arm Primary School	-
Sprent Primary School	-
Spreyton Primary School	-
Springfield Gardens Primary School	-
St Leonards Primary School	-
Stanley Primary School	-
Strahan Primary School	-
Summerdale Primary School	-
Swansea Primary School	-
Table Cape Primary School	-
Ulverstone Primary School	-
Westbury Primary School	-
Westerway Primary School	-
Wilmot Primary School	-
Windermere Primary School	-
Winnaleah District High School	-
Youngtown Primary School	-
Zeehan Primary School	-

State Service - Gender Equality

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

[2.48 p.m.]

With regard to the promotion of gender equality in the State Service -

- (1) What specific programs and measures have been taken to promote gender equality throughout the State Service?
- (2) (a) What training education programs related to gender equality have been undertaken and provided to State Service employees?
 - (b) How many have engaged in these programs in total and percentage of staff terms for each agency or division within an agency?

- (3) What training and education programs related to gender equality will be offered to State Service employees?
- (4) Are employees encouraged to attend such programs? If so, how are they supported to attend?

ANSWER

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

- (1) A key measure across the Tasmanian State Service - TSS - in relation to gender equality has been against the goal set in 2016 to achieve gender equality in the senior executive with a target of at least 40 per cent of senior executives to be women by 2020. This target has been achieved well ahead of that time frame, with women making up 45.45 per cent of the senior executive as at March 2020.

It is recognised that we still have work to do to ensure a truly representative, diverse and inclusive workplace, and that work will continue across the service.

To date, a range of initiatives that promote the value and importance of a diverse workforce has been introduced across the TSS and include:

- a commitment by heads of department in 2016 to gender diversity;
- heads of department and deputy secretaries across all TSS departments complete training and coaching in diversity and inclusive leadership, and have been implementing strategies in their departments to be more inclusive;
- the TSS was party to a University of New South Wales inter-jurisdictional study on the effects of unconscious bias in middle managers;
- forums have been run targeting women in the TSS which feature successful female TSS employees talking about their career experiences and providing opportunities for women across departments to meet and network;
- a publication titled *Women in the Tasmanian State Service* was released last year to coincide with International Women's Day, which celebrated the stories of 16 women working in various roles of government;
- the TSS partnered with the Local Government Association of Tasmania, TasCOSS, and Tasplan to conduct the inaugural International Women's Day cross-sector awards, recognising and celebrating the achievements of women across those sectors; and
- through the recently negotiated Public Sector Union's wage agreement the TSS implemented improved family-friendly provisions. Importantly, this included superannuation benefits for employees on parental leave, an increase in paid maternity and adoption leave from 14 weeks to 16 weeks, and an increase in partner leave from one to three weeks.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet's State Service Management Office is also finalising a whole-of-service policy on flexible work. These examples are from a whole-of-service perspective. Departments are also undertaking a range of specific gender

equality-related activities following on from the heads of departments' commitment to gender diversity and as part of broader diversity and inclusion programs.

- (2) The data in response to question 2(b) on the number of TSS employees and the percentage of staff in each agency or division within an agency who have engaged in training and education programs relating to gender equality is not available and would take considerable time and resources to obtain.

However, a number of training and educational programs have been conducted relating to gender equality at a whole-of-service level as a result of the heads of department 2016 commitment. For example -

- Since its inception in 2016, the course 'Being Bold - how women can improve their power and influence in the public sector', developed by the Tasmanian Training Consortium - TTC -in conjunction with the Swinburne Institute, has had 171 TSS employees participate.
- A pilot of the Confidence to Lead program for women in the Senior Executive Service to build the confidence in senior women to be heard and influence discussions had 22 participants.
- Two Women Supporting Women forums have been held, with a total of 185 participants and two Women Supporting Women networking events featuring Christine Nixon and Zina O'Leary had 90 participants.
- The Turning It Around International Women's Day luncheon had 35 TSS attendees. Gender Equity in the Tasmanian State Service had 136 participants.

Initiatives have also been occurring within departments, such as specific Women in Leadership programs; delivery of unconscious bias training, both online and face-to-face sessions; a Champions of Change program supporting mentors for female managers; participation in the prevention and elimination of family violence training; and education programs which have incorporated a strong gender equality focus.

- (3) Departments will continue to offer a range of training and educational programs relating to gender equality and more broadly inclusive workplaces. The TTC has been developing a future training module for selection panels on recruiting for diversity and addressing biases, the progress of which has been impacted by COVID-19. However, as training activities become feasible again, it is likely the TTC will be able to continue to deliver its program and build on previous successes.
- (4) Employees across departments are encouraged and supported to attend training opportunities in relation to gender equality. At a broad level this occurs through promoting these activities through a number of networks and internal departmental advertising. The most common and appropriate way to encourage and support employees to attend training and professional learning opportunities is through ongoing discussions between employees and managers relating to their performance and development.

Approaches may vary; however, some departments may get new employees to undertake targeted training through induction activities or make a certain training mandatory for managers or supervisors. For example, the Department of Justice-led program

Understanding Bias in Decision-Making involved compulsory four-hour, face-to-face training for all managers, team leaders and recruiters, and there were approximately 200 employees in that.

COVID-19 - State Growth - Driving Assessors - Recommencement of Services

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

[2.55 p.m.]

Leader, it has been advised that State Growth driving assessors intend to recommence services this week, with the major locations resuming first.

- (1) How have private driving assessors around the state been able to comply with guidelines and resume testing for some time now and that State Growth is still putting processes in place?
- (2) Why is priority not given to those living in rural and regional areas needing to gain licences, particularly in areas where access to public transport is extremely limited or non-existent?
- (3) Will the department reconsider its position on focusing on major locations and prioritise equally those who live outside the major urban areas who do have access to public transport?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The decision to continue services was a matter for individual businesses and subject to their own risk assessment. The Department of State Growth considered the recommendations issue by the Director of Public Health, including physical distancing at 1.5 metres and that being in a confined space for greater than 15 minutes significantly increased the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The Government provides a safe workplace for its employees and customers, so based upon information at the time, it was decided that suspending the service was the most appropriate course of action. As you would understand, driver assessment in the current environment is at a significantly higher risk than a number of other activities or workplaces.

The majority of businesses working in the driver training and assessment sector suspended services, including RACT. Private driver assessors operating in the north-west also suspended services during the period of additional restrictions.

- (2) The Government fully understands the importance of young people getting a licence in terms of enhancing employment and educational opportunities, and this is even more important for young people in regional areas. I am pleased to advise that this week State Growth is progressively resuming assessments in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie in

accordance with the COVID-19 Safe Work Australia guidelines. The Government is moving to expand the Enhanced P1 Assessment Pilot which authorises qualified private driving instructors to conduct assessments. An expression of interest to deliver these services commenced this week, and will provide additional capacity to undertake assessments across the state, including regional centres.

- (3) State Growth is now working on how it can safely implement the delivery of assessments across additional exiting centres in line with the Safe Work Australia guidelines. Each site is different and will need to be individually assessed before services can be safely resumed.

Family Violence Act 2004 - Emotional Abuse and Intimidation

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

[2.58 p.m.]

I appreciate the answer to the previous question on gender equality training. It seems like there is an awful lot of programs that women can attend. I am interested also - and I can put this on notice for another time - on the number of men who attend such training, because it is not just the women who need the training, it is the men as well.

This question follows on a little from that. With regard to the charges laid and convictions related to section 9 of the Family Violence Act 2004 relating to emotional abuse or intimidation, and is described in the act as a course of conduct that he or she knows, or ought to know, is likely to have the effect of unreasonably controlling or intimidating, or causing mental harm, apprehension or fear in, his or her spouse or partner and whereby a course of conduct includes limiting the freedom of movement of a person's spouse or partner by means of threats or intimidation –

- (1) How many charges have been laid under this provision by year since the inclusion of this important provision?
 - (a) How many convictions have been made under this provision by year since the inclusion of this important provision?
 - (b) What penalties have been applied in each case?
- (2) How has Tasmania Police monitored and/or identified cases where emotional abuse or intimidation as described in the act when responding to incidents of family violence or other requests for assistance?
- (3) Does the Premier accept and agree that achieving gender equality is central to addressing the scourge of family violence and domestic abuse?

ANSWER

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

- (1) Tasmania Police has laid 195 charges under section 9, which is emotional abuse or intimidation in the Family Violence Act 2004, between the implementation of the act in

December 2004 and 31 March 2020. The first charges under this section were laid in June 2008. The volume of charges under this section has increased since 2015, which was when amendments were made to the act to create a 12-month limitation period for this offence.

The charges are: 2008, 2; 2009, 4; 2010, 6; 2011, 4; 2012, 10; 2013, 8; 2014, 6; 2015, 7; 2016, 27; 2017, 38; 2018, 37; 2019, 37; and 2020, 9, but that figure is for the partial year from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020.

- (2) (a) The following data refers to the number of charges finalised by a conviction, which is a guilty plea or found guilty in the Magistrates Court. The data excludes charges finalised in the Youth Court and one charge which was committed for trial in the Supreme Court as part of a larger matter.

Data is current as at 7 May 2020 -

- 2009 - one charge, one defendant
- 2010 - 4 charges, 4 defendants
- 2011 - 3 charges, 3 defendants
- 2012 - 3 charges, 3 defendants
- 2013 - 3 charges, 3 defendants
- 2014 - 4 charges, 4 defendants
- 2015 - 4 charges, 4 defendants
- 2016 - 8 charges, 8 defendants
- 2017 - 12 charges, 12 defendants
- 2018 - 19 charges, 18 defendants
- 2019 - 19 charges, 18 defendants
- 2020 - 7 charges, 7 defendants.

Note that the charges initiated in a particular year may not be finalised until a later year.

Where charges against the same person were on separate matters and were finalised on different dates, these instances are counted as separate defendants.

- (b) Of the 87 charges under section 9 of the Family Violence Act 2004 for which a conviction was recorded, 77 were given global sentences and 10 were given sentences that related to a single charge only.

The sentencing outcomes for those 10 charges were: one by 12-month sentence of imprisonment; two by six-month sentence of imprisonment; three by 12-month probation order; one by six-month probation order; one by fine of \$600; and two by undertaking under section 7(f) of the Sentencing Act 1997.

Where multiple sentences were handed down for the offence, only the most serious sentence is shown. For example, if the charge resulted in a probation order and a fine, this is counted under probation order, not under fine.

Global sentencing, where a single sentence may apply to multiple charges is widely used in Tasmania. Since no information is available on the other charges involved in a global sentence, it is advisable to exclude these from any sentencing analysis.

- (3) Tasmania Police has a pro-intervention approach to family violence. Every family violence incident is assessed at the time to determine the type of family violence, including emotional abuse or intimidation, and the level of intervention required. Such assessments are validated through the completion of a risk assessment screening tool to assist determinations.

Every family argument and family violence incident attended or reported to police is recorded on the Family Violence Management System - FVMS. Each report is required to be assessed and validated by a supervisor to ensure that the matter has been correctly identified and appropriate early intervention undertaken.

Every FVMS report is scrutinised by the Family Violence Unit to ensure that appropriate actions have been undertaken, including safety assessments. Each matter is also referred to the weekly Integrated Case Coordination Committee meeting involving all Safe at Home partners to ensure that effective safety strategies are in place for family violence victims.

The high-risk incidents the Safe Families Coordination Unit reviews the case and provides further information, comprehensive intelligence and recommendations to support ongoing intervention and support.

Emotional abuse or intimidation can involve complex and protracted matters. Due to this complexity, these matters can be referred to the Criminal Investigation Branch for investigation and liaison with external partner agencies. Each Family Violence Unit is managed by a detective inspector in each district. Police members, counsellors and support workers are perceptive to circumstances and the situations that constitute family violence by way of emotional abuse and intimidation and take appropriate steps to ensure policy and practices are adhered to and implemented.

All Safe at Home partners work collaboratively to ensure that a comprehensive whole-of-government approach is adopted to ensure the safety, wellbeing and interests of victims and affected persons of emotional abuse and intimidation.

- (4) Family violence is completely unacceptable and the Government takes the issue of family violence against all Tasmanians very seriously. Family violence and sexual assault crimes are gendered crimes and they have an unequal impact on women. Equality benefits women and men, as well as their families and the community, and increasing gender equality to prevent violence from occurring forms part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. The national plan brings together the efforts of governments across the nation to make a real and sustained reduction in the levels of violence against women.

Improving equality and respect between men and women can reduce the development of attitudes that can lead to family violence. Reducing family violence is everybody's responsibility. By holding perpetrators to account, encouraging behaviour change and challenging the attitudes that allow family violence to occur, we aim to lead to a reduction in family violence in Tasmania.

As the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, the minister is strongly committed to leading primary prevention actions that drive changes in the attitudes and behaviours that lead to family and sexual violence, to reduce its incidences. Internationally significant research undertaken in Australia by Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety - ANROWS - and VicHealth, led to the publication of 'Change the Story', a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. 'Change the Story' outlines the four gendered drivers of violence - condoning the violence against women; men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence; stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity; and disrespect towards women and male peer relations that emphasise aggression.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to addressing these gendered drivers of violence. We are taking action to promote gender equality through the implementation of Safe Homes, Families, Communities, Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-2022, and through the Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018-2021, which provides a framework for government, the private sector and the wider Tasmanian community to take significant actions to achieve gender equality in Tasmania. The strategy focuses on four priority areas - financial security; safety; leadership and participation; and health and wellbeing. The final action plan under the strategy, the Safety for Women Action Plan, will be released in 2021 and will focus on actions to improve the safety of women and girls in a range of settings, including workplaces, public spaces and homes.

Safe Homes, Families, Communities will invest \$26 million over three years for 40 actions to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence in Tasmania under three priority areas, including primary prevention and early intervention. Preventing violence from happening in the first place is the single most effective way to eliminate family and sexual violence. Primary prevention makes preventing violence everybody's responsibility and asserts that we all have a role to play in changing the culture, structures and attitudes that drive family and sexual violence.

Since 2015 the Tasmanian Government has been a member of Our Watch, the national primary prevention organisation established to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children. Under Safe Homes, Families, Communities, we have established a national first partnership with Our Watch to establish an Our Watch primary prevention officer in Tasmania. The Our Watch primary prevention officer will build primary prevention capacity, capability and expertise in Tasmania. They will work closely with government agencies and non-government services to implement key Our Watch projects in Tasmania, work with Our Watch ambassadors to promote primary prevention activities and gender equality in Tasmania, and provide organisations with technical advice and expertise on building primary prevention capacity in their organisations and communities.

Under Safe Homes, Families, Communities we are supporting two national primary prevention campaigns; ongoing delivery of the successful Stop It at the Start campaign, and a new campaign to address sexual violence. Since 2015 the Government has supported the national campaign, Stop It at the Start, which aims to help break the cycle of violence by encouraging adults to reflect on their attitudes and have conversations about respect with young people.

We continue to embed Respectful Relationships education in all Tasmanian government schools. The program supports students and school communities to build healthy, respectful and equal relationships and address the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence. The Tasmanian State Service is also committed to ensuring that gender equality and respect are at the centre of all Tasmanian State Service workplaces. Safe Homes, Families, Communities builds on this to ensure gender equality and respect is part of the workplace culture.

In addition, as part of the Tasmanian Government's \$1 billion social and economic support package, \$2.7 million was provided to address family violence during the COVID-19 emergency. This has included \$100 000 to develop a primary prevention campaign to raise awareness of family violence, the available support services and to promote the message that COVID-19 does not cause, justify or excuse family violence.

By challenging the condoning of violence against women, promoting women's independence and decision-making, challenging gender stereotypes and roles, and strengthening positive equal and respectful relationships, we can work to create a Tasmania free from all forms of family and sexual violence.

Ms Forrest - Before the Leader sits down, Mr President, I want to thank her for that response. It was very comprehensive. I only sent through the question a bit over a week ago, I think, but it is a terribly important topic. You will not need to speak on my motion when I bring that on. That was very comprehensive, so thank you.

Mr Dean - There will not be too many tabled in the future with that response.

MOTION

Consideration and Noting - Select Committee on AFL in Tasmania - Final Report

Resumed from above.

[3.15 p.m.]

Mr FINCH (Rosevears) - Mr President, I encourage people who are watching or who have friends comment about the acquisition of a team for Tasmania to read this report. The other report, for the AFL Licence Taskforce, is very lengthy. It is more a very detailed submission to the AFL rather than a short, easy-to-read inquiry report that gives many of the facts of the matter. People are quick to have an opinion. If you talk to people about football and the state of football in Tasmania, they are quick to say that we cannot afford it. That is the first comment - 'We cannot afford it, don't be ridiculous.'

However, if you read the report - and if you then refer to the task force report for a more detailed explanation, particularly by Russell Hanson - I have never seen the figures drilled into and proven to our satisfaction. That is why we took notice of what he was doing, and then the task force as well, because of the comprehensive detail of what is in there. In future, before people make the hasty comment that we cannot afford it, read the report and you will see, if you exercise your mind, that it is affordable. We can do it. Particularly if you look at the recent history, as our chairman would understand - the money that has been poured into GWS to get it going, and also the money that is still being poured into the Suns.

I recognise that with COVID-19, it is a changed playing field. There is no doubt about that. Somewhere in my speech I mention Jack Riewoldt saying that now could be the time to restructure the AFL on many levels, which could factor in Tasmania in a better way. I wanted to make that point. Please, read the report. It is easy to read, and has only about 57 pages.

I wanted to point out something else. With all the reports I have been involved in, I have never seen a report where right up-front, on page 3, is the page to go to if you want to refer to any of the terms of references; points (1) to (7), you simply go to the next page, and it has where the evidence connected to those terms of reference can be found. Let us say, term (6), if Tasmania were to establish an AFL team, when would it be the optimal time for it commence? You look at point (6) and the evidence for that is on page 22. I have not seen that before in a report. If it is a regular thing, I have missed it. Congratulations to our secretariat for providing that easy guide for cutting to the chase if you are looking for particular evidence on a particular term of reference.

You did not mention, Chair, that when we established our committee of inquiry, up came the task force and then up came the board, chaired by Jim Wilkinson. We then wrote to the Premier to ask, 'Is this necessary?', because you do not want to be wasting legislature money if the Government feels you are going over old ground. The Premier said, 'Please continue, because stuff will come to an inquiry such as yours that might not surface in a task force report, or would go to AFL Tasmania's new board that Jim Wilkinson is the chair of.'. He explicitly said that we should continue with it, and this gave us added strength to continue with the report, and that it would not be, as some might perceive, a waste of time. It was a good indication.

I am just going over some of the things that were mentioned earlier, before I get into my report. There was talk of the expansion and the growth of soccer - I think it was a figure of 10 000.

Ms Rattray - I read it in the report.

Mr FINCH - I should have done that.

Ms Rattray - Page 20.

Mr FINCH - We discussed that aspect of the door opening while the AFL dillydallies and mucks around with this situation. Tasmania is open slather for the introduction or the expansion of soccer - and what about basketball?

Here we are going into the Derwent Entertainment Centre with a Tasmanian team. What is that going to mean? Every kid is going to want to play basketball. Every kid is going to want to follow a Tasmanian team. I do not know if it will be the Devils again, or some other name, but there are opportunities.

If we do not get a team in the near future, we will see the decline in AFL participation continue. Get the signal to the AFL that we will go to other sports while we muck around waiting for the AFL to get its act together. To me, that is the logical approach to developing the interest in football while we wait. I do not want to get too frustrated by the history even that I have been involved in. We are from a Sandy Bay family as players, then subsequently as administrators, with me at the Launceston Football Club, and boys playing and being supporters.

What we have been through is tear-your-hair-out stuff as we watch the demise of football in Tasmania. We started from here - and I will not point out the years, because then you will be able to put names to the positions I am talking about - but we started from here with a project: failure down to here; go down to the next level; try that - failure; go down to the next level - failure; down to the next level - failure. A litany of failures by administration from the AFL in this state.

I am getting frustrated - pull back.

As I say, I do not want to go over that history because it is too annoying, but we have all seen it. People who love their footy have seen the demise of footy in Tassie. Here we have started going on about a VFL team. We go to rebuild or build the growth by introducing a VFL team - we have been there and belly up it went. Let us not revisit old wounds. Let us not go to the VFL. That did not improve us much at all. It is all about creaming off the elite players - finding and creaming off the elite players to feed into the national draft, and that is what Tasmania has become part of.

All these other kids who play footy - they are just 'life support' systems for a handful of elites who might get drafted. It has been a very frustrating journey watching this, but I think it is a way forward for football. If we do not go that way forward, we will just see a diminution of support for grassroots football. I wish Jim Wilkinson well with his attempts to get the football back into schools, because that is where it starts, but, by crikey, it is a challenge to get it back into the schools.

Members would remember when it was in school - that was the team to get into. That was the team to play for. Everybody wanted to kick a football around at recess and at lunchtime, and then to get to pull the jumper on for the school.

Mr Dean - And that is where all the scouts were. Many scouts went around school football grounds as well - the AFL and VFL scouts and the senior leagues in Tasmania.

Mr FINCH - That is where to get them. Spare a thought for Mandy, who has been with the North Hobart Football Club for many years, and the sadness in that club with the loss of the great JL, John Leedham. That is interesting. He never played footy at school ...

Mr Dean - John Leedham?

Mr FINCH - No. He was at Campbell Town. They didn't have footy, but when he joined -

Ms Rattray - Say no more - Campbell Town.

Mr Gaffney - I thought you said school football was important.

Mr FINCH - JL was 16 before he played footy. I am trying to think whether it was the Army or something that meant a lot of footy was going on. He moved into town, was picked up by North Launceston. He played in five premierships for North Launceston as a teenager. He came to North

Hobart in 1957 and was just so good as a player. They won a premiership in 1957 and then he was captain and coach of the Tasmanian team in 1958 but playing in first division, and they beat Western Australia and South Australia.

Mr Valentine - Do not use too much of my special interest speech, will you?

Mr FINCH - Rob Valentine wants to pay tribute to the great JL, and he said he had seen him play. The Finch family played for Sandy Bay and we used to watch Dennis play, so we watched JL play - a very gifted left-footer.

Like so many, he went to the VFL, but never played in the VFL because he went there and got a knee injury in a practice game. I have a mate watching football, Bob Gormly, who went to Victoria as a very young bloke and played in the reserves, going great guns. Played one game for Melbourne and then unfortunately, in a practice game, did a knee and that was the end of his VFL career.

Mr Dean - They do not come back to it.

Mr FINCH - Came back to Launceston and had a terrific career with Launceston. I point out, football has been going for 100 years - Launceston Football Club was established in 1875. North Hobart disputes that situation, but it is around then that the clubs were established. We claim Launceston as being the first, certainly in Tasmania, probably second in Australia to Melbourne.

Tasmania is a mighty AFL state. We have produced some of the AFL's and the VFL's finest footballers. You only have to look in my office and you will see the team of the century with the great names that have been superstars in VFL and AFL football.

Mr Armstrong - Some players missed out then.

Mr FINCH - We have talked before about Murray Steele, my favourite footballer. He went to St Kilda, but he was a country boy at heart and got homesick and came home. Roger and John Steele - the Steele family were great footballers. Murray would have been a star in VFL had he been able to stay.

In your forward to this report, it states -

Tasmania is regarded as a heartland for AFL football in Australia. It is a founding state of Australian Rules Football, but it is the only state in Australia not to have an AFL team.

It defies comprehension that this is where our state finds itself, still fighting to convince the AFL that we should have our own AFL team after decades of producing some of the game's greatest champions. One of Tasmania's greatest success stories at the moment is Jack Riewoldt, who you mentioned. He said in *The Advocate* that the COVID-19 pandemic could speed up Tasmania's efforts to join the league. I agree with that.

While they are starting to look at regrouping to get the AFL going again, bring it to the front of your mind, AFL, that Tasmania should be included.

The AFL focus has been largely growing AFL in the rugby league states of Queensland and New South Wales, through the Gold Coast Suns and Greater Western Sydney, respectively. That is quite okay. It has ensured, unfortunately, that Tasmania was never really going to get a serious look-in over the past decade because the focus went to those two rugby league states.

In giving evidence to our committee's hearing on 3 March, the AFL's former CEO Andrew Demetriou was asked about whether a Tasmanian AFL licence was discussed with him during his time as CEO. I quote him -

But there weren't any very serious discussions with government, other than the desire for one day for there to be a team. We weren't opposed to that. It just wasn't in the sequence of events in my duration of the AFL that a Tasmanian team was going to get priority over New South Wales and Queensland at that time.

It is interesting going back over some old newspaper reports. On Sunday 1 September, Rob Inglis wrote a report in *The Examiner*, and I will quote one of the sections here -

Premier Paul Lennon's government-led push for a Tasmanian team was launched in 2008, as well, leading to a highly publicised meeting between Lennon, state Sport Minister Paula Wriedt and then AFL boss, Andrew Dimitriou, at AFL House in Melbourne. With a media scrum following them to the doors, Lennon and Wriedt got inside, only to be made to wait for 15 minutes before being summoned for the meeting. Wriedt told *The Age* four years later that she had never seen anyone speak to a premier like he [Demetriou] spoke to Paul Lennon. It was to the point of actual bad manners.

Mr Demetriou might have had a bad memory on that particular one. The AFL needs to understand that a deep belief across our state is that a Tasmanian team in the AFL is good - not only for the state, but also for the AFL. Russell Hanson proved time and again with his figures how it is going to financially benefit the AFL to have those extra games Tasmania will bring to the table. When Andrew Demetriou's successor, Gill McLachlan, held his first press conference as CEO in 2014, not that long ago, he made the following comment to the media -

I have a clear vision of where I feel the game needs to go and how we are going to get there. For me, that vision is about having an unassailable hold on the Australian community in women, in children as much as men, in the North to the South in all communities, and success in delivering on this vision will mean ultimately three things - that we are truly national, that we are truly representative and we are truly connected to the community.

He went on to say -

I believe we have the right amount of teams for the foreseeable future, whether that is five or ten years.

The following needs to be acknowledged - an AFL competition without Tasmania is not truly national. You mentioned before about Tom Harley saying that without the Suns we are not national. He thinks we were effluent that came out of Geelong when he was playing there.

This committee's key findings show not only enormous benefits from Tasmania having an AFL team, but the findings include an estimated economic benefit of \$110 million annually, and the

creation of more than 300 jobs. It found the team would cost approximately \$45 million - \$7 million to \$8 million annually from the Tasmanian Government, \$15 million to \$17 million annually from an AFL dividend, and the balance from sponsorship. The figures are there.

The AFL has previously questioned Tasmania's capacity to fund its own AFL team, but the AFL task force report found that a Tasmanian AFL licence bid is economically viable. The task force made this comment on page 10 of its report -

Broadcast revenue modelling and advising experts confirm a local Tasmanian team will add value to the AFL overall. There is a case to suggest that a Tasmanian team could in fact be self-funding as a 19th team.

Western Bulldogs President, Peter Gordon, said to the committee on 3 March 2020 that he also agreed that it could be AFL cost-neutral. In regard to flow-on benefits, Tourism Industry Council Tasmania said -

TICT is very confident a Tasmanian AFL Team will have significant benefits to the Tasmanian visitor economy. This is based on our experience with the current structure of AFL content in Tasmania, and examples interstate.

The Tasmanian Government said -

An AFL team for Tasmania could have the potential to attract thousands more visitors to our State, injecting millions of dollars into our northern and southern communities, while at the same time propelling the Tasmanian brand into one of the broadest reaching national sporting platforms.

In the same report, point 7 of the findings stated -

A Tasmanian AFL team has the potential to attract high-value local, national and international sponsors. Potential exists for synergies with the Tasmanian Brand.

It has been said that the AFL wants a Tasmanian team to have 50 000 members. Well, the AFL Licence Taskforce did a survey and found that membership could be in excess of 64 000 people. I remember when I posted something on Twitter, I received a bit of a retort to say this is approximate, pooh-poohing it. I went back over the figures and 64 232 people had ticked that they would support a Tasmanian team before they shut off the survey. They called an end to it. That was the indication from the community as to their feelings about an AFL team.

The member mentioned Tim Lane. In his submission, Tim referred to an article in *The Age* showing that 91 000 Tasmanians are members of AFL clubs. He said that if the figure of 91 000 were to be translated to a Tasmanian team - and why could it not be? - such a team would be better placed than many of the 18 current AFL clubs. They say that people are not going to have dual memberships. Of course they are going to have dual memberships. You are going to stick with your North Melbournes, you are going to stick your Melbournes and you are going to take on Tassie. You are going to take one out for Tassie. You are going to get a second membership to support a Tasmanian team if you believe in footy and its growth. I reckon there will be thousands and thousands of people who will take on dual memberships. In time, they will only take the one and it will be for a Tassie team.

Games are to be shared between the north and south. Russell Hanson said during his appearance before our committee, 'The beautiful thing is that we accept the fact that games are going to be shared, nobody is arguing about that, so that is brilliant.'. There was no argument, whatsoever. He went on to say, 'The state is going to have a boom time and everyone is going to get a benefit in the flow-on effect.'.

The AFL task force report makes this important observation -

The Business Case produced is viable and sustainable but (subject to negotiation) requires both the AFL and Government to 'co-invest' in an AFL 19th Tasmanian-based team for the long term.

Going back to my earlier point about an AFL licence for Tasmania being good for both our state and the AFL, the task force report finds in points 4 and 5 -

Broadcast revenue modelling and advising experts confirm a local Tasmanian team will add value to the AFL overall. There is a case to suggest that a Tasmanian team could in fact be self-funding as a 19th team.

...

Branding experts have advised that the existing corporate sponsors of the AFL and all 18 clubs will benefit from a Tasmanian-based and branded team.

During a visit to Tasmania in 2018, AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan, described Tasmanian football as fractured and fragmented - 2018. To use those sorts of words was very helpful to his side of the argument. But page 10 of the task force report notes that 20 years ago our state had the highest rate of participation in the country and makes the link between the absence of our own TFL team and declining participation by males over the past decade. The AFL is responsible for this demise in participation.

Tim Lane's submission to our inquiry provided many invaluable insights into what has caused this decline.

This is quoting from Tim Lane's submission -

First, the VFL - which had been growing too rapidly for its own good and needed to rein in the economic excesses of its clubs - instituted a regulated player-recruitment system. This took the form of a 'national draft'. Each year, aspiring players from around the nation nominated themselves for a ballot and the VFL clubs took turns at choosing from the pool of players so created.

This meant Tasmania's best young footballers were now part of an institutionalised system which took them, and continues to take them, away from their domestic competitions without meaningful recompense.

I will digress there because you might remember too, member for Windermere, our friend 'Dreams' Wilkinson with his passionate push for years and years, talking about how the clubs used to be compensated. You would get a recruit and you would pick up \$5000 or \$6000, fabulous, into the club's coffers. Gave them something to work for and then they stopped even giving you that

and it went into administration over here and took that money out of the communities that needed that money to help support the footy clubs.

To continue the quote from Tim -

An understanding of this reality is critical to any assessment of where Tasmania belongs within the national scheme of things. This aspect alone should compel any reasonable administration to seek to redress the unfairness.

The next relevant step in the steady demise of Tasmanian football was the establishment of the so-called national league. This brought regular live television coverage and for the AFL, live TV was the economic game-changer. The value of rights began to climb exponentially, particularly as Pay-TV arrived in the second half of the 1990s. Good for football though it may have been, this was further bad news for Tasmania. Satellite dishes meant it would no longer be possible for live coverage to pubs, clubs and even private homes to be prevented by a sporting administration. The now-national AFL gave up on its previous, well-intentioned attempts to protect local games in Tasmania from live coverage of its product.

This meant Tasmanian football now had the most direct and potent of competitors for the hearts and minds of supporters: AFL games from around Australia would be screened in opposition to the local product.

I think it was worth putting that quote on record in *Hansard* for those who may not get around to reading the report.

This inquiry has highlighted a lot of positives happening for Tasmanian football. They include the formation of the Tasmanian Football Board chaired by the former president of the Legislative Council, Jim Wilkinson. The board is tasked with growing football in our state.

There is broad and strong political and community support for a homegrown Tasmanian AFL team, and this continues to grow. AFL Tasmania figures show Auskick participation in the north and south has improved on last year but the work to engage young people must continue.

It follows logically that the granting of an AFL licence for Tasmania would strengthen engagement and participation in grassroots football and this point is made in the AFL Licence Taskforce report.

In summary, the AFL Licence Taskforce has recommended that the Tasmanian Government should present the state's case for inclusion in the AFL and AFLW to the AFL Commission, and that the Government retain the task force as consulting advisers with a view to engaging with the AFL Commission, AFL club presidents and senior AFL executives in order to submit Tasmania's bid for a provisional AFL licence.

We support these recommendations. I know I am probably confusing our inquiry report with the task force report but that is because they are in tandem; people may now have an understanding that two separate notions came from those investigations.

In conclusion, Russell Hanson summarised extremely well in his submission the opportunity which is before the AFL, and I quote -

Ignoring a heartland state; a state second only to Victoria to play the game and then spend on buying new supporter bases before including Tasmania is plainly wrong but too late – its there now.

But accepting Tasmania will put the competition where it should be – truly national, it will legitimise the AFL self-assessment of its tax-exempt status as it will finally be acting for the betterment of the game, across the nation not just mainland Australia as it currently does

[3.46 p.m.]

Mr ARMSTRONG (Huon) - Mr President, I will make a short contribution to the AFL report as the Chair of the committee, the honourable Ivan Dean, and the member for Rosevears, Kerry Finch, have covered most aspects of importance.

I put on the record my thanks to the Chair and the other committee members, and also to Natasha Exel and Ali for the work that they did during the committee. They were really under pressure at times, trying to contact witnesses, or whatever you would like to call them - then, with COVID-19 and everything else - but they kept persevering. I put my appreciation of them in *Hansard*.

Clearly the establishment of a Tasmanian AFL side that resides in Tasmania will definitely have benefits to the state, not only in jobs but economically. I will digress a little, and I may have mentioned this once before - I have friends who have a stall at Salamanca and when the football is not only here in Hobart but also when it is in Launceston too, the number of people who fly into Hobart and then go onto Launceston surprises me. My friends told me they would talk to them when they came to their stall. They have their regular customers every week, but they would know the new ones who came along and would talk to them, ask if they were holidaying, and they would say, 'No, we are here for the football.'. They would say, 'The football is in Launceston', and the reply would be, 'Yes, we fly in here on Friday, spend a night in Hobart, then drive up to Launceston to see the football.'.

It goes to show that whether football is played in Hobart or Launceston, people do distribute throughout the whole state.

The cost of a Tasmanian AFL team was put at approximately \$45 million to establish and then there is the ongoing funding. The member for McIntyre touched on how players once would play for virtually nothing. I can remember a coach who came down our way back in 1966 or 1967. I talked to the older people who were on the committee and they said he came down, got a case of apples, a case of spuds and a few other different things like that. Those days are gone. Money is here to stay.

I went to a seminar once where Royce Hart, who played for and captained Richmond and then went on to coach Fitzroy at one stage - we all know what a great footballer Royce Hart was. When he went to the AFL - well, it was VFL in those days - he got a Gladstone bag and a new suit.

These days, if you were a player like Royce Hart, you could ask for an open cheque book. Darrel Baldock used to fly in from Tasmania to play. He flew back and forwards at one stage -

Mr Dean - He flew back and forwards for quite a while.

Mr ARMSTRONG - The other thing with the funding, and I do not know who put it on the record, with the commitment that Tasmania has now to Hawthorn and North Melbourne, Tasmania might not have to contribute any more money. The member for Rosevears talked about football back in the 1960s and 1970 when the ABC used to broadcast the local games. You would be listening to the radio after that game to try to get AFL scores because that was the only way you got AFL scores in those days.

Mr Finch - Part of the diminution of interest in football was not so long ago when we used to watch the footballers in the local statewide competition on television. We would watch Brian Eade play, then we would go home and watch the video of the game. That was fantastic. It looked super on television. However, in the negotiations between AFL Tasmania and the ABC, the ABC finished up that contract. They thought it was a poor set of negotiations. For the young blokes who were aspiring to be footballers, one of the attractions was to see themselves and their team mates on television.

Mr ARMSTRONG - The former president was one of the commentators. I know he was on the radio but I think he was one of the commentators on television.

There has been much debate as to where the game should be played. The committee was unanimous that it should be played equally between Launceston and Hobart, with seven games one year in the north, eight games in the south, and vis versa the following year.

I questioned different witnesses about the Macquarie Point scenario. Demitriou said that you do not need a new stadium. All you need to do is put a few dollars in to the existing stadiums. The other members touched on this, so I will not go on about it too much. You are better off having a full stadium. When you watch games in different areas of the country and nobody is in those stadiums, it is not a good look. It is better to see the MCG with 90 000 people in it than watching one of the stadiums elsewhere where you play spot the person. We agreed with him.

I did some research in the lunchbreak. The MCG holds 100 000 people; Perth, 60 000; Docklands, 56 000; Adelaide, 53 500; Sydney Cricket Ground, 48 000; Brisbane, 42 000; and Geelong, 36 000. Then there are stadiums like the Gold Coast, which holds 25 000 - I do not think I have ever seen that full - and the Giants' stadium, which holds 25 000. Then there are Aurora and Blundstone, both around the 20 000. You go to Canberra, Darwin, Alice Springs and Townsville - Canberra has 15 000; Darwin, 12 000; and Alice Springs and Townsville each have 10 000 seats. I can see where Andrew Demetriou was coming from. I think he mentioned the 25 000 seat stadium -

Mr Dean - About 25 000 - close to it.

Mr ARMSTRONG - The other area they touched on was that attendances had declined at the Hawthorn and North Melbourne games. A Tasmanian team would rectify that because now when you go to a game in Tasmania to watch Hawthorn, it will nearly be the same teams they play each year. North Melbourne - much the same teams. However, they are not highly recognised teams. They are not teams with high followings or high memberships. If you had a Tasmanian team, you would have all the teams in the AFL come to Tasmania once a year. You would get Collingwood, or Richmond, or Geelong, all teams with a big following. You are going to reinvigorate the football

crowds here because you will get those with other allegiances. If Richmond were playing down here in Hobart, the Chair would possibly travel down and watch Richmond on the Tasmanian side.

Mr Dean - You would not get near Tasmania for the next month. It would be booked out.

Mr ARMSTRONG - I would not go quite that far. I am not sure whether that came out in the hearing. North Melbourne playing GWS or the Gold Coast at the Blundstone Arena will not attract a lot of support. If North Melbourne is playing Richmond, you will have a full ground. It will bring people back to football by having those teams playing here.

Other members touched on teams that have gone into recession over the past few years. It is scary when you look round Tasmania and go through towns that had a football team and played in a certain competition. Going out to the east coast - Avoca, Fingal, Rossarden all had football sides. None of them now have football sides. All gone.

Anything we can do to bring interest back to football is good.

Most of the other things have been touched on. Why do people not play football now? I believe it not just that they have gone to soccer and other sports, but when I was growing up football was in the wintertime, cricket in the summer. Now you have football and cricket, but you also have soccer, basketball, and sports centres. A lot of the young ones now play their sport during the week. Work hours have changed. Once you worked Monday to Friday. Now you have rotating shifts where you work different rosters. You could be working weekends. That was one of the reasons for the demise of Kermadie Football Club in my electorate. The aquaculture industry has rotating shifts and they work weekends. A lot of players worked one Saturday but not the next. They could play now and then. They went to play indoor sports in their sports centres.

Mr Dean - Some of these big companies - Mount Lyall was a good one, for example - used to give their employees time off to play footy.

Mr ARMSTRONG - That is another competition. The west coast is a really strong competition.

Ms Forrest - You need a few days to recover from the gravel rash.

Mr ARMSTRONG - The Huon used to go around there one year, and they would come to the Huon one year and play. That was a six-team competition. A really strong competition. Now I think there is one team - Queenstown.

I think anything we can do to foster a truly Tasmanian team has to be good for the state and good for football in general

[4.00 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I read through the report and I have to say it was quite interesting reading the various opinions put forward. The committee received a couple of negative ones. It would have been interesting to drill down, for instance, into Richard Welsh's opinions - I notice you have put that in the report. It is always good to make sure you cover the ground presented, otherwise it may look like a more biased inquiry. I think we have to be careful that we do not just try to build up the case, but truly look at the matter that is before the committee.

The main finding is that an AFL team would provide substantial social and economic benefits. I guess the growth of any particular sport in the state will achieve that, but in this case we are talking about an Australia-wide competition; as has been said quite often - without Tasmania in the competition, it is not truly Australia-wide.

It is a different circumstance, too, because when Tasmania has a team, it is a state team, not an individual city's team. I do not think any other states have a single team for that state, hence the reason it has to be embraced by the whole of Tasmania if it is to succeed. I can tell members that if this does not succeed, football will die. That is my opinion.

Mr Dean - It is a good point you raise. It is the same as with the Tasmanian cricket side, which is a national competition - Tasmanian people are behind it because it is a Tasmanian team. It is not a Hobart, not a Launceston, it is not a Burnie team - it is a state team.

Mr VALENTINE - That is right. It is a state team so therefore it needs to be approached from the state perspective, and it does make sense to have that mode of operation where it switches from one city to the next.

If you do not do that, you are on a hiding to nothing, to be quite honest. It would be great to think that you could bring the north-west into it, too, as with the Dial Sports Complex. I think the member for Murchison might have said that it gets pretty windy up there. I think you would have to have a fair bit of infrastructure to stop the wind from affecting the stadium at the Dial Range.

Ms Forrest - Mind you, I have been down at Bellerive too; it is not that good down there at times.

Mr VALENTINE - There are a few more stands around now, which reduce that capacity a little bit.

Ms Forrest - There is still a howling gale that goes through parts of it.

Mr Finch - It is perfect at York Park.

Mr VALENTINE - Absolutely, but let us not get parochial.

The thing that will save football in this state is not only an AFL team but also the AFL women's competition. I said that by interjection; in fact the member for Murchison commented about the women's team members not being paid full-time.

It is actually something - that particular aspect of AFL football, the women's team, has brought an excitement back. It is something new and it will attract younger crowds with their supporters.

Ms Forrest - And the pay issue could be fixed today.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, well, I think it could be and it needs to be. It is a matter of equity. I know the men's competition has had years to build up and there is an argument that the women's team needs to have that level of acceptance and building up too, but the fact is that they are out there playing and giving their time so they need equal opportunity in that regard. I do not think

there is a question as to whether they should or should not - it should happen. It must happen and if it does not, we are not being fair to half our population, basically.

I want to make just a couple of points. It really does matter if we want to see football survive at all. I really think so. It could go back to a regional competition; as someone else said - I think it was the member for Rosevears - we have seen it. Things happen. New structures are put in place and they fail and they fail. If this one fails, that is it. It will not be the Australian Football League in its true sense.

I wanted to make those comments. I know we have other work that needs to be done today so I will not take up too much time. I have read the report and I note the report. I encourage a proper approach to this that takes it as a state team, not as a single city focus. I do not think that is going to work. As for what Tim Lane says, it could be one of the greatest unifying things in Tasmania. I wait to see that happen, and I hope it does because I think unless we get that, we will not be in the game.

[4.06 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser - Minister for Sport and Recreation) - Mr President, I rise as Minister for Sport and Recreation to respond to this report on behalf of the Government. I begin by commending the work of the committee and particularly its Chair, the honourable Ivan Dean, for producing what is a very interesting and worthy read. As the Chair states in the report's foreword, Tasmania is regarded as a heartland for AFL football in Australia and it is that statement which underpins the single recommendation of that report –

The Government -

Recognise the potential social and economic benefits of a Tasmanian AFL team and pursue all opportunities to present Tasmania's case for its own team to the AFL Commission.

I am pleased to advise that the Government fully agrees with this recommendation and is already well down the track in pursuing these opportunities, albeit in the shadow of an unexpected and hugely disruptive global epidemic.

As the Chair stated, I was a proud member of this committee and attended almost all meetings from November 2018 through to my resignation from the committee when I was promoted to the Cabinet earlier this year.

The Government's main objective in relation to the AFL before, during and after the COVID-19 crisis has been to secure a licence for a Tasmanian team. We have not taken our eyes off the ball. To this end, the Government welcomes the AFL Licence Taskforce business case released earlier this year, which demonstrated the viability of a Tasmanian AFL team from 2025. I note that many of the findings of the business case were also found by the select committee in this report. Even for those with no interest in the AFL, or a Tasmanian team, there is no denying the economic benefit of a \$110 million direct contribution to our state and the creation of 360 jobs. For those not convinced by the economic argument, who could deny the immense pride and satisfaction that our entry to the AFL would bring to hundreds and thousands of Tasmanian football fans?

Generations of Tasmanians, including countless thousands who have passed on, unfortunately, have dreamed of our best young footballers playing on the big stage. The closest we have come in years past was those who wore the map on their guernseys at national carnivals. Now we do not even have that stage to demonstrate that we deserve our spot. Tasmanians have watched on in disbelief as AFL House announced expansion plans to include cities such as the Gold Coast - an unmitigated failure - while ignoring Tasmania on the basis of flawed financial and demographic assumptions.

Sadly, as the committee report identifies, there is a cost to these rejections that grows every year. Participation is growing in some cohorts, particularly in the female game, but is declining in the senior men's level.

Recruitment via the draft from Tasmania has been low in recent years and we hope this is not the start of a long-term trend.

It is really now or never for us to take our rightful place in the AFL by 2025, the target season identified both in this report and in the AFL business case. Our message is clear: do not take us for granted. There is potential for Tasmania to find a place in the A-League. We already have a provisional acceptance into the NBL. Soccer, also known as football, and basketball are growing in popularity among Tasmanian boys and girls.

When we were growing up there was really only one spectator sport, and that was football. Our support for the game was taken for granted by the AFL, from Ross Oakley through to Wayne Jackson and Andrew Demetriou, despite the evidence from the committee. Given his potential initial response to the AFL task force business plan, I am optimistic that Gillon McLachlan can make a break from the pattern of rejection laid down by his predecessors. In doing so, he would leave a legacy that he will never regret. The AFL's consistent rejection of a Tasmanian team threatens to be a death by a thousand cuts to those of us who love this game.

I thank those members of parliament who have been part of the United We Stand campaign and who have put the temptation of parochialism and politics aside not only for the greater good of Tasmania but also to communicate our unity to decision-makers at AFL House. Those who signed up to United We Stand did so in the full knowledge that previous attempts to gain an AFL licence have been by parochialism. As Mr Finch said before, more than 64 000 people have signed that petition. You are right, that petition was closed early.

This parochialism has been exploited for many years, probably decades, by those who seek to keep us out of the national league for a variety of reasons. In every case these reasons have been underpinned by self-interest. A number of Victorian suburban clubs saw Tasmania as a threat to their support, their fans, their base and their revenues. Why would it be in the interests of a club to accept another team into the competition, thereby diluting their share of the profit and the pie as well as marginal loss of their supporter base to a new rival? The politics behind this series of denials over the years has always been conducted behind the scenes and away from the public glare.

The strategic benefit of the AFL task force report is that it lays out a highly credible financial case for the inclusion of a Tasmanian licence, which is now over to the AFL to test.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an enormous challenge for our shared objectives of a Tasmanian team. With the 2020 season curtailed and to be played for at least a large part in front of empty stadiums, revenues are collapsing and everyone from AFL House to the players are taking

pay cuts. This crisis was seized on early by Collingwood president, Eddie McGuire who, through a barely concealed smile, said, 'It had put paid to a Tasmanian licence in the conceivable future.'

What a convenient excuse. Thank you, Eddie. Perhaps someday you can thank –

Ms Forrest - I never listen to Eddie.

Ms HOWLETT - No, Collingwood.

Ms Forrest - No, no. He is a misogynist.

Ms HOWLETT - Thanks, Eddie. Perhaps someday you can thank Tasmania for the wealth of talent we have provided to you and your great club, including Jeremy Howe, a boy from my electorate in Dodges Ferry, and also Brody Mihaljevic.

Ms Forrest - Went to school with my kids and your kids too, probably.

Ms HOWLETT - We are not parochial. All that is aside. This is a crisis, and like all crises we have unintended consequences that can produce opportunities.

While the AFL task force report made clear that Tasmania's position was to seek a nineteenth licence instead of taking a relocated club, the upheaval of the pandemic may produce failures elsewhere. Those clubs which have effectively been reliant upon the generosity of the AFL for their ongoing viability may see their positions become financially unsustainable. That includes struggling Victorian clubs as well as the manufactured clubs that were financially engineered to expand the league's footprint into rugby league territory.

I am very pleased to see that this opportunity presented by the global pandemic has been noted by the Chair of the committee in his report.

I cannot imagine how the AFL commissioners can seriously argue for special financial support for effectively insolvent AFL clubs when we can demonstrate we can support a Tasmanian team in our own right.

But our argument goes beyond finances. Our argument is about state pride and the restoration of injustice. Give us a chance and we will kick some goals.

[4.17 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, as always I extend my thanks to the honourable members who sat on the AFL committee and the members of the public who took the time to make their submissions.

The committee's enthusiasm for their task is evidenced by their contributions today, and they are welcomed and congratulated. I also recognise that 64 000 people signed the petition. That is a fantastic result. I am here representing the 461 000 who did not.

Members will recall that I resigned from the committee in August 2019. I also anticipate that some members are aware of my opposition to the creation of a Tasmanian AFL franchise. This may come as a surprise to those in the public who are aware of my lifelong participation in Australian Rules Football.

I have experienced football in many guises. I was fortunate to play in the statewide competition at senior level for Hobart and New Norfolk in the 1980s. I was fortunate to have played alongside Matty Armstrong, Scott Wade and Alastair Lynch. For the record, they were much better than I was, but they enjoyed the fact that I used to win the football sprints on grand final day. That was \$300-worth of beer for the players' trip.

I also played two years for New Norfolk in the statewide league because I was teaching at Bridgewater and transferred to New Norfolk. Unfortunately for Hobart, the next two years the New Norfolk club had a little bit more to drink on its players' trip.

I was also playing-coach in Latrobe in the NTFL, the home of the great Darrel Baldock. If you have not had the chance to visit the memorial to the great man, I suggest you do when you are able to travel to the north-west coast. Veer off the Bass Highway and have a look. It is in front of the ground.

Ms Forrest - You can go there now on a day trip.

Mr GAFFNEY - When I started my playing-coaching career at Latrobe, Darrel used to come to the games. He was a mentor for me. I have a lot of respect for the man.

As a physical education teacher I also had the opportunity and enjoyed the responsibility as a coach of coordinating numerous high school football teams.

I was proud to represent Tasmania on a number of occasions as a player and also as a team manager. Several of the boys I looked after as team manager for the Tasmanian under-16 boys team went on to AFL careers - they were Adrian Fletcher, Colin Alexander and Paul Hudson. Given my experience, I believe I was able to contribute to the inquiry. I know I was always hesitant in thinking that this committee inquiry should have an excuse or, excuse the pun, 'get a guernsey', but I was willing to participate in it.

Mr President, given my involvement in football, I believe my position regarding both the creation of the Tasmanian team and the committee itself warrants a contribution to the current AFL committee report. Conversation around an AFL Tasmanian team is a long-held one and for as long as I can recall, it has been permeated by similar themes and points of contention. Among those are the north/south divide, stadium and the longevity of deals to Victorian clubs to play matches here, be it Hawthorn or North Melbourne or previous arrangements that saw St Kilda and Fitzroy playing matches in the state.

Financial viability has been an ongoing question, with the formulation of a firm business case a longstanding objective of proponents of a Tasmanian team. This often goes hand in hand with arguments about whether the AFL would have to offer financial assistance and/or whether the taxpayer would have to incur any potential costs. These are important questions. I appreciate that the proponents of a Tasmanian AFL side have endeavoured to address them.

I know, however, that many of the issues I have identified form the focus of the committee, the board and project team. The committee was initiated prior to the establishment of the Football Tasmania Board. The board in turn appointed the AFL project team. The working relationships between the board and the project team were explained on 13 June 2019 by the Honourable Jacquie Petrusma as follows -

In regard to Tasmania having its first AFL and AFLW teams, on 1 July we will have the Football Tasmanian board to speak with one united voice to progress the vision of a Tasmanian AFL and AFLW team which will work in conjunction with our newly established Tasmanian AFL Project Team, responsible for developing the business case for a Tasmanian AFL and an AFLW team.

That will work in conjunction with our newly established Tasmanian AFL project team's Mr Hanson, who is responsible for developing the business case for a Tasmanian AFL and an AFLW team. I note there is a significant overlap between the general objectives of the Football Tasmania Board, the AFL project team and the terms of reference advertised by the Legislative Council committee, which were -

- (1) The likely benefits to the broader Tasmanian economy and community from having a Tasmanian team in the AFL;
- (2) Whether or not the Tasmanian Taxpayer, or the AFL, should subsidise Melbourne based AFL Clubs playing in Tasmania;
- (3) The on-going support required to sustain a Tasmanian AFL team;
- (4) The possible solutions to the AFL's perception of Tasmania being geographically and politically divided;
- (5) The impact on the future participation rates in AFL in Tasmania of not having a Tasmanian team in the AFL;
- (6) If Tasmania were to establish an AFL team, when would it be the optimal time for it to commence; and
- (7) Any other matter incidental thereto.

The broad mandate of the Football Tasmania Board and the AFL project team will no doubt mean that all the seven of the committee's terms of reference will be addressed by their business case and by their project team's business case.

In my view, establishing those two bodies after initiating the committee effectively rendered the committee redundant. In fact, on more than one occasion in the media at the time the Legislative Council inquiry did not even rate a mention. I recall the Chair of the committee, Mr Dean, being quite annoyed - and rightly so - about the inquiry's omission from media articles. In fact, it appears that the stand-out performer, Mr Hanson, was also a contributor to the AFL project team with his expertise and knowledge.

The committee process is time-consuming and can be expensive. In August I used advertising costs as an example of this. I said then that conducting select committee inquiries is expensive from the perspective of both financial and human resources. I have been informed that advertising the Legislative Council's committee of inquiry and terms of reference in the Saturday editions of the three regional papers cost over \$5000. We have advertised the AFL committee inquiry twice so even before the committee's real work had commenced there was a cost of \$10 000, and that is without the continuing expense of coordinating stakeholder meetings, staff time, Hansard requirements et cetera.

In a previous speech, I mentioned that six submissions were received by the first deadline. Two submissions were half a page long; one was two pages; two submissions were four pages in length; and one submission, from Mr Hanson, was 46 pages in length.

It would be difficult to glean any conclusive evidence from a total of 57 pages as part of the inquiry report, especially as over 80 per cent of the evidence came from one person. Compare that to the current finfish inquiry, and I am a member of that committee, with its 225 submissions - and some of those submissions are hefty documents that number well over 200 pages.

One of the hardest things our committee was tasked to do is to sift through the evidence to try to confine the recommendations and findings to make it a readable document.

However, it was decided by the committee - and I was on the committee then, so I am not absolving myself from that decision; it was fine and we voted on it - to readvertise. According to the minutes, another eight submissions were received of similar ilk to the first. The committee now had a total of 14 submissions.

At that time I felt we should cut our losses and shelve the committee because there was no need to continue, especially with the AFL board and the AFL project team now established. Indeed, we could have contacted the 14 submission providers and asked them if the committee could forward their submissions to the AFL board and the project team.

According to the minutes, other groups were targeted, contacted and requested to provide submissions and allowed further time. Another six submissions were received, which meant a total of 20 submissions.

I congratulate the committee on persevering with its task. However, I still contend that it was not the best use of this place's human and financial resources. While my resignation drew criticism from certain quarters about me not doing my job, I think it is the right of honourable members to question how our resources are used. Indeed, we have an involved budget process where we scrutinise the dollars spent or allocated by the government of the day.

It is more than appropriate that Legislative Council members ask questions of committees of our own making so that they stand the test. While slightly different, the dismissal of the Legislative Council Select Committee on Firearms Law Reforms arose because of an apparent departure from the terms of reference by the Government. I remember discussions with the Chair, the member for Windermere, and the committee was left really with no other choice. The committee was disbanded, and so it should have been because the terms of reference were not adhered to in the other place.

The AFL committee's first meeting was held in November 2018 and the report was presented and tabled in May 2020, 19 months gestation, about the same period for an elephant - that is, the common grey elephant; I am not certain about the birthing process of the white elephant, but for the grey elephant it is between 18 and 22 months. I am not having a crack at the committee here; it is the process we should have got out of.

That issue aside, I now offer my own views on several of the issues that face the bid for a Tasmanian AFL licence. My view is that key practical considerations surrounding a Tasmanian AFL team are often overlooked when they are presented by people who are support an AFL team.

Chief among these is the issue of stadiums. There has been much discussion recently about the construction of a stadium at Macquarie Point. This, to be frank, is quite perplexing. Tasmanian Football Board chair Jim Wilkinson told the inquiry the following on the 21 August 2019, which is in the transcript -

... both cricket and Australian Rules are looking for a new venue ... It might be pie in the sky and two years too late, but my view would be if you could have a purpose-built stadium which is a multi-purpose stadium ... Macquarie Point would be an ideal spot for it.

...

The only way anybody would consider building that type of stadium now in Tasmania, would be if the AFL said yes, you will be involved from 2025 or 2026.

With respect, I disagree with this point of view. The concept of a new stadium at Macquarie Point is possibly inspired by Marvel Stadium which is located in Melbourne's Docklands. However, there are key differences between the two. Docklands is serviced by trains and trams making travel to games extremely easy for patrons. By contrast, Hobart's trams and trolley bus services were decommissioned in the 1960s and then the trains followed a decade later. Coincidentally, as some members will recall, the train station was located on the site of the ABC, only a couple of hundred metres away from Macquarie Point.

If those transport services still existed and were improved by more efficient ferry and water taxi services, Macquarie Point might have become the ideal location for Tasmania's equivalent of Marvel Stadium. However, given the traffic issues Hobart already faces, a lack of public transport services to the proposed stadium site renders it unfeasible for use as a major sporting venue. There are better uses for the area, which is one of the state's premier pieces of real estate.

Another issue with the building of a new stadium is the exorbitant sum of money that has already been spent on the existing stadiums, particularly Blundstone Arena. The relatively recent construction of the Ricky Ponting Stand will have been for nothing if football and cricket games are moved to Macquarie Point. I congratulate committee members for saying they believed the stadiums should stay as they are, which is contrary to the issue raised by the chair of the Tasmanian AFL board.

I understand that Blundstone Arena has been criticised by patrons. The stadium exists in a natural bottleneck and is prone to traffic chaos on game day. Joanne Marsh, a Bellerive local in favour of a Tasmanian team, submitted the following -

I am making this submission to the Select Committee because, in my opinion, as a non-expert witness, Bellerive Oval is unsustainable as an avenue for large events. It cannot be considered for expansion or play a role in hosting future Tasmanian AFL games. My main concerns are the Traffic Management Plan and the design and operation of the four floodlighting towers. I believe that the arena is one of the worst examples of flawed planning and decision making by responsible authorities in Tasmania.

However, Mr President, I do not believe issues facing Blundstone Arena will be remedied by moving to Macquarie Point. Another issue with spending millions to construct a stadium at Macquarie Point is that it may only host half a dozen matches in a season, depending on whether

the north/south divide can be resolved. By contrast, a quick look at the 2019 AFL fixture reveals that Marvel Stadium had hosted six matches by round 3 and 11 matches by round 5 of the competition. By my calculation, a total of 43 home and away matches were played at Marvel Stadium in 2019. This is in addition to all the other sporting events and concerts that take place there each year.

I expect that the construction of a new stadium would be contingent on all of the matches being played in Hobart, otherwise why build. I was pleased to hear the committee say that it would be a north-south split. Speaking of the north-south divide, however, I refer members to the fourth term of reference which reads -

The possible solutions to the AFL's perception of Tasmania being geographically and politically divided.

This is the only term of reference that makes specific mention of the AFL as an organisation. The leaders at AFL House, CEO Gillon McLachlan chief among them, are the ones who will ultimately decide whether a Tasmanian AFL side goes ahead. Chairman of the project team, Brett Godfrey, echoed this point in August 2019, speaking to *The Age*. He said -

A provisional licence will be contingent on certain things happening ...

It would be subject to us submitting a compelling and sustainable business case that we can actually add value to the AFL and not simply existing to take from the pie.

Mr McLachlan remained noncommittal in March 2019 when he spoke about the possibility of a Tasmanian team. Despite saying that Tasmania was deserving of one, he told Fox Footy's *AFL360* -

I think the building blocks are in place. If a unified Tasmanian board can develop this under the talent model, the Under 18s into the VFL, that's the runway where Tasmania can't be ignored ...

It's obviously going to be a will from the top down, but also delivery and execution by Tasmania.

The pathway is there to deliver on the bottom half and if that happens, then it'll be incumbent, whatever the timing is, for the AFL to deliver on that.

I've said they deserve their own team, before I think that's a popular view, it's just challenging to get there ...

It's not going to be in the next couple of years, but at least there is a pathway and a plan there.

Expanding on this point, I refer to the first term of the reference for the inquiry, the likely benefits to the broader Tasmanian economy and community from having a Tasmanian team in the AFL. I understand it is commonplace for an inquiry such as this one to look at the costs and benefits that a particular project will bring to Tasmania. The proponents of a Tasmanian team will often cite the expected financial benefits that 11 AFL matches a year would bring to the state. This is

obviously an important point. It is not as determinative as another factor, the long-term financial benefit that a Tasmanian team would bring to the AFL.

I welcome the project team's focus on this. The comments from Mr McLachlan I quoted a moment ago are demonstrative of this point. The AFL already acknowledges that Tasmania is eager for an AFL licence, but the decision lies with the AFL - it does not lie with us. Tasmania is a football-mad state. Many Tasmanians already support a team in the national competition. As a Richmond supporter, the sight of Dustin Martin bounding down the MCG brings me as much joy as the next footy fan.

The Tasmanian team will probably become my number two team, as was stated. The trouble is one Tiger team is alive, but I fear the Tasmanian Tiger team is extinct. I think it will remain as such.

I hope that should Tasmania eventually get an AFL licence, the member for Windermere will remain loyal to the Tigers instead of switching allegiance to the Tasmanian team, but he will probably take them on as second place.

Jokes aside, Mr President, this is a serious point.

Every Tasmanian football fan already supports a team. I for one would not stop supporting Richmond if Tasmania got a team of its own.

Ms Forrest - It is not just supporting the team, it is paying the membership - that is how these teams keep going. It is okay to rock up as a supporter, but unless you are willing to put your money where your mouth is and pay membership -

Mr GAFFNEY - Exactly.

Tasmanians attend the games at Blundstone Arena and UTAS Stadium. Many even travel to the mainland to watch games. They buy merchandise; they watch the football on Channel 7; many subscribe to Foxtel or Kayo. It is fair to say that Tasmania is not a new market. This is problematic when one considers the AFL's longstanding expansion strategy.

Nobody would argue that Western Sydney is an AFL heartland, nor would they argue that the Gold Coast is. I am old enough to remember when the Brisbane Bears played at Carrara Stadium and struggled to pull a decent crowd. Nevertheless, the decision was made in 2008 to reward the Gold Coast with a licence. The Gold Coast Suns played its first AFL match in 2011. Crowds had been quite modest. Then 2019 saw the lowest attendance in its history, with about 11 000 fans turning out to Metricon Stadium each week. The Greater Western Sydney Giants were introduced soon after that.

The expansion clubs' financial results have been less than ideal. A report from *The Age* in March 2019 detailed that in 2018 the AFL gave a combined \$45 million to the Suns and Giants. Despite this, the Suns only managed to post a small profit and the Giants recorded their first loss in four years.

This leads one to ask: why were the Gold Coast and Western Sydney chosen for expansion in the first place? I believe they were chosen to introduce the sport of Australian Rules to new markets where children typically played other sports. As an existing market Tasmania's demand for AFL

matches can be satisfied by Hawthorn and North Melbourne matches that are already played in the state.

The AFL does not appear to think that the creation of a Tasmanian team would lead to a significant enough increase in overall demand for tickets, merchandise and other revenue sources. Indeed, while we have very vocal ex-AFL Tasmanian players and coaches extolling the virtues of our own Tasmanian team, in reality many Tasmanians whom I speak to actually enjoy the current roster situation and do not believe we have a large enough population in the one place to support our own team.

We can criticise the AFL's approach to expansion until we are blue in the face. We can continue to create as many committees, boards and project teams as we desire. None of this will make a difference until the AFL is willing to give markets such as Tasmania a chance. I would like to be proven wrong but a team by 2025 is as fanciful as Tasmania being the healthiest state by 2025.

Other sports would benefit from the creation of a Tasmanian team. Perhaps the best example is football, or soccer as it is colloquially known. The national competition, the A-League, has continued to expand. The focus of this expansion appears to be in areas where demand for soccer exists despite the lack of a local team competing in the national competition.

In my August speech when I resigned from the committee, I mentioned that 34 581 Tasmanians at that time play soccer compared to 24 275 who play AFL. A-League crowds are obviously smaller than the average AFL crowd, which means that Tasmania could easily pull decent crowds by competition standards.

According to research and marketing company Roy Morgan, soccer was the fastest growing football code in Australia between 2001 and 2016. In fact, it was only one of the four - that is, soccer, Australian Rules, Rugby Union, Rugby League - that grew in popularity at all. Football Tasmania's, or soccer's, submission raised concerns about the disproportionate state government funding received by various sports. The submission reads -

We fundamentally believe that no young Tasmanian should be disadvantaged from playing sport at the highest levels simply because they live in Tasmania, regardless of what that sport is. We welcome the continued push for more Tasmanian teams in the national competitions because it provides clearer talent pathways for Tasmanians and we would certainly welcome a Tasmanian AFL team in its national competition. We are, however, concerned about the way funding is allocated between various sports in Tasmania.

The Football Tasmania submission expands on this point, saying -

We are concerned that the way the Tasmanian Government allocates funding to support recurrent spending, particularly on grassroots competitions and talent-pathway development, is not aligned to any performance-based or participation-based criteria.

As a consequence, some sports in Tasmania are receiving disproportionately more funding from the State Government compared to others.

Further the submission says –

We want to ensure every young Tasmanian playing a recognised major sport is afforded equal opportunities to reach the pinnacles of their sport.

We are not in any way suggesting that AFL doesn't deserve funding. Quite the opposite. We are simply suggesting that in the interests of fairness and equity, there needs to be a transparent process for allocating funding.

Commercially speaking, soccer is a sleeping giant. I have no doubt that a Tasmania A-League team would be a resounding success if we were to invest in it appropriately. As far as I am aware, there is no plan afoot to schedule regular A-League games for Tasmanian teams to play in Tasmania as has been occurring in AFL for many years.

In December 2018 it was announced that Western Melbourne and South West Sydney would be home to a new A-League franchise, with the opportunity for further expansion on the horizon. Tasmania is not selected although we did bid for a team. Aside from a larger football-playing population, the Tasmanian bid had another thing in common with the successful bids: plans for a purpose-built boutique rectangular stadium.

Football Federation Australia CEO David Gallop told the ABC he was particularly impressed with the infrastructure planning of the two successful bids. He told the ABC -

In these two new locations we can ensure that the new clubs are in high-quality facilities from day one.

There were very attractive aspects to each of the bids, but the prospect of a facility owned by football for football would be a significant new milestone for the game in Australia.

Football-specific stadia have been extremely successful in league expansion in other parts of the world, and we are excited by the prospect of such a facility in Melbourne.

The Western Melbourne team would play matches at Geelong's Kardinia Park before moving to a newly constructed boutique rectangular stadium.

I would certainly support a Tasmanian A-League team playing at Blundstone Arena before moving into the proposed stadium at Cornelian Bay. That would be considerably cheaper than the proposed AFL stadium at Macquarie Point. Ray Chapman, a Mersey resident, made the following points about the soccer -

Soccer is the world game that more and more parents now prefer their children, boys and girls, to be involved in because of safety factors. I would hope that like you, the other members for the Legislative Council would have sufficient vision to plan for the future with the sport that offers international opportunities for Tasmanian kids. This is an important debate for Tasmania's social future.

Mr President, I believe if we keep chipping away at an A-League team, there is a strong chance of it happening. Unfortunately, I do not hold the same hope for an AFL side. I think it is fair to

say - and this is not a criticism of the committee because it can only report what evidence it had and it had 20 submissions - that I was quite underwhelmed by the report. Members would not be surprised by this development. I have spent much time today discussing the merits - or lack thereof - of a Tasmanian AFL team and why I do not believe the report was necessary.

It is pleasing that when a committee report makes recommendations, the Legislative Council inquiry also holds some weight in our community discussion - whether the deer, tourism, greyhound or a number of other inquiries we have held - and reinforces the worth of the committee process. Even now, some years after the feral deer report, some of the recommendations from that report can be seen to be as well-established evidence.

For the sake of completion, I conclude my remarks by addressing the contents of the report. An important function of a parliamentary committee is to provide recommendations so as an avid sports fan and participant, I was eager to see what this particular committee came up with despite my initial scepticism. Turning to the first recommendation, it reads as follows -

The Government recognise the potential social and economic benefits of a Tasmanian AFL team and pursue all opportunities to present Tasmania's case for its own team to the AFL Commission.

I thought that was very good. I have already outlined today why I do not think the social and economic benefits of a Tasmanian team are overstated. That said, I agree that if you accept the premise that such benefits do exist, you would certainly want to present the case for a Tasmanian team to the AFL Commission. I thank the committee for that first recommendation - insightful stuff.

I will now turn to the second recommendation. There is not one. Unfortunately, the report makes no more recommendations. Submissions were very limited, and with only 20 submission in total, I make the following point: the report is 32 pages long, but if you add the minutes of the meetings it gets to 55 pages. This is a hot topical issue that apparently a lot of Tasmanians care about. Committees such as this one burn through a great deal of both time and ultimately taxpayers' money. As representatives we have an obligation to provide the public with value for money. While others may view this report differently, I still do not think it was necessary.

What can we learn about this process? This is no slight on the committee as it completed the task but, as I have stated, six initial submissions to the committee surely gave an indication of how involved people want to be. Two government-supported bodies created specifically to look at the AFL case were a lengthy exercise for one recommendation. I will leave it up to individual members to assess the impact of this committee.

For the reasons I have outlined during my remarks today, I suggest we put this issue to bed and leave this discussion up to those bodies that are financed and supported by the Government to make decisions about the AFL team. However, I once again thank the committee for its work; I extend my thanks to those who made submissions and also to the Legislative Council staff who must have worked very hard to get some type of report to this Chamber. I note the report.

[4.46 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I will make a short contribution to the noting of the report. I appreciate hearing from the member for Mersey because it is good to hear a different

opinion. Obviously people on the committee will have the right opinion of the findings and recommendations that go through.

I am probably a little bit in the middle. I have never really seen the benefit of a Tasmanian team and I have concerns, but I have spoken to some of the members of the committee and they convinced me somewhat that there certainly is merit. I also take on board the comment that it is not just who you go for, or whether you go for the team, it is whether you are prepared to put your hand in your pocket and actually be a paying member of that team. It is very important not just that you support them, but that you financially support them.

I think it is questionable whether people in Tasmania would actually change over, as the member for Mersey alluded to - for example, I go for Collingwood and Richmond is my second team, but Hawthorn is my team when they are playing here, so I have a variety. Obviously, if there was a Tasmanian team, well, I would have more teams, but it would not replace my main team. I agree with the member for Mersey there. I have always gone for Collingwood. Since the days when Nathan Buckley played, I was probably someone who was like, 'Okay, I like the players in that team.'. I like Dustin Martin, I think he is a great player as well, and I tend to go for a team with players I actually like watching, those who I think are really skilled and play a good game.

I cannot see that I would - well, I would support a Tasmanian team playing but they would not be my team as such. Would I financially support them by joining up as a member? That is doubtful. I certainly appreciate the comments and the submissions put in by a variety of people and I was also interested in regard to the survey that went out and the number of people who responded. It is a good response in some ways for a survey because many times we are apathetic and people simply do not bother responding. On the other hand, if you look at the number of people in the state, the number of people who responded was not that high.

I appreciate the evidence and the findings we have before us. I appreciate the findings of the committee. I seem to be agreeing with the member for Mersey quite a bit here, but my other concern with committees is the money we spend on them. We know that nothing occurs for free and every committee costs money. When you actually hold a committee, there is a variety of costs across the parliament, and I saw this almost as a repetition of what was happening in another arena. I had concerns about this committee continuing. Obviously the committee has gone some way to putting some evidence together.

As the member for Windermere pointed out, Hobart would be the base. I am always parochial - I make no apology for being parochial - but I understand why the capital city would have to actually be the base for a team.

If you are bringing people into Tasmania and they are going to stay here, they have to be able to get jobs and they need a base so that it is possibly more attractive to them to relocate. While I am normally parochial, in this case I understand why that is the case.

I appreciate that the games would be split between the north and the south. I understand the member for McIntyre believes Campbell Town would be a good place. I am not sure we could afford to build a stadium there, but at least you would be able to park your car, which is something you cannot do at Bellerive. I have heard on a number of occasions that the real headache at Bellerive is the parking. You can get a bus sometimes. At one stage the bus broke down on the way back. I think it is a nightmare. It is also a nightmare for the people who live near Bellerive. We have to be

considerate not just of people who want to go to the football but also the people who live near the stadium on a day an AFL game is played.

I am sure it is not quite the same when cricket is played. Whenever I have watched a cricket game on television, the stands do not look that full so they might not have the same problem with parking for cricket as they do for AFL.

I do not believe we should be spending money on Macquarie Point because I think enough money has been spent on Macquarie Point. I certainly do not believe we should spend money on another football stadium when we have two adequate stadiums in the state even though one has no parking. Perhaps a light train coming from the city to Bellerive would sort out that situation.

I acknowledge and note the report. I thank the committee. I am sure its members put in a lot of hard work. We all know that when you are on a committee, you have briefings and there are submissions and witnesses, and a great deal of work needs to be done. I appreciate the report that has been handed down.

[4.52 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I thank honourable members for their contributions. You do not always expect every member to see a situation the same way. It is good that we have those different opinions.

The member for Hobart said that you need to look at the other side as well, not just the positive side, otherwise people may believe that a committee went into its inquiry with one position only. I accept it is important to look at all positions.

The member for Montgomery raised the issue of the Dial Sports Complex at Penguin. To my knowledge, it was not mentioned in the inquiry. We ought to be like some of the other teams - if we can get our AFL side up and running, we should play a game on the north-west coast if there is a suitable venue. The member for Montgomery says that Dial meets the requirements for an AFL standard.

Mrs Hiscutt - It is AFL standard. It was originally designed to get some NAB cups, preseason games.

Mr DEAN - I see an opportunity for a game to be played there each season. Games are being played in Canberra, Alice Springs, Darwin and Townsville each year. There is movement of football all around. If it could accommodate a game, it should be considered in the mix of things.

A comment was made about the times when games were rostered. I raised by way of interjection that it is important to have the AFL games played in this state at the right times. You can roster a game for a time when you would expect very low support for it. A Sunday evening, for instance, in Tasmania you will not get many people attending from the north or the north-west of the state because of other commitments. That happened on one occasion last year. It is not a good position to have.

Ms Rattray - Was that issue raised with the committee, or did the committee explore why there has been a drop-off of people attending football?

Mr DEAN - I do not think the rostering of games was raised. The members for Rosevears, Huon and Prosser might be able to refresh my memory. The interest in football in Tasmania generally is dropping off. As a member mentioned, when you have teams like Devonport, Burnie and South Launceston dropping out of the statewide league, it is a clear indication that things are not going right. They are all very strong teams. South Launceston's demise is just unbelievable. They won the grand final the year before and they were dropped the following year.

Mr Finch - They have done that a few times, joined in the competition, then when they are not travelling so well, they drop back to pick up a premiership lower down because it had recruited a lot of players.

Mr DEAN - South Launceston just won a statewide premiership when it was dropped. There are other reasons for the drop-off in patronage. What we are saying is that an AFL team would generate that interest again. It would show people we are a state where young players can aspire to play in an AFL team in Tasmania. I know how the draft works and the chances of playing in Tasmania would be much greater.

Ms Rattray - A question I did not ask - I must have been side-tracked when I was speaking - the volunteers you need to support a club could be another reason why it is hard to put a football team on the ground and keep the club going. Was that discussed?

Mr DEAN - If you are talking about an AFL team, I am not quite sure how many volunteers work within a team. I suspect there would be a number. I am not sure if everybody is a paid employee - for instance, the runners, the water boys or girls. I am not sure how far down the salaries are paid in an AFL club. Somebody might be able to help me there.

Mr Armstrong - I know one club in the AFL has a lot of its supporters do its banners and things like that. I suppose there would be a couple of paid people, but in the Western Australian clubs, when they come to Melbourne, they have supporters or volunteers who help them out in that way.

Mr DEAN - So the answer is that there are still volunteers carrying out some functions within an AFL team. As you know, volunteers make the local competitions, and without volunteers, you do not have local clubs at all.

I think the member for McIntyre mentioned the decline of clubs and shutting down. I have raised and talked on that. The member is right - it is because of all the other activities there are today. You have a lot of mountain bike tracks and riding tracks et cetera that are happening, so many people are committed to those activities as well.

Ms Rattray - They can do that as a family. They can go mountain biking as a family.

Mr DEAN - I think many other things are causing the decline in AFL and footy support around this state, unfortunately.

Someone mentioned Caroline Wilson; I think it was the member for McIntyre. We headhunted Caroline Wilson, because we saw her as a person we should talk to because she had been very vocal about a Tasmanian team, where it should be, and that it should be admitted into the competition. This was all happening around grand final time last year.

At that stage Caroline indicated - and we accepted - that she was just far too busy with other commitments to commit to a time and place to talk, so we then postponed it. We then went back to Caroline, and she was all enthusiastic to give a report to the committee - but all of a sudden she dropped off the radar. We are not quite sure what happened, but if you talk to Nat, she was tearing her hair out trying to make that further contact with Caroline. In the end, the committee - and the players' association - simply said, 'We have to make time, we have to report on this. We just cannot keep going.' Had we postponed it for a further period, no doubt we could have spoken to those people, but we had to finalise the matter.

We made contact with Patrick Dangerfield - not Patrick, but his next in line. They were happy to talk to us, and we had teed that up. Changes were occurring there as well. It was on one day, the next it was off, and things kept arising. In the end we decided we had to move on.

Ms Rattray - In other words, they just were not committed to following through.

Mr DEAN - I am not quite sure that is the case. Peter Gordon, for instance - we had teed up to meet him, and I think Peter was sick on that day, so we had to mess around to get times and dates, and in the finish we spoke to Peter.

Ms Rattray - I acknowledge that if there is an issue with someone's health, of course they are not going to be able to make it.

Mr DEAN - There comes a time when you have to say, 'We have to move on', and that is exactly what happened in that regard.

Playing for nothing: this was raised by the member for McIntyre, who said those times have gone. Even in country football, not too many people now play for nothing. That is a shame, in my view.

Mr President, some big money is earned in country football. In fact, my son is quite a good footballer, and he could earn a lot more money playing local country football than he could in the statewide league. Then you have farmers, who are fairly well off, and are able to play in ways that are not too well detected - I am not sure how they do it.

By way of interjection, cricket was mentioned. Tasmania has a national cricket team, and when we were going down that path, people were saying it could not really work - getting the support for it, the money for it, was all going to create problems. Getting the players to field a national cricket team could not really work et cetera. I do not want to harp on about it, but a Tasmanian cricket team has been extremely successful in all the national competitions - in the 20 over game, the white ball game, and at Sheffield Shield level.

Ms Forrest - We have provided a number of captains in the national community.

Mr DEAN - Absolutely, and that is exactly what we have done.

Whether you like AFL football or not - and not everybody likes it - it means a huge amount for a state. If you look at the iconic players, if you talk to people now about Tasmania, they will say, 'Darrel Baldock, that's where he came from, that's where the Gales boys come from - Tasmania, Burnie. Matthew Richardson, he is Tasmanian, that is Tasmania.' The same with cricket - and it is

worldwide with cricket. You go to India, and all you have to do is raise David Boon's name and Ricky Ponting's name and you are in like Flynn. I have been to India; I know what it is like.

Whether you like it or not, it is a very important event for Tasmania. We need an AFL team. My opinion is that possibly the AFL at present is wrestling, to some degree, with whether Tasmania will be the nineteenth team, or whether another team might be relocated to Tasmania. I think Gillon McLachlan has said that there will not be a nineteenth team, if I am right there.

If they can sort that out, settle that matter, should we take a relocated team? I would say, yes, we should. If you look at the other relocated teams, such as Fitzroy and South Melbourne, nobody now knows them by those names. South Melbourne is now the Swans, Fitzroy is now the Brisbane Lions. That would happen here as well, in my view, so I would say that if there is an opportunity to take another team, provided it is a Tasmanian team, and provided it has Tasmanian logo, my personal view - and this is not the committee's position, as it did not form a position on it - is that we should opt for and move forward with that.

Finance was mentioned by a number of members, and we have a lot of support to communicate that financially it is viable, and would be sustainable. The committee's view is that there would be a big sponsor. If you look at all the other teams, there are sponsors out there that will follow national teams so they can get publicity. I am confident, and we were confident, that a national team in a national competition would certainly draw that big sponsor. There are big sponsors out there - look at some of the car companies and firms, Emirates, and lots of others. Subaru - I do not think they sponsor anybody yet. If you look around, I think that would happen.

I thank the Government for its very positive response on this. Very clearly, we know where the Government is going with this. It is focused on getting an AFL team for Tasmania and I commend it for that.

I think the Premier and the state have to keep pushing AFL House and Gillon McLachlan, to keep putting this to him and giving him little wriggle room. We need to know where we stand. I commend the Government on what it is doing in this regard.

I will not talk on any of the negative issues the member for Mersey raised. He is right. Do you need a long report, a short report? It depends what is in the report - that is what matters: the type of information, whether something is drawn out, whether the information is probably not necessary and so on. This report is precise and to the point. That should not take anything away from what has come out of the report and what we have been able to come up with. Speaking to people like Brett Godfrey, Andrew Demetriou, Peter Gordon, Tim Lane and some of those others was vital, and the other committee did not do that, but we were able to do it.

Membership was mentioned. This is one of the last things I want to refer to. I think Russell Hanson raised the issue of the Eagles in Western Australia, which had strong support. As we Tasmanians support a current AFL team, they also did, but it was found that within two to three years, in a short time, people were abandoning the other clubs they had supported for a long time to become Eagles members and supporters. Some of them would become Tasmanian members - there is no doubt I would as well, but I would still continue to have some support for the Tigers. When the two were playing, I would probably run off and hide, but -

Ms Forrest - You could not pay your ticket to go to the game, but that doesn't help, either.

Mr DEAN - I am not sure what I would do. That is what happened with Western Australia. Studies done there demonstrated that was the case.

Ms Forrest - You would have had to learn to boo if you were going to follow West Coast.

Mr DEAN - You are right. They would probably be the lead crowds for booing; they are pretty good at that. I am not sure about South Australia. I suspect a similar thing might have happened there as well. I would be surprised if it did not because they have fairly strong membership in South Australia.

Mention was made about the state continuing to push our position strongly. The member for Launceston raised that she was not convinced as to the benefits of a Tasmanian team. With what we have said here today and with what has come out of this place previously, I am not likely to convince her otherwise. The statistics and the evidence are stark. The benefits to Tasmania far outweigh the \$8 million currently paid for North Melbourne and Hawthorn. You only have to walk around Hobart, and I have been here when footy has been played down here, and in Launceston when AFL footy has been played. The places are really alive with people.

Mr Finch - It is in the tourism off-season, too.

Mr DEAN - Yes, the tourism off-season, winter. Those places are alive with people. Businesses will tell you that it even spreads out into some of the other areas as well, not only in the Hobart or the Launceston hubs; it moves out. I have heard people on the east coast saying they benefit from AFL footy being played in this state, with visitors and people coming through.

Ms Armitage - It shows that having Hawthorn play down here works. We might not need our own team; Hawthorn is like our own team.

Mr DEAN - With our own team we would create employment for about 300-odd people; those are the numbers, and probably a lot more are hanging off the side. The economic return to this state would probably be immensely higher than we are currently getting from North Melbourne and Hawthorn. There is a lot of support there, but a state side playing more games, a game here every other week, has a lot going for it.

Mr Valentine - I think Tim Lane made the comment in your inquiry that it is a very unusual situation, with a state basically supporting a business from another state. It is not all staying here, so it works against us in some ways.

Mr DEAN - It does and that is a good comment. I thank the member for Hobart for raising that issue, it is absolutely true. I thank members for their contributions. We need an AFL team; we need to know where we stand; and we need to have a time given to us by AFL House as soon as possible. I commend the report to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Report noted.

MOTION

Establishment of Select Committee on Tasmania's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Measures

[5.16 p.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) (by leave) - Mr President, I move -

Noting the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of Tasmanians, and given the emergency response by the Tasmanian Government including Coronavirus related expenditure, legislative and public policy developments, that a Joint Select Committee be appointed with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of either House, with leave to adjourn from place to place and with leave to report from time to time to inquire into and report upon -

- (1) (a) the State's immediate and ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery measures;
 - (b) the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health, economic and social lives of Tasmanians; and
 - (c) any other matter incidental thereto; and
- (2) That the number of Members to serve on the said Committee on the part of the Legislative Council be four.

And requests the concurrence of the House of Assembly.

Mr President, I thank members for supporting the unusual request to bring a motion without notice. I distributed the draft text of this proposed motion to all members of parliament last week in an attempt to balance the need for adequate time for consideration and the constraints imposed by the current parliamentary sitting schedule to give the opportunity to consider this motion before we head into the winter recess. At the same time, I also circulated a background briefing paper comparing the parliamentary scrutiny of interstate legislatures during the COVID-19 pandemic, along with a summarised rationale document making the case for the establishment of this committee. Rather than taking up time reading large chunks of those two documents into *Hansard*, I instead seek leave to table those documents.

Leave granted; documents tabled.

Ms WEBB - It is likely that all here would have experienced within their lifetimes emergency and catastrophic events, either personally and/or within their communities. I reflect on previous disasters within our state, whether it be floods, the bushfires of 1967, 2013 or 2019, the Port Arthur tragedy, the Beaconsfield mining disaster and many more that time prevents me from honouring here now, but they all reverberated throughout our community beyond any localised point of immediate impact.

We would all recognise the pattern of response to these events - the activation of our emergency services and communal efforts as well as a subsequent period of individual and community

reflection, perhaps mourning and rebuilding. Now, we have faced a challenge like no other in our lifetime - the coronavirus pandemic. In this, we are all affected. Every single one of us, every single Tasmanian, has been and will continue to be for some time affected by the coronavirus pandemic. While some Tasmanians may be fortunate enough to pick up the pieces and resume something that resembles their lives prior to the summer of 2020, for many, their lives have been changed irrevocably.

Similarly, at the macro level, the full extent of the impacts upon our economy and society are yet to be fully fathomed. It must also be acknowledged, as the Premier has had the unenviable task of having to do, that there are and have been real and tragic costs, with Tasmanian lives being lost to this pandemic.

None of you need me to tell you the extent to which this pandemic has resulted in unprecedented challenge, changes and loss in our state. The sheer magnitude of that impact is of great relevance today to this discussion.

I am conscious that in normal circumstances when contemplating a proposed joint select committee, it is valid to ask: How does this issue merit a formal parliamentary inquiry? Why should there be a dedicated joint select committee to address this issue? Given the scale and magnitude of this pandemic and its impact, its ramifications, I believe that question is somewhat redundant in this instance.

Rather, as responsible, elected representatives, we must instead ask ourselves: Have we put in place all the fundamental and comprehensive mechanisms available to us as parliamentarians? Are we throwing everything we have, within our democratic role, at helping all Tasmanians get back on their feet in the face of this pandemic?

My answer to that question is not yet. As parliamentarians, we have a key role to invest in Tasmanians' trust and public confidence in their system of governance. Tasmanians must have confidence in how and why decisions were, and continue to be, made that limit and restrict their day-to-day lives. The Premier is up-front with his warnings that there are still months, possibly years, ahead and we all still need to do our bit.

I regard the establishment of a joint select committee inquiry into Tasmania's COVID-19 response and recovery to be an appropriate and necessary mechanism by which we elected representatives can do our bit for the Tasmanian community.

When thinking about this matter over recent months, I went back to the basics and asked myself, 'What is the responsible role for parliament, particularly in relation to that core function of scrutiny, during times like these?'

I found the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association very promptly and helpfully had turned its mind to this question of the role and the functioning of parliament during the COVID-19 crisis. It had in fact produced a toolkit for our reference. Fellow CPA members will have received it, as I did, by email on the 28 April this year. For members who may not have seen this document, I now seek leave to table it.

Leave granted; document tabled.

Ms WEBB - The CPA toolkit emphasises the responsibility of parliament to scrutinise all legislation and policies proposed by government, including routine laws and any emergency powers proposed during the pandemic.

While the toolkit does not dispute the necessity for emergency legislation, at page 13 it says, -

Emergency, fast-tracked legislation ... is used to take decisive and rapid action in response to emergencies such as the current COVID-19 global pandemic.

It also identifies a range of good practices which can be employed for any such emergency legislation. One identified mechanism is the parliamentary committee system which should play an important role during a crisis in relation to post-legislative scrutiny.

In the toolkit, under the heading, 'Action Points for Parliament', action point 3 focuses on post-legislative scrutiny -

In the absence of robust scrutiny during the passage of Emergency Legislation, it is even more important during this period for Parliamentarians to identify any unintended effects of emergency measures and to suggest changes where necessary. Post-legislative scrutiny can also examine procedural issues in addition to the implementation of legislation, particularly as the rapid passing of bills can place additional pressure on processes within Parliaments.

The toolkit also highlights that while emergency legislation may be necessary, it brings with it some potential problems, which increase the importance of scrutiny to hold the government to account.

Under the 'Challenges for Parliament', the toolkit says -

The massive extension of Executive power and the curtailing of certain civil liberties in society, in conjunction with a restricted Parliament, means that Parliamentarians are crucial to ensuring that scrutiny is applied and that any government is held to account as far as possible

The CPA toolkit provides broad guidance on the expected role and responses of a parliamentary democracy, and I commend it to my colleagues. We can also look to other Australian jurisdictions for an indication of what this looks like in practice. The background briefing paper I provided and tabled today shows that six of the eight sub-national legislatures and the federal parliament have instigated committee inquiries into their respective jurisdiction.

Focus on Covid-19 responses and recovery efforts - Western Australia has not done so yet, but it also took a different direction from the rest of the country by being the only jurisdiction to increase its parliamentary sitting schedule since the emergency was declared. It leaves Tasmania as the outlier in terms of formal parliamentary scrutiny. No two jurisdictions look exactly alike. Our interstate counterparts have all approached this in a way that suited their particular arrangements. In each there is an identifiable mechanism that fulfils a comparable function of the joint select committee I propose here. Clearly all parliaments not only recognised but also acted upon the principle expressed by the CPA of heightening parliamentary scrutiny and oversight during this crisis, which saw an unprecedented consolidation of power being exercised in an extraordinary manner.

To be very clear, those other jurisdictions also have a range of other parliamentary and non-parliamentary efforts in play, including committees of inquiry with more narrow or specific remits; parliamentary sittings with question time; subordinate legislation committees; advisory bodies both within and external to government departments; media scrutiny; and, in some cases, elections on the horizon.

Of course, it is our decision how best to respond in our local context and to act in the most appropriate way for the needs of our state. That we may look to other jurisdictions is not a suggestion we mimic exactly what they are doing, but more to get a steer on what has been regarded as the norm when it comes the appropriate amount of scrutiny from parliament during this extraordinary time.

I regard our lack of a broadly focused joint select committee of inquiry into the Covid-19 response and recovery thus far to be a failure of this parliament to deliver the appropriate amount of scrutiny on behalf of the Tasmanian people. We can recognise and value other efforts in place to capture, review and evaluate elements of this challenging time, but pointing to them and acknowledging their work does not elevate them above a piecemeal approach. These disparate parts do not cobble together to form a whole and do not deliver the value and outcomes that would be delivered by the committee I propose.

Nor should we have to pick and choose between these elements already here and the committee I propose. I do not believe we are in a situation of having to ration the democratic options available to us in this parliament, most especially not at this time under these circumstances. It is widely established that a vibrant and responsive parliamentary committee system is crucial to the health of, and the public confidence in, our system of governance. Parliamentary committees are an essential feedback loop between the executive and the electorate. They are a core parliamentary responsibility.

When dealing with an issue of the magnitude of this pandemic, a joint select committee provides a parliamentary response as representative of the full parliament as possible with all parties able to be represented and inclusive of a breadth of independent representation. It would be appropriate for the load to be shared equitably across both Chambers with the entire parliament working together on behalf of the Tasmanian community. A joint select committee carries a nonpartisan credibility that may be missing from other committee options. Some other jurisdictions were able to task this kind of broad scope of inquiry to an existing joint standing committee. In this state, we do not have an existing joint standing committee that could encompass a similar breadth. A number of our joint standing committees can and are playing a key role in addressing specific areas of scrutiny and documentation of this COVID-19 time as it falls within their particular functions and scope. The Subordinate Legislation Committee and the Public Accounts Committee would be examples of this. In each case, these committees are undertaking COVID-19-related scrutiny functions within their statutory role.

Alongside its regular role, the Subordinate Legislation Committee is scrutinising notices issued under the COVID-19 Disease Emergency (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. This is a valuable and appropriate role for this committee; however, it is tightly circumscribed in its scope.

The Public Accounts Committee will be engaging in scrutiny of public expenditure and the economic response and stimulus measures related to this COVID-19 time. Again, that will be valuable and appropriate work within the prescribed remit of that committee.

Does the work of these two existing committees complement the joint select committee I am proposing? Absolutely. Do these two committees fulfil the role and accomplish the outcomes that can be delivered by the proposed joint select committee? No, they do not. My assertion is we need not limit ourselves to these siloed efforts. We have the capacity for those committees to fulfil their function and also meet our broader scrutiny responsibilities. We can reap the benefit of a full suite of parliamentary activity.

Some members here feel wary of having what they would describe as too much scrutiny, with a sense that may be a burden. I prefer to ask: Do we have too much transparency? I wonder what level of transparency would we regard as being too burdensome? My intent in promoting the establishment of this committee is to be constructive. It would be an appropriate mechanism by which this parliament can deliver near real-time scrutiny of unprecedented and extraordinary governance through executive action, legislative changes and policy implementation. It also offers an input mechanism by which all affected Tasmanians can place before the parliament for consideration a diverse range of individual and stakeholder experiences and ideas.

Further, this proposed committee is timely. Best value will come from this work while still proximate to the execution and impact of those unprecedented and extraordinary actions. Parliament will soon go into the traditional winter recess period, which is the time when many parliamentary committees get a lot of their work done.

In short, this committee process could provide a unique opportunity for an overall evaluation and documentation of our state's COVID-19 experience. It will provide a comprehensive public record through systematically gathering evidence of what worked, what did not, and what people might have done differently with the benefit of hindsight. Were we as prepared as we had presumed? What lessons can be identified for future reference?

The answers to these questions and many more are all crucial contributions to good future policy development and a matter of public record. For example, this committee would have the broad remit to invite and review the perspective of the State Controller on the governance arrangements connected to his statutory role. Did he have all the tools necessary to undertake his role as best as he wanted? What difficulties did he experience, if any? What would he identify as potential improvements, and why?

Similarly, this clearly would have the remit to be looking at the Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan to examine whether it was fit for purpose for a pandemic compared with, say, a natural disaster.

I contend it would be appropriate and in fact a responsibility for a parliamentary committee to examine and review the degree to which such official and statutory preparation requirements played out during the COVID-19 crisis and during the transition and recovery stages, and any reforms necessary would come within its remit.

Of course, many other official roles and processes, statutory and otherwise, have not yet been truth-tested. We need to capture that feedback and insight while it is fresh.

These are just some suggested matters which do not readily fall within the remit of existing or planned parliamentary committees and inquiries, but which could appropriately be considered under this proposed committee of inquiry.

The scope of inquiry proposed for this joint select committee is a unique opportunity for posterity. It will deliver an important and unique public record, a nonpartisan governance resource for future reference at the local, national and international level. Such a governance record would also reflect Tasmania's unique status, including our challenges and opportunities as an island state. The Tasmanian Government should want this story told and it is one best told objectively through a formal parliamentary process.

One particularly valuable aspect is that this committee would in an expansive way invite public involvement into this exercise of accountability, providing an opportunity for the community to speak directly to parliament, to their elected representatives, on matters they wish to contribute as a formal part of the public record. This goes beyond feedback or consultation. Now is the time to encourage individuals and organisations to come forward to place their experience on the public record to test and ground truth against policy decisions already enacted and to assist in informing the development of good public policy.

Recovery, as we would all agree, is not just about rebuilding or restoring - as important as they are - but it is also an opportunity to draw on the experience we have shared and re-imagine, reinvent and reset where we want Tasmania to be.

There can be a number of avenues for this work of our state. It is by nature a collaborative effort and appropriate to the parliament as the people's elected representatives play a formal role through the respected mechanism of a joint select committee.

So far here in Tasmania we have picked off what I would describe as the low-hanging fruit of scrutiny - the straightforward parts, the already allocated parts and in some cases, perhaps, even the more comfortable parts. All those are valuable in their own right, but we have so far missed what should be the fruitful harvest of fully meeting our parliamentary responsibilities in this. It may be the Government chooses not to support this committee or other broad oversight at this time, but with all due respect to them, it is not the executive that should decide the level of parliamentary scrutiny applied to it. That is a decision for the parliament.

As members here know, in our democracy the parliament is supreme and the executive is answerable to it. That is our role on behalf of the Tasmanian community. It is a pillar and strength of our democracy and while any government of the day may chafe at that, I firmly believe a mature, responsible, confident government should welcome that accountability. I encourage the Government to recognise it, not just for the appropriate place it has in our democratic system, but also for the value it holds in delivering opportunities for better governance. It is easy to pay lip-service to transparency and accountability and then shy away from delivering on it in the ways that count most. I encourage the Government not to do that in this case.

In recent times, when it has come to the health of our people this Government has demonstrated strength, courage and leadership. I hope those qualities do not fail it now when it comes to ensuring the health of our democracy.

To conclude, I acknowledge many others have called over the last few months, and continue to do so, for a dedicated parliamentary inquiry such as this. This effort includes those in the other Chamber and in the broader community. Similarly, I need to thank all of you here once again for allowing this matter to be expedited here today, and for the frank and respectful conversations and discussions I have had with many of you these last few days in the lead-up to bringing this motion forward today.

As we emerge from possibly the most extraordinary period of disruption our state and nation have experienced in living memory, I genuinely believe it is appropriate for elected representatives to utilise all parliamentary processes available on behalf of the community, including this proposal for a comprehensive, dedicated joint select committee of inquiry into our COVID-19 response and recovery.

I commend the motion to the House.

[5.40 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, the Tasmanian Liberal Government has not shied away from scrutiny during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are currently two joint standing committees looking into the various components of the state Government's response, including the powerful Public Accounts Committee - PAC - and the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

Last week, the Public Accounts Committee resolved to undertake an inquiry into the Government's economic and health expenditure response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a separate committee would likely replicate existing inquiries already underway by the Tasmanian parliamentary committee system. This would presumably require key personnel to appear before committee on multiple occasions and other resources to be diverted for the purposes of the committee work, which has likely already been covered elsewhere by either the Public Accounts Committee or the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

While Tasmanians may be feeling safer and more comfortable with low infection numbers at the present, we must not be complacent because there remains a real risk that a second wave of infections may occur if we do not remain vigilant. We are still in an official state of emergency and public health emergency. Many restrictions remain in place and Tasmanians continue to be asked to make personal and business sacrifices to mitigate the risks of further infections. Government resources are still squarely focused, as they should be, on fighting the coronavirus. This should not change until we can be sure the risk has passed sufficiently. We cannot forget the virus has caused a health and economic disaster, and we cannot be complacent.

As well as the state-based parliamentary inquiries, there are also committees underway nationally within the Australian Parliament, including an inquiry into the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia's foreign affairs and trade as well as a select committee on COVID-19. As well as actively participating in the existing committees, as the parliament would likely expect, the Tasmanian Liberal Government has undertaken a range of measures to allow for heightened accountability and transparency throughout this period.

We have taken action to reconvene parliament earlier than planned and enable full scrutiny of government, with only the budget session being deferred until later this year when the budget will be delivered. To date, the parliamentary sitting schedule has had a net reduction in its scheduled sittings days by only four days. The Subordinate Legislation Committee is meeting regularly, scrutinising all notices made under COVID-19 emergency legislation, and is conducting regular public inquiries before which the Premier, other ministers and departmental officials have already appeared. The Premier has also committed to appear before the Public Accounts Committee at regular intervals and did so less than two weeks ago, with the Secretary of Treasury, to enable further scrutiny to occur.

The Government will actively engage with the PAC's resolutions with respect to its new inquiry. Furthermore, we are the only jurisdiction, including the federal government, to release an economic and fiscal update that includes budget forecasts for the current and next financial years. The Tasmanian Government has already undertaken considerable measures to ensure all members of parliament have been able to access information and access to key personnel during the pandemic. This has included regular meetings between party leaders and the Premier, briefings with the State Controller and the Director of Public Health and open lines of engagement with ministerial officers on constitutional matters, of which there have been many.

The Premier and various ministers have convened once again daily media briefings, which were livestreamed to the public to ensure the community and media had ample opportunity to be updated on the various and wide-ranging issues that have occurred during this period. The Premier has conducted nearly 70 public media conferences since the start of the emergency period.

The honourable member talks about it being crucial for the oversight and the scrutiny of parliament. I would like to bring honourable members up to date on the amount of scrutiny and oversight there has been with some of the ministers.

To start with, the Premier appeared before the Subordinate Legislation Committee regarding the State Service Regulations on 19 May. Further detail has been sought on this matter and will be provided in due course. On 21 May, the Premier appeared before the PAC to talk about economic and fiscal update with the Secretary of Treasury. The Premier will appear before a new PAC inquiry into the COVID-19 response on 29 June.

The minister, Mr Ferguson, has been requested by the Subordinate Legislation Committee to provide information on further briefings regarding the COVID-19 order.

The Attorney-General, Ms Archer, appeared before the Subordinate Legislation Committee on 22 May, to provide evidence. Follow-up information was sought and is in the process of being provided to the committee. Officers of the courts appeared before the Subordinate Legislation Committee on 8 May regarding notices relating to the operation of the courts through the pandemic. Ms Courtney is to appear before the Subordinate Legislation Committee regarding the COVID-19 Disease Emergency (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act on Friday, 5 June.

Dozens and dozens of answers to questions without notice have been provided to Legislative Council members, as we would expect, regarding the COVID-19 response. There has been plenty of opportunity for oversight and scrutiny. For Mr Shelton alone, there have been approximately 54 specific questions and 34 responses. These have been provided to honourable members here. Ms Archer has received more than 50 questions in eight separate responses. Ms Courtney has also had 22 separate sets of questions put to her and many individual questions within them. There were many, many more questions put to other ministers, as members know. There has been no lack of opportunity for scrutiny and oversight.

The Government has already conducted a review and has released an interim report into the north-west outbreak and we have accepted all recommendations, which are being implemented. Furthermore, we have committed to an independent inquiry into the north-west outbreak, for which the terms of reference are under development.

Honourable members, in view of this significant scrutiny and accountability mechanisms already in place and being participated in by all members here, it is unnecessary to convene another

committee, especially while we are still dealing with an emergency. If members can bear in mind that we are still in a state of emergency - the pandemic is not over yet. Because of these reasons and the abundant scrutiny that has been available and is happening and carrying on, the Government will not support this particular motion.

[5.48 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, my contribution will be brief. I have a couple of questions for the member for Nelson, who proposed this committee. I asked these questions of the member when she made contact with me earlier in the week.

Who has been identified from the Legislative Council to be a member of the committee? That is something we have always known in the past, and I do not see any reason not to know this time.

There appears to be this urgency, when we are still in a state of emergency. Normally an inquiry such as this would take place when you were through the state of emergency. That is one of my concerns - that we are still in the middle of that, and it would require focusing time, effort and resources into a committee.

We still have many people in our community who are dealing with aspects of COVID-19. The Small Business Hardship Grants people are working through at the moment -

Ms Forrest - Or missed out on, more like.

Ms RATTRAY - Or missed out completely, or received a reduced amount. That is certainly something people are trying to get their heads around. I think people need time to digest and work through many of the issues going on in the community before they need to make a submission to an inquiry process. I do not say that everyone would, or would not, but just to have that opportunity.

Again, I looked at the PAC inquiry's terms of reference. I know they relate to a financial aspect of government, but they also talk about any matters incidental thereto, so I am just interested in how much of what has been proposed by the member in establishing a joint select committee inquiry might cross over into the PAC.

I have also tried to contact the Auditor-General's office - I have not been successful in receiving a call back from the Auditor-General - to see what is planned for its focus post-COVID-19 or during the emergency situation. I do not have that at my disposal at this time.

I am a member of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, and, yes, we are meeting twice a week and undertaking a number of inquiries. Obviously, there are aspects of the issued notices that are not within the remit of that committee. Certainly I understand the direction the member for Nelson is looking for in that regard; I just want to make that point.

Also, the member has been good enough to table two significant documents in her contribution, but I am not sure I have received them as yet. Are they not yet available?

Ms Webb - Two of them were documents I sent to all parliamentarians by email on Tuesday last week.

Ms RATTRAY - All right, got that.

Ms Webb - The further one was a CPA toolkit, which, if you are a CPA member, would have been emailed to you by the CPA on 28 April, but I have tabled it for reference if anyone did not receive it directly from the CPA.

Ms RATTRAY - Thank you for that clarification. Certainly I have not looked in depth at the CPA document, but, yes, I do have a copy of what the member sent last week.

I also indicated to the member when she made the call that I thought we should at least have had a bit more time to consider an inquiry of this nature, given that probably not everyone has been on a joint select committee inquiry in this place.

Ms Forrest - Some of us have.

Ms RATTRAY - This no disrespect to the members from the other place, but it is heavy going because they have a significant workload. The other place usually has a small number of members who can be members of those committees, and possibly they expect that members of that committee already sit on two or three other committees. I am not here to defend the workload of the other place; I am just saying that it is a fact, and that is how it is. When you are trying to organise hearings and witnesses and doing reports, it can be a challenge.

The member for Huon is nodding at me. We shared 18 months on a joint House select committee on future gaming, and the Chair of that committee is my colleague here to the left. It is heavy going.

Again, I do not know who will be on the committee, and I would be interested to know who those members will be. That we will find out later is not something I have found to be the process in the past, so I am interested in (a) who has been approached, and (b) at least who the Legislative Council members might be. Obviously we do not know from the other place who will be identified there, but I do not think it is unreasonable to ask that question.

I have some concerns. Given we are only in the middle or fourth quarter, or whatever it is, of the pandemic - and it has been referred to as various stages - I do not consider there is the urgency that the member indicates that we must get started through the winter break.

At this time, I would certainly appreciate responses to my questions, and reserve my right to make a decision as we move through the process.

[5.56 p.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Mr President, I thank the member for Nelson for bringing this motion before us today, and the efforts she has put into it and the intention to establish a committee. I will support the motion.

These have been extraordinary times. We have all seen Tasmanians being asked to take steps we have never been asked to take before. We have had movements in and out of the state restricted. We have had movements even around our own communities restricted. We have had isolation and quarantine requirements, stay-at-home orders, schools closed, and families having to support their children through learning at home with the support of their schools. It is only right that these extraordinary decisions and extraordinary powers face proper scrutiny.

I hear the arguments around various committees and inquiries that have been established. We know that the Public Accounts Committee is scrutinising the expenditure decisions that have been

made. The Subordinate Legislation Committee has some powers of scrutiny over some of those decisions, but I am yet to be convinced there is any inquiry or committee in form already that will be addressing the same terms the member for Nelson has put forward, which I feel are important terms to consider.

The Government has made itself available to the public in terms of daily press conferences, or almost daily, until recently. I heard the Leader say that the Premier has made himself available for about 70 press conferences, but, frankly, Mr President, so he should. He is the Premier of the state. We are dealing with the biggest, most far-reaching event any of us have seen in our lifetimes in terms of the impact on the state, so the Premier should be addressing the public every day - so should the Health minister, so should many of the other ministers - to explain the decisions they are making, and opening themselves up to questions, because we are dealing with something we have not experienced at this magnitude.

However, the press conferences - even question time in parliament - do not allow the level of scrutiny we require. They do not allow the kind of detailed interrogation of these decisions that we really need.

I appreciate we are still in the midst of this emergency, but we do not know how long this will last. There is no point saying we are at the fourth quarter, and we can deal with it once we have dealt with this emergency, because we do not know when this emergency will finish. None of us knows that. We hope it will finish soon. We really are very hopeful that we are on the way out of it, but we have no guarantees. So I am not inclined to say, 'Let us put it off until we have dealt with the emergency', because I am not convinced we will not see another emergency, or that this will not drag on for some more months to come. There are still decisions to come, and decisions have been made that should be scrutinised now. There is no reason, in my view, to delay that further.

It would have been really good to see the Government take the lead on this. It has had plenty of opportunity, and I know the Leader said its ministers have made themselves available for scrutiny, and to be accountable to the public. It would have been really good to see them take the lead in establishing this committee, particularly given the reduced amount of time we have had in the parliament. That has been rectified and our days will be increasing after the break, but we are still operating on a limited schedule. It would have been good to see them take the lead on this. In the absence of that, I appreciate the member for Nelson bringing this matter before us. As I said, I will be supporting this motion.

In summary, I am yet to be convinced there is any reason this committee should not take place. No other committee is covering the same terms the member for Nelson is proposing, and those terms are important. Decisions have been made that need to be properly scrutinised. We need to do this and to start the process now because we do not know that we will not need to make more of these same sorts of decisions in the future.

[6.01 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I remember when the Joint Select Committee on Future Gaming Markets was first suggested - it was to have three members from the lower House and three members from the upper House. They said the three members from the upper House would be A-B-C. When the motion came here, I said, 'I don't believe this is an appropriate way of operating and we should choose the members from this place.'. We adjourned and those who wanted to be on the committee put their name in and there was a vote. I assumed a similar thing would have happened in this place - that once we had accepted four members from here would be

part of that subcommittee and sent downstairs if they agreed to four members, it would go to the next part, which would be to find out which four members wanted to be part of it

Members are saying it would be handy if the member from Nelson could sort that out for us. When we had the gaming committee, it had to be a member downstairs from the Labor, Liberal and the Greens parties and here it had to be three independent members. We need some clarification about what the structure would be. Of the four members up here, if this were to pass, would it be four independent members or two independents and members from the Labor and Liberal parties, because we are all 15 members of this place, so that would be helpful.

I will support the motion because I appreciate the member for Rumney's position about us not knowing how long this pandemic will go for. If another wave comes and if we go to a specific role the Subordinate Legislation Committee and the PAC have, this committee would be using the reports and information from both those committees and looking at other areas that might not be part of those committee's structures. I support the motion for this committee.

[6.03 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I understand the need to introduce the motion in this way due to the sitting schedules we have and the timing issues. I appreciate why it has been brought on this way and there is some benefit.

First, I want to thank the member for the background briefing paper she provided. It was most fulsome and obviously a heck of a lot of work went into it. The member has answered many questions about why an inquiry like this might be needed. The effort she has gone to is amazing, so thank you very much.

Some might say, 'Not another inquiry.'. I have been getting emails, as I am sure every member of this Chamber has, about this particular inquiry, but it is our role as a House of review to scrutinise what the Government does. However, this goes a lot deeper in a lot of ways and has another purpose if it can be steered correctly - that is, it is an opportunity to capture important information in many quarters. It has already been mentioned about posterity, about having a report from a government inquiry sitting in the *Hansard*, a place accessible to any future government that is faced with such huge problems as we are currently facing - let us face it, it has been a hundred years since this occurred. It would be a good thing to be able to get some fairly good information as to what happened, how it was handled and how things were progressed. Any government would want to be able to have the benefit of that information before it when it was trying to figure out how best to handle a similar circumstance.

We can say plenty of public servants will have had this experience and that will be documented within the public service. Those of us who have been in the service know how corporate knowledge can be lost - how people can simply walk out the door - one minute the knowledge is there and the next minute, it is not because it was not documented properly. For that reason alone, it is good to have an inquiry like this.

However, the important component of this is that it is not an opportunity to attack the Government for what it has done. That would certainly be the last thing I would want to see. I am happy to be involved in this but that is the last thing we would want to see. The way we have progressed through this has been with goodwill. An inquiry like this would need to be carried out with goodwill. Maybe gaps will be uncovered, there may be some deficiencies, but it would not be for want of trying to cover the field of issues we have all been faced with. No government is perfect

and we would have to ensure the focus was on capturing the information and getting it down for posterity.

As I have said, and as the member mentioned in her opening remarks, the output could be valuable to the Government in forming its policies. That is important. Having the whole experience on the project record, reviewing the current application of assistance measures and the possibility of those measures being adjusted to cover some gaps that may be discovered. If we are going to have another way, yes, fine, I understand. We are still in the pandemic - why would we have a committee like this if we are still in it? Because it might actually help to inform the Government about what else it ought to be concentrating on and paying attention to, because we will pick up things that might have been missed in this first wave. That is a good enough reason to do it now. Examining the recovery path could add to that.

I have had communications on this from some people, as I am sure other members have, but one of the ones saying, 'Oh, not another inquiry,' raised some interesting points: How do we reinvigorate our tourism sector? How do we get people back on public transport in a safe manner? How do we improve job security? Do we even try to improve job security? Should we have a universal base of income and major tax reform? How do we get the arts sector moving again? What about education and its future? What form of community do we want? They are all questions that at some time have to be addressed, and this would provide an opportunity to get some of that into focus and provide an opportunity to give the Government information that might well be valuable to it.

Yes, you can have inquiries from some of the existing standing committees and they may well be very valuable for the purposes of those standing committees. But, again, there is a benefit in having an inquiry report covering the whole field. I would be more than happy to be a part of that.

As for the numbers in the other place, I agree it is not easy and is probably a good argument for increasing the numbers down there. That is always an issue, one I do not think is going to go away. I do not know that it is an argument not to have a select committee. In this case, we would not want it simply to be an opportunity for the Government to be bashed. The only way you can prevent that is to have everybody around the table so there is an opportunity to share information and ideas.

The motion has some merit. Yes, it will be hard work and, yes, it will take resources, but every inquiry takes resources. Mr President, that is my two bob's worth,.

[6.12 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I thank the member for Nelson for all the information she has provided to us; she certainly has done a power of work.

While I acknowledge the right of any member to bring a motion forward - and a general committee with plenary oversight of the Tasmanian Government's response to the coronavirus pandemic may sound on the face of it a beneficial and worthwhile endeavour - however, for a number of reasons, I question its utility, given the existence of a number of other independent organisations, committees and bodies that are undertaking their own investigations into the coronavirus response. I do not believe we are post-COVID-19 at this stage.

My concern is that this committee could become a vehicle for duplication of efforts, confusion for those wanting to make submissions and a costly use of public resources to conduct. I, like many others, wish to focus on what the proposed role and functions of the parliamentary committee

are - and its first role is to ensure focused and rigorous scrutiny of COVID-19-related regulatory decisions are undertaken as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This is a laudable function; however, at this stage I am unconvinced this particular function is not already being adequately examined by other means. Aside from the regular scrutiny applied to bills, both in this Chamber and the lower House, the Joint Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation is already empowered to look into issues and has been doing so as part of its regular business before and during the coronavirus crisis.

It is quite self-evident the Tasmanian Parliament dealt with emergency legislation during the crisis period efficiently based on the medical and epidemiological evidence that came through hour by hour; the time taken from the drafting of bills to royal assent was, in my opinion, almost as quick as it could have been.

The debate that occurred both in the House of Assembly and here also ensured that comments and questions regarding those pieces of legislation would remain enshrined in *Hansard* and on the record in light of regular parliamentary processes and the work being done by the Subordinate Legislation Committee. I am therefore a bit unsure of what is hoped to be achieved by the function of the proposed inquiry.

Ms Webb - Can I just clarify - this function you read out, where were you reading that from?

Ms ARMITAGE - From documents I actually had. I do not have them with me now.

Ms Webb - Sorry. You were not reading the terms of reference?

Ms ARMITAGE - No.

Ms Webb - No, okay.

Ms ARMITAGE - No, sorry.

Without labouring the point too much, I believe pre-existing bodies have better expertise and capabilities to undertake this task. This is exactly what the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council is tasked to do. PESRAC is a fundamentally independent and apolitical committee comprising experts in their fields.

I appreciate there is some apprehension as to the nature of the recommendations that will be made by the council; whether its investigations and findings will be made public and how likely it is for the Government to actually implement its recommendations. These questions are worth asking, and I look forward to hearing what answers the Government will provide in response to these concerns.

However, I do not believe that this is now the time to implement the nuclear option of instigating an inquiry, the nature of which is being proposed. If it should become necessary and if the investigations are allowed to be made by the Public Accounts Committee, the Subordinate Legislation Committee and the Auditor-General - I understand the Auditor General will be looking into these matters - and if the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council in any way falls short of the high standard expected of it, that is when an inquiry of this nature could be contemplated.

To be clear, an inquiry like this is no replacement for the expertise offered by the aforementioned bodies and its members, but inquiries, by their very nature, are mechanisms by which to keep public administration accountable and responsible.

Consequently, I am not sure if I see the sense in having a joint parliamentary inquiry while we are simultaneously moving out of this crisis, albeit quite slowly and still in the formative stages of determining recovery plans.

I understand our community has expressed its grief throughout this crisis in varying ways and providing a platform where this grief can be expressed is a valuable thing. Parliamentary inquiries have been used to this end before, such as the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Inquiries like these are broad in nature and are a vehicle for witnesses to tell their stories. However, what is being proposed here is a compilation for an ongoing recovery plan and posterity.

As regards to an ongoing recovery plan, yet again I believe there are bodies already using qualitative individual experiences to inform recovery plans, such as the Premier's advisory council, which can more meaningfully collect and analyse these experiences to inform tangible recommendations that can be converted into actual policy.

As for the collection of stories for posterity, again I understand this has formed a part of some broad inquiries, but collecting stories and experiences relating to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic is another thing entirely. Let me very clear: this is not to say any experience or story any person has to share about this experience is any more or less valuable than anyone else's. I just do not believe this should be the function of the proposed inquiry.

The mind boggles at the resources we will be required to give everybody who wants to make a submission the time and space to adequately express themselves. I would anticipate significant revisions to this, given the vast amount of time and resources that would be required to provide this proposed platform. In that event, the inquiry committee would then be forced to deal with a serious legitimacy issue.

In summing up, I believe this proposed inquiry has been made with the very best of intentions and with the best interests of the Tasmanian community in mind. I am not convinced, however, of its practical value and I am unsure about the roles and functions it seeks to undertake. To my mind, they are far too broad in scope and are drafted in such a way as to confuse the manner of its investigation.

I am not ruling out supporting an inquiry like this. However, I do not believe now is the best time to commence an inquiry like this, particularly when we are still actually coming out of this crisis and when our existing bodies and organisations are still assessing the scope of its damage. At this time, I am content with allowing the existing bodies and organisations continue with the work they are mandated to do and to consider a committee, such as the one that has been proposed, in the future if their work should fall short of the high standard Tasmanians expect of them.

[6.19 p.m.]

Mr ARMSTRONG (Huon) - Mr President, we heard earlier in the AFL debate how resources should be used in this place. This is a perfect example of that. I will not go through all the committees that are already looking at it, the Subordinate Legislation Committee, PAC and all that.

I must say, when I received the email from the member, it said this matter would be brought on in June, and I thought that would be at the end of June, not the beginning, until I spoke to the member a couple of days ago and was informed it was going to be brought on today. I, too, would really like to know who the members are going to be on this committee and whether the member has approached anybody to sit on that committee. I have not been approached and a couple of other members I have spoken to have not been approached, so I would like to know whether the member has approached any other members in this Chamber to sit on that committee.

One problem I have is that PAC is going to call for submissions. If this committee gets up and is calling for submissions, it will be confusing. People will put a submission in to the PAC inquiry, and the next minute they will see an advertisement to say they can apply to another committee to put a submission in. It will create real confusion. I honestly think we should give some breathing space to this pandemic. Much is still happening and we are still in the grip of it. If the committees advertise, we are probably going to get many people who put in submissions a great deal of the time.

Businesses will not have time to start putting submissions in because they will be too busy rebuilding their businesses after this. They will not have the time to start writing submissions to a committee. They will be trying to get a dollar back in their tills because they have been out of business for two months. At a later time, if things do not happen properly and we do not get the answers and everything we want through this, we can look at a committee but not now.

[6.22 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, this is an interesting matter. Like other members, I can see why the matter has been considered but a number of other issues are underway. With the greatest respect to some members in this place, I do not think they have an absolute understanding or appreciation of what PAC can do.

If we look at the number of inquiries at the present time, the Government was really seeking scrutiny on this occasion inasmuch as they recalled this parliament. Members might recall that we were adjourned until August. The Government might have had approaches from the Labor Party and from other sources and maybe they listened; I do not know. For the purposes of scrutiny and COVID-19 legislation, they brought this place back, as we are now today, and a lot of that was about inviting scrutiny -

Ms Rattray - Openness and transparency.

Mr DEAN - Yes, openness and transparency, not wanting to avoid all that. We need to be fair in looking at where we are going with this.

The Leader mentioned the number of press statements, releases and things that have occurred and the questions that have been asked. There has been a huge amount of scrutiny. Then we were told about the Subordinate Legislation Committee, what it has done and is doing. I am not a part of that committee, but the member moving this motion is, so she understands that very well. I am the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, which is proceeding with an inquiry in relation to this matter. We are well advanced in where we are going with this and there have already been releases in the media about our inquiry. In doing that, I ask the member to look closely at the terms of reference of the Public Accounts Committee.

Ms Forrest - Are you talking about the PAC inquiry?

Mr DEAN - The PAC inquiry which is to inquire into and regularly report upon the Tasmanian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular regard to certain areas -

1. The timeliness and efficacy of the Government's economic response including stimulus funding and targeted financial support programs/payments;
2. Health expenditure with specific reference to preparation and response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. The impact, progress and outcome of the Government's economic recovery plan for Tasmania; and
4. any other matter incidental thereto.

Hopefully I have this right: if you look at the member's motion and the terms of reference as I read from that -

- (1) (a) The State's immediate and ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery measures -

which are exactly the same areas that the PAC will be looking at -

- (b) The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health, economic and social lives of Tasmanians -

That is another area PAC will be closely examining, and 'and any other matter incidental thereto'. They are three of the terms of reference. PAC can inquire into almost anything that has gone on during the COVID-19 pandemic because it has some effect on the finances and financial position of this state. PAC will be doing a wide inquiry.

I agree with the member for Launceston - there will be confusion. There will be confusion because our inquiry will be running simultaneously to this other inquiry, if it gets up. I have no doubt that some people will provide a submission to the Public Accounts Committee and, at the same time, will simply remove the date and provide that same submission to the inquiry the member for Nelson wants to set up. That is how closely they will interact with each other.

I would support this inquiry if it were done at a later time, when we could look at what has already happened and what has come back from other inquiries, to see whether anything was missed and if there are areas that need closer scrutiny. I would then look at that inquiry in a positive manner, to see whether it was necessary and required in all circumstances. My strong view is that now is not the right time. I ask members to look at that closely.

If you look at the position of the inquiry, Don Challen is chairing the Government's position in relation to the recovery, the responses required for the recovery and so on. It is not a parliamentary committee inquiry - the member is right, it is not. I had questions on the Notice Paper and I am following this up now because I understand there is a website, but two new questions are: How exactly will this operate? Will the reports that come from Mr Challen and his group be tabled?

The Government has referred me to that website, but I have not been able to follow up yet. Maybe the honourable Leader, in her response, might be able to tell me -

Ms Rattray - The honourable Leader has responded.

Mrs Hiscutt - Yes, I have already -

Mr DEAN - The member responding might know where this is all going. I understand they will be tabled and will become public documents, but I am not sure and I am trying to get the information as we speak. They are looking specifically at the area the member wants to look at with this committee as well, which the Public Accounts Committee is also looking at.

I have some questions of the honourable member moving this matter. We have the document - I am not sure if it is one of the tabled documents - that is headed, 'Re: Parliamentary Inquiry into the COVID-19 Response'. I understand it was sent out to community leaders and community members, inviting them to lobby us. I must say it is unusual - I have never experienced this before in my time in this place - but, anyway, that is what has happened on this occasion.

The member for Hobart mentioned the emails asking us to consider our support of this motion. I am not sure how many responses the member for Hobart received. I have five -

Mr Valentine - I think it was about four or five.

Mr DEAN - I received only five; I am not sure how many others this went to because, if this document was sent to all leaders in the state - specific leaders, community leaders et cetera - five responses is not a great response.

Mr Valentine - To clarify for the member for Windermere, I had five emails in relation to this inquiry. I am not suggesting they were responses to something you have.

Mr DEAN - I had five responses to the letter I referred to which was sent to community leaders. I could ask the question of other members: how many lobbying responses did they receive from community members?

Mr Gaffney - I had six.

Ms Rattray - I had four.

Mr DEAN - If it only went out to five, it is a good response if all five have responded, but if it went to 20, 30, 40, 50 or whatever people, I could not say that is strong support for this committee if the member is relying on that to get her committee up.

What is more, I wrote to all five senders of those emails I received to ask whether they were aware of the other inquiries underway at present, or would be underway. Three did not bother responding to me while two have come back to me. Unions Tasmania has come back to me and, with the greatest respect, I am not quite sure they fully understand what PAC can do from their response. I have it here and I can read it if honourable members want me to.

Mr Croome responded as did the other two people involved in his response. I thank Mr Croome for that, and for asking whether PAC was likely to be calling for public submissions in its inquiry.

I responded to him to indicate that yes, we would be. But I am not sure if I did so and I do not want to say I did if I did not say it.

Mrs Hiscutt - The recovery council report will be made public. I have its membership here if he wants that read into *Hansard*.

Mr DEAN - I would appreciate the membership of that group of people being read into *Hansard*. Do I need to read it in because you do not -

Mrs Hiscutt - Mr President, would you rather me take that list to Mr Dean?

Ms Forrest - It is on the website.

Mr PRESIDENT - The member on his feet can table the document as you have already spoken.

Ms Forrest - It is on the website.

Mr DEAN - The member for Launceston raised that the Auditor-General will undertake audits in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. That is as far as I can take that. The Auditor-General indicated I was able to make that statement here today, but much work is being done on where they are going and what they are going to do et cetera.

Ms Forrest - He was clear it would not be duplicating other work.

Mr DEAN - Exactly; that is right. I have spoken with the Auditor-General since then and he was careful to say to me that all he would want me to release at this stage is the fact that his office will be undertaking some audits in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. He did not want me to enlarge on that and I am not going to. To answer the member for Murchison, I am not saying yes or no.

Looking at the recovery council, we have these learned people - Don Challen is its chair and we know of his position in this state as a previous secretary of Treasury; Rufus Black, UTAS - I think we all know Rufus; Dale Elphinstone - I think we all know Dale; Tim Gardner, Stornoway group, Metro Tasmania chair - most of us would know Tim Gardner; Kym Goodes; Samantha Hogg - Samantha should be well known to all of you; Leanne McLean, children's commissioner; Paul Ranson, Bank of Us; and Brett Torossi, Tourism Tasmania.

I have read the list of members into the record so that is all I need to do. I wanted to make clear the calibre of people who are on this recovery group team; I have done that. Some people might not like that, but it needs to be done - we need to talk about it.

I am not sure - the member for Murchison might be able to tell us more about this - but a motion was moved this morning, something to do with COVID-19. Did I get that wrong?

Ms Forrest - I moved three motions. Were you not listening?

Mr DEAN - I will not be nasty; I will be nice about this. It is not in my nature at all to be nasty as it is in the nature of some other people; I am not that type of person.

Ms Forrest - I just said, 'Were you not listening?'.

Mr DEAN - I was listening.

Ms Forrest - There were three separate motions - matters relating to COVID-19. They are not inquiries; we were just debating them.

Mr DEAN - That is another area we will look at when going down this path and in this direction. I do not think I need to take it any further other than to emphasise that it seems the five people who responded to me and were lobbying me were not aware of the other issues, inquiries and things underway and the matters being considered at this time.

That is fairly clear to me.

The member in her contribution talked about PAC and its confinement in areas, or words to the effect - if I am wrong, I will apologise here, or change it - that PAC would work within constrained or confined limits. There really are very few limits, or confinements on PAC in its inquiry because, I reiterate, there would be very little, if anything, that has happened with COVID-19 that will not in some way or another impact on the finances of this state.

PAC is a powerful committee. Members have heard that before. PAC is said to be the most powerful committee within the Westminster parliamentary system. I have no doubt this PAC will do a very good job of the work it has agreed to undertake, which is now underway. PAC can do and undertake wide and varied work.

The member was right when she talked about the emergency services activation. We know that was the case. Emergency services were all activated, and worked extremely well. I commend them all. They have all done a superb job. It was their job and what they are paid to do. They did it with certain dangers that were there, and we absolutely were all impacted in some way.

I do not have much to say on other comments made by members. One member asked whether there can be too much scrutiny. Well, in my opinion, of course there can be. You have to draw the line somewhere. You cannot continue to scrutinise and scrutinise; you have to draw a line somewhere because other things are not being done. The COVID-19 pandemic is a very serious matter, critical to us all, but there are other matters.

The member for Rumney mentioned PAC looking at only expenditure. I was a bit annoyed at that comment because it is more than just looking at the expenditure. It has a lot more to it than that - if that were only the case. It is more far-reaching than that.

For all the reasons I have covered, I ask members to take a very close look at this motion. There is a right time, perhaps, for this inquiry at the end of all the currently occurring processes. Other members mentioned waiting for a later time to see if there are areas that need consideration and looking at. I would certainly consider that favourably. In my opinion, now is just not the right time for another inquiry. PAC and the committee created under this motion would operate simultaneously and there would be confusion and the creation of some problems.

Unless a very convincing speaker comes forward, I am not in a position to be able to support this motion.

[6.44 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, maybe I will be the compelling speaker.

Mr Dean - You do not support it, though. You might support the other way.

Ms FORREST - There is a bit of context around what we are talking about here. We are dealing with what are, and have been called more times than I can even contemplate counting, unprecedented times. I remember when this first started being recognised as a particular challenge for the world, but also when it came to Australia and then Tasmania, other members here thought I was overreacting. They mocked me for cleaning my spot here and refusing to leave this space to speak and things like that. I knew what we were facing, and what could potentially be unleashed on this state.

I commend the Government, wholeheartedly and sincerely, for the actions it has taken and the way in which it has responded to this very real threat. To be at the heart of the region where our major outbreak occurred was quite frightening. I know the member for Montgomery is right next door as well. We had constituents who were terrified and desperate for information and knowledge.

I have said it before in this place, and no doubt I will say it again: I am very grateful for the openness, transparency and approachability - if that's the word - the Premier provided to me personally. Not just the Premier himself, but also the Minister for Health, the State Controller, and even the state health controller, at times when it was absolutely imperative there was contact - as well as other staff in his office who could answer some of the other questions, including the acting secretary of DPIPWE.

I have no criticism of the Government in its dealings during that period. These were extraordinary times, where decisions had to be made very quickly. Some of the decisions that were made to shut down the state, and particularly to shut down the north-west, and the speed at which it had to be done, when things were changing on a daily basis, and then to get all the legal aspects of that, the orders and everything in place, and then the clarity around that with the answers to questions, were enormous tasks.

While the outbreak was really unfortunate - and unfortunately 13 people lost their lives as a result of COVID-19 - we did bring it under control.

The answer the Leader read out this morning, to the question I posed last sitting, stated that - and I don't know if this has changed - there is only one case in the state that is of unclear origin. I believe that is probably the case at the Mersey, where they couldn't identify where a person who worked at the Mersey caught it. I am not sure. I will be interested to find that out. It is not relevant at the moment.

I was talking to my husband about how, while we had more cases than we would have liked, they were all clearly linked to the *Ruby Princess*, and the outbreak at the hospital in the north-west and a couple of northern cases were also linked to that.

It was clear. We had really good contact tracing. We did not get those pockets of COVID-19 spread we could not account for. All power to the Public Health officers who undertook that work, and for the people who mostly did the right thing, with the odd little exception.

Mr President, during that period significant restrictions were put on us in what we did, how we moved, who we could see, where we could go. By and large, everyone did the right thing. I think there is a very positive story to tell in all of this. There is an opportunity to capture this story, at a time when it is fresh in people's minds, and it is still very real. In terms of, if this is the right time, if you do something like this, I would say yes, it is.

Some arguments have been put against it, apart from the timing issue, which is a personal position. I watched the Premier this morning, when he was asked a question in the other place, regarding an inquiry, or similar approach. He talked about the regular - and mostly, for a long time, daily - updates, which I hung out for, to hear what was going on. As soon as they had happened, questions would flood in from my constituents again, and at least I had heard it directly from his mouth. Some things were not always clear, and we had to clarify them, but that was fine.

The media could ask questions, but there was no real opportunity for parliamentary or public scrutiny at that point. Yes, they were really valuable, they were really important and absolutely necessary, but there were some limitations with that. Had they not been done, we would have been in an absolute information void. Also, parliament has been recalled. When we sat in March, and we were closed until August, clearly there was a need to have some sort of scrutiny. These really serious decisions were being made that completely restricted our freedom and liberties, with no scrutiny - not even Subordinate Legislation Committee scrutiny of those, and I will come to that in a minute.

Then we have the PAC inquiry that has been initiated, and the Subordinate Legislation Committee process. As an exhausted member of both committees, let me tell you what goes on in both. I do not want to go on about PAC being the most powerful committee in the parliament, because it is actually not. You cannot sit during prorogation, whereas the Subordinate Legislation Committee can. However, Subordinate Legislation is limited by the scope within its act, in terms of on what basis we can scrutinise matters that come before us - whether it be regulations, by-laws or other instruments subject to scrutiny in Subordinate Legislation.

The COVID-19 emergency act provided an additional process for Subordinate Legislation to be able to scrutinise the notices issued under that act. Normally, notices are not scrutinised by Subordinate Legislation, nor are ministerial orders and a range of other instruments, and neither are directions made by the Director of Public Health or the State Controller under the Emergency Management Act. They are not subject to the scrutiny of the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

Those matters the Subordinate Legislation Committee can consider are confined within the scope of the scrutiny within the act, and also to the notices under that act and regulations - but not directions, and not ministerial orders, unless it specifically says so in the principal act, which is pretty rare. Most of them are a way of avoiding that scrutiny; I spoke about that another time.

With the functions of PAC, the committee may inquire into and consider and report to parliament on any matter arising in connection with public sector finances that the committee considers appropriate, and any matter referred to the committee by the Auditor-General.

Then we go to public sector finances. The definition includes any money forming part of or payable to the Public Account or an agency trust account, and any money received by an agency or government business entity or statutory authority or local authority, any expenditure that is made or authorised by the Appropriation Act or any other act, or an agency of government business

enterprise statutory authority and local authority, and any liability for the satisfaction of which any expenditure by the Crown is or may be required.

That clearly gives us all the power to scrutinise the decisions made by government in regard to the spending - the spending on health, the economic stimulus, the support for small business, the support for the racing industry - and the support for this industry and that industry. Quite clearly, that was the intention. I was the person who proposed the inquiry in PAC, because I believe that is PAC's core business. There is no bigger game in town at the moment than the COVID-19 pandemic. To suggest there may be things that are more important is quite an interesting concept.

For PAC to look at those matters in relation to expenditure, particularly with regard to the additional moneys that had to be put into health, acknowledging that we passed the supplementary appropriation bill in March - it had \$150 million unallocated, money that sat with Finance-General. I believe \$50 million of that went pretty much straight into health, and I believe a significant amount of the other \$100 million that was unallocated is going into health as well.

However, that is a matter the PAC will scrutinise because we have not had the opportunity to get the Treasurer and Premier in to talk about that yet, but he has made himself available and he will willingly come to PAC and talk about those matters.

It would have been an extraordinary expense with closing down the North West Regional Hospital. The amount of stock that would have been thrown out, everything was thrown out. Every piece of disposable equipment, anywhere in all of those wards, anywhere, was thrown out. It is staggering when you think about it. I understand some of the funding related to these decisions will be met - 50 per cent - by the Commonwealth under the National Partnership Agreement.

These are the things we rightly should be scrutinising and looking into, and PAC will do that because it is related to the finances. So, you could say, "Well, is that enough?" Some would argue yes, and some people have. I might suggest there are still some gaps where there is merit in having an inquiry that looks at these other matters.

We had a parliamentary sitting that was not going to happen and we had to stamp our little feet a bit to get private members' time. Anyway, here we are. We are doing private members' business, which is good. We have also had pretty much unlimited question time when we have been here, which has been really helpful too because there is very little opportunity to get your answers on the record otherwise.

Mrs Hiscutt - Plenty of scrutiny, hasn't there?

Ms FORREST - I am saying I have had plenty of answers to questions when I have contacted the Premier's office, or whoever, but they are not on the record. It is important to get some of this on the record, so people have it in writing, because people find it difficult to take on merit, or on trust, the words sometimes one of us will just provide if it means they may be breaking the law if they do the wrong thing. I can understand their reticence around some of that.

When we look at the wording and the terms of reference such as the member for Nelson has proposed, I want to make a couple of points.

The first one, (1)(a) - 'The State's immediate and ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery measures'. I understand it is the practice, and I am not sure whether this has been considered by the

member, that normally joint House committees that members of the lower House are involved in have reporting dates in them. I am not sure whether if it does go downstairs and is supported, they will insert a reporting date. It would be difficult to interpret what that reporting date is, because we do not know how long this is going to go on for. It probably could be some time. When you look at the use of 'ongoing' there, how ongoing do you expect it to be?

Part (1)(b) - 'the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health, economic and social lives of Tasmanians' - this is where the potential crossover could be when you look at the word 'economic'. I read this as the economic impact on the people. The people of Tasmania have the opportunity to put forward the impacts on them. The businesses that missed out on the grants - I am getting representations from quite a number at the moment about this.

Ms Rattray - I am hopeful that might be turning around after what I heard in the other place this morning.

Ms FORREST - Yes, I heard some comment downstairs earlier today. There seems to be this disconnect, that this is a matter that may become less of a problem for some of our people. This is about the impact on the people of Tasmania, whereas PAC is looking at the government expenditure, its economic response, its economic plan. It is a different area and the people of Tasmania have a much better opportunity to put their case to a committee like this where it is focused on the broad impact on our community, based on the restrictions that have been put on us, as well as the threat of illness.

They are different areas. Yes, there could be some crossover to a small degree, but that is not a barrier to actually having an inquiry that enables a body of evidence to be collected that relates to a really specific and really unprecedented time, to use that overused word. If we have an experience in the future and we have further pandemics - they might not be in our lifetime but they will occur - there will be a body of evidence to look at what actually worked. It has worked and this is a great way to capture the story and the information about what worked, where the gaps were, where the really great work was done and predominantly to tell a good news story. You do not have to look too far across the water to see where there is not such good news.

Clearly, the Subordinate Legislation Committee cannot scrutinise the Public Health directions or the Emergency Management directions. It is outside its scope and it cannot do it, and these are the decisions that have the biggest impact on people. Arguably, I do not know whether PAC really has the capacity there either, except perhaps looking at how the Government responded in terms of financial support. They are the sorts of things that do not fit neatly into either of the processes on foot at the moment.

The Government did a great job of containing the north-west outbreak. Prevention, of course, would have been the ideal - if only we had not had it at all - but there are great learnings to be had and the independent inquiry is very focused on that. It is not a broad inquiry; it is a focus on what happened and what went wrong at the North West Regional Hospital and the North West Private Hospital, what could have been done better and what we can learn from it. The interim report from the Director of Public Health released a little while back gave some insight, but there needs to be a lot more opportunity for people to come forward without fear or favour - and certainly without fear of retribution - who actually worked there at the time because they will not without that guarantee.

The Leader said there were also many constitutional matters being dealt with during this period. It would be really interesting to know more about those because they are obviously significant and it would be good to have that sort of information captured on the record.

Mrs Hiscutt - I think the word was supposed to be constituent matters, not constitutional.

Ms FORREST - You said 'constitutional'.

Mrs Hiscutt - If I did, I do beg your pardon. Many constituent matters.

Ms FORREST - Okay. It does make it a little bit better because I am thinking, 'Hmm, there is a whole heap of information there we do not know about', but either way the constituent matters will be able to be heard in a public forum in a way that is on the record and their stories will be told and form part of the story. If it is constituent not constitutional, I take your word for that.

It gives an opportunity to enable the engagement of public voices, not only the Government's voice. The Government's voice has been loud, it has been strong, it has been constant, but the public voices have not been on the record, not in a formal sense, and this will give an opportunity for that.

I have listened to both sides. I waited for other members to speak and having the experience of both Subordinate Legislation and PAC, I know what is going on there probably more than others because I am on both. That is obviously for my sins. It will be interesting to see how this vote actually goes.

[7.04 p.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, I start by thanking all the members who have made contributions on this and I am particularly appreciative because of the fact we had a limited time to consider this matter, although some others may have been thinking it through for longer periods of time as I have been. There was a time issue around bringing this on for debate during the June sittings. To address that, which came up in a couple of contributions, I wanted to give this joint select committee proposal an opportunity to be considered potentially by both Houses and therefore it needed to be brought to this Chamber this week to allow for an opportunity for it to potentially, if it were supported, have a chance to go to the other place to be considered there while we were still sitting in June. That was the thinking regarding timing.

Sometimes we have to consider things with very little time. I know none of us prefers to do it that way. This is something we are probably familiar with in terms of the concept that a key part of our role is scrutiny, and we think about these sorts of matters relating to committees and other forms of scrutiny on a regular basis. I thank members for drawing on your experience, bringing that to bear here and sharing your reflections on it.

Some common themes came out in the contributions and I will make my way through them. Some that were raised by more than one person I will deal with whenever I arrive at it, in the first instance, from the contributions.

First, I will start with the member for McIntyre and her contribution. I thank the member for asking some questions that are good to cover initially. She asked questions about who would be on the committee from the Legislative Council, and that was raised by other members. People asked about who has already been approached to be on it and whether there was progress.

I am going to be very up-front. Nobody has been approached to be on the committee. My understanding and my advice on the process of this committee is that we would consider this motion here today. If it is successful and receives support from this place, it goes as a message to the other place. The terms of reference we are considering today only specify the number of members from this place. In the other place, they would consider the membership from there. If it were successful in the other place, it would come back to us to deal with the matter of membership here, at that time.

My thinking, also mindful of the speed at which we were moving with considering it, is that it would be beneficial for us in this place to have discussed it, to have shared our thoughts and ideas about it and to have had a chance to consider it and not have to rush to think about membership because we are not yet at that stage. My hope would be - and certainly this was my thought when contemplating what would deliver best value and best outcomes from such a committee, without in any way wanting to put an expectation on it because I would like to keep it a fairly open matter for further consideration - that this committee, as a joint select committee, could be very effectively representative of the representation that we have across our parliament. For example, in the other place, if they were to contemplate four members as we have in our terms of reference, that allows them the opportunity to have members that were drawn from each party and, potentially, a further member. We also know there is an independent member down there. The scope is there for that place to consider any combination of membership that they felt was representative of their Chamber.

Four members from this Chamber - the member from Mersey spoke about the gaming joint select committee and that the process used there was to have independent members from this place represent on that committee. That looks like a sensible model because that is what we can offer from this Chamber, with a wealth of independent members here. I hope that if we were to think about membership - if this motion goes through this place, goes through the other place, is supported and comes back to us for us to contemplate membership - we could have a process where people could express an interest. Then, we can decide together as a Chamber. I would very much hope to see such membership, if it were to come about, be very representative and an embodiment of the breadth of views and experiences in this Chamber. That is the way we best achieve a really credible process through this committee and that we best deliver outcomes to our communities in the spirit of parliament.

Mrs Hiscutt - While the honourable member is talking about membership, please bear in mind that the Leader does not sit on committees and a minister would not be on the committee, either.

Mr PRESIDENT - Nor does the President.

Ms WEBB - Indeed. If we were to think about it as I have just described and, again, I am just stressing that I am in no way wanting to dictate what membership of this committee could look like, but if we were to have party representation through members from the other place, it frees us up to have independent representation up here potentially, so we could look at that.

I hope that covers a little of where I am sitting with that and why membership is not fixed in place at this time and has not been offered or contemplated with anyone. The member for Hobart was the only one speaking on this matter today who expressed an interest in it, and there may be others who would have an interest if it were to come back to us to consider membership.

Ms Forrest - It is a bit of a moot point to get some support downstairs.

Ms WEBB - It is. That is probably the steps involved in the process, where we do not consider it until it comes back to us supported from down there. One of the things I would like to cover, and

it did come up in a number of contributions, was this issue of why now, why, when some people would describe it saying that we are sitting in the midst of things. That is a really sensible question to ask and it is an interesting one. In terms of defining the right moment, it would be hard if we said we cannot do it now because we are still in the midst of the thick of it, and it then becomes a question of 'when'. When is the right moment, when will there be a time that everything is settled enough or we have the right amount of distance away from the emergency period? It is hard, then, to define 'when'.

I believe we have a range of other activities already in progress right now, during this part and this time. We have embarked on other aspects of scrutiny and I will speak more about those in a moment, but of the things that have been listed by many honourable members in their contributions, many are in progress right now. They are delivering outcomes and being really positive contributions in terms of scrutiny, documentation and representation for the community right now, during this time.

The other jurisdictions I spoke about in my initial contribution have all begun committees of this sort, the broader sort, well and truly by now. Some of them began in March and April. In the ACT, a similarly focused committee has now delivered its second interim report in that jurisdiction, and that is how far down the track they are with this process. It is interesting to look at them and to look at the national level, too, with the committee there because they are, in real time, capturing, considering, reviewing and highlighting opportunities, highlighting gaps, highlighting further thoughts around the real-time activity of governance that is going on in those jurisdictions. They are making a positive contribution. Those are really interesting things to observe. Why should this process be missed and the opportunity be lost by waiting for an indeterminate time in the future, when it is precisely what could be assisting with better outcomes in the moment?

The member for McIntyre very thoughtfully raised the issue that people are still dealing with the effects of COVID-19 and they need time to digest and work their way through -

Ms Rattray - I think the member for Huon also made that point.

Ms WEBB - Yes, he also mentioned that. That is quite interesting and the reality would be that, in terms of the things that people are grappling with, the problems they are facing at the moment, in many instances they have nowhere to take those. They have nowhere to put those on the public record. They have no process of review of this sort that can tease them out, document them, and help provide further assistance with them. If we asked people whether they would like a process to investigate some of those issues they are grappling with, there would be real receptivity among many in the community.

Ms Rattray - I hear what you are saying. One of the issues for a constituent I have is that their child cannot come from Flinders Island, visit his mum on access and go back and go to school. No inquiry is going to solve that.

Ms WEBB - No, but we would capture that in this inquiry as an issue and perhaps provide an in-depth look at what sits behind that in decision-making and requirements.

Ms Rattray - I will tell you what sits behind it, is the State Controller.

Ms WEBB - That is right. At the moment, there is no other committee or process we have to interrogate those sorts of statutory mechanisms in depth, like the State Controller and the

decision-making processes. There are a lot of statutory plans and strategies and things that sit within legislation defined as having a recovery plan, a recovery adviser and all these other sorts of things that sit there that are directing the decisions and setting a context for decisions. None of that is currently being scrutinised in terms of how well it is functioning right now.

What, with this unprecedented and extraordinary thing going on, has that meant in terms of the efficacy of those structures and processes and statutory elements that we have in place? We are not looking at that right now. We are not capturing the illustrations of it in these stories from our community and taking it in to think and look more deeply into where in our processes that are defined, either in policy, or legislation, or elsewhere, they are setting the scene for that to happen in our community. What might we think about where we could adjust it or improve it or, at least, document how wonderfully it worked for next time. That is what this committee could do. I am going to move on from that. We will probably talk about that a little bit more.

Ms Rattray - I think we could have this discussion and it would probably take a long time. Thank you, but I appreciate you addressing my concerns.

Ms WEBB - I will pick up a couple more things from the member for McIntyre's contribution because I think it crossed over with some others. Apologies if I do not identify everybody who may have raised a similar issue. We talked briefly about the capacity of the other place and that being a potential difficulty. Again, I do not think that is for us to contemplate as a barrier or a determining factor in deciding on the appropriateness of this motion. It is unfortunate if that is a reality and it is certainly one I have heard raised. It reflects on our arrangements and the size of the other place and that is a matter for another day and for other circumstances to be discussed and examined.

Ms Rattray - You did ask that some of the more experienced members might like to share their experiences. I am sharing mine.

Ms WEBB - Absolutely. I thank the member for Rumney for her contribution and for indicating support of the motion. She quite rightly acknowledged some of the other scrutiny mechanisms in place, including things like media appearances, and I am going to speak about those in more detail in a moment. The member for Rumney raised the issue about it being hard to draw the line in the sand with regard to when we will be at the right point. That is a point I agree with and it is not something we need to determine now.

The other thing to perhaps keep in mind about this committee process, and this may link in to a point the member for Murchison raised, is that this is not a single point in time activity. If we were to agree to this motion, it was to be successful in the other place and this committee were to come about, it would begin its work now. The focus of that work would be in a way that was relevant to this particular time with regard to the terms of reference, but the work of the committee would continue. It is not that the work of the committee would not be continuing into some of those later phases of things - the committee obviously does not appear, act briefly and then disappear necessarily - and that comes with the question the member for Murchison raised around there are no reporting dates specified in this motion. I clarify that was on advice that no reporting date was specified.

Ms Forrest - Yes. They will probably put one in downstairs if they support it.

Ms WEBB - Yes. I was alerted to the fact a reporting date fixed into terms of reference can potentially be more problematic than not specifying a reporting date, because it then becomes a

matter that has to be dealt if there are unusual things that happen. Given the current circumstances, there is every chance unusual things may happen if this committee is in place and progressing. It is not to say there would not be reporting dates determined by the committee itself, if it were to be established and up and running and it would be a matter that may come up if it goes to the other place. It may come up once the committee, if it was successful, was established. I hope that provides enough explanation around that - the advice was not to put a reporting date there.

I agree with the member for Rumney it would have been good to see the Government take the lead on this. There is still a real opportunity for us to all come together on this and recognise the constructive value it holds. There is no need for a defensive posture that may be felt in terms of this sort of activity. It is an exciting positive and constructive potential for us as a parliament to deliver real value to the Government itself and also importantly to the community. I still hope the Government is listening and still receptive to the idea and potential value.

The member for Mersey also asked about membership; have we covered enough of that?

Mr Gaffney - Yes, exactly.

Ms WEBB - Great. Thank you and thank you for expressing support for the motion. I appreciate that. It was helpful to have reflections of other joint select committees.

Member for Hobart, thank you for the contribution and for acknowledging the work that went in - that is my social policy and research background coming to the fore. You make an evidence-based case for the best way you see. That is what I have attempted to do in this instance.

Mr Valentine - You did not leave too many stones unturned.

Ms WEBB - I agree that the broader purpose here is around posterity and it becoming a resource and a reference and that is where I see it as a constructive and positive element.

I appreciated you raising that this is not an opportunity to attack the Government as a core purpose. It is in fact, in my view, a joint select committee configured, as I imagine it may be, that is the best iteration of a nonpartisan, non-party political, most constructive approach to this, which is what I hope to see.

I think you spoke to some extent on why do it during this time that it is happening. I agree. We are aligned in what you raised in that we can actually get really good information from this process right now in this moment and it is a valuable contribution to make.

Mr Valentine - The point was it was about informing the Government and if we have a second or, heaven forbid, a third wave, they will have more information to be able to properly place their resources.

Ms WEBB - I agreed with the point you made about the comprehensive nature of this proposed committee being complementary to those other processes already in place.

Thank you to the member for Launceston for her contribution. She highlighted well - and others did also - the many other independent bodies or organisations or committees also engaged in this area. I am not sure if I misunderstood, but it sounded as if you suggested I was saying we were post-COVID-19 at this stage, and that is not what I am saying. I think we are still very much in

present-COVID-19 and this is the right time to be doing it. We do not need to wait until we are post-COVID-19 to do it.

You raised the issue of duplication and that has been raised in a number of contributions and it is worth me responding to some extent now.

Earlier today, when we were talking about the AFL committee report, it was quite explicitly discussed in the context of that committee that the Government was asked if the inquiry should shut down due to other inquiries and other matters occurring on that very self-same topic. By all accounts, the Government's response was to encourage that AFL committee to continue as things that may be brought to light may be missed by other entities and would be valuable contributions from that committee.

This is an absolutely fair comment to make. It was a fair comment to make in relation to the AFL committee. If that is true on an issue as contained and specific as the contemplation of an AFL team for this state where there were at least three or four entities looking at that issue, it would certainly be true. In fact, why would it be less true on this matter of such complexity and such impact for our state as COVID-19 represents? Why would it not be true that it is valid to have a number of different entities looking at the same issue from different perspectives, but perhaps complementary, and perhaps overlapping-at-times perspectives, and recognise the value of the contribution of each of them, and that unique contributions could come from each of them? Why would that be true in terms of AFL and not true in terms of COVID-19 response and recovery? I am not sure why it would not be.

Certainly the member for Murchison in her very detailed descriptions for us of the other joint standing committees, the Subordinate Legislation Committee and PAC, was able to highlight there is very little actual overlap when you look carefully at what those committees are tasked to do. Where there is potential overlap, why should that mean there would not be unique, valuable and important contributions to come from each of the entities, even if such overlap were there?

It is really important to not discard this idea on a false notion of duplication. Even if we recognise the potential for some duplication, why would we not recognise the unique value that could still come from various perspectives?

The member for Launceston described this as the nuclear option. Did I hear that correctly?

A member - She did say that.

Ms WEBB - I am not quite sure why this is the nuclear option. To me, this looks like the comprehensive safety net option that sits across and around other options we have in place, or other efforts we are undertaking. It is an option far from nuclear, which tends to have some negative connotations. It appears to be the standard option. I say that because when we look at those other jurisdictions - and we can look beyond Australia; we can look to other jurisdictions internationally, as is indicated in that CPA document I tabled earlier - it is standard in parliamentary democracies to undertake exactly this kind of work. It is literally a core part of our job. We do not discard the idea of multiple sources of scrutiny under normal circumstances. Why would we discard it here?

The member for Launceston spoke about other more meaningful contributions occurring from other sources. I am certainly very welcoming and supportive of other contributions that are occurring, both within our parliamentary system and external to it. I think they do not obviate the

need for this committee, and the outcomes and functions of this committee are not overtaken or displaced by efforts elsewhere.

The member for Windermere, I think I have covered some issues raised, but I will just check my notes to make sure I catch any that remain in the key bits I wanted to pick up on. I do not know if the member was referring to me when he suggested that some people may not have an appreciation of what PAC can do.

Mrs Hiscutt - No, he did not.

Ms WEBB - He referred to some people here perhaps not having a full appreciation of what PAC could do. I am happy to be corrected, but that is literally what the member said, and it may not have been referring to me. I am certainly not on PAC. I have not been yet; I may be in my time here, who knows? I looked at the act that PAC sits under, and I looked at the terms of reference put forward for the inquiry that PAC is engaging in.

I am not going to go through that in detail now, because the member for Murchison did that in quite a lot of detail in her contribution, and the way she described it is the way I understand it. PAC has a focus around public expenditure. The matters it will be inquiring into will be associated with public expenditure, and that is excellent. That is going to be a very important role to undertake.

While I take the point from the member for Windermere that PAC could indeed potentially draw a link from that remit that is described in the PAC act, and in the terms of reference to the PAC inquiry, you could draw a line to almost any issue relevant to our state.

My question to him would be: what time, energy and resources are you going to have to be available to draw that line to each and every possible issue that may be relevant in our state in relation to this COVID-19 time?

Mr Dean - We will get all the resources we need.

Ms WEBB - I wonder how your members of PAC feel about the prospect of having to be the be-all and end-all in the way you describe it? That is what it sounds like you are suggesting PAC will be. I think it will do excellent work. I think it will have so much work to do.

Mr Dean - The PAC will do its job. PAC will look at all the terms of reference, and it will follow them through to the nth degree. PAC will provide interim reports to the parliament as we go through, with no time line on when it might be completed, because we cannot do that. So PAC will do it very well, in my view, as it has done before.

Ms WEBB - Just to be incredibly clear, that is exactly what I am saying. I have full confidence that PAC will do the work it is tasked to do in the act, in the terms of references put forward for its enquiry. That is a full suite of work for PAC to focus on, the expenditure matters detailed in the act under its functions, and in the inquiry terms of reference.

To suggest that PAC, in addition to the incredibly large body of work that would readily fall within those functions and those terms of reference within the inquiry, would also seek to look at potentially all matters that this committee I am proposing could look at is, I think, unrealistic.

It may be that PAC potentially has the remit to draw the line through those issues. It simply would not have the time and resources and the focus to spend on all the matters this committee

might, which is why they are complementary. My argument is that the proposed committee is entirely complementary with the very full and valuable work that PAC is doing and will continue to do under the inquiry it has established.

Again, I think the member for Murchison described some potential measure of overlap, and described the value of what falls outside the overlap.

The member for Windermere asked questions around correspondence that I had sent. I will clarify that matter. I did not table today the letters that I sent, but what I did do on Tuesday last week - and I was quite open about this - was to send correspondence to all parliamentary colleagues.

I sent correspondence to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Greens, the Speaker of the House, to the President, and to all independent members in this place. I followed up those pieces of correspondence to other individual members from parties who are in this place, so that all parliamentarians were corresponded with.

I then also sent correspondence to a list of key external stakeholders I thought might be interested in the proposal I was putting forward. I invited them to contact me about that, and to contribute to discussion around that.

Off the top of my head, I do not know how many people I sent that correspondence to. I utilised a basic concept of who may be interested as key stakeholders in the community. That was in the interest of being open and collaborative, and for people to be engaged with this idea for discussion.

The member asked whether they are aware of other committees. In the material I sent them, there is mention of other committees. At the time I sent that correspondence, the PAC inquiry was not publicly known. I certainly was not publicly aware of a PAC inquiry coming forward. So, that is not included in the correspondence, because it was not, I believe, a public matter at that time.

Certainly, following up with them, I would have mentioned it from the time that I became aware of it, which was just very recently. I believe it only became a public matter very recently.

I find it interesting that the member would suggest that having sent out a number of pieces of correspondence to some key community stakeholders, it would be extraordinary to only have six, or somewhere between four and six, emails coming back to us.

I note, and unfortunately it does beg us to compare to something we discussed earlier, that where we talked of the AFL inquiry, where we advertised that AFL inquiry statewide to a potential audience of 525 000 Tasmanians, six submissions were received.

Mr Dean - How many did you send it out to?

Ms WEBB - I do not know the number exactly, off the top of my head. I would say, as an estimation, maybe 40, separate to the members - community stakeholders is how I would loosely term it. Maybe 40. So, we got maybe four to six back.

Mr Dean - As long as we are talking about the same document, I do not want to mislead you. The document where, I think, you are asking for members to lobby us. Is that the one? From 26 May?

Ms WEBB - It is a document where I corresponded to community stakeholders to say that this effort to see a committee considered was one that I was putting forward, and to provide to them the information I provided to all members here in parliament, and put into the public domain, via my website also, that background briefing paper, the rationale document.

I put all of that into the public domain. I invited them, if they were interested, to contact me about it, if they felt it was something they would like to hear more about, or had an interest in, and I invited them to participate in public conversation about it.

Some of them then, it would seem, have contacted members of parliament to share their views. That is not an unusual process, I would not think.

As I was saying, there seems to be some contention from you, member for Windermere, about the numbers. I was just clarifying that I do not think we need to focus in - and perhaps we do not really want to focus in - on whether size matters, in this instance, because we would be forced to contemplate what we discussed earlier in the day. I do not think we need to do that. I think we can set that aside.

Ms Howlett - Perhaps the honourable member could provide a list of the stakeholders.

Ms WEBB - I am not sure that is relevant.

Ms Howlett - I would be curious to see it.

Ms WEBB - That is fine. I am not sure it is relevant for me to provide a list of the people I have corresponded with on this matter. Can I take that on notice and I will think about it? I am not sure of the value of scrutinising that in terms of what relevance it would have to our contemplation of this issue. We are getting bogged down in this and it is a fairly straightforward matter. I sent correspondence to members of the community, as we all would on issues we think may be of interest to them. I provided straightforward information that I also put in the public domain and, as a result, it appears they have contacted a number of you with their views on this issue. There is nothing mysterious about that, there is certainly nothing inappropriate about that.

Mr Dean - Mr President, the point I was trying to make, and I am not being nasty about it, is that in that letter you urged those people to make contact with us. You urged them to do that, you supported this inquiry and the point I made was that only five responded to me. I do not know how many responded to others. You said you sent it out to about 40, is that right?

Ms WEBB - Yes, that is right.

Mr Gaffney - That means you want the inquiry to go ahead. You had six out of 40, and the inquiry still went ahead. You made the point that when the AFL football inquiry went ahead, you had six submissions out of, potentially, 525 000 people.

Ms Forrest - We are comparing apples with oranges here.

Ms WEBB - I am going to mention briefly, because it has come up in a few contributions, the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council. I state clearly that I am in support of that council. It is a mechanism we see replicated in other jurisdictions, a non-parliamentary advisory group of some sort, it is quite standard and common. It is excellent that we have some

prominent people on that council, and there is certainly no question as to their calibre. What I do not believe is that the existence of that council is relevant to whether this committee should go ahead because they are entirely separate in their intent and in what value they can deliver. There is nothing that is not complementary or exclusive about the value they could both deliver to the Tasmanian community.

To highlight a couple of things about that council to really distinguish it from the idea of this committee, so we can be fairly clear in our minds about how they fit in different realms, PESRAC is not representative of the community. It is selectively representative. A good mix of people have been chosen for it, and they are great people, but it is not representative in the way that parliament is. Parliament is representative, we are elected to be here to represent our community so it is a distinction, not a criticism.

PESRAC is not publicly accountable for its operations, its approach or its decision-making processes; it answers to the Premier, it is accountable to him. Again, that is fine and it is appropriate. It is not a criticism to state that but parliament, to distinguish it, is publicly accountable for its operations, its approach, its decision-making processes and for the visibility of all of its actions. Again, it is a distinction.

On the website there was a question about the reporting from that council - it says that the report will be sent to the Premier. After that time, I imagine it is up to the Premier to decide what he does with the report provided by the council, and he may well table that in parliament and that is appropriate and fine. It does not mean that group, that council, is accountable to parliament. It means we have been reported to about its activities but it is not about accountability. Again, that is not a criticism. I agree with the council being there; it is going to do great work but it sits in a separate realm to a parliamentary mechanism.

One further thing to mention about the council is that while the argument has been put here in relation to a parliamentary committee, that now is not the time - well, now is the time the council is undertaking its work; it is doing some valuable work, talking to key stakeholders, apparently, and will be interacting with the community, and it is doing that work now. Reservations being expressed here today that a parliamentary committee of inquiry should and could not be operating at this time would also apply, and there would be reservations members may hold about the activities of the council but, again, that is not what we are discussing today, and I am supportive of those actions of the council.

The member expressed concern about people perhaps being confused and about businesses not having time to make submissions. That would be disappointing for PAC to hear, too, probably, but we can give our Tasmanian community more credit. They often do figure out how to involve themselves in our parliamentary processes in other states. There is certainly a demonstration that those communities are involving themselves in a range of scrutiny mechanisms and are making their contributions, so I think we can expect the same from our Tasmanian community.

The member for Murchison provided a really valuable breakdown, and I thank her for it because I will not repeat it, of the details of the other two joint standing committees, the Subordinate Legislation and PAC committees and how they are both undertaking important and valuable work. They have a particular remit. She described where they potentially may or may not overlap with this proposed committee - again, I make that assertion that there is a lot of complementarity rather than duplication. I have covered the question raised about reporting. I do not think there are other issues for me to follow up.

I appreciated the Government's response; it is a useful detail to have things listed. All the things listed that the Government is undertaking in scrutiny and activities in communication and other things are excellent. It is as we would expect. We would expect, as was raised by others, that the Premier would provide information via the media and be available for media interaction. That is great. We would expect that ministers and the Premier would be coming to those committees that are in existence and responding to their requests for information or hearings. That is excellent.

We may have and remain at different viewpoints on this, but I do not believe that represents a totality or a comprehensive degree of scrutiny. It is a lot but we would expect a lot at this time and simply because it is a lot does not mean that it is the right or the complete scrutiny. This proposal clearly covers matters that are not yet being dealt with under those efforts that were listed by the Government. I say that in no way taking away from those efforts, fully recognising that they are in place and that they are appropriate and expected. I believe that we are still letting ourselves down to not go to the comprehensive degree that this committee would add to that mix. I will not engage with that list further because it is not something I feel is contentious or to be picked apart. All those things are good and listing them is useful. Listing things can sometimes feel like there is a lot there and therefore it must be enough. My view in this case is that is not how I see it.

I finish up by saying to all members that I really appreciate the opportunity for us to address this today in the Chamber. The motion came forward at short notice. I appreciate the contributions made. I imagine there is a variety of views in the room. My view still remains this is a really important constructive ingredient, that it is a standard and expected part of our role as parliamentarians. We could come together in a collaborative effort on this and deliver real value for our community in the immediate sense and also for our community in the longer term sense by providing a resource for posterity. Thank you.

The Council divided -

AYES 7

Mr Finch
Ms Forrest
Mr Gaffney (T)
Ms Lovell
Mr Valentine
Ms Webb
Mr Willie

NOES 5

Ms Armitage
Mr Armstrong
Mr Dean
Mrs Hiscutt
Ms Rattray (T)

PAIRS

Ms Seijka

Ms Howlett

Motion agreed to.

[7.57 p.m.]

**BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION (REGULATORY REFORM
AMENDMENTS) Bill 2020 (No. 21)**

First Reading

Bill received and read the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Council at its rising adjourn until 11.00 a.m. on Thursday 24 June 2020.

Motion agreed to.

The Council adjourned at 7.59 p.m.