

Wednesday 23 May 2018

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

TASMANIAN HEALTH SERVICE BILL 2018 (No. 3)

Second Reading

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

That the bill be now read the second time.

The Government is continuing to deliver better health outcomes for all Tasmanians by strengthening our hospital system.

This Government's One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes white paper reforms delivered a single public health system for Tasmania and, for the first time, clearly defined the role of each of the four major hospitals in this state.

These reforms have allowed each of our hospitals to focus on delivering high-quality services within a realistic scope having regard to their size, case load and availability of specialist clinical support.

Health policy and planning is not a 'set and forget' process. We must constantly refine our strategy to ensure that we are building on those things that are going well and addressing any issues that arise.

That is why we are now moving to strike the right balance between the ability to set strategy and direction in health for the whole state, as well as giving local facilities better capacity for local decision-making to deliver high-quality services to patients and solve local problems as they arise. This bill lays these foundations.

The bill delivers on the re-elected majority government's 'Strengthening Local Hospital Leadership' election policy, and the commitment under the 100 Day Plan to introduce legislation in the first week of parliament.

The Government's commitment was to introduce legislation under which the Tasmanian Health Service reports directly to the secretary of the Department of Health. Further, the role of the chief executive officer and the governing council will not continue. In their place, the governance framework is to provide clear roles for the secretary, a lean executive to maintain a focus on statewide planning, and support for local decision-making. Importantly, the estimated \$4 million of savings over four years that result from these initiatives are reinvested into frontline health services.

It should be noted that the roles of CEO and the governing council have been mandatory obligations under the legislation which was already in place, being the Tasmanian Health Organisations Act 2011, which is being repealed and replaced by this legislation. That legislation

is better suited to a large state with multiple bureaucracies. Whereas this legislation is more fit for purpose for our small state with distributed metropolitan and rural hospitals.

The policy also provided that the THS continues as a separate legal entity. This is a key feature of the Commonwealth funding for what are known as local hospital networks.

In overview, the bill repeals the Tasmanian Health Organisations Act 2011 and introduces what will be the Tasmanian Health Service Act.

The new act strengthens the ongoing objectives of a single statewide health service while promoting effective local decision-making and service delivery. The framework continues key policy and transparency elements from the Tasmanian Health Organisations Act 2011, including:

- a ministerial charter for broad policy expectations for the THS and the secretary
- a service plan (renamed from service agreement) to be tabled in parliament
- powers and functions of the THS based on the current act
- annual reports to be tabled in parliament.

The bill retains the THS as a statutory authority but it is no longer a standalone State Service agency. The bill provides for the THS to report to, and be subject to direction of, the secretary of the Department of Health.

The secretary's power of direction simplifies most of the multiple different powers of the minister and Treasurer under the current act. The intention is that the secretary could make directions of the kind that can be made under the current act. Further, the secretary can make directions to fulfil the secretary's role as the single point of accountability to the minister in relation to public hospital performance, performance management and planning.

To this end, the bill provides clearly for the secretary's role and functions. The current act's failure to provide the secretary with this clear role has been one of the key limitations in managing the performance of the THS and the three former THOs.

As I have already said, the THS governing council and chief executive officer position are not continued under the bill. The THS will be managed by an executive of State Service officers appointed by the secretary. The executive will be responsible to the secretary for the administration and management of the THS and the performance of the THS, with specific functions including ensuring management structures support local operational decision-making.

The THS will retain the same broad functions and powers as under the current act. As is currently the case, certain key powers may only be exercised with the approval of the minister and Treasurer. For example, a new power is provided, subject to that approval, to clarify the THS can provide services outside Tasmania, which will support an Antarctic services contract with the Commonwealth.

The bill explicitly provides for the role of the secretary. The secretary is responsible to the minister for the performance of the THS, and has specific functions such as planning for the future provision of health and related services including the planning of health infrastructure. The functions reflect the secretary's role as the primary point of accountability for public hospital performance. The secretary also has the power to establish advisory panels to provide advice to the secretary or executive.

The bill requires the secretary, in consultation with the THS, to develop an annual service plan for the THS. This is provided to the minister for approval and tabling before the parliament. As in the current act, the service plan will outline the services to be delivered by the THS, the budget for those services and the expected standards of care, performance targets, performance measures and reporting requirements to be applied to the THS.

The secretary will have a formal power of direction in relation to the THS, simplifying the multiple directive powers in the current act.

The administrative and management arrangements put in place under the new statutory structure will support local decision-making.

The secretary is currently consulting across the Tasmanian Health Service on changes that need to be made to support local decision-making. To date, the secretary has consulted key clinical representatives, including the Medical Staff Association, the Australian Medical Association and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation; the THS statewide executive; senior executives from the Royal Hobart Hospital, Launceston General Hospital and the North West Regional Hospital; consumer representatives from the south, north and north-west; and the Health and Community Services Union, the Community and Public Sector Union and the Mental Health Council of Tasmania.

There is broad agreement to preserve and continue to build the core elements of the One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes reforms, including a single statewide health service and clear role delineation across our four major hospitals.

However, it is acknowledged that within our statewide health system the large majority of services are delivered locally and the system must support local operation decision-making. The system must support local decision-making and help our health facilities to respond to the health needs of their local communities. To do this, we need to empower decision-makers in hospitals by giving them the authority and the tools they need to do their jobs. This includes a clear organisational structure, budgets and staffing establishments that enable decisions at the local service level where they can be managed within these parameters, and improved business reporting.

The Government is getting on with managing the Tasmanian health system.

In the past month, the Government has established a clinical planning task force, a health recruitment, retention and workforce planning unit, started work on new mental health beds in the south and commenced planning for new infrastructure at the Launceston General Hospital.

This bill introduces a leaner executive to focus on strategic issues and statewide service planning while making sure our hospital leaders have the best possible tools to deliver frontline services.

This bill represents our commitment to continuing to invest in and support our dedicated staff, to continuing to strengthen the One Health System and to deliver our future plan for health which was endorsed by the Tasmanian people at the election.

In closing, I acknowledge with gratitude the many individuals, employees and groups who have contributed to this process and who have endorsed the Government's approach.

I commend the bill to the Council.

[11.14 a.m.]

Mr FINCH (Rosevears) - Mr President, for some people the concept of progress is two steps forward and one step back. However, for this Health minister, it is three steps back, and that is being charitable, and with this bill, there may be one step forward. It is good the minister is holding his Health portfolio for another term, to fix what he broke in the previous term. This bill suggests the Government wants to have it both ways with health service management. The minister said in the House of Assembly -

Health policy and planning is not a 'set and forget' process. We must constantly refine our strategy to ensure that we are building on those things that are going well and addressing any issues that arise.

That is why we are now moving to strike the right balance between the ability to set strategy and direction in health for the whole state, as well as giving local facilities better capacity for local decision-making to deliver high-quality services to patients and solve local problems as they arise. This bill lays those foundations.

Note 'giving local facilities better capacity for local decision making'. It is also important to note, as the minister puts it, that the role of the chief executive officer and the governing council will not continue. I see a big back flip there. Surely not a return to some regional autonomy? Another quote seems to back a return to more local management -

The THS governing council and chief executive officer position are not continued under the bill. The THS will be managed by an executive of State Service officers appointed by the secretary. The executive will be responsible to the secretary for the administration and management of the THS and the performance of the THS, with specific functions including ensuring management structures support local operational decision-making.

One other quote that supports the argument -

The secretary is currently consulting across the Tasmanian Health Service on changes that need to be made to support local decision-making.

Then there is a list of those local organisations he has been dealing with, which is very fulsome. A move back to local autonomy is to be welcomed, but why was it stripped away in the first place? The then Liberal opposition made a promise in 2014 that the three Tasmanian health organisations would remain. What happened? As soon as the Liberal government was elected, they were abolished and we had four years of virtual chaos. This bill goes some way to correct that. I support it as the beginning, at last, of a step forward for the Tasmanian Health Service.

[11.18 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I thank the Government for bringing forward this bill as it returns our Tasmanian public hospitals to a form of self-control, under the direct umbrella of the secretary for the new Department of Health. The Department of Health under the leadership of the secretary is best placed to support statewide consistency and best practice in public acute, subacute and primary health facilities. I accept it is better to build a new act fit for purpose

with one local hospital network under the national requirements and that it meets the requirements of activity-based funding under rules between the Commonwealth and the state.

I am pleased the bill provides a framework that supports local decision-making. Local communities led by local doctors are in the best position to make decisions about their healthcare and will spend more money on beds and less on desks. I agree that where we spend money and where we direct money needs to be balanced. It is also hoped that we will now be less reliant on locums and agency nursing. Locally based accountability and authority for delivery of hospital-based patient care should be promoted by this bill and the related health service restructure. Localised where possible, centralised where necessary. Healthcare should be provided in, or as close to, people's homes as possible, but some specialist care needs to be centralised in fewer locations to ensure better outcomes. Our hospitals require onsite, engaged and empowered clinical teams, which are essential if we are to achieve best results in acute healthcare.

I fully support removal of the Tasmanian Health Service governing council and the current statewide THS executive as proposed by this bill. Our state naturally falls into three population centres and each has significantly different challenges in healthcare delivery.

On 1 July 2015 the Tasmanian government established the Tasmanian Health Service by amalgamating the three Tasmanian health organisations. At the time I stated I believed the change was being made with no evidence, just generalisations, not facts - that there should be one THS and that one THS would be more efficient.

The three Tasmanian health organisations had not had the time to be proven one way or the other. Efficiencies aside, and I am not sure there have been many, our Launceston General Hospital has lost accreditation in emergency medicine and had accreditation reduced in other specialities.

This has affected our ability to recruit, particularly with regard to registrar training. Many of Launceston's long-term specialists completed their registrar training at Launceston General Hospital and decided to locate permanently to our city. It is therefore imperative we have a hospital with the necessary accreditation to continue to attract these doctors and their families.

It is hoped with the changes in this bill that our public hospitals can regain their Australia-wide status as centres of excellence. We cannot go backwards and must always be looking forward. While I appreciate there is still one local hospital network with the Department of Health and Human Services secretary being the one and only person who takes responsibility for things that happen within the THS, I am pleased to see the establishment of the local advisory groups with initially one in the north, north-west and the south. I also note everyone currently on the consumer reference groups will transition to the new body.

As mentioned previously I am pleased to see the tide turn. Unfortunately damage has already been done in our public hospital system, particularly with regards to morale, and it is hoped it will be onward and upward from here.

I note there is an anticipated \$4 million in expected savings over the next four years and trust they are invested into frontline health services, as suggested in the second reading speech.

Our hospital staff perform incredibly well under often great duress. It is because they regularly go above and beyond that our hospital system continues to care so well for our community.

Regionally based northern and southern hospital executive management teams need to be empowered to leave their regional services with statewide processes overseen by the Department of Health and the Department of Health secretary. Patient outcomes are what is important, and while this bill is the first step, more work will be needed on the ground once the legislation is passed.

I support the proposed bill and the fresh start to organisation of the Tasmanian Health Service it will deliver.

[11.23 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, provision of accessible quality healthcare is a fundamental responsibility of the state government. It is always a challenging area because demand will always outstrip capacity. That becomes evident at some peak demand times, such as during the winter in Tasmania, when medical admissions to our acute health services increase significantly.

It can create the perfect storm: with a particularly severe flu season, as in 2017, staff as well as patients can be severely ill for extended periods. This is why it is vital to ensure structures are right within our health services to enable them to adapt and adjust to absorb increases in demand capable of being managed. We simply cannot achieve this if we do not have adequate inpatient beds staffed by adequate numbers of suitably qualified nurses backed up by medical staff who are equally skilled and qualified.

Nurses need to be paid a wage commensurate with what their mainland colleagues are paid, bearing in mind living costs and other relevant comparisons. If we do not, we will not retain the specialist nurses needed to ensure delivery of acute health services, which is the focus of this bill. We need to be able to meet the health needs of Tasmanians.

This bill does nothing to address this. Indeed it is not intended to, but any change we make needs to be made with this foremost in our minds, as one will not work without the other.

We also need to ensure our acute health services employ enough allied health professionals - including physiotherapists, dieticians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, social workers et cetera - to ensure smooth flowthrough in the acute health service and timely discharge back into the community and primary healthcare.

I also note the continued broad support from within the health system and outside for the one Tasmanian health service system in principle.

We need to get the operating structure right and not keep changing it as people become change-weary. Continually changing it creates a whole heap of additional challenges. We need to get it right. Is this right? Time will tell.

Mr Finch - What about those in the education system?

Ms FORREST - Yes. We need a long-term agreed plan for health. I know we have the minister's One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes plan, which is aiming toward that, but we still have to see significant change in the structure of delivering it, to achieve it. We need to have a long-term plan so we do not see constant change. This change is necessary - I am not saying it is not, it is. It is very clear from all the feedback received from the member for Hobart's inquiry into acute health services, but the real challenge is with governance, and this is seeking to address that. We have to do everything we can to ensure it is right.

I believe overall a state approach is essential, with local decision-making and input at the service delivery level an imperative. This does not mean that every local level will make decisions about what services are provided and where. That is not what I am talking about. I am talking about the local input to deal with local challenges and specific local issues. For example, the Burnie hospital has different challenges to the Royal Hobart Hospital. We need to have some flexibility around that and I hope this will provide that. I will be asking the Leader for some more detail on how that will be achieved.

One of the potential failings I see with the bill before us is that there is no clear assurance on this local input and decision-making at the service and delivery level. I asked this of the minister in our briefing. I appreciate the opportunity to have had this briefing with the minister this morning, and also access to the secretary previously for a few individual briefings on the bill. He agreed that there is no clear local decision-making capacity reflected in the bill. His reasons for that are that you do not want to create a system where you are boxed in because that creates further problems down the track. I want an assurance from the Leader, in her reply, about how this is actually going to work. I have spoken to the secretary previously about this and I think he is well prepared, one would hope, and so are his other helpers there.

The provisions in the bill provide very little detail about who will make up the executive. Effectively, this could enable the decision-making to be left to the secretary and the executive, who could be one person. This bill is silent on that. I asked the Leader to make it clear in her response that this will not be the case and that local clinical leadership and decision-making, through membership of the executive, will occur. In her second reading speech, the Leader spoke about a 'lean executive' - of course you want a lean executive. We do not want money spent on administration that should be spent on delivering patient services. But you also need to be sure you are not so lean that the appropriate voices are not being heard and the decisions are being made from afar, which is what we have seen in the past. It makes it very difficult: you end up finding that some of these decisions seem to be made at a local level, far away from Hobart, because they find themselves in the position where the system is not working for them. It needs to be a system that clearly enables that, but the bill is silent so I seek some assurance from the Leader that will be the process.

There is also very little detail about the local advisory groups, their make-up and role. In the briefing, it was helpful today to hear that the current advisory groups and community health groups already in our community - though I do not have constant or regular communication with members of the north-west one - will be transitioned into this legislative framework, creating some extra benefits. Once they are in a legislative framework, more information can be shared with them to assist them in their advisory role. That is a positive thing, but it is not apparent from the bill that this is the case, so again I seek assurance from the Leader that will occur. As the minister said in the briefing, if there is a particular issue with a particular area, whether in one of the small rural hospitals or one of our four major hospitals, an advisory group could be formed for a defined period to address or to advise on a particular challenge or issue. I would like the Leader to address some of the things mentioned in the briefing today regarding local advisory groups.

The Leader claimed this bill strikes the right balance between setting strategy and direction in health for the whole state while giving local facilities better capacity for local decision-making to deliver high-quality services to patients and solve local problems as they arise.

She said this bill lays the foundations. While this is true, after all the feedback to Government Administration Committee A on acute health services, and the length of time clinicians have been

expressing concern about the government's model under the current arrangements, we need more detail about these very genuine concerns and how they are being addressed. We are fixing the structure, but it needs to be very clear how it will address these real concerns of governance. It has been an ongoing challenge.

It is sad when people feel they are forced to go to the media to raise these concerns, when they feel they have been bashing their heads against the wall for some time. A lot of that was to do with the very unclear reporting structure, which has now been streamlined. The secretary is now the go-to person. It is clear that is where the responsibility lies, and then with the minister. There was a dual reporting structure. Sometimes it was claimed they were both the responsible reporting person; other times it was nobody so people had nowhere to go. It has been a serious challenge that directly impacted on service delivery and thus patient care.

The Leader suggested in her second reading speech that the secretary is currently consulting with the Tasmanian Health Service on changes that need to be made to support local decision-making, and has consulted with key representatives, including the Australian Medical Association and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation; THS statewide executive; senior executives from the Royal Hobart Hospital, Launceston General Hospital, the North West Regional Hospital; consumer representatives from the south, north and north-west; and the Health and Community Services Union, the Community and Public Sector Union and the Medical Health Council of Tasmania. I know they all support the intent of the bill.

There is broader gamut to preserve and continue to build the core elements of a single statewide service and the clear role delineation across the four hospitals. I support that and have done so for a very long time. I tried many moons ago, in a previous government, to establish one health service but with local input. As the member for Rosevears said, it is sometimes three steps back and one step forward. Sometimes it takes a while to get there.

I agree with the Leader that within our statewide health system the large majority of services are delivered locally and the system must support local operational decision-making. The system must support local decision-making and help our health facilities respond to the different health needs of the local communities - not completely different but there are nuances in each area.

The Leader acknowledged that we need to do this, and we need to empower decision-makers in our hospitals by giving them the authority and the tools they need to do their jobs. This includes a clear organisational structure, budgets and staffing establishments that enable decisions at a local service level where they can be managed within these parameters and improved business reporting. I agree with these sentiments and ask for more clarity on the make-up of the executive and how this local operational clinical decision-making will be assured.

I know there is support in the medical profession for this bill because it addresses many of the governance issues that have caused so many problems. We need more clarity and detail about the local clinical input and how that will be achieved.

The bill provides for the THS to be managed by the executive of the State Service officers, appointed by the secretary. The executive will be responsible to the secretary for the administration and management of the THS and the performance of the THS. The functions of the executive include management and monitoring and reporting to the secretary on the administration and financial performance of the THS.

That is important because there is only so much money we can put into health. Health could consume the whole state budget, and health inflation rises at a much higher rate than normal inflation.

We do need to be able to manage it within a budget and is always the challenge. What is missing is the need for the executive to also have the function of, and responsibility for, the collection, monitoring and reporting of the performance of the THS in delivering good patient outcomes using monitoring and reporting outcomes focused on performance information in the delivery of the health services within the THS.

I note one requirement in the bill is for the service level agreement to have performance information. There is no requirement there for it to be outcomes-focused. This is a vital aspect of service delivery. While the framework is set up in the service level agreement, there is not a focus on the patient outcomes.

We can count as many hip operations and knee replacements - and many other surgical procedures and medical treatments - as we like, but if these patients do not get the outcome they are looking for and do not return to good health or full mobility after their joint replacement, for example, we are not actually delivering the service we should be.

Mr Valentine - We cannot measure how well the delivery of the service is.

Ms FORREST - That is right. If they end up being recycled back through the acute health system, that is money that should not be needed there. That should be money other people who require the acute health system can access. This is a vital aspect of service delivery which I would argue is as important as the financial performance. I foreshadow an amendment that provides for this role and responsibility of the executive. I appreciate the assistance I have had with the Leader's advisors and the secretary on working through this.

Of course appropriate outcome measures will need to be agreed and in line with Commonwealth reporting requirements, but there is nothing to stop Tasmania leading the way in this area and really focusing on getting the best patient outcomes we can and hopefully reducing demand on our acute health services as a result.

If the focus is on good patient outcomes that do not see them re-entering the acute health service because of a problem not fixed in the first place, we will have achieved a great deal. Without that focus, it can be lost in the financial aspects. I will speak more on this in the Committee stage.

I support the principle of this bill and hope it can bring clarity and certainty to those delivering our acute health services. I thank them for their work. I have been in the system for a very long time and know how hard our nurses, medical practitioners and doctors work within the system. When you are worn out from working many shifts and receive a call asking whether you can come in, sometimes you think, 'No, I am too tired', but you go in because you know what it is like to be there and not have someone come and help you. The issue of overtime and those sort of things can be explored at a later time, but nurses and doctors have their patients' health and welfare outcomes foremost in their minds with all the care they provide. The last thing I want is to see someone not receive the care they should because of lack of resources, either human or other, so I thank them and acknowledge the hard work they do.

We must remain focused on adequately funding and staffing our health facilities and keeping patients at the centre of all our decision-making. This includes focusing on outcomes-based performance, rather than output-focused performance, and not just financial performance.

[11.39 a.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Mr President, I welcome the member for Prosser to this place and welcome back the member for Hobart. I am pleased to see you both here in the Chamber and am looking forward to working with you over this coming term.

We welcome this bill and will be supporting it. This is a necessary change to the health system; indeed, Labor has been calling for this model for some months now. We are pleased to see it brought before us now and having the opportunity to enact it in legislation and implement some change in the health system.

Since being appointed as the shadow health minister, a role I see as a privilege and an honour, I have been travelling to different parts of the state talking to as many Tasmanians as I can about our health system - people who are working in our health system, people who are relying on our health system, and people who just want to know there is a health system they can rely upon when they need it. Overwhelmingly what I have been hearing about this bill is to just get it through - 'Don't even worry about it, just get it through. We need it so badly, just get it through.' I am not going to do that; we are not going to push it through without scrutinising it, but it is important to note this is a change being widely called for across the state.

That indicates that the flagship reform the Minister for Health introduced as one of the first things he did as the Health minister has not worked. I am pleased to see in the second reading speech that the Leader, on behalf of the minister, stated that -

The system must support local decision-making and help our health facilities to respond to the health needs of their local communities. To do this, we need to empower decision-makers in hospitals by giving them the authority and the tools they need to do their jobs.

I could not agree more with that. The system we have had in place up until now has done the opposite. It has disempowered local hospital-level decision-making, resulting in a complete lack of a clear governance structure, which has exacerbated many of the problems we now have in the health system.

I have been travelling around the state talking to people about the state of our health system, and nobody can say that our health system is in a good state. My electorate office has reported an alarming increase in the number of constituent inquiries, including people telling us their stories because they are so desperate about the situation they are in. Ramping has become so commonplace that it is no longer a question of whether there are ambulances on the ramp but how many there are tonight, or today even. It is not only happening in the peak times in the dead of the night; it is also happening in the middle of the day, in the middle of the week. There have been instances of ambulances doing blockies around the Hobart CBD because they cannot even get onto the ramp because there are so many ambulances on the ramp.

Paramedics are now being rostered on specifically to relieve paramedics who are stuck on the ramp. Paramedics who would normally be doing light duties or office duties are going to the

hospital specifically to relieve crews that are sitting on the ramp or in a corridor so that they can get back on the road.

Patients are being treated in corridors or on the ramps. Only two weeks ago there were instances of patients sitting on the ramp for so long that one patient had enough time to have blood taken, have the blood analysis done, and be assessed by a doctor and sent home before they even got in the door of the emergency room.

The hospital has been operating at its highest escalation level far more often than it should be. This has become commonplace and it has become almost a way of managing the normal operations of the hospital, rather than only for a crisis situation as it is supposed to be.

There are stories of mental health patients languishing in the emergency department for hours and sometimes days on end.

Patients who have presented at the emergency room at their absolute crisis point are being sent home before they are even admitted to an emergency room. They are being told, 'There is no room for you here and nobody can help you. You will be waiting here for days. You will be better off going home'. How can somebody be better off going home when they are presenting for treatment, desperate for help at the lowest point they will come to?

Tasmanian women are having to fly to another state to access a legal procedure that can easily be performed in Tasmania - medical terminations, which are not currently available in our public health system.

The Launceston emergency room has lost its training accreditation and the Royal Hobart Hospital has lost its psychiatric training accreditation. Other training accreditation has been under serious threat. I am not sure the public truly understands the impact of these losses of accreditation and what loss of accreditation means for a hospital. It has a devastating impact on the hospital's ability to attract and retain staff. People will not come to work here if there is nothing to attract them. At the moment it is difficult to attract staff to Tasmania because of the state of the system.

I have spoken to nurses who have said to me that they have asked their families to be extra vigilant and extra careful - to get their flu shot and drive extra carefully because they do not want them to be in the hospital right now.

People who are working there day in and day out are begging their families to be extra careful because they do not want their own families being treated in our hospitals.

Nurses are telling me stories about knocking back double shifts because they have just worked a double shift. They simply cannot do anymore and feel guilty about that. They feel guilty about the fact they cannot work these extraordinary hours. Hours that are just not safe. It is not safe for patients and it is not safe for workers.

I acknowledge the workers we have in our health system because they do an extraordinary job. They work so hard. They are the backbone of the system. They are working under enormous stress but doing it to the best of their ability and doing an amazing job of it.

We have been told just to get this bill through, and we will be getting this bill through, but we are not doing that without an appropriate level of scrutiny.

We have some questions about the bill. We asked a number of questions in the debate in the other place. Some of those questions were addressed. We are still waiting on answers for some of them. I will raise those now here as well.

We are concerned with how this will operate in reality. The bill spells out broad guidelines for the way the structure will be set up, but the questions from people on the ground include: How is this really going to work? What is this going to mean at a hospital level? What are these jobs going to look like? What will the role be called? What responsibility will lie at that local hospital level? I seek clarification from the Leader. I believe organisational charts are due next month so I hope they will address much of the confusion and apprehension.

In the lower House the minister committed to providing the cost of ending the CEO's contract ahead of schedule and the date of the appointment of the CEO to that role.

I have a question about some content in the second reading speech. The Leader said that in the past month work had started on new mental health beds in the south. I would like more information on what work has started on those new mental health beds. I understand those beds were part of a commitment made by the government in the lead-up to the election and were part of the first 30-day plan of a majority Liberal government. What stage is that work at?

We will be supporting the bill, but not without apprehension about how it will work in reality. We will be keeping a very close eye on some of the commitments regarding more information coming forward. It is concerning this will happen at the beginning of winter, the busiest time of year for our hospital system. Hopefully adequate support will be provided so hospitals can manage the flu season and the busy winter period while also dealing with transition under this new structure. This is about delivering the best health outcomes for Tasmania and a safe and supportive work environment for our health workers. This bill is a step in the right direction and we will be supporting it.

[11.49 a.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I heard the member for Rosevears say this bill is fixing the mess that has been created. From the outside I think it looks that way. I am not here today to throw darts because I think that is the last thing we need.

We have problems, as the member for Launceston pointed out, with the Launceston General Hospital's loss of accreditation. The member for Rumney pointed out that the Royal Hobart Hospital has the same problem. The member for Launceston said the three Tasmanian health organisations did not have the time to work through it to get the maximum benefit of the model.

Mrs Hiscutt - No, that is very accurate.

Mr VALENTINE - Before I go any further, I welcome the member for Prosser to this place. I was going to save that welcome for my contribution to the Address-in-Reply but I am on my feet here so often I will welcome you now. I hope you enjoy your time in this Chamber. I think you will. It is a bit different to the Chamber downstairs. It is not as adversarial, even though we might have some issues and problems with bills.

Mr Dean - What did you say?

Mr VALENTINE - It is not as adversarial.

Mr Dean - I thought that is what you said.

Mr VALENTINE - Is that right?

Mr Dean - I do not know.

Mr VALENTINE - We do not personality bash in this Chamber, the member for Windermere would have to agree with that. We are here to look at the pros and cons of bills and argue the merits or otherwise and the member for Prosser will enjoy it. It is certainly my pleasure to welcome you to this place.

I also congratulate the members for Murchison, McIntyre, Mersey and Launceston for their appointments to their various roles as chair and deputy chairs of committees. I congratulate and wish them all the best in those roles.

This legislation presents an opportunity for parochialism to once again insert itself into the organisation of health services in this state, something I hope is not taken up. This bill is a perfect opportunity to create a proper single statewide management of health service delivery. The main purpose of the bill is to provide opportunities for better local decision-making, which is absolutely imperative.

Looking back at the interim Acute Health Services report the member for Murchison mentioned, one recommendation is made in that report. It is an interim report and I hope we get an opportunity to continue the inquiry because more information is to be gained and found, possibly through other submissions. We will have to work this through as a committee. The subcommittee's one recommendation is that all parties fully consider key findings contained in this interim report and work collaboratively - note that word - to propose, refine and implement solutions to the challenges and problems identified within the Tasmanian Health Service and the state's major hospitals. That is the one recommendation.

We did not put other recommendations forward because we have not finished our deliberations. Key finding 1 is -

A number of key stakeholders raised concerns regarding the leadership structure and communication within the Tasmanian Health Service (THS).

Key stakeholders identified the loss of local administrative and clinical leadership and a lack of local decision making capacity as negatively impacting on patient care, staff morale and efficient service delivery.

Quite clearly the submissions to the committee underline the necessity for this bill. This is the right direction to take. We need to make sure the system in place allows proper administration for the delivery of health services to all Tasmanians.

It is an opportunity to make sure that we get the recruitment process right for the state. I am not suggesting this is the way it needs to happen, but one submission we received in that inquiry was from Dr Bryan Walpole. He proposed that there should be a single statewide academic medical centre. His submission reads -

I suggest that Tasmania needs one statewide Academic Medical Centre ... say, the UTAS medical centre, with three statewide campuses, as the RHH model has been superseded, Royal is an anachronism, it's also divisive along the north-south line.

RHH treats far more than Hobart, it's a statewide institution and has a wider role than hospital with its outreach and ambulatory services. Also there is an urgent need to bring all state health institutions under one administration.

He is getting his wish in this bill.

There is no universally agreed definition of an AHC -

I think he means AMC.

but most are alliances of geographically co-located entities with varying descriptions of what they actually do or hope to achieve.

However, all AHCs are committed to a tripartite mission of advancing research, education and patient care together.

He then talks about the institutions in various places and how that works. There is a need for research in this state and it does happen. There is a need to educate doctors in this state and that does happen. There is a very urgent need for patient care. He says this model brings it all under one recruitment process. This might be the cheapest way to go. That is something for the Government to consider, to see where its weaknesses or strengths lie. Our committee may wish to further reflect on that if we have the opportunity to restart the inquiry.

The point is that it steers away from a parochial process and from regionalisation. We must do that if possible so we have one state administration for things such as recruitment, back office functions, human resource functions and ICT functions.

I reflect on my 20 years in the health service, between 1991 and 2007 - so not taking in the last five years of my service - when the ICT section, which is a central function within the department, had 16 changes of the manager. Sixteen changes in 16 years. It is like flies in a bottle. People are so concerned about their own futures and so concerned about how they will fare in changes that occur that it hampers their application to their work. This must stop.

There must be greater certainty, especially in areas that are so important for staff recruitment, such as providing ICT services. There has to be a better way to deliver services to people in our community. Perhaps the Leader cannot yet explain the process because it has not been signed, but if it is possible to explain that recruitment process and how it may be about to be implemented, I would appreciate that. The secretary said in the briefing this morning that they were about to sign off on something in that regard. I would be very interested to hear about that.

It was very encouraging to hear the member for Rumney saying the Labor Party supports this. Members may have some concerns and issues with it that will probably come out during the Committee process. The one thing we need - and some of us around this Table harp on this quite often - is a long-term framework that every party signs off on. Let there not be that basic dispute about where we want to be in 15 or 20 years' time. Let us take the politics out of that side of it:

argue about the small bits, do not argue about the main big picture. We need every party to sign off on this. The Government has the One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes approach. Bite the bullet and say 'Yes, we agree with that approach'. Let Labor and the Greens say they agree with that approach. Let us agree that it is a good approach. Let us agree this is where we want our health service delivery to be in 15 or 20 years' time. Then every time there is a change in government, we will not have to be subject to, 'We didn't get that quite right, we are going to change that in this way', and then there is argument again about how it is going to change.

The people in the community expect better than that. It is a major expenditure item. It is the biggest expenditure item in the state budget, if I am correct, for health service delivery. I cannot put the number on it but it is big.

Ms Forrest - The bill is on your desk.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, but it does not say the number.

Mrs Hiscutt - It is around the \$7 billion mark.

Mr VALENTINE - It is a lot of money and we should not be having it subject to chopping and changing direction every four years. My plea is that the parties all sign off on this. Let us show the people in the community that we are committed to delivering good health services. We should not argue about the main objective.

The bit about being outcomes-focused is very important. The member for Murchison has an amendment on this and I am inclined to support that. I will listen to the debate on that. It is so important. We quite often focus on outputs. Those of us who have been through these sorts of public service planning exercises are always focused on the outcomes because that is what matters. They are desired outcomes. You cannot say what an outcome is going to be; it depends on how the outputs work together and what they deliver. You cannot say you are going to get this outcome. It is a desired outcome - it is what you might like. But we have to be outcomes-focused. We have to know what it is we are aiming at. If you aim at nothing, you hit it. We need to have a vision of what exactly we want to see, what services are actually being delivered and how members of the public are actually faring through the system. Otherwise what do we have to properly measure how effective service delivery is? I agree with that observation from the member for Murchison.

The member for Rumney observed the dire need for service review to ensure places like the Royal Hobart Hospital can actually cope. Quite clearly it is not just an RHH problem - the LGH and North West Regional Hospital have problems in certain areas of service delivery. We certainly heard about that in our inquiry. We have to make sure this structure is put in place, that steps are taken address those problems - the ones we know about - and seek to shape better future service delivery.

I will support this bill. Let us hope the savings encompassed within this bill are not eaten up with the splitting of the Health and Human Services on 1 July. That is all very well provided we can save the money and put it into frontline services.

Mr Willie - There has been little justification for that; we have not heard a lot.

Mr VALENTINE - It will be interesting to hear the justification when we get into Estimates and have an opportunity to ask some questions - if that is a part of Committee A and if I am on Committee A, as I hope to be.

We can make bureaucratic changes for little reason, and all this does is shake up the flies in the bottle so they do not know where they are going or what they are doing. There needs to be greater surety in various sections of bureaucracy to make sure they can apply themselves to delivering services that need to be delivered, rather than being concerned for their own welfare and careers because there is so much change. I ask the Government to consider that these are not just changes to make it look like something is being done.

I support the bill and its intent. I want to make sure it actually cements something in place that will not be overly fiddled with in the future.

[12.07 p.m.]

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Mr President, in my view some of the comments made by the first speaker in this debate were a little rich and also unfair. It does not matter what colour government you support, when looking at these issues, to be fair across the board, we need to be controlled in our statements. The member for Hobart and other members mentioned those issues. You have to look at what was inherited by the current government back in 2014. Look at the health system then - was it a Rolls Royce model, was it performing at 100 per cent and doing a wonderful job? No, it was not. Members here would recall lots of issues with it.

Mr Valentine - All parties are guilty of it.

Mr DEAN - Absolutely. I took from the member for Rosevears speech that it was pushing it all back onto the current Government. I am not here to protect the Government, but I want to protect fairness in things that have happened and things said.

Ms Forrest - Former prime minister John Howard needs to take some responsibility for interfering in the Mersey Hospital and putting us back in this.

Mr DEAN - Perhaps others as well, so I might not disagree with that.

I support the bill. As other members have said, we have seen constant change with our public hospital system now for a long time. It is time we got the management model and the structure right.

I do not disagree with the member for Launceston's comment. I do not think the previous control system we had - south, north and north-west - was wrong. Had it been given time, it could have worked well. If you look at some of the people we had in place in very senior positions within those organisations, unfortunately a lot of them were ego-driven. In my view a lot of poor decisions were made, administratively and in other management areas. Not wanting to be parochial, the Launceston General Hospital at that time was in fact setting the pattern as to where we wanted the other two regions to be. I do not think anybody would argue against that. They were doing quite well.

Mr Willie - That is a rhetorical question, isn't it?

Mr DEAN - I will answer it then. I think they were setting it fairly clearly and I thought doing quite a good job, but other bad decisions were being made around it. Unfortunately that led to its demise and the system we had prior to this bill coming forward.

I have often referred to the police model. The police model and system are not significantly different to the hospital system where you have the south, the north and the north-west. Going back two decades, the management of the police department was moved from Hobart and to the north and north-west, with budgets distributed accordingly and with commanders in position to control the activities in those areas. Some services were retained centrally in Hobart - salary, command and control and some of the other systems. That is how it operates today; it has performed very well and there have been many benefits from that model.

Mr Valentine - No turf disputes?

Mr DEAN - No. There are no turf disputes at all because commanders are selected very carefully. The commissioner and other senior staff are very careful in their selection of the people to fit into those positions. There have been no turf wars to my knowledge at all. Whereas under the previous model, as people would know, it was all controlled from Hobart. Even if you only wanted a shoelace, you had to apply to Hobart and get approval from Hobart to get a shoelace - or a shoe or a tie or whatever. That is how it used to be before the system changed about two decades ago.

The focus of any change in the health system should be on improving services provided to the sick, the best of care in all areas. Ambulance ramping has been referred to. Any changes ought to be focused on getting these things right. We have had problems in the acute and intensive care areas. We have had problems with elective surgery. The focus of any change ought to be on getting those things right or at least improving them.

Having said that, I do not think we will ever have a Rolls Royce model in our hospitals because of the costs incurred in getting that model. If we look at our demographics today, we are extending age. Our population is increasing and so the demand on our hospital services is becoming greater not less - unless we start to concentrate on healthier lifestyles. I have said this many times in this place and I say it again today: we need to start concentrating on those areas that are clogging our hospitals. The very one that comes to my mind - and your minds, I would think - is smoking. That is the area where we ought to be putting much of our money. I am told there is a ward in Hobart that is full of smokers and previous smokers with the diseases that have come from smoking. That is across the state. Look at mainland hospitals, hospitals around the world, the number of smokers taking up positions in hospitals is enormous. Absolutely enormous. We need an endgame for smoking. We need to concentrate on it. It can happen, and it will assist with many of the problems in our hospital system.

I thank the secretary for our discussion on 7 May, and I thank the other staff member I spoke with over the phone about this bill. I also appreciate this morning's briefing. Did anyone quote the AMA's document in relation to this bill? I will quote three or four lines from it -

I write to ask you to support the Tasmanian Health Service bill passed by the House of Assembly last week. The AMA has been calling for these changes for over a year now and we strongly support the overall management of the THS resting with the DHHS. If you have any questions regarding our view on some of the detail, I would welcome a call.

Stuart Day, AMA President

There are problems within our hospitals. I received an email from an ex-employee that identifies some enormous issues in an area within our public system. I will discuss it in the first instance with the minister and the secretary. I am not sure if any other members received it, but reading the reports is horrendous. Having said that, I will support the bill. I will ask questions in the Committee stage. Some of the answers given this morning at the briefing ought to be in *Hansard* as well, so I will probably ask some of those questions again.

[12.18 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I thank honourable members for their contribution to this bill. I have some answers to work through here. We will start with the members for Rosevears and Launceston.

Criticisms of amalgamations originally. The state Government remains committed to supporting the effective delivery of statewide health services in Tasmania. The last term of this government saw implementation of the One State, One Health System, Better Outcomes reforms. This included the creation of a single statewide health service and the development of the Tasmanian Role Delineation Framework - TRDF - and the Clinical Services Profile - CSP - for our four major hospitals. The state Government remains committed to these reforms.

As expected, however, some things that were introduced have had unintended impacts. This includes a number of changes that have impacted unreasonably on the ability to make decisions that support the delivery of local services. As other jurisdictions have found, the underlying legislation was part of the problem. We need to keep progressing. We need to balance our responsibilities to plan on a statewide basis with a pragmatic reality that services must be delivered locally within local facilities.

The work underway by the THS transition project is addressing issues raised. This work includes clear organisational charts for the THS to improve transparency of decision-making and report arrangements and actions to ensure decisions can be made at the facility level to deliver health services locally. In addition, work is underway to deliver a range of things the Government committed to in the first 100 days, and this includes some of the issues raised by members - establishing a clinical planning taskforce, establishing a health recruitment retention and workforce planning unit, commencing planning of the LGH capital works, procuring the 30 additional community-based drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds, convening a task force to improve the integration of mental health services in southern Tasmania, planning for the new community rapid response program in the north-west and the south, and commissioning feasibility studies into urgent care centres in the greater Hobart and Launceston areas.

The member for Rumney had quite a few problems. To start with, the mental health update: while not a question about the bill, I can confirm development work on the 10 new mental health beds at Mistral Place has commenced, with preliminary planning and consultation underway with key stakeholders. This important work is being led by the chief psychiatrist.

The member for Murchison asked about local decision-making. The secretary has had discussions with members of the executive of the Tasmanian Health Service and has spoken with many other peoples over the past few months about actions needed to support local decision-making.

Clearly, we can do things to support local decision-making. For example, we need to ensure that in every facility where decisions are being made there is better reporting to support local

decision-making. This includes budget and expenditure; human resources and information on activity within clinical streams and across facilities; agreed budgets and establishments across services within which local decisions can be made; advice and support at the facility level, including for HR and financial decisions. The secretary and others are working to prepare for the lead-up to the bill's commencement. While the bill does not attempt to define local decision-making as a need for each site because local administrative structures will differ, this is a core objective for the framework of the bill.

Why does the bill not specify the local decision-making arrangements? This might help some people.

Local decision-making is at the heart of the bill and the reasons for the bill, but that does not mean we would attempt today, or in this legislation, to try to set in stone exactly what local governance and the local decision-making structure should be in all cases.

What we are doing here is creating a simple, accountable and transparent governance structure that avoids the problem of separation between the THS and the department.

We are looking for a single line of accountability and a single accountability structure. This includes the executive's specific role of providing the THS administrative and management structures. The key message is that any complex statutory organisation would suffer from any prescriptive statute. That is the clear advice the minister has had and the one thing consulted with stakeholders.

We do not want a one-size-fits-all in all local areas, as that would fail our commitment for truly local decision-making to fit local conditions in the context of a statewide strategic health service. The bill therefore creates the governance framework to allow fit-for-purpose decision-making to be delivered administratively. The Royal will have different needs to the LGH. We also want to avoid over-managing in small areas. There is ongoing implementation and planning for this transition. This includes transition planning for these changes, clear organisation charts for the THS to improve transparency of local decision-making and reporting arrangements so people will not feel unsure exactly who they are answerable to and can get support from, and actions to ensure decisions can be made at the facility level to deliver health services locally.

The statewide THS executive is responsible for the administration and management of the THS. It is responsible to the secretary for the performance, by the THS, of its functions and powers. Clause 28 sets out the functions of the executive; they include administering and managing the THS. The executive must establish - so there is a 'must' - appropriate management and administrative structures for the THS that will be used for purposes that include enabling local management and control. The executive must ensure the THS performs its functions. These functions include the management of each hospital. As I pointed out earlier, the bill does not specify a one-size-fits-all for this. Even if it did, apart from it being dangerous and imposing a one-size-fits-all, it would also suffer from sitting in legislation and not being changeable depending on changing circumstances.

The intention with regards to advisory panels is they may be used for any purpose, either specifically for the purpose of functions under the act, or more broadly on matters relevant to the secretary and the THS. For example, the secretary will decide whether to establish advisory panels to fulfil the function of ensuring appropriate mechanisms for consultation and engagement between the THS and consumers or other interested parties. The secretary will establish those advisory

panels. A broader example is that the secretary may decide to establish an advisory panel to review a particular health service planning issue or a particular clinical issue. For this kind of example, clause 14 of the bill comes into play. This is a typical clause to make it possible for health practitioners and others to bring relevant information forward, even when it would otherwise be restricted and or where you want to ensure panel members are bound to keep it confidential. For example, patient information may be provided to a panel to ensure there are appropriate clinical practises or outcomes. This clause allows external experts to receive such information and also ensures they have a clear duty to keep it confidential.

The member for Murchison talked about who will be on the executive, where it is based and the termination of appointments. The bill provides for the secretary to appoint a person or persons from the senior staff working for the THS to the executive. This provides flexibility to evolve the executive over time. The secretary can increase or decrease the size of the executive, for example. In the short term, the secretary will speak to the current statewide executive members about this important statutory role under the new arrangements. It will be a matter for the secretary to make appointments. I do not want to prejudge who these people are, but I can assure members the secretary is actively planning for this so an announcement can be made. There is no need for the executive members to be based in any particular geographical location.

Reporting, including outcomes reporting: the bill continues a requirement for an annual report of the THS, including audited financial statements and operational and performance reporting. This report will be tabled by the minister in the Tasmanian Parliament. The bill includes other mechanisms to provide performance reporting by the THS. Under clause 10 of the bill the service plan for the THS must include the requirements for the THS to report on performance.

Further, under clause 12, the secretary can direct the THS to provide and/or publish information and reports. The service plan provides for care standards.

Beyond what is already reported, the nature and substance of outcomes-focused reports will be developed between the THS and DHHS in consultation with consumer advisory groups supporting our health service, as well as the technical input from the University of Tasmania, to ensure we are reporting outcomes using a consistent, useful and relevant methodology. While the Government's view was that this initiative could be progressed under the current bill and reporting provisions and directions, the amendment proposed to reporting outcomes of health services is not opposed and is left to the will of the Council.

The member for Rumney - what happens to the CEO? Before I read that answer, I would like to slip in here that I have one good report on the health service. It only came to me on 18 May and the lady says -

Hello Leonie,

If chemo wasn't sufficient, he now has very painful bouts of shingles -

poor fellow -

We were at the Emergency Dept in Burnie today and he could not have had better treatment. The staff of some of the Victorian hospitals should come over here for lessons.

That is one good thing I would like to put in here.

What happens to the CEO? The minister has advice from the State Service office. It is proposed that when the restructure of the Tasmanian Health Service takes effect, Dr Alcorn's appointment as chief executive officer will cease. The Government will honour any contractual requirements within Dr Alcorn's instrument of appointment, including any entitlements to severance pay and also any applicable statutory entitlements, including entitlements to leave.

Until the restructure of the THS takes place, the Government is not able to give figures on to the payout figure that will be applicable. However, I can confirm that Dr Alcorn will be treated appropriately and fairly, consistent with his lawful entitlements. If we are able to, we will provide figures once they are assessed at the date of the contract ending.

I hope that clears up some of the questions of members and I thank members for your considered -

Ms Lovell - The date of appointment?

Mrs HISCUTT - The date of appointment - I may have to seek some further advice on that.

Mr Dean - What are the cost savings as a result of this change? Does it include any payouts to the existing chief executive officer?

Mrs HISCUTT - I will seek advice on that. Dr Alcorn has been the chief executive officer of the Tasmanian Health Service since 1 February 2016. There is an estimated \$4 million saving. All that will be encompassed in that. It is an estimated figure. There may be a couple of thousand here or there, but you would presume that will be part of that figure.

Bill read the second time.

TASMANIAN HEALTH SERVICE BILL 2018 (No. 3)

In Committee

[12.37 p.m.]

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 -

THS and Secretary to comply with ministerial charter

Mr DEAN - I refer to clause 6(3) at the bottom of page 10 -

If the ministerial charter and the service plan in relation to a financial year, are inconsistent, the service plan prevails, for the financial year, to the extent of the inconsistency.

How and where would one expect them to be inconsistent? A charter is provided by the minister to cover the following year and the service plan would have then been done to take into account all the issues the minister refers to in the charter.

I would have thought that the service plan would be closely checked and considered to ensure it complied with the requirements of the minister as outlined in the charter.

I think it says the minister cannot change the charter midway through the year if the budget significantly changes, such as if there was a huge emergency and the money had to be taken from other budgets to satisfy that emergency.

Mrs HISCUTT - The ministerial charter must be tabled before each House of parliament within 10 sitting days of being signed by the minister and it can be long term.

The service plan under clause 9 is approved by the minister and is the most contemporaneous and specific statement of requirements for the THS, and so any inconsistency between the two is decided in favour of the service plan.

I think if there was a big budget inconsistency, as the member said, the service plan would have to change.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clauses 7 and 8 agreed to.

Clause 9 -
Service plan

Mr VALENTINE - Referring to clause 9(2)(b), during the briefing I asked about the minister receiving advice during the service plan approval process. I was looking particularly at the charter and the question the member for Windermere talked about. The charter is a much broader overarching document. I asked the Leader to state whether there is an expectation appropriate advice will be received prior to the minister requesting a change. Does the minister receive advice? It is not something likely to occur where the minister decides a change is needed, goes ahead and does it. It seems to me that under this clause, it would have to go through the secretary in any event and advice would actually be provided, but I would like that confirmed.

Mrs HISCUTT - While the minister can request a change to the service plan, this cannot be done whenever the minister chooses to. It can only be done when the secretary first prepares the plan by 1 June or if the secretary chooses to propose an amendment. The minister routinely takes advice. In other words, the minister must wait for the secretary to put forward a plan. The secretary's function is in clause 8; it includes advising the minister about the plan.

Mr DEAN - I raised this question this morning in the briefing and it ought to be included in *Hansard*. In reference to the explanation provided about legal status and position, under clause 9(3), the secretary could ignore the requirements of the minister in this instance because the clause says, 'may provide to the Minister a proposed service plan altered as requested'.

Can the Leader explain why we have 'may' there? My interpretation of it is that it gives the secretary the prerogative here to tell the minister to go run. It would be interesting if that were the case.

Mrs HISCUTT - It is to give the minister and the secretary leeway in their discussions. They might change their mind. They may agree on a different outcome from what was originally

proposed, so they have to have the flexibility to work through the pros and cons of what they are trying to do. Therefore the minister may choose to have plan a, b or c, but it might not be what was first proposed to him, so he has to have the ability to 'may' look at it.

Clause 9 agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 12 agreed to.

Clause 13 -

Advisory panels

Ms RATTRAY - I would like some clarification about local advisory panels. I note from the second speech that the secretary is currently consulting across the Tasmanian Health Service. The second reading speech also talks about supporting local decision-making and gives an extensive list, which includes consumer representatives from the south, north and north-west. What constitutes a consumer representative group? I am particularly interested in how small local - not big local - community groups may be included in the consumer representative group. We need to flesh this out, Leader, so it is very clear in my mind. Some groups may like to have input into services, such as ambulance services and the like, delivered in their areas. That is what I would like to see.

Mrs HISCUTT - The secretary appoints members to the local consumer representative groups. If a specific area wished to be on the group, they could certainly ask the secretary to consider putting them into that consumer representative group. Does this answer the member's question?

Ms RATTRAY - What is the process if a community group has an interest in a particular service for their immediate area? Could they effectively elect somebody to be their spokesperson with the request being put to the secretary? A considerable number of smaller representative groups across the state could well be looking to have some sort of voice in this consultative process. How wide-ranging is the secretary going to be in this regard? It is a bit of an unknown. There needs to be some sort of clarity around what the parameters are for being involved. It probably cannot just be a member of the local auxiliary wanting to have some input into services. I am more interested in the nuts and bolts and the parameters the secretary would look at for including a representative or a group as an advisory panel member.

Mrs HISCUTT - Generally three levels of consultation happen - local, regional and state. I can certainly get the member more information later. All the information is fed in and ultimately the secretary makes the final decision. Any particular issues in any area can have representation made from any of those groups, but ultimately it is up to the secretary to have the final say, as discussed in our briefing this morning. We certainly cannot have neurosurgeons in every little town. It is up to the secretary to make the decision, but there seems there are plenty of local, regional and statewide feed-in processes for people to comment or express concern.

Ms RATTRAY - The information from the briefing this morning is that there was not a real desire by the secretary to have representation from a lot of the smaller hospital areas. I am concerned about having a reasonable process. They did not want every small group that wanted to be part of the advisory panel consultative group process. Can you assure me that is not the case?

Mrs HISCUTT - The secretary was only trying to point out this morning that an undesirable outcome would be over-management of these small areas. He certainly is keen to make sure every area is serviced to the best of the state's ability.

Mr DEAN - Taking that further, and I asked a question in this morning's briefing about this, will there be common members on these panels? If all these bodies are autonomous, with different people on the panels, decisions could be made that are inconsistent with the state model. A follow up question from the member for McIntyre is that if we take George Town Hospital, for instance, would it have an advisory panel set up for any particular purpose? Is that how far it will go or would there be an advisory panel at the Launceston General Hospital that would satisfy the position of both areas?

Mrs HISCUTT - If that were to occur, it would be over-management of some of these smaller places. They would probably be treated on the regional level for input to the secretary. Regarding common members on the panel, there will be some common members on the panel. The example was given this morning of an oncologist or a gynaecologist. There is only one in the state, so he will be a common person on that panel all the time. It would depend on what expertise was needed for a particular panel, but it would not be unusual for there to be common members on that panel. There might be some common representation on the statewide panel who have come from the regions to ensure a common thread. So, yes, it is more than likely there will be common representation on the panels.

Mr DEAN - Who would be the likely members of a panel? If we take Launceston General Hospital or George Town Hospital, would it be somebody with a medical background, or can they bring somebody into the panel from outside? I take it there is no cost attached to that? It is a service that is volunteered or provided with existing appointees.

Mrs HISCUTT - You would presume that regarding the LGH, it would be people with the right expertise on that particular panel. Whether it is the same person every time would be up to the secretary to determine. There is no cost to these panels. They will be drawn upon as and when necessary.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clauses 14 -

Provision of information to advisory panels

Mr VALENTINE - I am concerned with information being provided to an advisory panel, because it -

... cannot, by virtue of providing the information, be held to have breached any code of professional etiquette or ethics ...

Does having their personal information shared with another party in any way infringe on any individuals rights? I am worried this is signing away the rights of an individual.

Mrs HISCUTT - This would only be done if it were clinically necessary for a particular patient. The clause notes say that in providing information to an advisory panel -

An advisory panel may involve consideration of confidential information, and may not be able to effectively fulfil its function unless there is a facilitative clause in relation to information and confidentiality. This clause provides such a clause, based on examples in other legislation, enabling persons to provide such confidential information and requiring panel members then to maintain the confidentiality of such information, subject to consideration of the functions of the panel or matters prescribed in the regulations.

Ms RATTRAY - In regard to clause 14(3)b, could I have an example of 'in other prescribed circumstances'? This just talks about a 'person who is, or has been, a member of an advisory panel must not ...' It then outlines a number of things as a prescribed circumstance. What are those prescribed circumstances?

Mrs HISCUTT - There is nothing in mind there, but if it does happen, it will go into regulations. It is a catch-all in case something happens.

Clause 14 agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 18 agreed to.

Clause 19 -
Powers of THS

Mr VALENTINE - Under clause 19(b), the THS has the following powers, 'to enter into contracts other than contracts of employment'. What mechanism might be used to employ surgeons and the like on a statewide basis? Are we better empowering local hospital services? How does this actually run against the concept?

Mrs HISCUTT - We do not do this under the THS act because all employees are employed under the State Service Act. That is simply what that means.

Mr VALENTINE - Does that include employing surgeons who might have private surgery practices and only partial employment with the hospital? Are they actually a public servant in the true sense of the word or in every case?

Mrs HISCUTT - All our specialists are under the State Service Act.

Ms RATTRAY - In regard to the powers of the THS under clause 19(g), 'to charge fees for the delivery of services and to waive all or part of such fees', may I have an example of where that might be used?

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

QUESTIONS

John Duigan Sailing Schedule

Port of Grassy - Fertiliser Shed and Operating Hours

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

[2.31 p.m.]

- (1) With regard to the King Island shipping service provided by Bass Island Line, since the commencement of the *John Duigan* -
 - (a) What was the proposed schedule of sailings, including docking times to date?
 - (b) What was the actual schedule of sailings, including docking times to date?
 - (c) Of the delayed or cancelled scheduled services, what was the reason for the delay or cancellation?
 - (d) How were the delays or cancellations communicated to King Island residents?
 - (e) Where did each service dock on the Tasmanian mainland?
- (2) What progress, if any, has been made on replacing the condemned fertiliser shed currently situated at the Port of Grassy?
- (3) In view of the shorter hours of daylight as winter approaches and the recent announcement that the port operating hours have been restricted to daylight hours due to inadequate lighting and insufficient staff, what measures will be taken to ensure port access is maintained when shipping services are delayed due to inclement weather or other delays to avoid delays to unloading and loading of livestock and other goods?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The *John Duigan* is operating a weekly schedule, departing Geelong on Sunday, departing Grassy on Monday and departing Bell Bay on Wednesday for Geelong.

During its first full week of service from Geelong, the *John Duigan* needed to accommodate a community event and official naming ceremony at the Port of Grassy on Friday, 18 May, which required an adjustment to the schedule. Alterations to the schedule are always communicated in a timely manner via email. *John Duigan* is now operating as per the schedule, departing Geelong on Sunday, 20 May and Grassy on Monday, 21 May. Bell Bay is the mainland Tasmanian port for service start-up.

- (2) The fertiliser storage shed at Grassy is planned for demolition in the second half of this year. The market has made alternative arrangements in relation to distributing fertiliser directly to customers.

- (3) The Port of Grassy has always been a day port, operating during daylight hours. Historically, some operators have sought dispensation to navigate into and out of the port at night.

Following a recent review of the port, the TasPorts harbour master removed the option for vessels over 35 metres to apply for an exemption for night navigation on safety grounds. These shippers need to ensure they arrive at or depart from the Port of Grassy during daylight hours.

In his recent updates of operating parameters, the harbour master made it clear that vessels can be loaded or unloaded outside daylight hours by prior arrangement with landside stevedores.

To access this option, vessel masters or owners should contact the port operations coordinator with details about the cargo task, which will then be risk-assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The lighting and staffing levels are adequate and appropriate for the Port of Grassy to operate effectively as a day port and for landside work at night by prior agreement.

John Duigan Sailing Schedule

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

Mr President, question (1) was not answered. We have seen this with other members when they have to say, 'Well, the question was ...'. I encourage the Leader, when she gets a question provided to her, to actually check the answer provided. My questions were very specific: What was the proposed schedule and when did the ships actually dock? Were there any delays? If there were, what were the causes of them? Those questions have not been answered. I will resend question (1). The other two questions were answered very well, thank you. The first was almost completely ignored.

Commissioner for Children and Young People - Appointment

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

[2.35 p.m.]

Applications for the Commissioner for Children and Young People role closed 10 December 2017. Yet here we are in May 2018 and there has been no announcement from the Government. When will the five-year appointment be made?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Elwick for his question. The previous Commissioner for Children resigned in August 2017. The current commissioner commenced in September as an interim appointment while a nationwide recruitment process was undertaken to fill the position substantively. Mr David Clements has extensive experience working with and on behalf of children and young people. The Commissioner for Children role is crucial in providing not only advocacy for all Tasmanian children, especially the most vulnerable, but also in giving children a voice about the issues and decisions that may affect them.

It is therefore important to take the time necessary to get the selection right. In the meantime the current Commissioner for Children, Mr David Clements, is in place until the process has been finalised and a substantive commissioner appointed.

Bicycle Racks - Number Plate Display

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

[2.37 p.m.]

Mr President, my question is probably one that will interest you, and perhaps a number of other members. With the prevalence of bikes being transported on vehicles, it has been identified that those bikes on tow bar racks are obscuring vehicle number plates.

- (1) Are Tasmania Police identifying this noncompliance as an increasing issue?
- (2) What community education is being undertaken to advise vehicle owners of their obligation to have front and rear number plates clearly visible?
- (3) Are bike distributors required to advise customers of their obligation to acquire the suitable small number plate that is attached to the rack?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The statistics on obscuring a number plate are trending down slightly; however, Tasmania Police do not record what is obstructing a number plate. Tasmania Police has not identified bikes on tow bar racks that obscure the visibility of number plates as an issue. Statistics on cautions, infringements or prosecutions for having an obscured number plate are provided. I will table that response.
- (2) Vehicle operators have a legal responsibility as outlined under regulation 63 of the Vehicle and Traffic (Driver Licensing and Vehicle Registration) Regulations 2010 to ensure number plates are clearly visible.

As part of the Department of State Growth's ongoing commitment to assist the Tasmanian public to self-regulate, a review is currently underway of the Transport website to ensure there is appropriate information regarding the displaying of number plates.

In the last five years 5692 bike rack plates have been issued, which suggests many Tasmanians are aware of the requirements to ensure their number plate is clearly displayed when a bike rack is fitted.

- (3) Bike distributors are not required to advise customers about displaying number plates on a motor vehicle. Mr President, I seek leave to table the table and have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The answer reads as follows -

- (1) The statistics on obscuring a number plate are trending down slightly, however Tasmania Police do not record what is obscuring a number plate. Tasmania Police has not identified bikes on towbar racks which obscure the visibility of number plates as an issue. Statistics on cautions/infringements/prosecutions for having an obscured number plate are provided over page.
- (2) Vehicle operators have a legal responsibility, as outlined under Regulation 63 of the Vehicle and Traffic (Driver Licensing and Vehicle Registration) Regulations 2010, to ensure number plates are clearly visible.

As part of the Department of State Growth's ongoing commitment to assist the Tasmanian public to self-regulate, a review is currently underway of the Transport website to ensure there is appropriate information regarding the displaying of number plates.

In the last five years there have been 5692 bike rack plates issued, which suggests many Tasmanians are aware of the requirement to ensure their number plate is clearly displayed when a bike rack is fitted.

- (3) Bike distributors are not required to advise customers about displaying number plates on a motor vehicle.

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (to 20 May 2018)
39	34	27

A more detailed breakdown on the above figures from reporting services is also included below:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (to 20 May 2018)	Data Source	Date extracted
Fail to ensure no object obscures number plate	3	3	1	Prosecution system	21 May 2018
CAUTION - Registered operator fail to ensure that no object obscures/reduces visibility of any motor vehicle number plate and that number plate has no characteristics preventing production of clear number plate photographs by photographic detection device	23	21	20	Fines and Infringement Database (FIND)	
INFRINGEMENT - Registered operator fail to ensure that no object obscures/reduces visibility of any motor vehicle number plate and that number plate has no characteristics preventing production of clear number plate photograph by photographic detection device	13	10	6	Fines and Infringement Database (FIND)	21 May 2018

Short-stay Accommodation

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

[2.39 p.m.]

In March at the Housing Summit, the state Government released a communique that included -

Data Sharing Partnerships: Agree to a data sharing partnership between the Government and Airbnb and Expedia Stayz to inform policy and improve transparency in the rapidly changing sharing economy. This would include regular updates on facts including host locations, guest nights and host income.

- (1) How many host locations are there across the Greater Hobart area?
- (2) How many host locations are standalone dwellings in the greater Hobart area?
- (3) How many host locations are there across Tasmania?
- (4) How many host locations are standalone dwellings across Tasmania?
- (5) What is the total income for short-stay hosts in the Greater Hobart area?
- (6) What is the total income for short-stay hosts across Tasmania?

ANSWER

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

As part of the recent Housing Summit hosted by the Premier, we agreed to new data sharing arrangements with Airbnb and Stayz to give us all a clearer picture of the sharing economy.

With the partnership agreement now in place, we expect the first data from Stayz and Airbnb to be shared at the end of July so the data will provide us with valuable information about the contribution of the sharing economy.

Motorcycle Returning Rider Refresher Course

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

[2.41 p.m.]

My questions relate to the motorcycle returning rider refresher course run by the Department of State Growth.

- (1) How long has the motorcycle returning rider refresher course been going?
- (2) How many people attended during that period?
- (3) If it is no longer operating, what if anything is currently in place?
- (4) How much funding is allocated to the program annually?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The Department of State Growth does not run a motorcycle returning rider refresher course because this type of training is not required by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles - RMV - for someone to gain or continue to hold a motorcycle licence.

However, the Department of State Growth has and continues to be a strong advocate for returning riders to undertake refresher training.

Motorcycle refresher training has been available in Tasmania since 2006 and is delivered by RMV's contracted motorcycle training providers under a separate agreement with the Motor Accident Insurance Board. Under this agreement the MAIB provides an ongoing financial subsidy of currently \$150 per participant to encourage returning riders to undertake refresher training after an extended break. This is in response to returning riders being over-represented in crash statistics in Tasmania.

The original course was developed by the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council - TMC - and was funded through the Motor Accident Insurance Board and the MAIB Injury Prevention and Management Foundation in 2005.

However, with the implementation of the New Motorcycle Licensing Training and Assessment Program in Tasmania in mid-2017, it was agreed to replace the original course with the Check Ride component of the new motorcycle training program. This decision is supported by the TMC. The Check Ride is a half-day coaching and mentoring course developed using contemporary adult learning principles, and is based on the top five causes of motorcycle crashes in Tasmania. The Check Ride is designed to reinforce safe riding skills and behaviours to improve riding skills and to maximise riders' protection from road crashes.

From March 2018 the new motorcycle Returning Riders Road Skills Check Ride has been offered through the external motorcycle training provider AJL Training Pty. Ltd. Information regarding this course is available on the provider's website and on the Department of State Growth's website as well as being promoted by TMC.

As part of its ongoing commitment to promoting refresher training, the department is also looking at ways to better target returning riders with information regarding the importance of undertaking refresher training.

- (2) A total of 641 participants statewide have undertaken refresher motorcycle training since 2006.
- (3) The Check Ride component of the new program operates as the new refresher course.
- (4) The Motor Accident Insurance Board continues to provide a subsidy of \$150 per participant. The cost to the participant undertaking the new refresher course Check Ride is \$90. At this stage MAIB has indicated no cap has been applied to the subsidy funding.

Shipping - Pony deaths

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

[2.45 p.m.]

The recent deaths of 16 ponies travelling from Tasmania to Victoria is nothing short of an appalling tragedy. The death of the 16 ponies follows another tragic event where 59 cattle were dead or had to be put down after they arrived at South Gippsland's Port Welshpool on the

MV *Statesman* from Tasmania in January 2016. In both cases the Government has not released the reports.

The *Herald Sun* reported in February that -

The Weekly Times asked the Tasmanian department for an explanation into the cattle deaths, only to be told by a spokesman he was 'too busy' to answer questions.

Sounds a bit like here. The same report also stated -

If the pony death investigation is drawn out and shrouded in secrecy, you can only conclude Tassie authorities aren't too keen on rocking the boat.

- (1) Why is the Government continuing to withhold both reports despite significant public interest interstate and in Tasmania?
- (2) Were the 16 pony deaths caused by carbon monoxide poisoning?
- (3) How can the public have confidence that animal deaths will not happen again during transit?
- (4) What recommendations were made to prevent incidents like these happening, and have they been acted upon?

ANSWER

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

- (1) The matter relating to the deaths of cattle at Port Welshpool in January 2016 is currently before the courts. The Government cannot comment on matters that are actively being investigated or heard before court as such comment could affect the outcomes of the cases. The next hearing on this matter is scheduled for 27 June 2018. Regarding the matter relating to the deaths of ponies during a voyage on the *Spirit of Tasmania*, an investigation is still underway. The investigation is complex because it is a multi-jurisdictional investigation with legal complexities.
- (2) The investigation is ongoing. The department has indicated publicly that this is an isolated incident and no ongoing issues have been identified relating to transport across Bass Strait.
- (3) and (4)

The transport of animals is governed by the Land Transport of Livestock Standards. The standards are nationally agreed to and in Tasmania are law through animal welfare regulations. These mandatory standards are science-based and when followed ensure animals are handled and transported in a safe manner. In addition to the standards, guidelines for the transport of livestock on Bass Strait were endorsed in March 2017 and approved under the Animal Welfare Act 1993. These guidelines bolster the provisions of the standards, with guidance specific to the conditions found in Tasmania.

Department of Health and Human Services - Smoking Controls - Hospitals and Schools

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

This is a repeat question on the progress made by the Department of Health and Human Services regarding smoking controls in and around hospitals and schools. I will continue to ask this question until I receive a satisfactory answer.

- (1) What progress has been made in relation to smoking controls?
- (2) When we can expect the review to be completed?
- (3) When can we expect further amendments to legislation to prevent the insidious activity of smoking in and around hospitals and schools?
- (4) Is the review also considering the sale of tobacco products within close proximity to schools and hospitals, as applies in many other jurisdictions?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Windermere for his questions and expect to see them again.

- (1) The Department of Health and Human Services is currently developing policy options to address smoke-free areas around hospitals, schools and other key areas, which expose the community to harmful effects of second-hand smoke. Discussions are currently underway with the Tasmanian Health Service, local councils and the Local Government Association of Tasmania.
- (2) The development of policy options is expected to be completed in the second half of 2018.
- (3) Establishing effective control of smoking in and around hospitals and schools may require legislative change. If changes to laws are proposed, a public consultation process would be needed.
- (4) No. It would not be feasible to bundle consideration of an issue as substantial as how tobacco products are sold with the current issues of smoke-free areas.

Child Safety Service

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

[2.50 p.m.]

In April, the *Sunday Tasmanian* revealed child safety figures showed that at least 282 children were unallocated to a Child Safety Officer. Fifty per cent of intake workers in the north-west and 33 per cent in the north were over their 'trigger point' for a discussion about their case loads. Sixty-

nine per cent of case managers in the north-west and 49 per cent in the south were over their trigger point.

Leader, Child Safety Service workers have been consistently telling the government they need more staff to ensure they can protect vulnerable children and work with families on early intervention strategies. Clearly, from these statistics, they are unable to do that in many instances.

- (1) How can the Government be confident it is upholding its statutory responsibility when so many cases do not have an allocated worker?
- (2) What direction has the Minister for Children given the Child Safety Service in response to the recent reports of unallocated cases?
- (3) What actions have been taken by the Government to reduce unallocated cases?
- (4) Can the Government provide the current number of unallocated cases across intake, response and case management teams statewide, broken down by region?

ANSWER

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

- (1) Where there is no capacity to immediately allocate a child to a Child Safety Officer, cases are allocated to a team leader. During this time the team leader provides oversight, undertakes necessary case tasks and management, and escalates the urgency of allocation as required.
- (2) Unallocated cases are an operational matter for the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.
- (3) This Government's significant investment in the Strong Families - Safe Kids redesign of the child safety system is aimed directly at supporting frontline staff, increasing support to families and intervening earlier with families in need.

Getting the right help to children, young people and their families at the earliest opportunity will mean that there will be less need for families to enter the statutory system and children are less likely to be removed from their families.

- (4) Case load figures fluctuate on a daily basis as cases are opened, closed and reallocated across the service. As a result, the 'for allocation' list also changes continuously.

TASMANIAN HEALTH SERVICE BILL 2018 (No. 3)

In Committee

Resumed from above.

Mrs HISCUTT - As to the fees charged by the THS, the bill includes the same fee arrangement as the THO act; that is, the THS has the power to waive fees. This is generally where there is financial hardship. The THS also has the power to charge fees for the delivery of services as in the current act; however, this continues to be subject to the following clause, which requires the

approval of the minister and Treasurer for any fees not already set under the health legislation. That is because hospital fees are generally set by regulations made under the health legislation. However, there is a small number of other operational fees. These include the current fee for Home and Community Care Program services and some client contribution to supplement the cost of home help and home maintenance. These are very modest. For example, the fee for a pensioner for two or more visits per week for domestic assistance is \$10 in total. There are also subsidised fees for community equipment rental. Some sites also have residential aged care beds where people may contribute payments towards the cost of services.

I would like to clarify something asked before lunch about contracts and employment. The previous questioner asked why the THS can enter contracts but not contracts of employment. This is because contracts of employment are made under the State Service Act. This includes clinical staff and visiting medical officers. To clarify my answer, the THS can and does currently have service contracts with locum agencies for provision of locums as required. The locum agency employs staff rather than the State Service doing so. Other health practitioners are all employed under the State Service Act.

[2.56 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY - Following the response when I asked about an example of reasons for waiving fees, are hardship matters the only reason for waiving fees? How do you apply for hardship? Is there a formula for applying for hardship? Everyone suffers hardship in various ways at various times. You can have assets but no cash, you can have no cash or assets - how do you work it out?

Mrs HISCUTT - As I am aware, public patients do not pay any fees. If there are any of these other fees, it is financial hardship and under the proposed act hardship criteria will be broadened. These cases are assessed as and when required, and the paperwork will be done by clinical staff.

Clause 19 agreed to.

Clause 20 -

Limitations on powers of THS

Mr DEAN - I want clarity on clause 20(6). I had feedback on clause 20(1)(i), relating to providing services outside Tasmania's territorial boundaries. I understand it applies to doctors or medical staff serving in Antarctica. Could it cover doctors from here serving in other areas? Is that happening now? How frequently does it happen?

Mrs HISCUTT - It is happening now and this has been left open in case it is needed anywhere else - for example, oil rigs. It is specifically for the Antarctic, but it could be an oil rig.

Clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 agreed to.

Clause 22 -

THS subject to direction of Secretary

Mr DEAN - Clause 22 says -

The THS must comply with any direction of the Secretary given to the THS under this or any other Act.

I wonder why it is written in that way. In many of these situations it is written that the directions must be all reasonable directions. In this instance it is probably not likely, but it could occur that a direction given is not reasonable but there must still be compliance. That is what it identifies - it does not matter whether it is a reasonable direction or not, it must be complied with.

Mrs HISCUTT - It links directly to clause 12, which talks about directions. That will explain what can and cannot occur.

Clause 22 agreed to.

Clause 23 -
Employees

Mr DEAN - I want to know how this will really work -

The THS may make arrangements, with the Secretary, for State Service officers, or State Service employees, of the Department to be made available ...

That allows for any staff serving in those other areas, through an agreement with both departments, for the transfer of staff in that circumstance. Is that the way it is meant to work?

Mrs HISCUTT - The short answer is that the THS employees will continue to be State Service employees and continue to work at the THS under their current duties and arrangements. One of the Government's commitments was to reduce the duplication of resources created by the THS being a standalone State Service agency similar to the department, with a CEO having the same head of agency responsibilities as the department secretary.

For that reason, like the ambulance service or arrangements with some other statutory authority, the staff of the THS will technically be departmental staff but made available for the purposes of the Tasmanian Health Service. They will continue to report to their current managers, who will continue to report to their managers, up to the executive members. The executive members will therefore report to the secretary.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clauses 24 to 26 agreed to.

Clause 27 -
Role of Executive

Mr VALENTINE - I have two questions in one with regard to 'The Executive is responsible to the Secretary for ... the administration and management of the THS'. I was talking before about back office functions and operational functions like human resources, ICT, accounts receivable and accounts payable. What is it to be in terms of the department versus the THS? Is there only going to be one set of functions carried on by the department to cover human resources, ICT et cetera for both the department and THS? The second component is that none of those functions will be carried on by any of the hospitals themselves, one assumes.

Mrs HISCUTT - There is a balancing act with things like IT and payroll, which will be across the lot, whereas HR might be more localised.

Mr VALENTINE - HR management?

Mrs HISCUTT - HR management, yes.

There is always that overall management of the whole lot, but then little departments in between or separate regions will need precise tweaking, you might say.

Mr VALENTINE - My concern is that there is no unnecessary duplication. One would expect minimal duplication. As soon as you allow any duplication, all of a sudden you get these little fiefdoms which means you have more fragmentation. If you could clarify that the objective is not to have that, I would appreciate it.

Mrs HISCUTT - It is designed specifically so there is no duplication. The secretary is in a position to direct so hopefully that will resolve any duplication, and can eliminate duplication where they see it.

Clause 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 -
Functions of Executive

Ms FORREST - Madam Deputy Chair, I move -

That clause 28, page 30, after paragraph (d) be amended by -

Inserting the following paragraph:

'(x) to monitor and report to the Secretary on the outcomes, for persons, of the provision of health service to those persons; and'

I touched on this in my second reading contribution and note that in the Division 2 of the bill, which talks about the service plan, the service plan is required to include performance standards, performance targets and performance measures for the THS and standards of patient care and service delivery. As we have seen in the past, a lot of these performance measures are output-based, such as the number of surgical procedures that have been carried out. It does not require that they be outcomes-focused.

The previous auditor-general repeatedly made calls for outcomes-based performance indicators. Unless we take that seriously, we are going to continue to see only number crunching. You can do a thousand joint replacements in a short space of time to get through the list, but if half of those end up with infections and only a third return to full mobility within a reasonable period, whatever is determined by the experts in the field, you are really not getting the outcomes we should be getting for patients.

The Government said it is not opposed to the amendment. I worked closely with the advisers - and I appreciate that opportunity to do so - to ensure that this is the focus. You can have output-based performance indicators. I am not saying we should get rid of those because outputs are still important as well, but we also need to have outcomes-based performance indicators as well.

Health service is defined in clause 3, Interpretation, as -

- (a) a hospital service;
- (b) a medical service;
- (c) a paramedical service;
- (d) a community health service;
- (e) the supply or fitting of any prosthesis or therapeutic device;
- (f) any other service (including any service of a class, or description, that is prescribed) relating to the maintenance or improvement of the health, or the restoration to health, of persons or the prevention of disease in, or injury to, persons ...

It is broad because we need to be sure that the outcomes are across the whole of the health service. The THS is responsible for delivering health service. That is very clear. The executive needs to be required to report on the performance measures contained in the service plan. We do need to ensure there are outcomes-focused key performance indicators as well as the financial KPIs, and I imagine there will still be some output-based KPIs.

I encourage honourable members to support the amendment. I received a letter from the minister regarding my consultation with the secretary. In some cases there are already outcomes-focused reports; that is true. However, the Auditor-General commented in the past that we need to have a much greater focus on outcomes - not just in Health, I might add. It needs to be across other areas as well. We are dealing with Health here and we have an opportunity to insert this. The minister also said that he is keen to ensure that we progress outcomes-focused reporting. We have an opportunity here to insert it in the bill and to make it one of those roles out there, the same as financial management, and reporting on that, is.

Mrs HISCUTT - Beyond what is already reported, the nature and substance of outcomes-focused reports will be developed between the THS and the DHHS in consultation with consumer advisory groups supporting our health services and with technical input from the University of Tasmania to ensure we are reporting outcomes using a consistent useful and relevant methodology.

The Government's view was that this initiative was progressed under the current bill, but the amendments proposed relating to reporting outcomes of health services are not opposed. The main reason it is not opposed is because we see it as a direction we are moving in anyway. This amendment to this bill is neither here nor there. We do not oppose it, but we cannot see a need for it. We will go with the will of the Chamber.

Mr DEAN - I wonder how low down this reporting is required to be. I ask the member moving the amendment to explain. The executive? If the amendment gets up, one of the functions will be to monitor and report to the secretary on the outcomes for persons of the provision of health services to those persons. Is that monitoring of the medical services to all individuals within the system? To monitor and then to report to as required? Is that what this means? Just how low down does it go when monitoring the medical services to individuals? Am I right off track here? If I am, maybe the member will put me right.

Mrs HISCUTT - It is very possible there will be a representative sample. It would be very onerous to do every person who went through the hospitals.

Mr Dean - That is what it says, doesn't it?

Mrs HISCUTT - They would be looking for systemic outcomes across a sample of people. This is where we were generally moving anyway. I do not like to keep saying neither here nor there, but this amendment is. It would be happening anyway. This is how we will be doing it. We are at the will of the Chamber.

Ms FORREST - To address the question, it is a high-level requirement to have outcomes-based KPIs and reporting, much as the same as the financial performance is. We do not expect them to report how every dollar was spent in the Health department. That is the level the member for Windermere was talking about. Ultimately, as the Leader said and as was mentioned in the second reading speech - or maybe in the correspondence I had from the minister - the DHHS, clinical leaders, UTAS and community representatives will be consulted on what are the most effective and relevant outcomes-based key performance indicators.

The Government said it is already working toward this, which is great, so it should be in the bill. It should be there to ensure that is the focus. Yes, we report on the finances. We all expect that. But we also expect to know it is not how every individual patient arrives out, but it is the individuals who receive the care. This was OPC's advice, this is how you describe it to ensure we are talking about the services delivered to people, patients.

Overall the outcomes of those patients is a collective, as the Leader indicated. It is not going to go through every patient's record necessarily, but you are going to look depending on what are the determined outcomes-based performance indicators. The example I used was the return to full mobility following a joint replacement. That is easy to assess and shows whether people are returning to full mobility, and 99 per cent are. The troubles the honourable President has had with his joint replacement would be a failure of the system, as he had not returned to full mobility in a reasonable space of time. If you have to frequently return to the acute health service, we need to look at why that is happening. You cannot act on that if you do not have those outcomes-based performance indicators.

Using my example, if 30 per cent of patients were returning with infections in their joint replacement, or only 10 per cent were returning to full mobility within three months, we would have to ask what was going on. It is the only way to prevent some of these adverse outcomes. It is not just a matter of saying that we have done 1000 joint replacements. We need to know more about that. The Commonwealth is pricing for quality and safety, so there is a requirement to demonstrate that. How can you demonstrate that if you do not know whether your patients are getting better, rather than just going through the surgery sausage factory? We do not need to report on individual patients; there is patient privacy. We need to look at the overall outcomes we are getting from our health services, so that if there are problems, we can identify them, find out why patients are not recovering as well as they should and what we need to do to improve that.

If we do not, the money will be sucked up by repeat admissions and people will not recover as much as they can. Good patient outcomes must be our aim. This will save us money and our financial reporting will look better.

Mr VALENTINE - I support this amendment. It is going to be broad statistical information, such as the percentage of patients suffering iatrogenic disease as a result of the series of events they have had. I think you would be able to pull together the information needed for the Commonwealth without too much difficulty. It is important. Perhaps 20 per cent of people who have gone through events at the Royal Hobart Hospital suffer a clash of drugs which results in a certain outcome. How are you going to know what to change to give them a better outcome unless you have this detail?

Ms Forrest - Maybe the pharmacy department needs more resourcing. That is the sort of thing I would expect in return.

Mr VALENTINE - I fully support this amendment. I think it is a good way to go and can only benefit our health system. If the Government is going down that path, good on it.

Mrs HISCUTT - I point out that in clause 16(1), the primary purpose of the THS is:

- (a) to promote and maintain the health of persons who are in Tasmania; and
- (b) to ensure the provision of care and treatment to ... persons with health problems.

This is smattered throughout the bill.

We think we are moving in that direction, but we stand at the will of the Chamber.

Mr DEAN - The Leader has said the bill is targeted to ensure the right services are provided to patients in all circumstances and so on. In the current system, if we use the example given of mobility issues such as hip or knee replacements, if there is a common problem occurring in operations in the public hospital system, that would be closely monitored and reported on as is required to the secretary.

I would not have thought there was anything there that would stop that happening. I cannot quite believe just how low it is going to go in making the assessment in each case. I am struggling with it. We should not accept any amendments for the sake of accepting amendments. If it is going to make the bill better, absolutely, but I am not sure it will. It places an onus on the executive and the executive does not require this because these things will be monitored. Doctors will be watching very closely. They are the ones performing these procedures and they would be talking with one another very closely, so I do not see the point. It is a superfluous amendment.

Ms FORREST - I put one question to the member for Windermere to ponder if he is having trouble understanding this: how do you know if the right services are being delivered in the right way at the right time to the right person if you do not measure outcomes?

Mr Dean - They are being measured.

Madam DEPUTY CHAIR - Order.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 28 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 29 to 32 agreed to.

Clause 33 -

Accounting records

Mr VALENTINE - For the record, right to information is available on all of these accounting records. There is no way this organisation could be set up without being subject to that.

Mrs HISCUTT - The audited financial reports will be in the annual report anyway and there is no changes to RTI with this bill.

Clause 33 agreed to.

Clauses 33 to 37 agreed to.

Clause 38 -

Employees under former Act transferred

Mr VALENTINE - Clause 38 mentions -

A person who was, immediately before the commencement of this section, an employee within the meaning of the *Tasmanian Health Organisations Act 2011* is taken to be a person made available under section 23 to the THS for the purposes of the THS, until the Secretary determines otherwise ...

Does someone who is not a state servant prior to this have anything to be concerned or worried about? Are their interests going to be looked after in this transition?

Mrs HISCUTT - There are no employees not employed by the State Service.

Clause 38 agreed to.

Clauses 39 to 43 agreed to.

Schedule 1 - Advisory Panels -

1. Membership of advisory panels

Mr DEAN - There has been discussion about the panels this morning and clause 1(1)(b) concerns me -

(1) A member of an advisory panel-

...

(b) may be removed from office by the Secretary by notice in writing addressed and delivered to that member ...

I take it there is no recourse to the member. If there is a clash of personalities or something and somebody wants somebody off the panel and the secretary decides 'Yes, they are', that is it. There is no recourse, no protective rights for the person on the panel. Removals from panels et cetera can be not only soul-destroying, but can damage reputations. I would think there should be some recourse here for a member to be able to defend their position in the circumstances.

Mrs HISCUTT - It is there in case you need to wind the panel up. Generally speaking, it is a power to enact and has to be used wisely and subject to common law.

Mr DEAN - It is saying a member or a panel can be removed. I understand that because you would not want the panel there all the time.

Mrs HISCUTT - Perhaps that particular panel's expertise was not required for the subject they were debating at the time. Maybe the panel member has moved in or desires not to be there. It would all be looked at by the secretary.

The drafting of these provisions provides a high-level framework for panels similar to provisions in other acts - for example, it has a simple appointment and termination clause for members. Like any statutory power, common law requires it to be exercised reasonably. The power of removal is simply there to bring panel members or panels to an end when the need arises. It is not reasonable, for example, for the secretary to remove a member simply because he does not like the member's advice. That is most unreasonable and you come back into common law.

Mr DEAN - You use the word 'panel', to remove 'a panel' in that answer.

Mrs Hiscutt - For a 'member' I used it as well.

Mr DEAN - Panel or member. Why does it not then say 'membership advisory panel'? Why does it say in subclause (1), 'A member of an advisory panel'? Why does it not say, 'The panel and/or a member of an advisory panel', if that is what it is intended to cover? Currently, to me, it is identifying just one individual within the panel. I raise the issue because it is certainly not clear the way it is written.

Mrs HISCUTT - In clause 13, there is a power to establish a panel. Where you can establish one, you can also dissolve one. That is in clause 13. In this clause, schedule 1 is specifically to put members offered on the panel as the expertise requires. If you happen to need a gynaecologist's opinion on something, of course you would put that person in to get the advice you need.

If you do not need a particular panel member's expertise and need another person's, you would ask another panel member to come on and then you would not need the other member.

Mr Dean - It does not refer to replacement of members. All it refers to is removal - 'may be removed from office'.

Mrs HISCUTT - He or she 'is to be appointed for the period that the Secretary thinks fit'. We are appointing them to the panel.

Mr Dean - That is okay.

Mrs HISCUTT - They 'may be removed from office by the Secretary by notice in writing', in subclause (1)(b); they can be removed as well as and when required, for their expertise. Are we on the same page here, member for Windermere?

Mr DEAN - Well, we are - (a) is clear. It simply says 'is to be appointed'.

Madam DEPUTY CHAIR - If the member has a question, he might like to take a third call and the Leader can listen to his question.

Mr DEAN - I did not want to take my third call in case I needed it while the Leader was on her feet.

Madam DEPUTY CHAIR - If you want to ask a question, you can take a third call.

Mr DEAN - As it reads, (a) says: 'A member of an advisory panel ... is to be appointed for the period that the Secretary thinks fit'. That is okay. The appointment of a panel member could mean that on 1 July 2019 they cease to be a member of that panel. I can understand that. That is not a problem, it is clear. But then it says a member of an advisory panel '(b) may be removed from office by the Secretary by notice in writing'. That could occur at a time shorter than their appointed time. I understand that; I guess that is what that covers.

You have referred now a couple of times to the fact that it could be the removal of the panel. There is nothing there to say anything about the removal of the panel.

Mrs Hiscutt - No, that is in a different section.

Mr DEAN - We are talking about an individual person here. My point in the first place was that if the secretary determined that a member be removed, it can be damaging to the person's reputation and in many other ways. There is absolutely no recourse there whatsoever.

Mrs Hiscutt - While the member is on his feet, it is mainly for expertise. The clinical advisory panel may want a consumer's or a specialist's or some other manager's expertise on that panel. You would remove a person from that panel if you do not need them and if you need another specialist.

Mr DEAN - There is nothing about replacements. A member of an advisory panel is to be appointed for the period the secretary thinks fit. They may be removed from the office by the secretary or by notice. I have some concerns about the way it is written. Nobody else has taken it up, so obviously they are quite happy with it.

Mrs Hiscutt - I think I understand what the member is trying to say. If there is a conflict of interest or a personality thing, that person then does have the common law right if they feel they have been aggrieved. But this is here particularly to set up the expertise required to address a particular situation.

Mr DEAN - So you are saying they would have a common law right to defend their position?

Mrs Hiscutt - If they felt aggrieved.

Mr DEAN - I am not quite sure how that would take effect and everything else around it. But I understand what you are saying.

Schedule 1 agreed to.

Schedule 2 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill read the second time and taken through the remainder of the Committee stage.

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

That the bill as amended in Committee be taken into consideration tomorrow.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 1 May 2018 (page 7)

[3.26 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - First, I would like to record formally my congratulations to the re-elected member for Hobart. Once again his constituents have expressed their confidence in the honourable member and their appreciation for the ongoing valuable and constructive role he plays in the deliberations in this House, as we have just witnessed. The results really come as no surprise to me but as we all know elections are never easy.

I am also pleased to see the member for Prosser here. You have had a couple of hard months with elections. It must be very tiring and you must be pleased it is all over. Welcome to the House. We are mostly a friendly lot so you will be all right; we will look after you.

The Governor's speech sets out quite clearly the Government's intention and resolve to continue the positive direction for Tasmania and its agenda for this term of government. It is, however, appropriate for me to reiterate some key points on the Government's behalf and, of course, to make one or two observations and comments as the member for Montgomery.

First, the re-election of the majority Liberal government is a historical win. The extent of the victory was very substantial. It is the first time since 1970 that a party has won consecutive elections with greater than 50 per cent of the primary vote. It was the first time in 100 years that a conservative party has been returned with a greater than 50 per cent vote. I now note that we have more women than men in the lower House. We will see if that is a good thing or a bad thing, but at least it is even. We have seven out of 15, so that is good too.

It is also interesting to note the extent of the Premier's personal vote. Once again the Premier received a truly outstanding vote that can only be interpreted as a ringing endorsement of his leadership of the government and his plan to move Tasmania forward. I extend my congratulations to him on his exceptional personal result.

The government's victory was both clear cut and impressive. In many other jurisdictions it would be seen as a landslide result; under our Hare-Clark system, it has still resulted in the slimmest of margins in terms of seat numbers. There is no point in arguing whether this is a bad thing at this point. It does raise a couple of issues that I will touch on, including the notion of mandates as well as the role of the Legislative Council.

I believe the Government does have a mandate to implement its goals and the strategies to achieve these goals, particularly when these goals and strategies were very specifically highlighted by both the government and the opposition during the campaign. Having said that I emphatically

believe, along with every other member of this House, this does not equate to a right to expect the Legislative Council to simply rubberstamp every bill and measure put before us.

The role of the Legislative Council has not changed. It will continue to review legislation based on its merit, and taking into consideration the information put before it. That is as it should be, and I do not doubt it will continue. That is why I as Leader have committed to you all to work as openly and constructively as possible as we tackle the tasks ahead. I also acknowledge and respect comments made previously by many members regarding the predominately independent nature of the Legislative Council. The success of our bicameral system is due to no small part to the largely independent nature of the Legislative Council. That is a view I know the former leader of the government held. I do know she would have been particularly pleased and excited with the results of this election.

Work is well underway on the 2018-19 Budget, which will confirm surplus across the forward estimates and the rollout of election commitments. We said we would fix the budget and we have. It is this hard work that allows us to invest even more in health, infrastructure, education and police. Of course, the Government's first year agenda is available on our website if anyone wishes to look.

Before I move on, at this point, I will contribute as the member for Montgomery.

Cradle Mountain has now come into my electorate following the boundary changes last year. I am pleased about the funding being put into this iconic region. A new bus fleet, including environmentally friendly technology and vehicles with improved accessibility, will soon be introduced at Cradle Mountain to help meet increasing visitor numbers following the awarding of the tender to McDermott Coaches. Visitation to Cradle Mountain is at an all-time high, with 268,000 people visiting last year, a 12 per cent increase on the previous year. While a cable car remains the Government's preferred solution to the park, an increased shuttle bus service will be required in the short term while cableway options are fully investigated.

The Turnbull and Hodgman governments will generate jobs and tourism in Tasmania by providing \$60 million for the Cradle Mountain cableway. It will cement the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park as a national natural treasure in the same category as the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru. Critically, this project will help to protect the area for generations to come. Discounted tickets will be offered for the benefit of local residents. Last year, more than 1.26 million people visited Tasmania, spending a total of \$2.33 billion on accommodation, attractions, tours, transport and other goods and services at an average of \$1884 per visitor. In total, tourism directly and indirectly contributed more than \$3 billion per year to the Tasmanian economy. The Turnbull Government's \$30 million investment in the cableway follows the \$30 million commitment from the Hodgman Government as part of its \$35 million Cradle Mountain experience policy at last year's election.

Touching on the Hermal site now in Hampshire, in my electorate: the Hermal Group announced that an 80-hectare site in Hampshire will be the location of its \$190 million cross-laminated plantation timber mill and production facility. Once completed, the facility is expected to create around 221 jobs, with a further 160 jobs being created during the construction phase. This is a big win for the north-west and is more evidence of the growing confidence, investment and jobs in the industry on the back of the strong forestry policies of the Hodgman Liberal Government. We are very excited about those things in my electorate, except for one person.

Mr Dean - Where is the product going to?

Mrs HISCUTT - That will all become clear in good time.

To include some opinions of people on the ground, I have some comments from the three mayors in my electorate and also the principals of the Ulverstone and Penguin high schools. I asked them if they would like to say something. I would like to read their comments to honourable members. I have not vetted them. I did mention to them that it did not have to be all good stuff if they had any criticisms to add.

I quote Tim Wilson, the Deputy Mayor of the Kentish Council -

Kentish Council would like to thank the previous Liberal Government for the introduction of regular bus services in the Kentish region. Transport has been a long time quandary for Kentish and the introduction of a new bus service will bring a tremendous benefits to the municipality.

Kentish Council also acknowledges the previous government's grant of \$600 000 from the Tasmanian Cycle Tourism Fund towards the Wild Mersey Mountain Bike Project. This project will bring great financial benefits to Kentish and specifically Railton.

I believe Railton is across the line in the member for McIntyre's electorate -

Council continues to be concerned about ongoing flooding in Railton and would again ask the State Government to work with TasRail to upgrade the railway bridge in the township which contributed to previous flooding.

He went on to say -

We have been successful getting some funds to clean out around the railway bridge base but the bridge itself acted as a dam during the floods. A new design and build is needed.

There is a comment from Alwyn Boyd, Mayor of the Burnie City Council -

The Burnie City Council has had a close working relationship with the State Government for many years and have jointly delivered many projects. The Burnie region has benefited from the Tasmanian Government's initiatives that contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community, such as the investment of the Coastal Pathway program and in our regional hospital, and the initiatives that contribute to bettering education and delivering jobs such as the investment in the UTAS Cradle Coast Campus and advanced manufacturing.

Jan Bonde, the Mayor of the Central Coast Council, said -

On behalf of the Central Coast Council, I would like to thank the State Government for partnering with us on many projects throughout the year. With your support we have been able to complete the Dial Regional Sporting Complex, ...

As an aside, members will remember my talking about that in the past -

... progress work on local sections of the North West Coastal Pathway, apply for further funding for our Museum, Arts and Cultural Centre and bring forward six projects scheduled in our Long-Term Financial Plan through the Accelerated Loan program.

In recognising the tourism, economic and health benefits of cycling, you have also supported the Cradle Coast Mountain Bike Park and I look forward to your further support of the completion of the North West Coastal Pathway from Latrobe to Wynyard, which will be a magnificent asset for our region.

While funding for the section of pathway over the Forth River was very much appreciated and work is ready to commence, we have been unable to reach agreement with TasRail, which has been most disappointing, and work on this long-term awaited project has stalled. I look forward to continuing the excellent working relationship we have with State Government.

Even though the mayors were fairly succinct in their contributions, the two principals I approached gave me an in-depth report. First, Mr Glen Lutwych, principal of the Ulverstone High School said -

Ulverstone High completed our first year of year 11 and 12 provision in 2017, commencing with 69 FTE students, comprising 50 year 11 and 14 year 12 students. Two students completed year 12 with an ATAR score for entry into University in 2018 with a number of students in year 11 and 12 completing Pre Tertiary Level three courses. 2018 has seen our enrolment grow to 79 FTE and the inclusion of VET Construction with 14 students to complement our VET Community Services and Hairdressing, which commenced in 2017. We have students studying Animal Studies at Yolla District School and students undertaking Ag studies at Sheffield with students from Sheffield undertaking VET Construction Community Services and Hairdressing at Ulverstone High.

Mr Willie - Is it government policy to allow public servants to speak on the record if they are in favour of government policy? When the lowering of school age debate was on, principals were being gagged. They were not allowed to speak.

Mrs HISCUTT - It was ticked off by the minister's office. I did have to seek permission for this occur.

We are collaborating with other schools to provide a wide range of experiences for our students.

Prior to the year 11 and 12 extensions, our retention rates to year 11 and 12 were below the state average and since commencing our extension program, we now are above the state average. Specifically, our recent data from year 10 to 11 Census 1 is very promising, sitting at 93.5 per cent, which is the highest retention rate we have recorded.

The addition of year 11 and 12 to our school has been a positive experience for all involved, staff and students. The growth in our teachers as they work with senior students and TASC subjects has been pleasing.

We have commenced work with Beacon as one of six students statewide as part of the Collective Ed initiative looking at retention for students in year 11 and 12 and systemic change to assist retention.

The Project Officers have commenced consultation within our wider community and industry as we look at ways of strengthening partnerships with our community.

We are continually looking at 'doing things differently' and have commenced operating UHS@theclock, a learning campus from a premise within the business district. This has enabled us to engage better with our broader community with two students, Ella Barron and Rowane Ewida, setting up an exhibition of student work on World War I and opening this up to the public on Anzac Day this year, serving traditional Anzac biscuits. This was a real authentic learning experience for all. We are continually looking at enacting the vision of 'To be inspiring and innovative learning community'.

The principal of Penguin High, Mr Mat Grining, says -

Penguin District School is continuing the planning phase for a 2019 delivery of year 11 classes on site. We are working in partnership with Hellyer College and other local high schools to ensure that the combined offerings avoid duplication and provide more opportunities for students to engage in education for longer, thus reaching year 12 completion and the attainments of TCE, VET or other qualifications.

We have strong partnerships with local industry and businesses with 11 of our students moving directly to approved traineeships and apprenticeships from year 10, many resulting from work placements in years 9 and 10. Our future year 11 offerings will be around adding value to the network of schools with specialised sport and recreation opportunities for students as well as personalised programs for students that identified transition barriers post year 10.

Our school community is excited about the opportunities that major capital works and a consolidated site design will provide as announced by the returned government. Along with the completed Dial Park sport and recreation facilities the young people of Penguin will have learning and recreation spaces that are modern, fit for purpose, will support the growth we are seeing in enrolments into kinder and provide seamless transition along the journey from our early years programs through to adulthood.

Our school's priorities have continued to focus on consistent pedagogy and programs that build sequentially year upon year. We believe the acknowledgement early this year from the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority that we have seen identified as 'having demonstrated substantially above average gain' is testament to the effort of the staff in working towards these school improvement priorities.

We are well placed as a district school to ensure our school is central to our community, and that the concept of community is central to our school. We have been able to establish a number of new partnerships over the past 12 months with business, sporting and community groups and the local council that benefits all parties.

Following our external school review in late 2017 and development of our new school strategic planning, there is a strong sense of optimism as we continue to work towards our goals to engage and challenge each and every learner every day in an environment that is safe and supportive.

Mr President, under a Liberal government Tasmania is stronger, prouder and more confident. Our economy is one of the strongest in the nation. Tasmanian business is the most confident in the country. I also need to refer to the recent federal budget and its impact in Tasmania. It is clear that the good working relationship the state Government has with its federal counterpart has resulted in positive things for Tasmania. The federal budget builds on the hard work and achievements of the state government and will help us grow our economy and create more jobs.

In addition to strong and growing federal funding for health, education and housing, we will see an unprecedented infrastructure spend of nearly \$1 billion that will create more jobs, cut travel times and make it safer for Tasmanians to move around the state. This investment in a modern, efficient transport system will support thousands of jobs during construction and underpin the stronger economy as a result of improved productivity.

In addition to a landmark commitment to replace the Bridgewater Bridge and \$400 million for strategic roads, the additional \$59.8 million for the Tasmanian Freight Rail Revitalisation Program will increase the Commonwealth Government's total funding to \$120 million and allow the upgrade of priority sections of the Tasmanian rail network. In an economy that has a strong focus on exports, an efficient rail and freight system in Tasmania is vital in supporting jobs and growing the economy. This investment by the federal government is great news that will underpin Tasrail's ability to get Tasmania's freight where it needs to go safely and on time.

Funding for essential services has been confirmed with both Tasmania's share of the Quality Schools and the new health agreement fully funded. We will also get our fair share of the traditional aged care places. That is on top of the income tax relief that will result in increased take-home pays for two out of every three working Tasmanians, which will flow through to increased spending in Tasmanian businesses and lower the cost of living.

Mr President, the future of Tasmania is looking pretty good. The next four years of Liberal government will see the creation of more full-time jobs, reduction of state payroll tax, continued investment in flagship industries such as tourism, agriculture, fisheries and resources, and a focus on housing investment. There will be \$125 million to increase supply, leading to better housing outcomes. The Housing Summit outcome means landlord support to move property into the low-cost rental market. There will be support for more skilled labour in Tasmania, with a focus on training and apprenticeships, supported by payroll tax relief and targeted small business grants. There will be new centres of excellence for agriculture, trades, water and hospitality.

In education, new schools will be built, more students will be taken to year 12 and more support will be provided for principals to focus on school leadership. There will be more investment in health, new beds, more frontline capacity, and increased support for paramedics and mental health and drug and rehabilitation facilities. Safety - 125 more police, stronger bail laws, reform of

dangerous criminal declarations, increased focus on family violence and increased capacity in gaols with a new gaol in the north. Infrastructure - millions of dollars will go to new road projects and increased public transport to outer suburban areas; 1500 more affordable homes will be built; there will be new hospital upgrades and redevelopment of King Island; and a focus on improving traffic congestion with a makeover of Macquarie and Davey streets; and irrigation schemes will be funded.

To add to our way of life and environment, there will be no new taxes, but there will be investment in national parks and we will preserve our disease-free status, move to zero net emissions, be 100 per cent energy self-sufficient, and will break links with the National Electricity Market for lower power prices.

Mr President, it is actually pretty exciting. The Government has a plan and it wants to implement it. It wants to do that cooperatively and constructively in conjunction with the Legislative Council. It wants to do so in an atmosphere of mutual respect between both Houses.

Both Houses must recognise each other's right roles and responsibilities. The Government has a right - indeed, it has a responsibility - to implement its plan and that is what the people of Tasmania voted for. The Legislative Council too has a right and responsibility to perform its review functions with impartiality and professionalism.

As I said to all members in my letter last month, I have never doubted the genuine desire on the part of all members to produce quality legislation and seek beneficial outcomes for all Tasmania.

I look forward to working constructively with all members in the next four years.

[4.00 p.m.]

Ms SIEJKA (Pembroke) - Mr President, I have the pleasure of seconding the motion for the Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency the Governor. I, too, would like to thank the Governor for her Address. I concur with the Leader's comments: this Address and all matters laid before us shall be considered carefully.

The members of this House come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. This allows us to utilise our varied strengths, skills and insights in evaluating what comes before us and providing a robust consideration of all matters.

I thank the member for Montgomery for her contribution today. While my response to the Address-in-Reply will no doubt differ to the Leader of the House, I appreciate her comments and perspectives for this Government.

I take the opportunity to congratulate the Government, Premier and those who form the Cabinet. I particularly congratulate the member for Montgomery on her appointment as Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council.

I also recognise the number of women in this Parliament. For the first time we have more women than men, making this Parliament the first majority female parliament of any state in Australia.

I acknowledge the appointment of the member for Denison, Ms Hickey, as Speaker of the House of Assembly. It is wonderful to see women in leadership positions and I congratulate her on her appointment.

I look forward to the day where we can also celebrate our parliament for its diversity across all levels, whether gender, cultural diversity, age, disability or religion.

I would also like to congratulate the newly elected member for Prosser. It is no mean feat to run two election campaigns back to back, and I commend you for your effort and welcome you to this Chamber.

Of course, I congratulate the member for Hobart, Mr Valentine, on his re-election to the Legislative Council. I have known Rob for a number of years, mainly through my role at the Youth Network of Tasmania. I have always enjoyed working with Rob and I look forward to working with him more in the future.

In her Address, Her Excellency outlined the agenda for this Government.

The Liberal Party came into the Forty-ninth Parliament with a large number of election commitments made to the Tasmanian community.

Her Excellency spoke of a number of these ideas, issues and commitments.

Mr President, I will now respond to a number of the issues raised.

As Her Excellency highlighted, Tasmania achieved self-government in 1856 and in the intervening 162 years we have arguably seen our state go from strength to strength, facilitated by strong and ambitious governments with parliaments that were innovative and bold and which upheld and prioritised a commitment to good governance.

As elected members coming together for the Forty-ninth Parliament, it is our role to continue this legacy. The world has changed dramatically since 1856, and yet despite the time that has passed -

Mr Dean - This Chamber has not changed.

Ms SIEJKA - No, it has not. Those who came before us shared our expectations that the government act responsibly, be accountable and transparent, and act in the interests of the community and their constituents. I believe for the most part this has happened.

However, in light of some of the tactics used at the most recent state election, there has been significant community concern about how these values are being compromised.

Too often politics is being put first. This needs to stop.

Dishonesty and secrecy has become the 'norm'. This too needs to stop. We have seen questionable tactics around political fundraising, and potential conflicts in donations and campaign finances. We have seen policies and election commitments not announced or being publicly available to the community before they cast their vote. Many in the community believe our politicians are failing Tasmanians, that self-interest has become more important than governance or sound, considered policies.

The Legislative Council plays a critical role in this process. It is our job to ensure legislation is strong, free from unintended consequences, supportive of a future Tasmania and reflects

community expectations. It is our job to facilitate responsible and open government; it is our job to hold government to account; and it is our job to make sure legislation is comprehensive and measured.

It is not our job to automatically support any policy. It is not our job to support any mandate.

Through winning the election the Government gained the right to introduce legislation to parliament, and it has the right to bring its agenda to parliament. It does not, however, have the right to assume this Chamber will pass it. It is this Chamber's obligation to make sure the government is responsible and operates with a best practice approach to governing.

Throughout my career, particularly in leading peak bodies and on boards at state and national levels, I have learned the value of concentration, collaboration and compromise. Working together results in stronger outcomes, while working in isolation fosters negativity and creates a parliament that is adversarial. The community expects us to represent their views, to work hard to support them, and to create a strong, stable Tasmania.

At the moment the perception of some is that parliament is not always working for Tasmania, and many in the community are exasperated. As an institution we are part of the global democratic experiment. We are elected by our population; we represent our communities - and they expect us to do so free from the trappings of ideological entrenchment.

Since 1856, when the Tasmanian Parliament formally became bicameral, the Legislative Council has played a critical role in the pursuit of strong democratic governance and has prioritised upholding representative government. To regain this trust, we must ensure we are open, transparent and accountable as politicians. I believe there is much to be done.

Her Excellency also spoke about the rapid growth that Tasmania has experienced over recent years and the challenges that have resulted through this process. Her Address highlights the Government does not resile from these challenges and indeed welcomes them. While it pleases me the Government does not intend to avoid challenging circumstances that occur as a result of this aforementioned growth, I need to see more evidence of this in practice, particularly when it comes to ensuring our most vulnerable are not left behind.

Certainly growth in some areas of the economy, such as in tourism and construction, can be considered as positives for this state, but these cannot be celebrated at the cost of ignoring key social agenda such as housing and homelessness, employment and health. We must consider social impact and investment in our decision-making.

There is clear evidence there is greater demand for housing, particularly affordable housing, in Tasmania. Her Excellency spoke about the increase of dwelling commencements in the market over the past year. My concern is many Tasmanians are prevented from entering the market and accessing this growth and opportunity. The Government has an affordable housing strategy that aims to contribute to the supply of housing in Tasmania. An increase in affordable housing is desperately needed by many in our community. There are stories most days in our newspapers about the difficulty people have in finding affordable and appropriate accommodation. Despite the Government reporting it is on track or is progressing most action items in relation to the strategy, it concerns me that so much demand is unmet by this.

In Tasmania we have seen youth homelessness increase by 70 per cent in the past decade. This is a cause close to my heart: as a former chair of the National Youth Coalition for Housing I worked for seven years to raise awareness in the broader community about these issues. We have seen many on the brink of homelessness or who are homeless where previously they were able to make ends meet. We need look no further than the members of our community who are camped at the Hobart Showground in tents for evidence of this. Unfortunately, there are far more people we do not see who are in need of support.

There are many reasons in addition to a lack of affordable housing that prevent people from being able to live in safe and appropriate accommodation. For example, violence, abuse and an unsafe environment at home are key contributing factors to why young people may need to leave home and seek to live independently. These experiences can be traumatic and may leave lasting mental health issues and lack of support networks. I am keen to hear from the Government about plans to address these complex issues that contribute to homelessness.

One of the things I admire most about this state is that we are still a community that cares about others. Access to housing is a human right. The Government must do more to ensure that this human right is provided to all in our community. The member for Elwick will no doubt speak more about this issue.

The Address maintains that Tasmania is leading the nation in business confidence, export growth and tourism, which have contributed to employment growth. Tasmanians want jobs, but they also want security in their jobs. Many Tasmanians are working, but would like more hours of work or have to take jobs that are casualised and less secure than permanent positions. Not only does this contribute to cost of living pressures, but it can create uncertainty. Supporting businesses through tax benefits to generate jobs is one thing, but it requires a multifaceted approach to address unemployment. Businesses consider multiple elements when making the decisions to employ people.

Job opportunities such as apprenticeships and traineeships across industries such as tourism and agriculture and fisheries cannot be looked at in isolation. Completion rates of apprenticeships and traineeships are low and many things can be done to improve retention and completion for better outcomes for Tasmanians. These could include pre-employment programs, quality management, mentoring, health and safety and strategies to minimise turnover and prepare for the ageing workforce.

On the other hand, businesses also need to be encouraged to understand the value people can contribute to their workplace, particularly if they have been out of work for a period of time, are planning to retire soon or are entering the workplace for the first time. These cohorts of people are often not given the opportunity to contribute in the way they would like. By addressing employment more holistically we can support Tasmanians into more secure and sustainable employment.

I ran for the seat of Pembroke after years of working in the community sector listening to the concerns of those I represent. This role involved consultation, communication and careful consideration of a diverse range of ideas and issues. These are skills I believe are essential in the Legislative Council and why I am so passionate about meeting regularly with my constituents. I have continued, and will continue, to listen to the Pembroke community.

In addition to those already raised, I will closely monitor a number of key concerns on behalf of the community I represent.

Within Pembroke, concerns about the implementation of the statewide planning scheme, the involvement of the Coordinator-General's office in projects such as Kangaroo Bay and concern over development on public land, such as Rosny Hill, has led to grassroots advocacy from active and coordinated community members. Much of the angst is caused by the lack of opportunities for them to be involved in consultation on key projects. They see the lack of resources provided through the statewide planning scheme for members of the community to seek information and to engage in planning processes as a major limitation of the scheme. Many constituents are keen to see action on a number of traffic and transport concerns within Pembroke, including the Mornington Roundabout and the East Derwent Highway.

The Government has made election commitments regarding the upgrade of some of these areas as well as the implementation of a ferry system from Bellerive to Hobart. I am determined to hold them to account and ensure these are delivered for the community in the way they want. I will continue to listen to the residents of Pembroke on issues they are concerned about and that are presented to the Legislative Council. I thank you, Madam Deputy President, and look forward to other members' contributions.

[4.14 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Madam Deputy President, I was not aware of that process before, so I apologise for getting up before my turn. Before I present my contribution to the Address-in-Reply process, I congratulate the member for Hobart on his successful re-election. To be re-elected to parliament and this House is a fine testament to the work you have put in over the past six years. I wish you all the best in your second term as the member for Hobart, and I am sure you will continue that excellent work.

To the new member for Prosser, I offer my congratulations on your successful campaign to be elected to the Legislative Council. The long wait to learn the final result must have been a very difficult one, and obviously I acknowledge back-to-back campaigns. I do not envy that at all. So congratulations. I know well quite a bit of your new patch, and can assure you that the former Apsley communities are made up of wonderful people, groups and organisations which you will have some understanding of because of your family's long-time commitment and residency in the southern Midlands area. I can assure you that they will be loyal and become great friends if you show them respect and assist them where needed. Super important is to show up to their community events; they appreciate that. Do not hesitate to ask for any advice you may need - I am happy to provide it and I give you an undertaking that whatever invitation or information I have in regard to those things that sometimes keep arriving after circumstances have changed, I will forward to you so that you do not miss out on any of those significant community events.

I also welcome the member for Mersey to the deputy committee chair team. I already congratulated the Chair of Committees yesterday.

Madam Deputy President, my response to the Governor's Address might be a little tame after the two we have had, but I will do my best.

First, I will talk about the online access centres. I noted with interest recently that one of the new members in their inaugural speech in the other place talked about the progressive closure of online access centres. That is something I have raised in this House on previous occasions. The comment was made that the problem is that sometimes these policies do not consider the importance of a service to a small community. I absolutely agree with that. Those online access centres are very important. It is not a lot of funding in the scheme of things, but they are vital to our smaller,

more rural and remote communities. I urge the Government to look favourably upon requests for the funding of those centres. I believe that some of those centres will need funding, or re-funding, soon. I expect I will not be the only one to receive requests for support in that area. I hope the Government will take on board the importance of those centres to our communities.

There has been quite a bit of media coverage of late in my local area about the Defence Science and Technology Group facility in Scottsdale. It had a significant upgrade in 2016 and, surprisingly, part of that upgrade has not been put into operation. The member for Derwent is always interested in what is happening in his former home town. There are job losses that number about seven, to be implemented by the end of August, from the packing line. Interestingly, there is an increase of two in the food research area, obviously different skills. Some might say that is not that bad and that it could have been worse. In a small community, a single job loss to a family is devastating. In the past the ration packs used for the Australian Defence Force were imported from across the ditch. I believe that is still occurring. Shame, shame, shame. Very disappointing that we continue to import ration packs for our armed services people from New Zealand when we have facilities in our country to do these jobs. Here we are - closing down an unused, never-operational packing line, but we are still importing ration packs from another country.

Mr Dean - They used to import them from dog food countries. We used to have dog biscuits in our ration packs.

Ms RATTRAY - The member for Windermere will know firsthand what is provided. I know they use them in outdoor hiking - if you go off on perhaps the Overland Track or something like that, where you cannot take a lot of rations. There is a broader use for these ration packs. We grow some of the best produce in the world in Tasmania.

Mr Dean - Think of all the backpackers who come here to do our walks.

Ms RATTRAY - It baffles me that we are not prepared to pay a little bit extra. That is often what it is - the cost of these goods and services that are obviously outsourced in these contracts in the first place. It really is disappointing. An obvious question will be to our federal members around this and a follow-up. I have contacted the local federal member, who was straightaway on the case. Of course when the information came back, it was 'No, no, it is all right, we are only closing down that line, but we are going to do some more research.'

Research is a very different skill set to packing food rations. I suggest losing seven jobs from that type of expertise is nowhere near going to be picked up by two research jobs, which could well be someone living in Launceston or coming in and out and not necessarily living and being part of the community. I worry about that. They are very specialised. I have serious concerns and I will continue to follow this particular issue. We should be up in arms and saying that it is not good enough.

It is not the first time I have spoken about this. The last time there were some concerns, we did get some federal money. Upgrade, 2016, we thought, 'Yay, this is fantastic, new piece of whiz-bang machinery in place', but we never operated it, we never made it operational. What a nonsense. Work for the federal members and work for our Tasmanian members. We all would benefit if we could from our communities, provide produce and product to be freeze-dried or dehydrated. Then you add water, eat it and it is pretty good, apparently. Better than the dog biscuits, I hope.

I hope someone somewhere is listening to me on my hobbyhorse. It is of concern to the north-east community, but it should be of concern to the broader community.

On top of that, a transport operator in the local area had a contract for some nine years to haul produce from the north-east to Ulverstone. Obviously, when the Simplot factory decided to shut down its Scottsdale operation and have all the processing done at Ulverstone, they still needed potatoes. They still have a pretty good array of farmers providing potatoes to the factory, but quite a bit of work is done there. They store them in quite big storage sheds at the old part of the old Simplot site in the main town of Scottsdale. The loss of this nine-year contract and the almighty dollar we know will result in job losses of around six positions.

So add seven from the Defence facility and six from the transport industry, and fill it up with two research opportunities. Not faring so well again in the north-east. I continue to be concerned about opportunities for different sets of skills from what others would need. We have some very good operators driving heavy vehicles to and from Scottsdale to Ulverstone who did that mostly through the winter months.

Obviously after the harvest had finished, the stores were full, but they could not process them all. You cannot process them all at once so you just keep on taking the potatoes down to Ulverstone. The contract has gone to a north-west company now that will come up and pick them up and take them back and do it obviously at a cheaper rate - I expect for one year, and then they will say to the company, 'We cannot do it for that any more', and the price will go back to probably what it was before the contract price was reduced. In the meantime the company is out of business.

The Australian Government committed \$25.27 million for the north-east's Scottsdale Irrigation Scheme, the Liberal government committed \$20 million and the farmers of the area, who obviously have confidence in growing their crops, committed around \$12 million. The scheme will provide 8600 megalitres to more than 80 farms, which is a good outcome.

The community has been waiting for some time for an announcement of this nature to be able to fully subscribe to the scheme. The announcement prior to the election was obviously something that would have brought a number of members across the line in the election.

It will create around 60 jobs in construction. Hopefully, some of them are truck driving and some of them are more manual labour. This would be really helpful, but again it will only be for a short period. They will not be permanent positions, which is the issue for building communities and having permanent and secure positions where people take the opportunity to perhaps buy a home. We heard from the member for Pembroke about the struggles people have with buying a home and I know since the financial crisis we had a number of years ago, banks seem to be pretty tight lending money these days. It is not easy to get a loan. I have not tried to get one lately but I believe it is difficult. Having that is certainly important.

Mr Dean - The royal commission would suggest it is very easy to get a loan from a lot of banks.

Ms RATTRAY - Some of those terrible stories are appalling. Most of us have probably not had a look at our finances recently and phoned our financial institutions and asked for a better deal. I am one of those.

Mr Farrell - I think they are a bit crooked as well. The Dollarmite accounts.

Ms RATTRAY - The one that used to be through the schools?

I welcome that commitment to secure that scheme into the future. It is a bit of light at the end of a pretty gloomy tunnel.

After the \$3 million election commitment for the redevelopment of the Scottsdale sports facilities, there was the great photo opportunity. The Liberal team, the mayor and the Premier were there with their feet dangling in the pool, with a commitment by the government prior to the election that they would provide \$3 million. It is most welcome.

I have already written a letter to the mayor and general manager, and I am sending a copy of it to the Premier because I have received representations from sporting groups that would use the facility that say they have not been consulted but would like input into the final plan. I have urged the Dorset Council and the state Government to engage with the community before they set the development in place because it is really important we get the best value out of a very large commitment like that for a small community.

I did so after I met with a group of people involved in a program run through the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which also runs primary healthcare services in a number of areas across the state, including Dorset, Break O'Day, Glamorgan, Spring Bay, Flinders Island and George Town. It is called Prime Mover and is an integrated cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation program. It is being rolled out to rural and remote Tasmanians. The group that are a part of this program would love to see an aquatic recreation facility included in the redevelopment that would include disability access. If you have poor mobility and you need to access a hydrotherapy pool, you need to be able to get in and out. I am hoping the letter I sent to the council and the Premier alerts them to those needs.

The netball association is keen to have input into the roof over the netball courts - fantastic, but they said, 'What about seating, what about lighting, what about all the other things that go with an upgrade of a facility such as two very good netball courts in a sports precinct adjacent to the Scottsdale pool and possibly a hydrotherapy pool in the future?' There are some great opportunities: let us not waste the \$3 million commitment, a fantastic commitment, but let us make sure we take some time and get it right and not rush in so that we can just have another photo opportunity, without really considering the needs and aspirations of the community, making sure these are the real needs and priorities. I am not sure if I have had a response from the Premier yet; I know he gets a lot of mail. I acknowledge I have sent a letter off and am looking forward to getting some response to that. The people involved in that program are pretty excited about it.

Health packages were announced, including 60 new graduate nurse positions over six years. That is certainly welcome news for all in the health system as we are well aware of the pressure placed on staff in our hospitals. I am pretty sure it was the member for Rumney who outlined some of those wait times in her contribution to the Tasmanian Health Service Bill. We all know or hear of issues brought to us with waiting times, particularly for people waiting in emergency areas, sleeping on gurneys for 48 hours and that type of thing. It is not ideal and we know the pressures. The staff do the absolute best they possibly can under the circumstances they are working under, and we need to do whatever we can to support them. I imagine that 60 new graduate nurse positions over the next six years will be very welcome. We just need the beds in the wards so that those health professionals can do their jobs.

Another key part of the package for my island community is the two-year pilot program with a not-for-profit organisation, Community Transport Services, to provide transport to medical and

social appointments for Tasmanians over 65 living with a disability. I will be interested in how that will work on the ground for the island community - the Furneaux Group - and if that program could be something the King Island community is receiving the benefit of as well. I am interested in how that will actually work. What are the parameters around the definition of a social event? We often know that the devil is in the detail and for some reason or other, things do not always fit neatly into the boxes as intended. I will be interested in some guidelines around that initiative in the interests of my island community. They have done pretty well out of the election commitments. I am sure they will be looking forward to the delivery of that \$1.81 million for the Flinders Island package. I look forward to what we can learn from that. I understand if that is something that will have to be taken away and brought back. It is not a matter of urgency. I went through and kept every clipping I could find before the election about the various commitments that were made so that I could follow up as the budget came in and as the years go on to make sure that those promises are delivered on.

Mr President, as you know I do not come to the lectern on these occasions and not talk about the road network. Even though part of it has changed.

I hope to be still using part of the southern network, and I know the member for Prosser will be using it probably a lot more than myself. I have still been regularly travelling the Great Eastern Drive and there is still no action on lay-by areas, just a rehash of promises previously made by the then minister to action the works. Why is it when there is so much focus on ferries and getting visitors in their vehicles here to Tassie, we still have done nothing on the Tasman Highway to deliver adequate signed lay-by areas for slow-moving vehicles to make way for other road users? I do not understand why we have had such a delay in at least making a start on those lay-by areas. It would be three years ago since I did the drive with the minister.

Mr Valentine - Have they done the white lines yet?

Ms RATTRAY - They have been done and removed, as in when you are driving on them all the time. They just wear so quickly. A couple of weeks ago I was coming home from an event around Launceston. It was a very foggy night. I was hard-pressed to see where I was going and I knew where I was going. I know that road. But you cannot see a white line - and we only have one, there are none on the side of the road, they are only in the middle. The road pavement is not wide enough for white lines on either side. It is quite scary, as the member for Hobart knows, when he drives up that way.

I would like feedback on this. If I have to be a squeaky wheel, that is exactly what I will be. It is too important to continue to talk and not get any action. The section of the Scottsdale to Bridport road was the scene of an accident last week, where, in slippery conditions, an empty milk tanker lost control and jackknifed on a treacherous section of the road. I am told that corner is like ice when it is wet from the tar that has come up through the road seal. Thankfully the driver is okay, albeit very shaken. Fortunately no other vehicles were on the road at the time of the incident. Next time the outcome may be more serious or, heaven forbid, a fatality.

I expect there will be a full assessment of that section of the road. I urge a cooperative approach to address the shortcomings of the previous works undertaken in the interest of the safety of all road users. As you would expect, I have emailed the minister's office about that particular section. A couple of people rang the council and they said, 'It is not our problem, ring the government.' It is everybody's problem. When a section of the road is not safe, there needs to be a cooperative approach. It is everybody's problem. Yes, you can put a sign up to say 'Slow down.' It was an unladen milk tanker. Had it have been fully laden, look out. It was actually empty. They were

going to collect, not the other way round. Very lucky. I have had a couple of people ring me directly about this. I said that I would use this opportunity this week to reinforce the email I sent to the relevant minister's inbox.

In regard to general areas of the road network, I respectfully ask - as I do not always get much joy out of the infrastructure department - for a level of consideration by the minister and his department to reversing a number of areas and sites on the Tasman Highway that in more recent years have had double white lines put on them, without any consultation with the community - I might add 'and installed' - where for decades prior to this there were broken lines and opportunities to overtake safely. Again, if those who head our agencies are going to make these decisions and implement changes, there needs to be some consultation and discussion, particularly around safe overtaking areas such as these, and to have adequate signing designated for the lay-by areas. If it is signed 300 metres out, you know exactly what you are coming up to. A sign would have to be next to nothing to provide a safety aspect for road users compared to even doing works. People are overtaking on double white lines that used to be single white lines because they have always overtaken there and they still do. People get over for you because they know there is enough space for you to actually overtake safely. Slow-moving vehicles pull right over and let you go past. Technically it is a breach of the law. If we are going to do these things, let us have some consultation around them and work together. I will continue to follow that one.

The Ben Lomond Alpine Hotel and the Parks and Wildlife shelter - a devastating fire last Tuesday night caused \$1 million-worth of damage - what a shame. There has already been some action, because it has actually taken out the only toilets in the area. The fire destroyed the toilets. When I wrote this towards the end of last week, there were no toilets at Ben Lomond. Obviously that is not satisfactory and we need to take action quickly in regard to those facilities. It was an accident - nobody's fault. They were doing some renovations at the hotel and somehow something has caused the fire. I urge the Parks and Wildlife Service to work very quickly and cooperatively with the Government to make sure some suitable rest room facilities are in place as soon as possible.

I declare an interest in this particular area because my partner and I operate a livestock cartage business. My interest in this matter is on behalf of the Tasmanian livestock operators, the Northern Midlands Business Association and the entire network of roads in our state and the super-important public who use the roads where livestock are transported. The Powranna truck wash facility has been some four years in the pipeline and was heading towards its final stages, which involves an effluent pipeline from the facility from one side of the Midland Highway across to the settling ponds at the feedlot on the other side. It would be a great outcome for the facility and the environment. Anyone who regularly travels the Midland Highway would have noticed that the works are at a standstill. The cost of the project has overrun from the initial funds made available.

Mr Farrell - It is interesting you talk about effluent from stock transport. Years ago when the saleyards were at Bridgewater and all the stock from all around the state came in on the train, once they had dropped them off at the stockyards, they would take the train down to Granton and hose it off into the Derwent. You cannot do that now.

Ms RATTRAY - A dedicated truck wash facility is needed so the effluent can be disbursed in an environmentally friendly manner and we are not following trucks with effluent after they have unloaded their livestock. They do not have anywhere to go to wash their trucks out before they have to go back to home base. They cannot be charged for what they are doing because there is no facility to allow them to wash their trucks out to make sure they are not polluting the roads.

We want people to have a good experience on our roads. So we need a top-up of funding. I believe there is an application in the system, sitting on someone's desk, and I urge the Government to approve the last piece of funding so the environmental licence can be approved.

The next part of my contribution relates to the new part of my electorate, once represented by the former member for Western Tiers who represented the Meander Valley with a high level of dedication. I will do my utmost to represent this part of the McIntyre electorate with that same dedication.

I contacted the Meander Valley Council for some input into today's contribution. They were good enough to provide quite an extensive list, as all areas do when governments are heading into elections. We know there will be a federal election next year.

I attended a public meeting in Deloraine last week. The community is in a consultation process on the development of a Deloraine and districts recreation facility. A feasibility study is being completed with an option that has been put forward by the group that undertook that feasibility study. There is more work to be done. It could be a staged project process. I will share those updates with the House as they come to me.

That evening I saw a proactive and supportive community that wants to make a difference to those who live there and attract more families there. Interestingly, they are bucking the Tasmanian and national trends in terms of the number of teenagers in the area. Our young people are the future of our state and our communities, so it was positive they have a higher number per population of 13- to 15-year-olds in that area.

The scope of the Westbury recreation ground project has been reduced. The budget is now \$1.9 million, which makes it much more achievable for a small local government area. The state Government has also promised a contribution to the upgrade of the Westbury recreation ground. Recreational facilities are very important to small communities. They are their heartbeat - their footy, their cricket, their netball, where people gather. Regarding the Bracknell Hall reconstruction, I think from memory former speaker Mr Shelton was able to secure some funding for it. I know he has a strong interest in that area so that is something very important to them.

There is also another larger project that is also very important to the Bracknell community: the construction of a reticulated sewerage system to address environmental concerns within the community. The council has funded a design development and is in discussions with TasWater on the funding options. I am interested to see how that will work with the Government's funding of its cash injection into TasWater, and how the priorities of projects are going to unfold following the announcement that the Government has decided that rather than take over TasWater, it would now like to partner with it and provide some of those much-needed infrastructure projects that have been on the Government's priority list, and how this will work. It is going to be very important. That is around a \$5 million commitment so it is not small funds, but when you are talking water and sewerage, it is probably fairly small.

In the Carrick area, there is also an upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant. TasWater has a lot of work to do and \$15 million is a significant amount of money.

There is \$500 000 for signage in the Meander Valley for the Great Western Tiers touring route. That in itself is not a lot of money when you talk about good signage when we are welcoming so

many visitors into the area. I know the member for Montgomery will be interested in that because people who use that touring route will probably head on to Cradle Mountain and so forth.

I also thank the member for Montgomery for including the Railton initiative in her contribution. It is very much appreciated and I will be having a look at that in the *Hansard*.

Mrs Hiscutt - Mr President, we do share the municipal area.

Ms RATTRAY - We do. I have already talked about the Bracknell Memorial Hall; that is a good initiative. A couple of projects that are very exciting in the Meander Valley area are two outdoor netball courts at Deloraine and a half basketball court. The netball community and team were represented at the community meeting by a spokesperson, a former Scottsdale girl, Taneil Bloomfield. She has been a great asset to the Deloraine community with her passion, support and drive. I look forward to seeing -

Mr Farrell - I think that is the same with any people from Scottsdale who move elsewhere, they tend to be tremendous.

Ms RATTRAY - I take on board the member for Derwent pumping up his own tyres, Mr President. A couple of other projects are on foot, as we speak. There is an alteration to the Deloraine Auditorium to improve its functionality. It is \$300 000, but when you have a facility that is going to be used to the extent it is being used, it is very much worthwhile. There will be more extensions to the Community Complex to provide indoor squash and badminton courts and dancing, which I thought was pretty special.

Westbury needs an upgrade in stormwater drainage systems to manage flooding in the urban areas. That is something the council will be looking at for funding as well. Stormwater is certainly a council role but it is very important.

Mole Creek Memorial Hall - it is not a lot of money but it is still important to that small community. Also, there will be some lighting around the Deloraine area. They have a plan and there is already some action on some of those things. I look forward to working with that community to achieve some of those outcomes.

I would like to add one matter in regard to TasWater. I was very pleased to see the Government's approach to TasWater - not wanting to take over and at least giving that joint venture or shareholder role a go. I congratulate the Government on that.

I have talked in this place a number of times about real-time data reporting, which is something that Mr Tim Slade from Pioneer in the north-east has worked diligently on. At the March meeting of the TasWater board they announced they would take that on board. After three years of asking they said yes, they will, which is terrific. I was a bit disappointed they did not even give Mr Slade a mention in the article. It was all about TasWater having thought that this was a great initiative - 'Pat me on the back and let us get going.' I wrote a letter to the editor acknowledging Mr Slade's work. He has worked diligently on this. I thought he should, at the very least, have been acknowledged for that. I have no idea how hard it was to get that through the board process. I hope that it went through unanimously. Just the same, it is a good outcome for all Tasmanian communities. The notice of motion I put forward in this House was supported, about three years ago now. That is a very useful thing.

I noticed recently in the *Tasmanian Country* that Rural Alive and Well is extending its reach interstate to support communities to develop local suicide prevention programs. I know RAW has had some issues in the past about recurrent funding. I hope, if it extends its reach into the interstate community, that it is funded for that and it does not draw on the funds it needs to run the RAW services that are very well received around the state. I congratulate RAW on being invited to head into South Australia and Victoria - that is terrific. Obviously the model is a good one and is working, but I would not like to see that model be a detriment to the Tasmanian communities that have come to rely on the RAW services.

I think we have talked enough about the health system today so I will not go back over any of that.

There are some changes in energy, trying to lower the price of energy. That will always be well received. The farming community has commended the Liberal Party on the policy announcement made in early February before the election to help farmers reduce their energy costs. I note there was some media coverage earlier this week about reducing costs generally for households. I expect it will be very well received right across our communities.

Members, rest assured I am not going to speak to every piece of information I have here. I just want to make sure I do not miss anything that is super important.

I will finish by focusing on a couple of things in the Governor's speech when she came to the parliament. She said the Australian Bureau of Statistics recently confirmed Tasmania's economy is one of the best performing in Australia and the third strongest in the country. That has to be a real confidence boost for any state. I certainly hope that confidence will continue for our state because it certainly does sit well with our communities when there is that level of confidence, growing the economy. If there is business confidence, people are growing things and exporting and building, and we are obviously growing with the international and domestic tourism. It is a good story and we want to keep it going, albeit there will always be challenges within our communities at every level.

I do not want to skim over housing; we have talked about that earlier in the week. I saw container housing at Agfest, and the member for Pembroke has already spoken about the significant challenges with housing. More needs to be done and we need to be working together to make sure people are not living in tents in caravan parks, showgrounds or anywhere else for that matter. People need to be housed appropriately and not everyone's needs are the same, but basic housing is a basic right.

Mr Willie - I went out with the Salvation Army one morning at the crack of dawn and we found about 15 or 16 people in the CBD on the ground living in the streets.

Ms RATTRAY - That is not something we are used to in Tasmanian. If we go to bigger cities, it is more prevalent, but when you start seeing it in Tasmania in our streets, we certainly all need to be concerned. I thank everyone for the opportunity to provide my input today. It is a great opportunity to be able to talk about what is happening in your electorate and also where there needs to be some improvement and being able to acknowledge where there has been some wins for any government. I look forward to listening to other contributions. I support the motion.

[5.08 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I first congratulate the Hodgman Government on its election. I acknowledge the fact Tasmania is now the first Australian state parliament to have

more women members than men, and welcome those new members to the House of Assembly and the new member for Prosser, Jane Howlett, as well as congratulate Rob Valentine on his re-election.

The Government has announced it will focus on creating more full-time secure jobs and the method employed to do this will be reducing payroll taxes and creating a competitive tax regime for small business. This would provide welcome support for all those business owners who are struggling to make a living. If you take a walk through the streets of Launceston, the number of empty shopfronts is alarming. Any government incentive to fill these empty spaces with profitable businesses is much applauded.

Another issue that faces the people in the greater Launceston area is a lack of affordable housing. It will be interesting to see how the proposed affordable housing strategy will benefit our constituents in the northern half of the state and how many of the proposed 1500 homes will be built in and around Launceston.

It was refreshing to hear the Governor mention a focus on mental health in the state, both in schools and under the general Health portfolio. Mental health is often overlooked in society; although recent advertising campaigns are helping to break the stigma associated with these diseases, there is still often a hush-hush attitude towards sufferers. This is one area that not only affects the patient and their family, but can often have far-reaching effects in the community. The addition of more community mental health beds and support is very welcomed.

It is proposed \$19.1 million will be spent over six years to fully staff and open eight additional beds on Ward 4K on completion of the redevelopment of the Launceston General Hospital, including specialist facilities for mental healthcare. This should allow the hospital to deliver better psychiatric services to young patients and their families and carers from across the north of Tasmania. It is hoped additional full-time equivalent staff will be recruited, including nurses, doctors and allied health staff.

While I am on the topic of health, the area of recruitment is one area the government really needs to focus on, as it appears we have difficulty luring accredited medical professionals to the state and keeping them here.

Much work needs to be done on the underlying issues everyone is aware of - the lack of beds, surgery backlogs and lack of staff to manage the infrastructure already in place. Of course, it is always important to spend money on upgrading and building facilities around the state, but if we do not have the staff resources to manage these buildings, it seems to be a waste of money. I acknowledge there has already been a focus on health over the last term of the government, and I look forward to seeing the fruits of that labour and a return to stability in the health system.

I note the Tasmanian Health Service Bill 2018 passed our House today and trust this will improve the situation. The plan to increase out-of-hospital services and in-home management of chronic disease should in time alleviate some of the pressure on hospital beds, but still much more needs to be done. The proposed establishment of urgent care centres in the Launceston area would see specialist general practitioners supported by hospital specialists provide care in the community. This would take pressure off the Launceston General Hospital Emergency Department and help people to be treated sooner and closer to where they live. A study would look at how such centres could work with the community rapid response service and local health centres.

On education: within the greater Launceston area, two public colleges provide for students through to years 11 and 12. While I agree in principle about extending high schools through to years 11 and 12, some consideration has to also be given to the colleges that have been supporting years 11 and 12 since their inception as chances are they could lose a large percentage of their senior student base. Newstead College already has quite low numbers compared with previously, and although I am not sure about the numbers at Launceston College, it stands to reason, if people stay at the high school, they are not going on to the colleges, and there could be some real problems there.

Tourism continues to be a major economic growth sector within Launceston. Approximately 33 per cent of people working in Launceston work in the hospitality or retail sectors, both of which are significantly affected by tourism.. With the Penny Royal having been rejuvenated two years ago and with Peppers Silo Hotel opening on 1 June this year, the city has recently had a few developments to aid in bringing tourists to the area. The City of Launceston Council is also giving the city a facelift by upgrading the Civic Square and Brisbane Street Mall areas. The additional promise of the Government to invest \$875,000 in the Cataract Gorge lightshow will maximise the attraction of the gorge by opening up the area to night visits by tourists. I am sure all members here have been to our magnificent gorge, and it can certainly only improve with this lightshow.

The renovation and refurbishment of the CH Smith Building has also brought job opportunities to the area, and the added infrastructure should allow for more opportunities for business and development. The Government's plan to move 100 Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment employees to Launceston and Devonport will also help promote growth in the north of the state. The Government's intention to spend around \$1 billion in new capital funding across the state could also greatly help the Launceston area, particularly if one of the new planned centres of excellence were to be based in Launceston.

The Governor announced many new additions to our policing and prison systems. The construction of a northern prison is a welcome and necessary addition to our Corrective Services structure and will lessen the burden on the current Risdon Prison. If the Government introduces its planned stronger by-laws and dangerous criminal laws, there will be a greater need for additional prison and detention cells. A northern prison will also make it much easier for northern family and friends of inmates to visit their loved ones in prison. We are all aware regular contact with family and friends plays a large part in any rehabilitation that is possible.

The additional 125 frontline police officers planned for the state should also help the fight on crime as long as they are stationed in those suburbs where crime rates are particularly high, some of which are in the greater Launceston area. With additional police officers on the beat, Tasmania Police needs to ramp up high visibility policing in shopping precincts, particularly the central business district.

No interest loans to small businesses that want to install good-quality, high-definition digital recording cameras will provide further incentive and security to businesses trying to survive in central Launceston. That will enhance redevelopment of the mall in the Civic Centre.

The member for McIntyre touched on infrastructure, and I will mention infrastructure as well. On the issue of new road infrastructure I look forward to the roadwork on the Midland Highway being completed. Any work done to improve the flow of traffic is worthwhile as long as any private land that needs to be compulsorily acquired in the construction of these roads sees its owners fairly compensated.

Transport infrastructure in the Launceston and Tamar Valley region are of vital importance, not only for Launceston's ability to function and service the city centre but also to enable our increasing tourist trade easier and safer access. The \$92.5 million traffic vision for Launceston, including upgrades to the West Tamar and the Batman highways and the new Tamar River crossing north of the city, are essential to traffic flow and future development in the areas.

Congestion issues at the Mowbray Connector intersection, Wellington and Bathurst streets and Charles Street Bridge are serious safety concerns. I look forward to the completion of the promised new bridge connecting the East and West Tamar highways from Riverside to Newnham, something that has been talked about for decades.

Mr Dean - They have to commit to funding.

Ms ARMITAGE - This proposed bridge across the Tamar River north of Cormiston Road will allow drivers to avoid the congested West Tamar Highway where it enters the city. You are quite right, member for Windermere, but it was an election promise.

Mr Dean - It will connect to one of the best electorates in the state, Windermere.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am sure the Government is aware it was an election promise and a very important promise to the people of Launceston. I am sure we all know people who live at Legana who go to university or the Institute of Sport - they have to drive the long way around when it is a very short trip across if they could access a bridge.

On 14 May 2017 it was reported that the notoriously dangerous intersection on the East Tamar Highway was set for a major upgrade, with \$7 million allocated in the state budget. The Mowbray Connector and East Tamar Highway junction has previously been the topic of heated debate among the Launceston community, with 10 crashes at the site over the past five years, including a double fatality early in 2016.

Mr Dean - I got good answers to those questions yesterday.

Ms ARMITAGE - I appreciate that; I also had some similar questions.

Mr Dean - The way you are going I will not have to speak shortly because you are covering my electorate well.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am covering roads that lead everywhere. Both a roundabout and traffic lights were proposed for the intersection; however, the minister at the time, Rene Hidding, said a roundabout was the likely outcome. It is disappointing now from a safety and traffic point of view that traffic lights are proposed.

The continued planned investment into sporting and recreational facilities across the state is much needed in some areas. It is good to see that the current \$2.26 million upgrade to the Silverdome has commenced. Hopefully the centre will continue to be supported as it is an important piece of community infrastructure in Launceston.

In many ways Tasmania is blessed and as the Governor mentioned is leading the nation in business confidence. It is hoped that this will continue and that Tasmania will be the place to start up or relocate business and that Bass Strait will not be an impediment as it has been in the past. It

is important to look forward and I trust my region of Launceston will get its fair share of public service jobs as I believe moving jobs to the state's north would address the current imbalance.

As stated by Neil Grose from the Launceston Chamber of Commerce, in the year ending January southern Tasmania gained 6000 jobs on a 12-monthly average basis while northern Tasmania gained 2400. In February the Liberals promised to move 100 state public service jobs to the north and north-west if re-elected as a majority. The Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment department jobs included 65 positions in Launceston and 35 in Devonport.

Mr Grose said the government should play a role in accelerating Launceston's growth with employment and population both key factors. Mr Grose said -

The Chamber welcomes the decision to bring these jobs back where they belong in Tasmania ...

Launceston hasn't experienced the growth in population nor employment that Hobart has enjoyed and the government can and should act to redress the balance where common sense solutions are available.

The Chamber understands there is infrastructure available to relocate these jobs to Launceston, where it will make a significant positive impact on the local economy.

I echo the words of the chamber of commerce and look forward to a positive and successful year ahead for Launceston and our state as a whole.

[5.21 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, before I give my Address-in-Reply to her Excellency's speech at the opening of the new parliament, I offer a few comments on my re-election to this House. I begin this speech by acknowledging the Mouheneener people, the traditional original owners and custodians of this land who have a continuing association with it. I acknowledge their Elders both past and present and I am committed to the ongoing process of reconciliation within our island community through recognition of and respect for their culture across many fronts.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be here, as I was six years ago, delivering - I was going to say my first speech, but it ends up being about my third or fourth in what is now my second term. I have to say 'Sorry people, despite all the secret prayers and wishes, I am back.'

Ms Armitage - We knew you would be back.

Ms Forrest - They were not even secret prayers. They were out there.

Mr VALENTINE - Well, there you go. I am delighted to have been returned. I had a whisker under 7 per cent more primaries and a whisker under 1.5 per cent less on the cut up. I have reason to be joyful and somewhat alert, having had that 1.5 per cent drop. It is interesting to know what the community thinks. They are always tense times. I was kept on my toes by Richard Griggs, who was an independent; Simon Behrakis from the Liberal Party; Chris Simcox from the Animal Justice Party; Alan Barnett from the Tasmanians 4 Tasmania Party; and Brendon Hext from the

Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party of Tasmania. I congratulate them all for putting their hands up to be counted.

We have all started that political journey at some point in our lives. For some it will not be the last time that we see their names on a ballot paper. Good luck to them. It is a journey that can be rewarding, as it was for the member for Prosser. I know you have stood before for different elections and won just recently. To get that endorsement is something very special.

It is special, but it is also onerous because your community is expecting you to be there in this House to review and to perform. I do not take that lightly. For me it was fought at the doors rather than in the media. It was a pretty quiet media campaign. Every time you knocked on a door you would have another candidate's pamphlet under the door as a reminder that they had been there. It made me want to climb those driveways. I have taken on Fern Tree and Ridgeway and they have driveways that are steeper than anywhere else in Tasmania.

Ms Forrest - I do not think you should complain about this when you consider some other electorates that have many more hills to climb.

Mr VALENTINE - They are steep driveways. You do not drive up them, you walk up them.

Mr PRESIDENT - You have come back an elite athlete though.

Mr VALENTINE - I did lose weight and I am hoping to keep the weight off. It was an interesting time, but it was a respectful campaign. I think that says something about the people who were in it. It was almost collegial. Every time we met for a community forum or even met at a different function that was not anything to do with the election, it was not unlike this Chamber: quite collegial, on a good day.

I have already congratulated the member for Prosser for attaining her seat and wish her well. I have already mentioned the elections that took place yesterday for the committee positions, and I congratulate those members.

As mentioned six years ago, I will continue to make sure the channels for dialogue and discussion always remain open as far as I am concerned, unless any of you happen to be a Tigers supporter, in which case I will think twice. I want some of the spoils of victory to come back my way. I think the member for Windermere knows who I am talking about.

I thank my family for their support, including my brother and his wife, who wanted to be here today but could not unfortunately, and my dad, who said to me, 'Yes, you should run again.' I thought to myself, why does he want me to run again? He probably wants me out of his hair. He is 95 but he still runs his stall at Salamanca, as everybody here in this Chamber knows. He wanted me to run. He said, 'Give it a go', so I did. Most of all I want to thank my long-suffering partner in life, Margaret, for putting up with a sometimes grumpy beast as the election progressed. Everyone knows it is a tense time.

The community really cannot be taken for granted when you are doing these things. You might think you are going well, then all of a sudden you get somebody who complains to you about a certain thing and you think, 'I wonder how many others in the community are feeling that?' Then you will get somebody else who yells at you across the street as you are trudging up somewhere like the Glebe, delivering pamphlets and knocking on doors, 'We voted for you, go, you good thing!'

You think, 'Gee, I will walk up those streets a bit quicker now.' It is all appreciated, but it is all there to keep you on your toes as well.

Ms Rattray - You look like you have lost weight.

Mr VALENTINE - I have lost weight, yes, I have lost a kilogram or two. My children have their homes to go to. There is only one person at home who can feel the stress and the tension and that is my wife, Margaret. I thank her for being there for me during this time. I actually escaped to Agfest on the day of the election. Time passes more quickly when you are driving. It worked. We arrived home around about the time the polls closed. It was a good day.

I have to say if my mum had been here still, I reckon she would have said, 'Do it'. I thank my mum for the inspiration that she has provided. There are no lightning strikes coming down so I think that must be okay on that score. I thank the community for placing their faith in me again, particularly because it is the thirteenth election. If anyone is superstitious, then number 13 is going to be the one to worry about. I have enjoyed most of them and I certainly enjoyed this one.

As my State Theatre ad says, I will continue to advocate for the people of Hobart and work for legislation that benefits Tasmanians as a whole, and that is so true. We are all in that boat, when you think about it, advocating daily for the concerns of our constituents in the electorate at the doors of the various government service providers then sitting in judgment on statewide legislation, whether it benefits our local community or not.

At the beginning of my last term, I spoke on governance and the adversarial system with a need for change and long-term strategic planning. I also spoke a little on exploring the possibilities, as our number plates say.

We really are lucky as inhabitants of this great little island of ours, and we need to make sure its specialty is not undermined and that we promote low-impact businesses and long-term job creation. Short-term projects are useful and they add to the mix, but it is the long-term employment that is really important. Sometimes the short term can actually help deliver the long term but it is the long term that we look for. Why do we look for that? Because people want surety. They need some degree of surety of money coming in. No-one can be a hundred per cent sure their job is going to be there tomorrow, but long-term job creation is very important and has the capacity to stimulate the economy a lot more than a short-term project or two.

As I said in 2012, to perform this role effectively, one has to be able to identify with people across the state and not just those in a particular electorate and that I would certainly be interested in travelling to various parts of the state to fill in those knowledge gaps. I believe I have done that over the last six years. The Public Works Committee enables that, and I have really enjoyed that committee. All of that is to be decided. You do get a chance to see other parts of the state and get a feel for what other members' electorates are suffering or enjoying, and it helps to give you a more well-rounded experience of the state. That is important when looking at statewide legislation. It is something we need to do - take that opportunity to visit.

Six years ago, I remarked on the fact that I spent my childhood in the country town of Dunalley and that during those 20 years and the years following I worked in, or was acquainted with, the commercial fishing industry, particularly fish processing, agricultural research, stud cattle rearing, sheep farming, and I had relatives who were heavily involved for many years in dairying at Forth, at Marrawah and the Smithton area in the north-west. I think all of those experiences stood me in

good stead over the past six years in this job to be able to understand some of the things that some of you, coming from those areas, were putting on the Table to be considered. It was valuable.

For the member for Prosser, you may not have to get around as much because your electorate is a reasonable size. I encourage you to travel over as many of those electorates as possible and get to experience them. I could have even run for Prosser, with all of that experience down there. I have a shack down there. The member for Prosser cannot speak yet.

Ms Rattray - A lot of people did run for Prosser.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, 13 of them.

Ms Forrest - Democracy in action.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, democracy in action. There were only six in my election and there were six last time, so maybe I ought to be thankful for that.

Forty-two years in the public service as well gives me an understanding of how some of those departments work and, probably in most cases now, used to work because I have not been there for the last six years. It is important to have that inside information when we are looking at different bills and the way services are delivered.

I still note the bills and acts we deal with in parliament often seek to improve the lives of people in the community but when they are debated in parliament, the gloves seem to be off. I made a bit of a point of this earlier. We are a strange people, are we not? A lot of people want to personality bash and it should not be that way. You can have a go at a policy or an issue but you do not have to personality bash and this Chamber is great, because it can be collegial. Others in the other place would probably say they could do the same thing and have a go at each other, but then sit down and have dinner together. That might be the case, but 'stick to the ball'.

Each member of the other place is elected by the people to govern, basically with the same quota. Through the Hare-Clark system they have all the same level of support in varying degrees. Hare-Clark takes a bit longer to work it all out but they have the same level of support from the community. They are all expected to contribute. Approximately half of them are relegated to opposing the other half.

On the things that really matter, the health bill I was talking about earlier, and the way these long-term strategies are needed. We need the combined intellectual capacity of the parliament to work these things through. Not for it to be a competition of trying to keep the other parties honest all the time. Obviously they need to be kept on their toes when they are in government. There is a lot of experience in every member around this Chamber and we need to bring that to the table. We do, in deciding what amendments should and should not go through. I encourage the other place when it comes to putting their minds together to actually govern for Tasmania with a spirit of cooperation on those really big items that matter. There might not be heaps of things they can agree on, but look for those things and go for it.

Mr Finch - We need to be smarter in the way we go about developing our ideas and our arguments and what we look to, to develop for the future because we waste a lot of energy with arguing and argy-bargy and being against each other.

Mr Dean - If that was the case, the Government is not going to be hindered in getting controversial legislation through.

Mr VALENTINE - That is not true. I am talking about those areas all parties can agree on.

Mr Dean - The Government was elected to govern -

Mr VALENTINE - The Government was elected to govern - that is true. If it wants to govern efficiently, it needs to work with the other parties to decide which areas are non-negotiable.

Mr Dean - All governments?

Mr VALENTINE - Otherwise you get four-year thinking and that is not what we need. What we need is 20-year thinking. You can knock when you have your say. People expect and want it. I have just run through an election and people want more collaboration on the things that matter. That is the experience I have had. It might not be the experience you have had.

Mr Dean - A lot of people I talk to do not even know about the Legislative Council.

Mr VALENTINE - You are right. Some of them think it is local government.

I have spoken with many seeking their opinions on the issues facing us. In Hobart the cable car loomed quite large, changes to gun laws, the TasWater takeover, long-term planning, mandates, housing issues, poker machines in pubs and clubs - to which I had some interesting responses which I will share at a later time when those things come before us. I am not 100 per cent sure the cable car will come before us again because that is really a local government decision - only if the government decides to do something different. People really do care. They care about some of these things and we need to listen. It is not the only information we go by. We have other things to weigh up and that is why they elect people to places like this - to actually get that information and make decisions. They know they do not have all that information in front of them. They know you can not expect the person they elected to absolutely agree with everything they say, because they do not know the full set of information. They want to know how you think and how you approach a matter. That is the difference between a Legislative Council and a lower House election. It is demonstrating how you apply yourself to the role and how you hold the government to account - not so much whether you agree with a policy position on a particular matter. This is not the policy house.

I believe we have a positive future ahead, but we need to make sure we do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Many in the community recognise we have a very special island, with very special attributes, and deep down we do not want to be like a thousand other places on the globe. We need to regard our specialty, that speciality that is now returning dividends in spades. It is because the attention is on us, and it might not always be there, so we have to be a little careful how we approach development in this state. That is not to say development cannot happen, but it is has to be in the right way. Parts of the state are certainly flavour of the month, and it has to do with the MONA effect. We need to spread the love as a government and as a parliament and consider parts of the state not feeling the love that are out there trying to get some attention and trying to encourage tourists. Trying to develop businesses that help to employ people in their area. We just have to make sure we do not sell our soul in return for the holy dollar.

The people of this island live here because they love the place. Yes they need jobs. Yes they need homes to live in. Yes they need good health services. We also need to work together to maximise potential without destroying the very reason for being on this island. The residents of this island need due consideration to make sure their lifestyle is considered, especially our original inhabitants in all of this process. To the job at hand, now it comes to Address-in-Reply.

More women than men in the House of Assembly. It is 20:20 in the whole parliament. That is good, it actually happens to be about 52 per cent women and 48 per cent men on this island. You may not say it is quite reflective. But it is good to see that happening. It is important, because women are less combative and approach a matter without the testosterone. It is important we make sure balance remains. Whichever way we do that, it is important and reflective of our society, it is reflective of the balance in the real world. I thought for a moment we might have had a historic moment yesterday when the member for Murchison was elected to the chair, which was then followed by the member for McIntyre being elected as the first deputy chair, and we might have had another female as the second deputy chair. That probably has not happened ever in this Chamber. It was not to be, however, as the member for Mersey took the position. And then another lady should follow on the other position.

I look at Her Excellency's speech to this House. It reflects the Government's legislative program and how it is approaching life. On the second page of the speech it says, 'economic conditions and employment growth are the strongest they have been in many years' - and this with what has sometimes been considered an obstructive upper House. Many people think we are there to obstruct; that is the message that gets out there because of a couple of major bills that have come before this House and gone down. For the most part, government legislation does go through. It is only a small percentage that does not. It is not an obstructive House; it is just the House that holds the government to account.

Mr Dean - One of the issues that has come up and that I referred to in my opinion piece, was that in the Liberal Party's four years they lost six major bills, while in 16 years of Labor and Labor-Greens rule, they lost two - two only in 16 years.

Mr VALENTINE - Well, that is democracy, isn't it? The House changes.

Mr Dean - Is it democracy or is it the make-up of this place?

Mr VALENTINE - Over the years, it has been a conservative House. Then, all of a sudden, people start to change their minds and then it becomes less conservative, or more progressive, whichever way you might like to describe it.

Mr Finch - Look at some of the changes in attitude to legislation that comes through this place. At one stage we had the relationships bill. I remember clearly, we voted two out of three on that bill. The third point was the fact of two females being mentioned on the birth certificate of the child. We were nearly unanimous in opposition to that when we did the first relationship bill. When it was brought back a couple of years later, it passed unanimously in this House. Over two years, attitudes completely changed in this House.

Mr VALENTINE - Society moves on and the make-up of this House reflects that. It is as simple as that. Whenever I vote, I might vote like yesterday, against the Government. The Labor Party voted with the Government. There were four of us on this side of the House and there were 10 on that side of the House.

Members interjecting.

Mr VALENTINE - I do not go into a room and caucus with the people that I vote with.

Mr Dean - That was nothing to do with the Government. It was not the Government's bill, it was my bill.

Mr VALENTINE - I am talking about the way we vote. I am saying I do not caucus with people. I do not ring up a party and ask, 'What do you think about this? I want to make sure that I vote with you.' I do not caucus.

Mr Dean - You need to be careful where you are going.

Mr VALENTINE - I do not caucus. Are you saying I do? Give me evidence.

Mr Dean - I am not saying you caucus. You do not have to caucus to follow a certain line.

Mr VALENTINE - No, I will tell you right now - lightning can come down through that ceiling. I do not lie. I tell you, I do not ring up party members or any other members and ask, 'How are you going to vote on this?' I do not do it.

Mr Dean - I am not saying you do.

Mr VALENTINE - I am just telling you I do not. I look at things on their merits and I vote that way. I might be inclined to be a progressive person or I might be inclined to be left of centre, but that is the way I am. I do not get around and think, 'How can we make sure the Government does not get this through?' I never do that. That is not the way I operate. I cannot talk for others, but that is not the way I operate. I am just letting you know that, member for Windermere.

I note on the bottom of page two of the speech that the Governor says -

Tasmanians have entrusted my Government with a duty to deliver on these core responsibilities, to govern Tasmanians with a steady hand and a sense of purpose, and to lead the state with resolve, compassion and integrity.

These are the three very important words. We know there are quite a lot of vulnerable people out there and we need to make sure that the long-term objective must underscore that sense of purpose that is talked about. There are people on this island who really suffer and we have to make sure that we are not overtly supporting the haves so that the have-nots suffer. That is important. It does not take away the responsibility of people to live sensibly, but there are people who simply are not in a place to think things through, and we need to be able to make sure that this Government is a caring government, that this parliament is a caring parliament, and that it has compassion and integrity. I want to get that across.

Going further forward, 'In this term, my Government remains committed to further strengthening our economy and create more full-time, secure jobs for Tasmanians.' I was talking about project-based jobs. They are not secure, they are transient. We should not be relying on capital injections all the time. Yes, I suppose it is part of being a state that we get Commonwealth funding, but we should not be relying on that all the time for our basic lifestyle in this state. We need to think clearly before we ask for new infrastructure. As soon as you ask for new

infrastructure, you then have an increase in the maintenance regime needed and depreciation has to come into it. I do not think some of the funding that comes across from the Commonwealth for these sorts of things comes with that long-term maintenance funding associated with it. The government is left with that baby to carry. We have to be a bit careful that whenever we think, great, a hundred million dollars for a new piece of gear - a bridge, or whatever it is - that puts a bit of the burden on the depreciation budget. We have to be able to maintain what we get.

I would like to see some long-term planning in infrastructure as well. We spend a lot of time doing planning. When I was in local government, we spent a lot of time putting the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy together - the first for 30 years. We did a lot of thinking about growth corridors and those sorts of things. Now it is a statutory document that is in the planning system. I wonder whether the ministers have bothered to read it. Quite often you see in the paper, 'They need to plan long term. They need to do this before they do that.' Much of it has been done, it is there. It just needs to be accessed. Sometimes it is just not in the top of their mind, and they do another planning exercise, and all of a sudden that one is out of date.

If they were to approach planning in a better, more consistent way, we would be able to solve some of the problems and issues we have. For instance, I am thinking of the growth of Hobart because that is my electorate. It is not just Hobart on its own. All of those other council areas around it affect how Hobart operates. The traffic jams are happening because the people on the outskirts are travelling into town to work. If we do not provide the transport corridors for the future, how are we ever going to solve those problems? It is 30-year stuff and it needs to be dealt with, infrastructure-wise. To my mind, Dodges Ferry way, it is all very well to be widening highways, putting in extra lanes. You are going to have a bottleneck at Midway Point, whichever way you go. Has anyone ever thought of a light rail that goes from Dodges Ferry across to Five Mile Beach, past the airport, up through Meehan Range and onto the main rail line? We need to think this way and there needs to be some proper planning, because if we do not plan for it now we are not going to have it in 30 years' time. People are going to have bought the land and it is going to cost more in compensation. Some of that long-term planning needs to be done.

Mr Dean - Midway Point needs to be sorted, you hear on the radio every morning.

Mr VALENTINE - It does. Better bus transport would be a start, but you need peripheral car parking. You need car parks where people can park and get on a bus. You do not just need the car park, you need the child care services there too and the other facilities that people need to get them out of their car. You are not going to get them out of their car if they cannot drop their child off at child care. It needs to be holistically thought about. The parties need to get together on the big picture items.

Housing has been in the news a lot. It is not easily solved. Affordable housing is one of those areas that needs more consideration. As soon as you create affordable housing and it gets purchased, it is no longer affordable because the people occupying it want to get maximum value when they sell it. Truly affordable housing is housing that the government has a stake in, but the people who occupy the house need to have a stake in as well so they care for it. We often hear of places being burnt down. If the occupants owned part of the house and their dollars were in there they would not be so quick to burn it down, maybe.

It is a system called value capture. They use it for transport-oriented development in Perth and in other places across the world. The rise in the land value, which in Perth was something like 40 per cent, through the leasing arrangements to businesses was put back into the project and it

funded the project, it funded the train. We can look at that for the affordable housing strategy. I put that out there for consideration.

Mrs Hiscutt - Mr President, I wonder if the member might consider adjourning the debate. Feel free if you only have a short while to go.

Mr VALENTINE - I will only take a short time. We can stay here and go through all of these things laboriously and I do not want to do that. I will take a few more minutes.

I have talked about the traffic congestion, I have talked peripheral car parking, and I have talked before in this place about mandates. It is my strong belief that the Government might claim it has a mandate, but it has a mandate to put it on the agenda. It does not have a mandate to have it rubberstamped. I said this on radio the other day. There needs to be an understanding that whoever is selling a policy idea is going to sell the positives and not the negatives. It is for us to look at the negatives, to look at how it impacts on Tasmanians. That is what we need to do, that is what our House is here for.

Mr Armstrong - Wouldn't you look at the positives too?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, of course you do. You weigh it up, but we are here to test it.

Mr Armstrong - Not just to look at the negatives?

Mr VALENTINE - No, it is the unintended consequences. They could be negative or could be positive consequences but they might have an impact somewhere down the line. You have to look at all sides to an argument. The positives are obviously put forward by the government so you have to make sure that you discover some of the negatives as well.

Mr Dean - Don't you think the government is the one that should answer to the public?

Mr VALENTINE - They are answering. We are the public because we get elected the same as they do.

Mr Dean - But not us.

Mr VALENTINE - They do not answer to us? Of course they do. Are you saying that the 23 000 people that elected you do not want them to answer to you? Of course they do.

Mr Dean - I am not saying that. What I am saying is that if the government stands on an item very strongly in its campaign, surely it has the right to expect that some of those matters, if not all of them, will get through.

Mr VALENTINE - They have a right to expect they will be put on their agenda. They do not have a right to have it rubberstamped and they never will.

Mr Dean - Nobody is talking about rubber stamps.

Mrs Hiscutt - I did mention that in my contribution.

Mr VALENTINE - You did. The honourable Leader did mention it.

Mr Dean - I am just looking at what others have said.

Mr VALENTINE - You can talk about that in your offering.

One other matter that is important and talked about during my election campaign is donation reform. That must be addressed. I believe government-funded election campaigns are the way to go. That way you do not have to worry about donations and everything is above board and transparent. When I say government-funded, obviously there has to be a formula to be able to do that, and do it effectively. It is not a small thing to organise but that would be a better way to go. That way everybody has a level playing field.

Mr Dean - You are right. The system now is open to abuse.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes. I am going to finish there. I will have the opportunity to talk about some of the other things I had listed here. I do not want to take the time of the House talking about Hobart all the time because we are here for the state. It is not to say we cannot push a barrow but we are here to look at legislation and try to make sure that it is good for the people of Tasmania. Thank you very much for being forbearing.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That at its rising the Council do adjourn until 11 a.m. on Thursday 24 May 2018.

Motion agreed to.

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

That the Council do now adjourn.

The Council adjourned at 6.02 p.m.