

Thursday 5 March 2020

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

QUESTIONS

Spirit of Tasmania - Docking in Melbourne

Ms WHITE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.02 a.m.]

You have ambushed *Spirit of Tasmania* users with revelations that the ships may be moved to the Port of Geelong. The Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has expressed serious concern about the detrimental impact of any move. TCCI CEO Michael Bailey said moving the *Spirits'* berth to Geelong could potentially affect those vital supply arrangements with mainland customers and that is a significant concern to the business community -

Those vessels are arguably our most important link to the mainland and when docked at Station Pier they are effectively massive floating billboards for our state in the heart of Melbourne, which is probably Tasmania's most important market in terms of exports and visitors.

In light of these concerns why did you attempt to keep this massive development secret from *Spirit of Tasmania* users?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I am surprised that I received that question on the basis that the minister responsible for TT-Line raised these issues at the beginning of December last year, at GBEs. That would be the worst kept secret in Tasmania. Last year in Government Business Estimates, the minister responsible raised the fact that negotiations with VicPorts were difficult, and the costs needed to be passed back to Tasmanian consumers. This was raised in December. All I can discern from that question is that they have spent the last three months dealing with their own internal troubles.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, we have had our moment of humour. Premier, do not incite the Opposition, thank you.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. Please allow the Premier to continue.

Mr GUTWEIN - It does not surprise me that there was only one idea in the Leader of the Opposition's speech yesterday - no doubt too busy fending off Mr O'Byrne to focus on her speech.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to Standing Order 45. I draw the Premier back to the question, which was why he has kept it secret from industry that he was planning to move the ships to the Geelong port, because that was news to them yesterday.

Madam SPEAKER - I do not think that is a point of order and the Premier did clarify that.

Mr GUTWEIN - It is a ridiculous question. This was raised publicly in December last year. As a responsible and sensible government, we want to get the best outcome for Tasmanians, Tasmanian freight users and for that service overall. We make no apologies for looking at options. What we want is the best deal for Tasmania. It was printed in *The Advocate*, from memory, when this matter was raised. It beggars belief that those on the other side would have been particularly blind to this particular issue.

We will do what is in the best interests of Tasmanians and Tasmanian freight users. Passing on costs - it might drive up the price of a passenger vehicle by up to 30 per cent or the cost of a container by nearly \$100 - is not in Tasmania's best interest. The Opposition should understand that. It appears from their position yesterday, that what they want to argue for is more costs for Tasmanians and for Tasmanian freight users. They need to explain themselves.

Spirit of Tasmania - Docking in Melbourne

Ms WHITE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.08 a.m.]

Clearly you have been misled by your leadership rival, Michael Ferguson. He has led you to believe that he has consulted with industry about this when, in fact, he never once mentioned that ships might go to Geelong. Now he has left you to clean up his mess.

You have been blaming the potential move of the *Spirits of Tasmania* to Geelong on price gouging at Station Pier. What you have not told Tasmanians is that the larger vessels will require new loading facilities, staging points and wharf upgrades in both Devonport and wherever they dock in Victoria. How much will these infrastructure upgrades cost and who will pay for them? Is your failure to factor in these costs associated with the new vessels the real reason that you are pursuing a move to Geelong?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. It beggars belief that you have been blinded to this. It beggars belief that after this matter was raised in this place at Government Business Estimates last year, nearly 90 days ago, all of a sudden it is a revelation.

Luke Martin from the Tourism Industry Council said yesterday, 'We have known for some time TT-Line is undertaking due diligence on its Victorian berthing options with the price structure and capacity limitations at Station Pier'. That is exactly what the minister outlined last year -

Ms O'Byrne - Could you re-read it? We didn't hear the word 'Geelong'. We must have misheard.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne.

Mr GUTWEIN - and I will make the point, we do not want Tasmanian businesses to have to pay more than they should. Regarding the capacity issues raised by Ms White, of course we want to improve the ports' circumstances both here in Tasmania and where we berth in Melbourne

because we will have bigger ships. We will be carrying more people, we will be carrying more freight. This is just extraordinary -

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to standing order 45. It is extraordinary that the Premier cannot explain what provision they have made to fund the upgrades that are required at Devonport and at wherever the port is in Victoria. Can he explain if the reason why he is now looking to move the ships to Geelong is because he has failed to make that provision?

Madam SPEAKER - You did have a lot of questions in your original question so I will ask the Premier to be as relevant as he can.

Mr GUTWEIN - Regarding Station Pier, the price increases that are being requested are unacceptable. Regarding the capacity constraints on that port as we grow our business into the future, it will become even more difficult to get the levels of freight through that port that we need. That is a statement of fact.

In terms of the price, it is not acceptable that price increases of up to 30 per cent on a passenger vehicle or \$100 per container would be foisted upon Tasmanians. I have made that point perfectly clear. We are looking at options because we will have bigger boats with more capacity that will carry more freight and more passengers which will underpin this economy.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, it is very hard to hear with a lot of chirping going on this side.

Mr GUTWEIN - We are working very closely with TT-Line. As I said yesterday, no final decision has been made. We are considering what the options are and we will continue to work through that in a sensible and responsible way as any good government should.

WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator - Activities

Ms O'CONNOR to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.12 a.m.]

On your watch Tasmania's Workplace Health and Safety Regulator has explicitly targeted the Bob Brown Foundation, the first time unlawfully, and the second attempt yesterday with a threatened \$50 000 fine. As a result of your Government's politicisation of WorkSafe Tasmania, now Unions Tasmania has expressed no confidence in the regulator for targeting forest protesters while failing to protect Tasmanian workers. This is confirmed by our Right to Information request lodged in September last year to which we do not yet have a full response.

What we do have from WorkSafe is confirmation the regulator, under Mr Cocker, is not collecting data on whether an incident has resulted in death, serious injuries, serious illness or is a dangerous incident.

Do you agree this is utterly damning? We have a regulator pouring time and resources in trying to shut down peaceful protest while at the same time it has lost the confidence of the union movement and is clearly failing Tasmanian workers. Why have you not asked your Attorney-

General to rein in this now highly politicised regulator and to ensure it does its job in protecting workplace health and safety?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, that would be the lowest and nastiest attack I have ever seen on an independent regulator in this state, to be frank.

The WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator goes about his job as an independent statutory officer. He has taken a view as a result of a referral being received, not from the Government but from the private sector, wherever it has come from, taking a referral and then acting on it because, quite frankly, the activities we have seen from those workplace protesters employed by the Bob Brown Foundation puts them at risk -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, and this goes to the Premier's credibility. He is pretending he cares about forest protesters -

Mr Ferguson - But what is the point of order?

Ms O'CONNOR - when he would not condemn the violent attack on Tarkine protesters the week before last so he should be more honest with the parliament.

Madam SPEAKER - Sorry, I don't think that is a point of order. Please continue, Premier.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The member for Clark, the Leader of the Greens, should be honest with the Tasmanian Parliament. She wants one standard for herself and another for others. That is what she wants. We support the WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator -

Dr Woodruff - Why are you politicising it?

Mr GUTWEIN - If people want to raise the issue of politicisation then let me remind you of the damning email that was read into this place about the Integrity Commission and their views on your actions.

Mr O'Byrne interjecting.

Mr GUTWEIN - It might be one point the shadow treasurer and I can agree on. That was the most extraordinary statement to say it did not mention the Greens. You are the only ones trying to table it in parliament.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, relevance, standing order 45. We have asked serious questions about the regulator's capacity to protect the workplace health and safety of people in their workplaces in Tasmania while they are hunting down forest protesters.

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you, that is not a point of order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Dr Woodruff - Put your efforts into TFS volunteers, why don't you?

Madam SPEAKER - Order, please.

Mr GUTWEIN - If the Leader of the Greens and member for Clark would stop this political witch-hunt then maybe the regulator could get on with their job.

Ms O'Connor - A political witch-hunt. What do you think your Government is doing to the Bob Brown Foundation?

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Mr GUTWEIN - Madam Speaker, the WorkSafe Regulator is going about his job and we support him. I urge the Leader of the Greens, the member for Clark, to stop attacking a statutory officer because that is exactly what she is doing - attacking a statutory officer going about his statutory responsibilities.

Australian Public Service Jobs for Tasmania

Ms OGILVIE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.17 a.m.]

I would like to thank you for acting on a jobs package for Glenorchy. The funding for a Glenorchy employment hub is welcome.

Like a squeaky wheel, you know I will never be satisfied while there is more work we can do for the benefit of everyday Tasmanians. You have quite dangerously shown a willingness to listen so how about we now land our fair share of APS jobs? There is momentum and willingness on this issue at national level. My immediate focus is on Antarctic, CSIRO, IMAS and new space sector roles. I have been working to build a coalition of support amongst stakeholders and I have been lobbying your own federal counterparts. Will you join a delegation of key stakeholders to the Prime Minister's office so we can pull up a chair at the APS jobs' table and negotiate more jobs for Tasmania?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Clark, Ms Ogilvie, for that question and for her strong interest in what is occurring in Glenorchy. Quite rightly she praised the Glenorchy employment hub. It will be a good outcome. I admit that in recent times the member for Clark has also raised the issue of working closely with Incat. That is something that we intend to do as we roll out the hub.

In terms of APS jobs and the Antarctic Centre, I make this clear point: work is well underway for the establishment of an Antarctic and science centre at Macquarie Point. The business case, which has a considerable cost to it, I think around \$1 million, has commenced in looking at CSIRO. Also, those elements of AAD that might reasonably transfer, whilst ensuring we protect the economic footprint for Kingston as we agreed to as part of the City Deal, that work is already underway and we are well engaged.

I know that the minister for Infrastructure, responsible for the City Deal, is in regular contact with Mr Tudge regarding his responsibilities in that area. I do not believe there is a need for a

delegation to go to see the Prime Minister, because we are well engaged. We might offer a briefing, if you would like one, of the steps we are taking to ensure we can deliver what will be a significant investment at Macquarie Point.

Tasmanian Economy and Job Creation

Mr TUCKER to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.20 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how this Tasmanian majority Liberal Government is keeping Tasmania's economy strong and supporting strong job creation? Is the Premier aware of any other approaches or ideas?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker for that question and his interest in this important matter. Tasmania's economic performance remains strong. Yesterday it was announced that once again we have led every state in this country in terms of economic growth over the last 12 months, the fastest of all of the states - 2.1 per cent over the course of the year. That is strong economic growth. Importantly, we also saw that consumer spending was very strong over the last year and in the last quarter of last year. Consumer spending is one of the best litmus tests for your own economy.

Our long-term plan is working, with 21 100 jobs that have been created and more Tasmanians in work than ever before in this state, unlike when that side was in government and 10 000 people lost their jobs and Tasmanians were leaving the state in droves.

One of the key steps we took in last year's Budget was to announce a \$3.6 billion infrastructure program so we could build roads, bridges, hospitals and schools, houses and dams. We are rolling out that program. As I updated in the Revised Estimates Report, that is now a \$3.7 billion infrastructure program.

It is why we have invested \$50 million in ensuring we can capture the hydrogen potential. The minister for renewable energy - I knew he would like that - it is why we have announced a target to double renewable energy production in this state. We believe in the future of Tasmania, unlike those on that side. We have strengthened our long-term plan for Tasmania to continue to grow our economy to ensure we can attract investment and create even more jobs.

I was asked if I was aware of any alternative ideas. I took the time last night to have a look at the speeches by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Greens. I make this point very clearly to both of them: they should stop focusing on each other and start focusing on Tasmanians. In fact, the only point I would agree with from the Leader of the Greens' speech was that she said the Leader of the Opposition's speech was distressingly beige.

Ms O'Connor - Depressingly beige.

Mr GUTWEIN - Depressingly beige? Thank you, that is one correction I will take from you, Leader of the Greens.

We know that on that side of the House they have few ideas. In fact, they have spent all summer working very hard to come up with only one idea, and that was 'housing lite' when you consider the comprehensive policy that we rolled out the day before, one that had tax incentives that will help people build their first home or downsize or purchase their first house. It is a policy whereby by transferring stock across to be managed by the NGO sector, the community housing sector, we can build and see an additional 1000 houses being built over the course of that program.

On that side of the House they had one policy idea - 'housing lite'. On this side of the Chamber we have a plan. Our priorities are fully funded, fully costed. On that side of the House we have no idea whether they could even pay for any of it. Can you?

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. It is clearly impossible today for you to self-regulate your behaviour, so we are going to take a few minutes to reflect on that. It is chaotic, unparliamentary, undignified, not a safe workplace, not respectful, and tiring. Are you ready to resume calmly, with dignity? Thank you. Please continue, Premier.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think those watching this morning will have been surprised by that last response from the shadow treasurer. When asked if he could pay for his policies he was mute. He should have simply said yes in response, albeit would not have been true, but he might have said that. Anyway, I believe he has other things on his mind.

This side of the House is clear in its priorities and its plan. This side of the House has ensured that we have grown our economy, attracted investment and created record numbers of jobs. In growing that economy we have generated the additional revenues to ensure we can fund record amounts into health and education, and looking after the most disadvantaged and ensuring that we build houses, bridges, schools and hospitals. That is what this side of the House delivers. We are still waiting to hear what the other side brings to the table.

Spirit of Tasmania - FSG Contract

Dr BROAD to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.28 a.m.]

Earlier this week you claimed, and I quote:

Not one dollar has been spent or provided to FSG associated with the construction of the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels.

However it is a fact that Tasmanians have had to pay for your failure to manage this critical infrastructure project. Figures from the TT-Line annual report showed that almost \$700 000 was spent on business class travel to Europe primarily associated with visits to FSG, while a further \$2 million has been spent over the past three financial years on consultancies for the new *Spirits*, including nearly \$500 000 on legal advice presumably associated with the failed FSG contract. That is a total of \$2.7 million. How can you claim that no money has been wasted on this process?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Braddon, Dr Broad, for his question and his interest in this matter. I would simply say that my advice is that the majority of the work undertaken on the new vessels by TT-Line and our external consultants is transferable. It will be utilised in the detailed design phase and contract negotiations with the new shipbuilder, so I refute your assertion. The work that has been undertaken, in large part, will be transferrable to the new ship builder.

I reject the premise of his question.

Opposition members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, can would have a little bit of respect over here, please?

Mr GUTWEIN - I reject the assertion made by Dr Broad. Please try to be a little more positive about the TT-Line. On that side of the House, all we have seen is them do their very best to create concern, to damage the economy. That is their aim: to damage the economy. What you will do, if you are successful, is cost Tasmanians jobs. You have been called Dr Doom before. I am not intending to go down that path but it is a title he is working hard to earn.

Duck Hunting Season

Dr WOODRUFF to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr BARNETT

[10.31 a.m.]

The opening of the annual duck shooting season starts this long weekend. Native ducks will be blasted out of the skies in the name of sport. As we witness every shooting season, non-target as well as targeted birds are wounded and die a painful and lingering death, beyond the reach of those who are watching and trying to keep count. Water birds in eastern Australia have been documented for years as being in significant decline.

BirdLife Tasmania has notified you that mainland ducks are flying to Tasmania to seek shelter from the worst drought in recorded history and from the devastation -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I am sorry, Dr Woodruff. I am actually struggling to hear Dr Woodruff's question because the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is talking at such volume while we are asking an important question about ducks. I ask you to whisper.

Madam SPEAKER - Okay. I am prepared to accept that point of order, providing you honour it in future. Please proceed.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, BirdLife Tasmania notified you that mainland ducks are flying to Tasmania to seek shelter from the worst drought in recorded history and the devastation from climate change induced bushfires. Those birds will be live targets for the next three months.

Will you follow the lead of New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia and ban duck hunting in Tasmania, or will the so-called clean green state continue to be the laggard when it comes to native wildlife protection?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I did not hear through the interference of the Opposition, whatever that interjection was.

Madam SPEAKER - No, it was cheeky and rude, so ignore it.

Mr BARNETT - They were laughing about that. It is an important matter and I acknowledge the question.

The Liberal Government, as we have in the past and still today, recognises that appropriately managed duck hunting is a traditional form of recreation in Tasmania. My department manages an open season to provide access for recreational hunting and has strict regulations.

Dr Woodruff - The numbers of ducks killed every single year is 50 000 or 58 000. Business as usual is not okay, minister. The world is changing.

Madam SPEAKER - That is the interjection your Leader does not like, so please do not do it again.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I was simply raising the issue of the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition chattering at volume while a question was being asked.

Madam SPEAKER - Yes, but what is good for the goose is good for the gander, or the ducks, so please continue.

Mr BARNETT - That is an appropriate comment from the Speaker with respect to ducks. The department imposes strict regulations and procedures when it comes to ensuring that ducks and hunting of ducks is conducted in a humane way and in a sustainable way.

Dr Woodruff - Why are we the last state for everything? It is a disgrace.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff. The whole House is tempting me to ask somebody to leave. I do not want it to be you. Please proceed, minister.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am trying to provide some evidence for the member and members in this Chamber, that might satisfy the member or at least other members. I am not sure we will ever satisfy the Greens members.

The long-term monitoring of wild duck populations conducted annually by my department shows no evidence of long-term decline in wild duck numbers in Tasmania over this period. Wildlife population trends are determined using scientifically robust and statistically valid methodologies -

Dr Woodruff - They have taken no account of the current conditions in Australia.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Mr BARNETT - Monitoring has been regularly conducted in Tasmania for more than three decades under governments of all sides, including the former Labor-Greens government. As far as

I am aware, under those previous governments duck hunting was not banned. Surveys undertaken in February 2020 showed numbers remained within the range observed in recent years.

Dr Woodruff - Were they taken on the mainland as well, minister?

Mr BARNETT - Madam Speaker, if I could continue.

Madam SPEAKER - You could.

Mr BARNETT - Madam Speaker, surveys undertaken in February 2020 show that numbers remain within the range observed in recent years.

Dr Woodruff - What about the migration of ducks?

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - The 2020 hunting season for wild ducks in Tasmania will open on Saturday, 7 March and close on Monday, 8 June. Wildlife enforcement officers will monitor the activities of duck hunters at wetlands to ensure compliance with rules and regulations in this place. I am also aware of calls from BirdLife Tasmania to cancel the 2020 duck hunting season and note that they have a known track record in calling for the banning of the duck season, with similar calls made in both 2017 and 2018. The Liberal Government supports the Tasmanian way of life. We support the important opportunities to be involved in recreational hunting or shooting. It is an important part of the Tasmanian way of life. It is part of what makes Tasmania great.

Housing Initiatives

Mr STREET to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.37 a.m.]

Can you please update the House about the exciting new housing initiatives that were released as part of the Premier's state of the state speech earlier this week? Is he aware of any alternative policies?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr Street for another excellent question and his sustained interest in this important topic. The Premier's state of the state address on Tuesday was terrific news for Tasmanians in need of housing and waiting for housing. I outlined to the House yesterday the impact that our extension of the community housing provider agreements would make and the additional funding being directed towards building new social housing for those who need it.

Today I am pleased to recap the other exciting news that was announced, such as the increase to the maximum government contribution under HomeShare to \$100 000, extension of the \$20 000 First Home Owner Grant and stamp duty rebates for downsizers and first home buyers of established homes for a further two years, all of which will help people in housing stress right now.

The Premier also confirmed that funding will be brought forward for key new projects from our second Affordable Housing Action Plan. This means we can start work sooner on the new

Hobart and Burnie youth foyers, the Launceston Youth at Risk project and the Thyne House youth supported accommodation expansion much earlier than we had otherwise planned. This is all great news for people in housing but we know there is more work to do.

Mr Street asked me about any alternative policies. I am still trying to work that one out. Yesterday Labor launched something. We are still trying to work out exactly what. It would appear that maybe so are they. It appears to be a significant state-funded housing subsidy over 10 years for people who are on the housing waiting list. The problem is that anyone who is on the social housing waiting list now who moves into community housing already qualifies for a Commonwealth-funded subsidy. Labor's plan would either provide a second state-funded subsidy on top of the Commonwealth one or replace it entirely for 10 years, which does not make any sense.

Mr O'Byrne - You've got people sleeping in cars who can't get access to housing and you do this?

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr JAENSCH - The only other explanation is that maybe Labor's plan is not about people on the Housing waiting list at all -

Ms O'Byrne - Talk to a woman who's been waiting for a house for eight years.

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - It could legitimately be a state-funded version of the failed federal Labor NRAS scheme that they were very concerned about just a couple of weeks ago when renters on low incomes who received a rental subsidy for the last 10 years did not any more. If it is that, it is not for people on the waiting list, it is for low-income renters. Both are equally legitimate, but you need to decide what problem it is that you are trying to solve. We may never know. What we do know -

Opposition members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Look, would you like me to leave the room while you just talk amongst yourselves, because that is what is happening? I have no idea, it is all just waffle. Remember where you are, please, and do not put me in the position where I have to start throwing people out. If you cannot be kind to each other at least be kind to me.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Madam Speaker. What we do know comparing Labor's announcement this week with ours is this: Labor's plan will cost the Tasmanian Government \$200 000 per house for 10 years. Under our model we will get new homes for \$100 000 and we will own them forever. Under Labor's plan, tenancies will be paid for by the Tasmanian taxpayer. Our plan is based on increased utilisation of Commonwealth rent assistance. Labor's plan provides subsidised rent for only 10 years. Our tenants will have social housing for as long as they need it. Labor's plan does not appear to be supported by any of the recommendations.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 48, sufficient time. The minister has been answering a Dorothy Dixier, all of which he has spent talking about Labor, for four and a half minutes.

Madam SPEAKER - Yes, but he has had lots of rude interruptions and a very distracted speech, so I am going to give him one more minute.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Madam Speaker. Labor's plan does not appear to be supported by any of the recommendations of the recent select committee inquiry on housing affordability chaired by one of its own.

Our announcements this week address recommendations 1, 19, 20, 26, 30, 39 and 40. Ms White, you have had the whole summer to come up with one big idea. You had 61 to choose from. Ms Standen must be heartbroken they did not pick one idea from this report. Ms White, is your big idea a state-funded NRAS program? Is it about getting people off the social housing register? Does it replace a Commonwealth subsidy with a state one? If so, why? What happens to people when your subsidy runs out? These are the questions that you need to answer, because you are selling this like your big idea to fix housing, but you cannot explain it.

Madam Speaker, school is back. Ms White has not done her homework. Mr Street asked me if I am aware of any credible alternatives. No, I am not. Only the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government has a credible plan for housing Tasmanians and we are getting on with the job.

Education Infrastructure

Mrs RYLAH to MINISTER for EDUCATION and TRAINING, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.43 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government's record investment in education infrastructure and advise if he is aware of any other approaches to school infrastructure?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member, Ms Rylah, for her question and interest in this matter. As the Premier noted in his address, we are investing record amounts into Education to keep students engaged in learning and improve educational outcomes, with a total \$7.1 billion over the forward Estimates. This includes a record \$179 million in capital works over six years, the largest state investment in education infrastructure in over 20 years. Capital works projects also benefit the local economy and jobs.

While Labor tried to close schools, we have committed to building new ones, including a primary school in the growth area of Legana which will make a huge difference to that community. I was also very pleased to recently announce the site of the new Brighton High School, which I know the Brighton community has been calling for for a very long time. We committed at the last election to commence construction in 2022, last year's budget papers reflect this and enrolments will be taken for 2025. We have committed to delivering a state-of-the-art high school to this growing community and this is exactly what we will do.

I was asked if there were any alternative approaches. Yesterday I was expecting one from the Opposition Leader. We had one big idea but I wanted her to talk about education. Alas, I was very disappointed. There was no alternative to investing in school infrastructure. Labor has no plan for education.

When I became Education minister I travelled around the state visiting many schools and I was shocked and appalled at the state of disrepair when it came to education infrastructure, not to mention the massive backlog of maintenance we are now still recovering from, despite our best efforts but we are getting there as quickly as we can. We are getting on with the job with school infrastructure and it is improving.

I reflected recently on what we had achieved since 2014 in terms of new capital education projects announced and completed since 2014-15 and started jotting down a few notes on a piece of paper.

Ms O'Byrne interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne, you get the honour of the first warning.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I soon realised I ran out of room on that little piece of paper, so I got a bigger piece of paper and jotted down the things we had announced and completed since 2014 and I realised I needed an even bigger piece of paper. So I produced a spreadsheet of new education capital projects announced and completed since 2014-15. They include: Austins Ferry Primary School, \$5.5 million; Boat Harbour Primary School, \$1.8 million; Illawarra Primary School, \$2.9 million; School of Special Education North West, \$7.9 million; Windermere Primary School; Bayview Secondary College; and Cooee Primary School. The list goes on. There have been 36 projects announced and completed since 2014 but there is more.

I was also reflecting on new capital projects announced and progressing since 2014-15 that are expected to be completed before 2022. I started jotting down on a little piece paper but I needed a bigger piece of paper, so I cut up the spreadsheet and I have it right here. Devonport High School, \$10.5 million; East Launceston Primary School, \$4.5 million - announced and to be completed before 2022; Education Act implementation capital, including new kindergarten, \$6 million; Riverside High School, \$12 million; School Farm redevelopment at Sheffield, \$3 million; Snug Primary School, \$2.5 million; and the list goes on - 40 projects, but there is more -

Members interjecting.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 48. The minister has been performing for more than five minutes of self-congratulation. Please, Madam Speaker, I ask you to do something about this.

Madam SPEAKER - Given it is a matter of public importance and everybody agrees it is really good to have education, I ask the minister to continue. You have another minute.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, can I have some clarification? When a point of order is raised in relation to ministers wasting parliament's time, will they be rewarded every time with an extra minute?

Madam SPEAKER - Telling great news that has been achieved by this whole parliament is not wasting public time. I ask the Deputy Premier to resume. One minute.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was reflecting on new capital projects announced and progressed since 2014-15 and expected to be completed after 2020-2022. I grabbed

a pen and a piece of paper and I realised I did not need a spreadsheet but I got one anyway. Brighton High School, \$30 million; Cosgrove High School, \$20 million; Legana Primary School, \$20 million; Child and Family Learning Centres, \$21 million; Penguin District School, \$20 million, and Sorell School, which the Opposition Leader should be very interested in, \$25 million. That is \$228 million worth of projects in total.

This Government is getting on with the job of improving school infrastructure, neglected by those opposite for 16 years.

Community Housing

Ms STANDEN to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.51 a.m.]

Housing is essential social and economic infrastructure. Just like you are failing to deliver major infrastructure projects like the *Spirits of Tasmania*, the Royal Hobart Hospital and the Hobart Airport roundabout, you are also failing to deliver on your housing promises. As a result, housing stress, poverty and homelessness are getting worse.

Your Government has promised 2400 new affordable homes over eight years yet at the six-year mark. Excluding refurbishments and vacant lots of land, you have delivered just 585 new homes. Taking into account asset sales and other stock losses over the period June 2014 to June 2019, social housing stock has actually declined by 598 homes.

This week the Premier promised to deliver a further 220 homes by June 2023. Given your Government's abysmal track record on delivering infrastructure and your failure to invest in skills and training to ensure there is a workforce available to carry out this work, why should Tasmanians believe that you can deliver on your latest promise?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, because we can explain what we are doing. Because we have a track record of investment. Because we have announced a deal that the community housing providers have been asking for. Because in December and again this week, we have announced new community housing grants rounds of \$12 million and \$22 million, a total of \$34 million. Over the next three years that will deliver 300 social housing properties for people from the social housing waiting lists managed by community housing providers, supported by Commonwealth rental assistance, owned by the state government - Housing Tasmania - forever.

In addition to those 300, based on past performance over the last seven years of the Better Housing Futures program, we believe that the new deal that we have put in place to transfer 2000 more properties and a 20-year horizon for new Better Housing Futures agreements will yield around another 700 properties into the market based on track record.

What is Labor going to deliver in three years? They have said they are going to deliver 490 new homes for people who are on the social housing waiting list. They are going to spend \$200 000 for each of those houses. They are going to subsidise the occupancy of those houses as well as the building of those houses from state coffers and they are going to do it for 10 years. What is it that they are offering us?

Ms STANDEN - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing order 45 goes to relevance. The question was very clear. We were asking the minister to explain why over a five-year period stock has declined and he has failed to deliver new homes for Tasmania. This is not about Labor's plans. This is about his.

Madam SPEAKER - I have allowed that to go on *Hansard* and I will ask the minister to be relevant.

Mr JAENSCH - The question at the end of Ms Standen's original question was why should Tasmanians believe our promises about what we are going to deliver? We have a plan. We have put record state investment behind it up until now, \$258 million.

Ms O'Byrne - You have lost 598. You have built 585. You promised nearly 2500.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne, warning two.

Mr JAENSCH - We have just landed another \$34 million on top of that, created certainty for the social housing sector for the next 20 years and we are going to deliver more houses for Tasmanians who need them.

Housing Rental Affordability

Ms STANDEN to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.55 a.m.]

Your Government's failure to address the housing crisis has been well documented. Sadly, the stories of people who have been left in the cold as a result of your policies have become all too common.

The Real Estate Institute of Australia, their Housing Affordability Report, is the latest to confirm that rental affordability in Tasmania is the worst in the country. The proportion of income required to meet median rents has increased to 30 per cent, an increase of almost 2 per cent since December 2018. That means the average renter in Tasmania is living in housing stress.

You have been silent in response to the recommendations of the parliamentary inquiry into housing affordability. Labor is taking a proactive approach to addressing rental affordability, including calling for a pause on short stay accommodation in areas of rental stress and releasing our landmark Housing Works policy, which will fast-track the building of 490 homes, in partnership with community housing providers, to be offered at reduced market rent. We will also provide free TAFE courses to address skills shortages, particularly in the building and construction sector.

While Labor has a plan, what are you going to do to address rental affordability?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it is utterly bizarre that Labor's housing spokesperson can stand up here and say that we have not responded to the select committee's inquiry on housing affordability and done nothing to respond to it. I have just listed the recommendations that we have directly responded to,

even this week, while we are still preparing our whole-of-government response to the 61 recommendations that are in here.

Ms White had the whole summer to come up with an idea for housing and it is not one of these. Ms Standen must be heartbroken, not to mention all the other members of that committee who put all their work in, the 54 people and organisations who made submissions or came along and were witnesses to the process and poured out their stories and their ideas for this shambolic Opposition, who said they wanted to make a difference.

Ms White - Who do you think chaired the parliamentary inquiry? Who do you think set it up? The shadow housing minister, and chaired it.

Mr JAENSCH - Set it up, that is right and they did all of this work and you ignored it. Shame on you. All the work that went into this.

We are working our way through this. We are delivering increased capital funding for the delivery of more social and affordable housing. In our announcements this week, we are developing further options for youth under the age of 16, the youth at risk centre in Launceston, two new Education First Youth Foyer. Funding received from the housing debt waiver will be allocated to new social housing for at risk Tasmanians.

Ms STANDEN - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing order 45, this is a very simple question. I asked what are you going to do to address rental affordability?

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order but, minister, if you could be relevant that would be fabulous.

Mr JAENSCH - Recommendation 26 was that funding received from the housing debt waiver be allocated to new social housing for at risk Tasmanians. I can confirm that the \$12 million announced in December, the \$22 million announced this week for new social housing for people off the social housing register waiting list, is all from the housing debt waiver savings that this Government negotiated with the Commonwealth.

Recommendation 30 recommends the Tasmanian Government, in consultation with community housing providers, consider further transfer of management of housing stock linked to KPIs, so the camera can see it, to increase stock. For example, for every three additional properties that are transferred from management, one additional home is to be constructed by the CHP. That is exactly what we have done this week.

Ms O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to your previous ruling on the point of order of relevance. You asked the minister to be relevant to the question which was about housing rental affordability.

Madam SPEAKER - I cannot rule it in because as you know, I am not allowed to put words in the minister's mouth, but I can remind him to be relevant.

Mr JAENSCH - There is another recommendation that the committee recommends - number 39 - that the Government as a priority ensures Better Housing Futures funding agreements are continued and based on 15-year agreements. We have gone to 20 years; we think that is better. They agree and are prepared to co-invest with us. I could go on. This is what we are doing about housing affordability. What are you doing?

Proposed Prison Site at Westbury - Actions of Minister

Ms BUTLER to MINISTER for LOCAL GOVERNMENT, Mr SHELTON

[11.00 a.m.]

The Meander Valley Council was instrumental in putting Westbury forward as the site for the maximum security northern prison, a proposal which has caused incredible distress for the Westbury community. Respected regional newspaper the *Meander Valley Gazette* recently published disturbing revelations about your history with the preferred site. The paper reported that in your former position as mayor of the Meander Valley Council you signed a deed of agreement with Glen Avon Farms, creating a debt for that business of nearly \$700 000. Payment of that debt is due in 2022. Glen Avon Farms still owes that money to council and the debt relates to a site on Birralea Road in Westbury. I am sure you recognise the address as the site for the proposed maximum security prison. The *Meander Valley Gazette* reports further that it was the Meander Valley Council that submitted an expression of interest to the Liberal Government for the prison to be sited on Birralea Road. Given your intimate knowledge of these matters, did you declare a conflict of interest and absent yourself from Cabinet decisions on the location of the Westbury maximum security prison?

Mr FERGUSON - Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER - I am taking advice.

Mr FERGUSON - Madam Speaker, I simply wish to raise with you that the question can only really be related to the minister's portfolio responsibilities. Any other conspiracy theories that might be literally wrapped in petrol should be set aside.

Mr O'BYRNE - Madam Speaker, on the point of order, the question goes to his role as Local Government minister and whether an appropriate decision-making process was followed by the Government.

Mr Ferguson - Your conspiracy theory.

Mr O'BYRNE - You may say that, but it is a legitimate question to ask in his role as Local Government minister. It is not reflecting on his role prior to entering parliament but purely the process around the decision on the land and as Local Government minister we think it is an appropriate question that he declare what process he went through.

Madam SPEAKER - I am going to ask the Clerk for further advice. In future, it would be better if you actually stated it as the minister whose portfolio matches your concern but, given it is under Local Government, if the minister wishes to respond, he can.

ANSWER

Yes, Madam Speaker, I was mayor when the industrial area was talked about. I was one of nine councillors at Meander Valley Council that promoted that area as an industrial site. I am very pleased that Meander Valley Council went through the process to achieve that and it is working

well for the council. At that time there was no industry there and there was a process to go through and it was anticipated that it would be of benefit to the community going forward for many years.

As far as the decisions taken in Cabinet are concerned, I cannot talk about that. It is a preferred site. There has been no decision at this point in time so it is a preferred site.

Ms O'Byrne - Did you absent yourself because of your knowledge?

Mr SHELTON - It is a preferred site. That is all I can say at this point in time.

Cradle Mountain Visitor Experience - Progress Update

Ms DOW to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[11.05 a.m.]

The delay in the revitalisation of the Cradle Mountain Visitor Experience is putting much-needed regional jobs and investment at risk. Your Government promised that investors for the visitor gateway precinct at Cradle Mountain would be announced in mid-2019. It is now March 2020 and there is still no news and this important project appears to have stalled. The project will create much-needed regional jobs and the local community and tourism industry deserves certainty. Can you confirm how far behind schedule this crucial infrastructure project is and when you will release the names of the investors?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member, Ms Dow, the member for Braddon, for her question and interest in this important matter on what is a fantastic project up at Cradle Mountain in the electorate of Lyons. I thank the member for Braddon for her interest in Lyons.

The Cradle Mountain Master Plan focuses on three key areas, namely a new visitor centre and village precinct, a new iconic viewing shelter at Dove Lake, and an alternative transport system from the gateway precinct to Dove Lake. I am pleased that the gateway precinct is planned for opening later this month, while the Dove Lake viewing shelter project is currently out for tender and is expected to commence in April 2020. The master plan vision also included a request for expressions of interest seeking a developer to create a new high-quality alpine village for the next stage of the Cradle Mountain gateway precinct and we went out for an EOI on that.

Regarding an update, when we have more to say on that I will provide advice to the House at the first opportunity I get. I can say that I visited it recently and the work that has gone on is fantastic. I encourage anybody who gets the opportunity to go and look at what is first-rate in terms of both the investment and the workmanship. It is an outstanding addition to that precinct.

That provides me with the opportunity to say a couple of words regarding the investment we are making in parks more broadly. We accept that our parks are a fantastic natural asset. That is one of the reasons we have taken steps to ensure we can attract further investment into those parks because we know that leads to jobs in regional areas right around the state -

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. The question was clear: how far behind schedule is this crucial infrastructure project? Could he answer the question?

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you, I will take that as a point of order, so I ask the Premier to be relevant.

Mr GUTWEIN - I have answered it. In terms of the Cradle Mountain precinct itself, we will be opening the gateway precinct this month. I am happy to make that point. We can provide an invitation to the shadow treasurer if he would like to come. He should have a look at it. The work that has been done is fantastic. In terms of the EOI process, I will update the House when I have some further information.

Business Growth - Long-Term Plan

Mrs PETRUSMA to MINISTER for STATE GROWTH, Mr FERGUSON

[11.09 a.m.]

Can you outline how the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government is strengthening our long-term plan for businesses in Tasmania, and are you aware of any alternative approaches?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that Tasmania is travelling so well under the majority Liberal Government led by the Premier, Mr Gutwein, and a united team. Members opposite are not very familiar with that because the minister for unemployment on the other side, who cost our state 10 000 jobs when he was the so-called minister for economic development, is not so comfortable with Tasmania's economic growth so favourable and our employment numbers now setting records.

We will continue to support the strongest economy in the country.

A stunning 21 100 new jobs have been created since we came to government. We aim to see a further 10 000 created. This should not be lost on members opposite who worked so hard with the Greens to cost this state jobs. We have helped to build businesses by introducing employment incentives, reducing payroll taxes and introducing a range of targeted measures for different sectors to stimulate the economy.

Compare that with alternative policies. The only alternative policy you could look at is the track record of the minister for unemployment. After six years of being in opposition the Opposition still has no long-term plan. They have no costed alternative budget. We were told yesterday to wait for an election. No economic credibility and no idea.

I am pleased our state is doing so well, because our state was ranked dead last in the CommSec State of the States report for eight consecutive reports. This is Labor's record from 2012 through to March 2014 when Labor and the Greens were in power. This Government has turned it around. Isn't that good news? The former infrastructure and economic development minister cannot read the Budget. He misses the details. He calls a surplus a deficit and he is coming for the Labor leader's job.

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - He could not get a question up today, just got interjections peppering across.

The important component of the current surge in confidence and activity is the fact that our Government is actually backing business. We understand business. We listen to business. We are working in partnership with business. We are working with them to cut red tape. The latest red tape audit confirmed that 84 per cent of the more than 120 identified red tape issues have now been resolved. That equates to over 100 red tape reforms.

A second tranche of red tape reduction reforms is underway. The Premier outlined that in his exceptional speech on Tuesday -

Mr O'Byrne interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Mr O'Byrne, we only have minutes to go.

Mr FERGUSON - He was the minister for unemployment. He was the minister for sending Tasmanians to other states looking for work when he did his deal with the Greens.

We will improve permit and approval processes underpinning residential and commercial developments from concept to completion. I encourage members opposite to support these initiatives, because it is what business needs. We will deliver a more streamlined approval process so we can build more homes and create more jobs through business investment. We want to get more houses built in a quicker time frame. That is exactly what this Government is doing.

The reforms have been endorsed by a number of peak industry bodies, including Brian Wightman, representing the Property Council. He said:

Simplifying planning and building approval processes and releasing more land for development will result in more homes being built, more jobs being created and more importantly more Tasmanians with a roof over their heads.

Ms O'Byrne - Really, you have less housing stock than when you started.

Mr FERGUSON - You should heed his wise words. He said:

We know the most effective way to deal with the housing crisis is to build our way out of it, but to do that -

Ms O'Byrne - But you have less housing stock than when you started.

Mr FERGUSON - Listen to Mr Wightman.

Mr O'Byrne - Listen to Mr Bailey.

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - He said to do that we need to cut through red tape.

These are actions we are taking to increase business confidence. Labor tears down business and they tear down jobs when they deal with the Greens. In stark contrast to that the Government is working with business, creating jobs in the conditions for higher confidence.

I was asked about alternative policies. Frankly, the Leader of the Opposition's speech, if you can call it that, was a very underwhelming effort yesterday. I have heard it said that it was 'depressingly beige'. It does remind me of *The Twelfth Man* series with Richie Benaud choosing a jacket whether it was beige, light beige, off white or cream: I think it is the cream; maybe it is light beige.

After the whole summer, when we were told Labor would be working on policy they only came up with one idea. One new idea, which has been dismantled by Mr Jaensch today as 'housing lite'. We know someone else has had one idea, Mr O'Byrne. He has an alternative idea. His plan is to cut down the Leader of the Opposition. That is his plan. You just have to look at his history. Apart from being minister for unemployment he was also undermining Lara Giddings.

Time expired.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Cradle Mountain Visitor Experience - Progress Update

[11.16 a.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Premier) - Madam Speaker, regarding the question on the expression of interest, the minister has provided me with further advice.

Round two of the expression of interest process opened on 6 November 2019, and closed on 12 December. The valuation panel met and considered matters in February. They will be providing recommendations to the Government shortly.

SITTING DATES

[11.17 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Leader of Government Business) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House as its rising adjourn till Tuesday 17 March next at 10 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

WorkSafe Tasmania and the Bob Brown Foundation

[11.18 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: WorkSafe Tasmania and the Bob Brown Foundation.

We brought this on as a matter of public importance today because public trust in our institutions is essential. For the public to be able to have a measure of faith in the integrity of ministers of the Crown it is an essential and foundational aspect of our democracy. This tale of WorkSafe Tasmania's insertion into the political debate and targeting of the Bob Brown Foundation is a tawdry tale indeed.

It is very clear that the person behind the original referral is the candidate for Windermere, Kelly Wilton. She was seen at the Magistrates Court last week, that is the week of 26 February, in close conversation with the regulator, Mr Cocker. Not a casual conversation is the report we got from the court, but an intense conversation. Also by Ms Wilton's own testimony, of course. Her original complaint targeting peaceful protestors to WorkSafe Tasmania was made in April 2018. It was not until the previous premier, Will Hodgman, intervened in October of 2018 that WorkSafe Tasmania started to target the Bob Brown Foundation in earnest. That makes it very clear that this is a political exercise on the part of WorkSafe Tasmania.

Mr Cocker has made his bed and now he must lie in it. He inserted himself into the political debate by issuing what turns out to be an unlawful prohibition notice against the Bob Brown Foundation. The prohibition notice to the Bob Brown Foundation from Mr Mark Cocker was a massive overreach of the power of WorkSafe Tasmania. It said:

I hereby direct the Foundation to cease the carrying out of forest protest activity throughout the State of Tasmania until such time as the Foundation has satisfied the Work Health and Safety Regulator that it is managing health and safety duties and risks to workers and others consequential to their frontline forest protest activities in accordance with regulations [x,y,z,l,m,n,o,p] of the *Work Health and Safety Regulations*.

I will note in passing, that there did not seem to be any concern on the part of the regulator, or indeed the Premier, the Attorney-General or the Minister for Resources when peaceful protesters in a vehicle in the Tarkine had their car repeatedly rammed by pro-logging thugs.

Crickets, utter silence, from the Premier, his ministers and WorkSafe Tasmania who pretend that this is about being concerned about the health and wellbeing of people who are defending our forests. It is anything but that. It is yet another attempt on this Government's part to crush dissent, to silence protest, to back in the mendicant faction of a native forest logging industry, every single step of the way, every day.

Having failed and folded within six days of issuing that prohibition notice on 20 February in which WorkSafe Tasmania decided not to defend itself in court, yesterday another notice was issued to the Bob Brown Foundation threatening them with a \$50 000 fine in relation to a coupe in

Que River, again, specifically targeting peaceful protesters and one organisation for clearly political purposes.

The question remains: did WorkSafe Tasmania seek advice from Crown Law before it issued the original prohibition notice? I bet my house on them not having done so, because if the regulator had confidence that the prohibition notice he had slapped on the Bob Brown Foundation was lawfully valid, he would have made sure WorkSafe Tasmania could defend itself in a magistrate's court after the Bob Brown Foundation appealed. But no, folded and tried again yesterday.

This is a continuation of this Government's ongoing early onset fascism. We have had one anti-protest act struck down by the High Court for being unconstitutional. Then amendments, which seek to put a shine on a cowpat, were brought through this place to the anti-protest legislation towards the end of last year. They are now parked in the upper House until after the Legislative Council elections.

This is the third attempt by the Liberals in government to crush peaceful protest and this is not only a matter of concern to people who are defending our forests. It is a concern to the unions and to union members. If a government agency can be so politicised that it targets those organisations and individuals who are making life a bit difficult for government, where will it stop? That is why we referred this matter to the Integrity Commission, because there are so many questions.

There is such a stink around this issue. We have Mr Cocker going on radio on the morning of the twenty-first after the prohibition notice was issued, confirming this is the first time a protest group has been targeted by Workplace Health and Safety laws, stating that he had 'no contact from government, no advice, nil, none whatsoever'. Of course, my journalist's brain goes, 'methinks he doth protest too much'. Then, after the Regulator said 'no, no, nothing from government, we have from Mr Barnett and the Attorney-General a media release on that morning confirming they had referred the matter to WorkSafe Tasmania. This is a scandal.

Time expired.

[11.24 a.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I sat there in silence, not because I have not got a lot to say, but I was respectful of the member in the hope that she will be respectful of me in putting our position forward again for the record.

The Greens are choosing to be judge, jury and executioner in this saga that they think exists. They are full of conspiracy theories all the time. We are used to that with the Greens. If they truly respect the work of the Integrity Commission, as they say they do, and they have made a complaint to the Integrity Commission that questions my integrity and that of Mr Barnett, but we are somewhat used to that in this place. We will never get used to it in terms of the fact that we are human as well. They have made very serious allegations against an independent statutory holder, the Workplace Health and Safety Regulator. To come in here and prosecute in the way that the Greens have when they have referred the matter to the Integrity Commission - if they really have the concerns they say they do then they would let the Integrity Commission do its job. That is what it is there for.

If the shoe was on the other foot and the Greens were not afforded due process you can imagine what they would be saying and that is all I ask them to do. That is all I ask them to do in this situation.

Ms O'Connor - What is the due process breach?

Ms ARCHER - You can only question their motives when, before they even have the protection of parliamentary privilege in this place, they publish their complaint to the Integrity Commission on their own website and give it to the media. Thank goodness the media has had the good sense not to print it word for word because the allegations in there are so serious. They are highly defamatory and the Greens may find themselves the recipient of court action at some stage in relation to these types of claims.

The Greens, in fact it was Ms Woodruff, yesterday -

Ms O'Connor - Dr Woodruff to you.

Ms ARCHER - Sorry, Dr Woodruff. It was a slip. It was Dr Woodruff who said yesterday that everything in the complaint was based on fact. Well, no it is not. It is the Greens putting one and one together and coming up with some number other than two, so let it do its job. How many times does it take for the Integrity Commission, by way of the Chief Commissioner or the CEO, to say, stop politicising and talking about these complaints in public, for the Greens to take any notice and respect the work of the Integrity Commission? They must find themselves in a place of being incredibly repetitive.

As members know WorkSafe Tasmania is the independent work health and safety regulator and it makes its decisions independent of the Government. I know that is hard for the Greens to somehow fathom. There are many independent statutory office holders within government. Where there is something of a matter of significance, as I said yesterday in answering a question, all they would do as part of the normal process would be to notify ministers, in this case me, of their intention to issue a notice, as was the case here.

I have made it very clear there has been no attempt to influence or interfere. It has been on the public record for some time that there has been a number of complaints about the Bob Brown Foundation. On 6 February, as well, Britton Timbers raised their strong concerns in a media statement by saying, 'Attaching themselves on to moving excavators is life threatening and we are expecting WorkSafe Tasmania to take serious action as they would if a life-threatening incident happened in any other workplace'.

The Greens do not seem to care about the workplace health and safety of employees of the Bob Brown Foundation but they care about the workplace health and safety, allegedly, of other workplaces. What the regulator is trying to achieve in this instance is that no one is immune from the law. There are workplace health and safety laws that every employer must abide by -

Ms O'Connor - Except the people who rammed the protesters' car. There has been no police investigation or follow-up.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Ms ARCHER - The Bob Brown Foundation was set up deliberately to have employees. I do not think there have been previous cases where in protests there have been employees. They have been volunteers. It is not surprising that this type of action by the regulator has never been taken in the past. The Greens find that difficult to understand.

On this side of the House, and I am sure most members in this House will agree that we want every worker to go safely home at the end of the working day and that they have not been injured or worse still there has been a fatality. That is at the forefront of everyone's minds, particularly in relation to members who attended the funeral of Cameron Goss. I express my deepest personal condolences and sympathy to his family and the West Coast community and his workmates and management at Henty Mine. This is an example of a tragic workplace incident. All workers should go home safely at the end of the day.

Time expired.

[11.32 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I also echo the comments that it is a worker's right to be in a safe workplace and to go home safely after their shift has finished.

We would also like to reinforce the importance of the workplace regulator being independent from government. Labor has significant concerns about the regulator and notes that Unions Tasmania has taken the unprecedented action of moving a motion of no confidence in the regulator. This is due to issues raised in this place and issues workers have raised over the past year. The regulator is woefully under resourced and there are far too few inspectors.

There has been a failure by the regulator to appropriately respond to long-standing issues, including the fact that paramedics are continuing to perform their duties whilst on the ramp because the regulator chose to dismiss the pin notices. The regulator also failed to act when the CEPU raised issues about the lead contamination in the water pipes in K Block. Workers who identify safety concerns do not feel they are being taken seriously by this regulator.

In saying that we should not ignore the safety risks that the protesters are creating for themselves and for forestry workers in the -

Dr Woodruff interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Dr BROAD - Please be respectful. You are so intolerant. This is very important. We cannot ignore the safety risks that the protesters are creating for themselves and forestry workers. Go to Bob Brown's website and you can see photos of unsafe practices. You see photos of protesters standing on -

Dr Woodruff - Oh, goodness me, have you looked at the Rural Fire Service from New South Wales? Have you looked at the unsafe activities that people were subjected to in the bushfires on the mainland?

Dr BROAD - This is so intolerant.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Ms OGILVIE - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, standing order 146 - interruptions not allowed. Exceptions: a member shall not interrupt another member while speaking unless they call attention to a point of order for want of a quorum or the presence of strangers in the House.

This interruption has gone beyond just chatter in the Chamber. I draw your attention to that standing order and hope that it will assist.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Thank you. Dr Broad, continue.

Dr Woodruff - Have you become the Liberal attack dog now, Ms Ogilvie?

Ms OGILVIE - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, I take offence at that comment. I ask her to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff?

Dr WOODRUFF - I beg your pardon?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - You have been asked to withdraw the comment.

Dr WOODRUFF - It was not a statement; it was a question.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - It does not matter. You have been asked to withdraw. Do you withdraw?

Dr WOODRUFF - I asked the member whether she was the Liberals' attack dog because -

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - You have been asked to withdraw. Will you withdraw the comment?

Dr WOODRUFF - It was a frivolous point of order which made no sense.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Will you withdraw the comment? Yes or no?

Dr WOODRUFF - Could Ms Ogilvie please explain what the offence was?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - If you do not withdraw I will ask you to leave the Chamber.

Dr WOODRUFF - Madam Deputy Speaker, if the member feels that way I will withdraw my question. I would still expect an answer at some point.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Thank you.

Dr BROAD - You see photos of protesters standing on on log piles. Log piles are inherently unstable. If those log piles move people will die. We have a photo here of a protest, Love takayna. You have a tree sit in a lone isolated tree in a logged coop. If you have had anything to do with the forest you know that once all the trees surrounding that tree are gone - the tree has not been exposed to wind; it has been protected by all the trees around it. A good breeze comes along and that tree goes over and that protester is in serious trouble. This is a safety breach. This is putting people at significant risk. If a breeze comes up that protester is going down. I have seen trees in forests like this where it has been logged. A lone tree unprotected by neighbours, when wind comes along that tree is going down. That is a safety breach and that is on Bob Brown's website. That is unsafe. You have to care about the protesters. The protesters are putting themselves in danger.

The same danger is locking on to moving excavators. You cannot be inside the swing arc of an excavator. You should not be in that. It is unsafe. Yet protesters are running out of the bush and locking on to moving excavators. They are running into Ta Ann and locking themselves onto machinery. It is stressful for the workers, having to hit the kill switch. If they do not quite make it and somebody gets seriously injured then those workers will carry that with them for the rest of their lives. This is dangerous.

There is hypocrisy here too. We look at the photos from Bob Brown's website and you see the protesters out in the forests in their raincoats -

Ms OGILVIE - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Clark has just called me another offensive name. I ask her to withdraw it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Member for Clark, will you withdraw?

Ms O'CONNOR - I want to thank Ms Ogilvie for allowing me to put the words on the *Hansard* record because it was not before. I accused her of being a Liberal shill and, because she has taken offence, I withdraw it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Thank you.

Dr BROAD - For the people who preach tolerance and acceptance of other points of view, you are so hypocritical. Any time somebody raises an issue that you disagree with you try to shout us out of this place.

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Dr BROAD - You do. It happens time and time again.

The facts are that protesters are putting themselves at risk. The prima facie case is from Bob Brown Foundation's own photos. Their own photos show unsafe practices. They also show some hypocrisy, calling what is obviously regenerated forests, given the even nature of the stands and the heights of the trees - it is obvious it is a eucalypt forest - yet it is called endangered rainforest. They gild the lily. I spoke last night about Bob Brown changing his rhetoric over the years to continually change the goalposts. Instead of calling for support for a special species timber industry to be well supported and going to single stem harvesting, we had 60 blackheart sassafras trees harvested. You would have thought that was the end of the world when it was not. That was something Bob Brown was calling for for a number of years. It was Greens' policy.

Time expired.

[11.39 a.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot help but agree with Dr Broad in relation to his commentary on safety. Safety is the part on which we all not only must agree but we need to manage. It is no good for workers who have to contend with things that are outside the scope of how they have already established and managed their workplace health and safety processes. It is no good for them if they are confronted with things that are unexpected, whether it is in forests, on farms or in takeaway shops. It is important that we protect people's workplace health and safety.

It is also important that we protect the safety of people who want to protest, particularly because we know a lot of them are our kids. Our kids are working at the shops and our kids are protesting. When I was growing up here, we protested and were part of all of that, but we need to make sure when we are getting that balance in place that it is done incredibly carefully. I live in fear, as do many of my constituents, and I have been contacted a lot on this topic, that someone is going to get hurt and we are very worried about it.

If we need to put more resources into how we manage workplace health and safety, I would be listening to the unions. They know what is going on on the ground, but we are worried and it is about somebody potentially getting hurt, and that is where the rubber hits the road.

[11.40 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, what a lot of crocodile tears we are seeing and hearing from the Labor members, the so-called Independent who is now the attack dog for the Liberals, and from the Liberals themselves.

Ms OGILVIE - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am offended by this slur of 'so-called Independent'. I am an Independent and I ask the member to withdraw.

Dr WOODRUFF - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am happy to withdraw and call Ms Ogilvie an Independent but I still stand on the fact she is an attack dog for the Liberals. The Liberals, the Labor Party and the Independent are all doing the same thing: they are creating a faux risk here but this is not what this issue is about. The real risk people are protesting peacefully about in the forest is because they understand the climate is heating. We are in a climate emergency and unless we take direct action it will be catastrophic for human survival. That means everyone in Tasmania living now and the children and the young Tasmanians who are there in the forest. They will stay there and we will support them and the Bob Brown Foundation will support them and you had better get used to it, because this is the future in Tasmania. It is going to be one war after another because we understand what we have to do. This is a peaceful war to reclaim peaceful protest.

Government members interjecting.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is your language. You are creating this terrible situation in the forests.

Ms ARCHER - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member has just grossly misled the House by saying these are my words. I have never uttered those words in this debate or any other debate. For that reason alone, the member should withdraw. Not only is it personally offensive, she is misleading the House.

Dr WOODRUFF - Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister has completely misunderstood me. I said 'these are your words', and I put my hand to the Government side of the House. I am not talking about the minister.

Ms ARCHER - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I ask you to uphold the point because the member is now saying they are the Government's words. None of us has ever used those words. She should withdraw them and describe them as her words. They are not our words.

Dr WOODRUFF - Madam Deputy Speaker, the Liberals are on the record for talking about a forestry war. It is a disgrace and a shame.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - The advice I have received is that this is a debating point. If you would like to correct the record on the adjournment then you are welcome to do that, minister.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is clear that this is something the Liberals made a decision about in 2014 when they came into this place and ripped up the forestry agreement. It was a long, hard and very difficult conflict that was finished with the forestry agreement. This Liberal Government ripped it up. They are on record for wanting to open up the 356 000 hectares of reserve forest which cannot be logged because they are carbon-rich, biodiverse dense forests. They will not be logged because people like the peaceful protesters in the Tarkine and thousands of other Tasmanians will go there to defend them.

We all take risks every day. We drive cars, we surf, we ride motorbikes and do things every day where we take a risk. This is about people knowingly putting themselves into a situation where they will stand up and protest.

The WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator is allowing himself to be manipulated and used. Today is the second time that the WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator has now gone back and told the Bob Brown Foundation to cease protest activities, after having it knocked out last year. Why doesn't the WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator look with the same attention to the sorts of things he has raised that the Bob Brown Foundation must focus on, which is the potential for conducting activities in environments that are isolated and remote with limited communication in the event of an emergency?

How many volunteers in the Tasmania Fire Service put their lives on the line for our communities this Christmas and last Christmas by going into situations that were knowingly dangerous, with burning trees, smoke they could not see through, without being able to communicate with people? They did that.

Is the WorkSafe Tasmania Regulator seriously expecting no Tasmanians will take considered risks and put their lives in situations to defend the things they care about - their families, their communities, their bush, their natural world? It is the same thing. These are the same people who volunteer to fight fires at Christmas time; they are there in the forests today. They will be there defending the 356 000 hectares. This is what it is about - people understanding the bigger picture and preparing to take action. They have been well trained. They are not untrained volunteers. They are peaceful, trained volunteers.

This is a political stitch-up. It is about silencing protest against businesses that this Government supports. We will continue to defend the right of people to defend the forests that protect us all.

Time expired.

[11.48 a.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, the Greens this morning have been very hypocritical when they come in here trying to be all care and concern about a safe workplace, when the bullying of the member for Clark that occurred this morning was appalling. This is supposed to be a safe workplace. International Women's Day is on this Sunday. The fact they are bullying a female member of parliament, we are not going to have any more women wanting to join this workplace.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Seeing there are numerous points of order being taken about offensive words, under Standing Order 144 I ask the member to withdraw the accusation that we have been bullying, because we have not. You cannot play the gender card in here when it is normal parley across the Floor of this House.

Mr FERGUSON - On the point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, your last ruling on this was that debating points are reasonable but that was not about offensive words against the member. If the member is concerned about that, I suggest she have a look in the mirror and allow the member to continue her contribution.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Yes. Continue, Mrs Petrusma.

Mrs PETRUSMA - I also have to put on the record that if the Labor Party is also concerned about worker health and safety, they should support our legislation to protect emergency service workers through mandatory sentencing to put a deterrent in place for our frontline emergency service workers, including firefighters who fought the fires last summer. I put on record our grateful thanks to them, but if Labor wants to support a safer workplace they should be supporting that legislation.

Ms O'Byrne interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne

Mrs PETRUSMA - Then they should be supporting that legislation.

Dr Broad talked about investment in occupational work health and safety. The Government is continuing to invest in strategies to lift the capability of the inspectorate to engage with and educate industry and workers as well as monitoring enforced compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act. In last year's Budget the Government demonstrated its commitment to ensuring the health and safety of workers by investing in the permanent recruitment of an additional five inspectors to be deployed state-wide. This means we are increasing the number of field active authorised inspectors to 45.

Ms O'Byrne - Explain why there is no answer on the paramedic issue.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Investment in improving the skills and capabilities of the inspectorate through training, professional development, workforce renewal and technological solutions is enabling the inspectorate to deliver better inspection investigation outcomes for the Tasmanian community.

Ms O'Byrne - What happened when the CEPU raised the issue of water in K Block?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Byrne, I now warn you. I have asked three times.

Mrs PETRUSMA - As the Attorney-General said this morning, the Government takes all workers' health and safety extremely seriously. It is committed to ensuring that all Tasmanians go home safely. Every Tasmanian employer has legal obligations under work health and safety laws

to protect their workers. No employer is above the law. We want employers and workers to have healthier and safer workplaces. That is a very important commitment of this Government.

WorkSafe Tasmania is an independent work health and safety regulator and makes its decisions independent of the government. Work health and safety inspectors are appointed to educate, ensure compliance and enforce laws as necessary.

Ms O'Connor - Kelly Wilton said the previous premier intervened.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, order please.

Mrs PETRUSMA - Inspectors have the power to issue the following penalty notices: improvement, prohibition, non-disturbance and infringement. WorkSafe Tasmania's purpose is very clear. It advances work health safety and wellbeing in Tasmania. Its promise to Tasmanians is safe and well every day. It works to achieve this by promoting a safer and healthier workplace -

Time expired.

Matter noted.

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Resumed from 4 March 2020 (page 94)

[11.53 a.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I will continue my contribution. I am excited as minister for a range of portfolios and supportive of the Premier's state of the state address. What a terrific plan this is for Tasmania and all Tasmanians, not just for this year but this decade and the decades ahead.

We have done so much. One of the messages I was sharing was the importance of agriculture. I will come to fishing and salmon and seafood shortly. The Tasmania brand is clean, fresh, pure, natural. That is what is important. We have done so much. We have delivered so much. The GMO-free moratorium for 10 years is just part of that. It is protecting the Tasmania brand. It has been an extension for five years and we have now locked in a 10-year moratorium. I am pleased to have the support of those in this chamber and elsewhere around the community.

It is consistent with our biosecurity efforts. It is a top priority for Tasmania because Tasmania's brand reputation is number one. We want to keep out pests and disease from Tasmania. Being an island state is one of our great natural advantages. Biosecurity needs to be rigorous and effective. We are delivering an extra more than \$30 million in funding in this year's Budget and an additional \$2.6 million per year to the frontline. I thank industry for its support - fruit growers, TFGA and industry across the board.

Our landmark Biosecurity Act 2019 did away with seven other pieces of legislation, putting it all into one act. I met with the Biosecurity Advisory Committee, chaired by Felicity Richards, just a few weeks ago. I thank Felicity and all the members for their contribution as key advice to government. The Government is committed to expanding our world-class biosecurity system.

Water is liquid gold. It is raining today and as minister for Water I am delighted, particularly for the east coast, south-east, southern midlands and across the state. It is replenishing our water reserves.

Just 8 per cent of our agricultural land is delivering over 50 per cent of our agricultural production. That is fantastic news. That is because we have invested in water infrastructure over the years. Water is a key natural advantage for Tasmania. We are delivering on that through renewable energy, hydro, but also in terms of irrigation.

We are investing, with the Australian Government, thanks to the Prime Minister, ScoMo, and his team for that commitment, \$170 million over the years ahead. Nearly 15 schemes by mid this year will be built and delivered. The last one is the Scottsdale Irrigation Scheme. A couple of days ago the Don Irrigation Scheme was announced at a cost of \$28.5 million. Its 5000 megalitres will cover areas like the Don, Barrington and Sheffield. I was at Lower Barrington last Saturday with the poly pedallers, raising awareness and money for diabetes, riding up from the Palooka Dam. It was a very steep ride. We got to Lower Barrington and I looked out across the fields and saw the very productive, fertile soil. You could almost eat it. Brilliant stuff.

The Don Irrigation Scheme is part of our tranche 3 project. Tranche 3 will deliver more than 2500 full-time jobs and an additional \$150 million will be privately invested on farms. We have plans for 10 more, with five under way.

The south-east integration project is really important. We have delivered the interim solution announced a couple of weeks ago. I am pleased and proud to have worked with Tasmanian Irrigation, the Premier and Treasurer and others on behalf of the Government. Thank you for that project. Farmers in the south-east have an expression of interest process going out. More than 600 landowners and farmers will benefit from that.

We have a short-term solution, a long-term solution. We are a government of vision. We are implementing action to achieve that vision. I will soon release the Rural Water Use Strategy. We are aiming for best practice across Tasmania in how we use water. It is liquid gold. We want to use it wisely. We have been and we will continue to do so.

We have a world-class wild catch and farmed seafood sector. We are continuing with strong support for that wild catch and farmed seafood sector with an investment package worth more than \$26 million over five years.

It is worth more than \$1 billion to the Tasmanian economy and community, particularly rural and regional areas. It supports thousands of jobs in those regional communities. We have a sustainable growth plan for the salmon industry. Our \$26 million investment to help build our sustainable seafood sector and \$13.8 million in the Budget is really important.

Some of that funding is for the Blue Economy CRC. This is not only nation-leading, but globally leading. It will be based in Launceston. My former secretary, Dr John Whittington, has been appointed as the initial CEO. It is very exciting. An investment of \$320 million over the next 10 years will focus on marine farming, marine engineering and renewable energy, which is a wonderful trifecta that leans into Tasmania's natural advantages.

We are putting a lot of work into that. I want to pay special recognition to Peter and Una Rockliff for their contribution to Petuna Seafoods over many decades. They are a wonderful couple;

I have known them for decades and I want to say thank you for their positive contribution to not just the north-west coast but the seafood industry and the salmon industry in particular. They are still involved in the wild catch fishery but they have sold their share of Petuna. I visited there with the Premier, Joan Rylah and others a week or two ago in Devonport. They have a wonderful operation and it was great to see so many of the employees doing their bit to deliver that beautiful Tasmanian salmon into the community.

We are really proud of our fishing industry. It has been tough with the coronavirus and that is why we have responded proactively and positively to the rock lobster industry and provided that support, the rollover of the quota into payments by instalment for the licences and other fees and likewise for the abalone sector. We are working shoulder to shoulder with these industries. I meet with them regularly and I thank them for their leadership and support.

There is a lot to say in terms of natural resource management but we are doing so much to support our environment and our community. We have doubled the funding for Landcare Tasmania over that four-year period. We have the Landcare action program that is well supported by rural communities. Regarding traditional pursuits, we are very pleased and proud of the changes to the Game Management Act -

Time expired.

[12.02 p.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am excited to have an opportunity to have some proper time to roam across some of the issues that I think are facing our beautiful island state.

Before I kick off I also would like to thank former premier, William Hodgman, for his fairly massive contribution to Tasmanian political life. I also knew him as a child and went through law school with him. We come from different places in politics but always were able to rub along pretty well. His father was a friend of my father and that went on for a couple of generations. Times change as they do but his contribution was really quite enormous and this is a different place without his personality in the room.

I have only been back in this space a shortish time but we have ramped up pretty quickly and have engaged in many very fruitful meetings with stakeholders, including getting right across not just the electorate but the southern region of Tasmania and also placing Tasmania in a global context. I am hugely optimistic for our place. I feel very proud to be Tasmanian, as I think we all do in this place. I acknowledge the huge Tasmanian diaspora that we have across the world. Many of them have come through our university and have secured employment in interesting roles and top jobs from New York to San Francisco to London, all those great hubs and places. It shows what can be achieved from a small island state that does things well.

We do things well. We are a tight-knit, close, local community. We look after each other. Whilst there are some areas for improvement in education, you can get a running start from Tassie and you can do anything in the world from here. I was very fortunate to have the benefit myself of both a public school education plus some time through the independent system, and a first degree at university without HECS so I was able to study whatever I wanted to - liberal arts, archaeology, philosophy, history. It sets you up for the big thinking that goes on both here and nationally as well.

I was fortunate that I could afford to do that but my worry nowadays, particularly with my kids now getting to the stage where they are thinking about university degrees, is that we have made that

kind of experience quite unaffordable. When our children graduate from what used to be called matriculation into a potential university environment, the huge sums of money required can be prohibitive. I am concerned about that and I have reached out to the university and spoken to them, particularly around local kids who have talent and what we can do to offset some of those challenges, because it is incumbent on us to share the benefit, beauty and value of Tasmania, to share the wealth and opportunity a little better than we have been.

It is a jigsaw puzzle of opportunity. Things happen in different places at different times, but we need to keep an eye on the question of equality, both geographically but also within our own electorates. Mine is an electorate of two halves with very different dynamics and cultures. We have a huge multicultural community of which I am extremely proud and quite protective. I have a strong working relationship with those groups. I would like to think we give everybody a big warm hug when they arrive but in these moments of coronavirus we have to be a bit careful. The challenges are there. The coronavirus issue around movement and travel, economic and health impacts is quite a serious one for us and brings to mind a question about our trade partners, where we are quite exposed in one area, and whether we ought to be looking at diversification. We know that the UK, and I have been there recently, is wanting to reach out to Tasmania in particular and is asking us to get engaged with our markets and bring our apples back to England, those markets we had before the EEC changed that dynamic.

There is global change happening across politics. Look at what is happening in America. Look at what is happening in the UK with Brexit. With change there is an opportunity for us to work across both an economic and an educational landscape to deliver more opportunities, not just for our own kids and the people who live here already, but for those who might want to come from elsewhere to take advantage of our great university, our great education system and opportunities to flourish here that they might not have in other places.

For many years I have been a strong advocate for care, protection and concern for refugees and have spoken about it ad nauseam in this House. It is a bit off the radar but we still have those sites offshore. It is incumbent on a decent government, both national and state, to be addressing that issue. I was more inclined to say that we should be dealing with the care and management of refugees and asylum seekers locally but, unfortunately, the site at which we were able to do that was changed.

I am hoping and wanting to see big-picture thinking. It has been interesting coming into this place as an Independent, with a different but good dynamic. I have sought to reach out to all sides of this House, with some more successfully than others. I am a squeaky wheel for my electorate and I will be incessant in asking for things that the people of Clark in particular want and need. My phone and the phones of my staff members run hot every day. I thank my two staffers who have managed to get our little shop up and running in record time, delivering policy, media statements and real results for constituents on the ground. In the last week or two, we have been able to help a family who was homeless get into a house, and we have managed to assist a gentleman with his waiting list problem to be able to get one of his issues fixed. He was in serious amount of pain.

That is where the real stuff happens and that is why we are here and why we are in this House. I see politics and political life, not as this binary 'them or us' battle of parties. It is not a battle of parties. It should not be like that. It should be negotiating outcomes to deliver solutions to these intractable problems that we know we have.

Some of that you can point to and say that is an easy problem to quantify. It is a question of how many beds we might have at the Royal, or why our literacy rate is not great. You can identify those things, but there is other stuff that sits underneath it.

I have been giving a lot of thought to our lifestyle and how we live here. You cannot bottle it. In every other place in the nation and on the planet, people would love to have the lifestyle that we have. Even today, as I came into parliament and that beautiful soft rain was falling, I thought that is great. It will be good for the garden. How fortunate to live in a place where that is what you think when you walk into work. Every day, even when it is raining, is a good day. My Irish husband would have said it is a fine, soft day because that is what they say over there, but in Ireland it rains more often than not. Here in Tasmania we are grateful for that rain.

I want to be in a place and participate in political dialogue that addresses the issues of the haves and the have-nots, of equity and concern and consideration for each other. I am absolutely open-minded where this goes.

I hear chirping from the sidelines about what people may or may not think my agenda might be. My agenda is very clearly and very simply - unfortunately for the Government - to influence the Government by hook or by crook, by being a squeaky wheel and nipping at their heels to deliver outcomes for my constituents that my constituents have been asking me for. That is the task. My task is to be an advocate for the people who have put me here. I have been doing that and I have been doing it fairly mercilessly, but politely, I hope.

I have had a fairly large career before political life as a commercial lawyer, barrister, solicitor, international gigs. I have worked in Paris, Indonesia, Silicon Valley, for UNESCO, Ernst & Young, Allens, Telstra, telecommunications. I have been very fortunate and all of that has happened from a base in New Town, Tasmania. I grew up in New Town under the shadow of Mt Wellington and each morning we would throw open the windows of our bedroom, look at the mountain and say 'what is the mountain doing today'. Then you would know how you had to dress. If it was covered in cloud, you would think 'I ought to bring a raincoat'. If it was bright and sunny, you knew at least you had a morning of sun before you had to go and get your raincoat.

It is not all honey and jam. I have had some concerns, particularly with the changes that have happened in this House. I had been concerned that the perspective of perhaps both major parties on the north and the northern seats of being such important dynamics in the future of their political ideas, where they want to go, whether that would allow or provide a space in the south that might be filled with things that were not as positive.

I am on the record as saying we need strong voices in Clark. Across the Chamber, we have really intelligent, smart, experienced and good politicians in the Clark electorate. The challenge is to work out how we work better together for the benefit of the people in this electorate, negotiating outcomes, bringing things together, and working out how we can deliver outcomes. That is the challenge.

I am very grateful and very pleased that after all of my carrying on about a jobs package for Glenorchy that those calls were answered. I am truly thankful that listening is occurring. That is very pleasing, of course. As a local member I am looking forward to helping. That jobs package is going to be pivotal and game changing and if we are able to get both the schools involved and the local businesses and learn from what has happened in other areas, we have a real opportunity to address what has seemed to be an intractable problem with a high unemployment rate in Glenorchy.

I am very pleased also that the palliative care funding was delivered. Again, like a squeaky wheel I have been knocking on the door of people to make that happen so I am very pleased. I thank the Government for that.

There are areas in which I would like to focus on delivering more outcomes. I have learnt, because of the way my journey has occurred in this place, that you have the time you have in this place. My goal is to try to deliver real outcomes that are tangible and practical for people.

I have an agenda for Clark. I call it 'jobs, jobs' but there is more to it than that, of course. You would have heard this morning I talked a little bit about the project that we are really working hard on across all sorts of boundaries and barriers around APS jobs for Tasmania. I have a great love of the Antarctic, science and research, digital technology, telecommunications - that whole science and applied science area that we do so extremely well here in Tasmania.

I have been fortunate to be able to speak at length with David Thodey, who happened to have been one of my old bosses in Telstra-land. He ran the federal public service review. He is a smart operator and he sits across CSIRO so he has operations here. The long and the short of it is that he is open to new ways of doing things. We have a really good opportunity across the CSIRO space which is the new area and very exciting - science and technology in the university - wherever we put that. It could be Macquarie Point or wherever it is. It is not an infrastructure play. This is about increasing the number of serious high-level full-time solid, stable APS jobs. We can do this but we will have to do it collaboratively.

I am hoping that in my role as an Independent, if we can get this working we can bring people to the table to deliver those outcomes. That would be a great thing for Tasmania.

A holdover from the last parliament was the work that I and others did regarding advance care directives. I have mentioned Joan Rylah because she worked very hard on this. That work has been very important. Tasmania has a gap in this area where we really need to create a legislative basis for people's forward planning, particularly around health and health outcomes. There is nothing contentious about it, which is difficult. As politicians you really want to get out there and sell it but it is hard to do. It is really practical, sensible stuff.

That comes off the back of a bill that I wrote and tabled in the last parliament, which then became a parliamentary inquiry, which then went to the Law Reform Institute and was recommended to be progressed. That is a good one and if we can land that, that is good for a generation of Tasmanians who have been doing things a bit on a wing and a prayer to date.

We have some contentious things coming up. We are going to have some very strong and good debate - a battle of ideas around EGMs, pokies, et cetera. I have given a lot of thought to 'where to from here?' in this area and I have laid out some ideas quite publicly in the media which I am happy to sketch here.

When it comes to how we manage the CSL funds, I believe we need to have an independent body with an independently appointed board. We need proper processes for grant making and grant acquittal and we need a scope for the spending of that money that is attached to addressing the harm associated with problem gaming. Again, it is probably not a sexy answer to the issue but it is about getting management structures right and how we can do that in a better way, using self-exclusions and technology now in a new way to manage those things. We have a sophisticated

market. I see what is happening in Victoria around using digital technology and we need to have a really good look at that.

Having Glenorchy in my electorate leads me to talk about the suburb saturation levels and it is something we have all been concerned about. I will say on that topic, though, that we have had 30 machines removed, which has been a good thing. They were part of the RSL in Glenorchy. I took the opportunity to write to the then premier and Treasurer, and the Treasurer is now the Premier so that is confusing, but I did write and request that those machines remain permanently out of Glenorchy and permanently out of operation. I want them retired. I think we see market forces acting on this product and it is a reduction in people wanting to play the pokies, but the big-ticket item - and this is what we are very quickly going to have to get our heads around - is the increase in online gaming which of course can happen from anywhere and unless we get a handle on that - in fact it is probably already happening - you can lose as much sitting at home on your iPad as you can going down to a venue.

I am not Pollyanna-ish about this. I do not personally engage in that form of gaming. I like to think of people being able to have fun, but I know that change and managing change can only happen by working with industry so I am particularly keen to see the Government's proposal, particularly around tax rates. It will be instructive to see that but I obviously have a few ideas of my own that I would like to feed into the mix.

Tasmania has always been a fantastic place for the arts. We are a very creative gang here but I have a view that we could diversify somewhat more. I would also like to see emerging artists looked after. We have some infrastructure challenges with arts centres, particularly the Salamanca Arts Centre. I have not checked in with them recently but for some time there was concern around the physical management of that building and, I believe, a leaky roof. I hope I am not verballing them; if that has been fixed that is good.

In the last session of parliament I wrote and brought in a plastic-free waters bill. You might see a re-emergence of that - no pun intended - because I have been in conversation with engineers and people, particularly at TasWater, who say that they now have better technology that might enable filtration to occur with microplastics. We are concerned about plastics generally and keeping our beaches and waterways plastic-free and every little bit helps, so we can do more on that.

I have mentioned the opportunity for free trade with the UK. I was over there recently, which was fantastic, hearing about cybersecurity. I was fortunate to be on a learning expedition and I think we have quite a lot of work to do there as well. All the challenges that we have here, particularly as politicians, around social media and fake news and abusive commentary and all of those things that now happen to all of us, are challenges that are happening in every other jurisdiction. In the UK they are taking some forward planning action around that. They are engaged with those big social media companies, particularly Facebook and Twitter, in trying to address some of those issues.

I picked up the paper today and read about some work that the Australian Government is doing on dark web issues, which is where the worst of the worst hides, and I think every person in this room, every parent in this room, would agree that we have to act on that.

I have developed a bill on climate change. I see no reason why we cannot hit zero by 2040. It is going to take a bit of will, some energy and some money, but I am coming at it from a different angle. I have had the benefit of being able to sit with scientists, engineers and business people and

I have done some research around what energy companies are already doing. They are ahead of the game with this. It is we who are a little bit behind the eight-ball.

We need to treat this as a great engineering challenge and opportunity. It is an engineering challenge because to migrate from one form of energy to another we need to get some engineering solutions in place. We are going to need some innovation funds. I spent some time working for the Division of Minerals with CSIRO on minerals and battery technology many moons ago as a young commercial and intellectual property lawyer and we were remediating the Ok Tedi spill. That was about filtration as well. The people there were smart, switched-on, great engineers and scientists and they are from industry and working with industry. That is what we need to do. We need to get in behind the people who are already moving in this direction. We have such a leadership opportunity because of hydro and our clean, green electricity generation opportunities. Let us lead the way. We can lead the way nationally and we can grab this thing.

People want to be heard on this and they want to go on the journey with us. We have to open those doors and include people. The community wants to be part of the answer. We need to work with local government, householders right through to energy companies and GBEs. Let us look at what is happening internationally, let us investigate the best-case scenarios right across the planet for what we can do right here.

Tasmania has always been the pilot state. We have always been a state that is just large enough and just small enough to run out some pilot programs. This stuff we can do. We are already leading and I think it is an easy win. I understand that it is difficult in party land, where you may have a different perspective coming from a federal level, but in Tasmania we already have the solutions. We just need to identify them, sell them and explain to people. We need to keep a lid on the cost as well. People are concerned. My constituents are concerned about that.

I know we have a climate emergency motion coming up and I will be looking at that very carefully, but I think there are very few people who are not on board with needing to address the issue of climate change. The moment I decided to write a bill was after having been invited with my staffers, Simon and Katherine, who are marvellous, down to IMAS to look at the ice core samples and the data associated with that.

I have studied archaeology and I am very aware that we have had ice ages and that the climate has changed in the past, but I did not really understand the speed of the transition in the last 20 years to a drier, hotter climate was as scientifically provable as it is. The reality is it does not matter how much of it is natural. We need to be addressing the part that we can control. Everyone would agree that we need to reduce pollution. What is not to love about that? That is a science and engineering challenge. Let us do that.

Our forests are a beautiful, wonderful thing and my family history going back generations has been about engagement with the forests and our national parks and making sure they are protected. It is something that we all share as good Tasmanians. They are a carbon sink, that is true, but let us not let that excuse prevent us, because it is so effective, from addressing the non-land use side of carbon emissions. I believe we can do that.

There are other issues on the agenda which are going to be of great interest to everybody, such as the size of parliament and whether we can get a restoration happening. I have a bit more freedom to speak as an Independent but I see the work that is being done here and I know the work that is being done. I have been in opposition. It is big hard yards. I see the Government and the

backbenchers, in particular, who I will give great credit to, doing that work. Hard to get people to manage committees. Hard to find the resources to get things done and at the end of the day - and I have done the numbers - we have never had less access to our elected MPs than when Tasmania was in fact first established. The population has grown exponentially but our MP pool has reduced.

I have now reached the stage in my life where I am little bit older and I see the need to bring young people through. How are we going to recruit great people to come into this environment if there is no ability to do any succession planning? If there is no ability to give people a go and keep them on board, it becomes a very hothouse environment for seats and for the backroom people who manage those issues.

I put out a call to the parties to say, why not get together and have a proper discussion on this? You can do it, I think, with goodwill. It has happened before. I believe a letter was signed to the effect that a restoration was in order. I do understand that people do not like paying more for politicians. That is a fair call. However, you cannot run a footy team with only half a team and there is a certain amount of work that needs to be done.

There are some other issues I think will come up, just to flag my thinking: the Electoral Act amendments. I know the Government has some things on the table. I understand that Labor has some proposals too. I look forward to reading that bill but I will flag that if we are talking about capping campaign expenditure I presume it will be like the Legislative Council -

Time expired.

[12.32 p.m.]

Ms COURTNEY (Bass - Minister for Health) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased today to respond to the Premier's Address. It is wonderful to have the Honourable Peter Gutwein as our new Premier.

I cannot start without acknowledging the work of Will Hodgman during his time here. I came in in 2014 and until recently have only ever worked under Will Hodgman as the premier and I saw his dedication and work ethic. He worked incredibly hard and I cannot even imagine for his family the sacrifice that that would have meant over so many years. To both Will, to Nicky, to their three children, I thank you because of the support you have provided me personally in terms of what I have been able to achieve, but I thank you on behalf of the Tasmanian people. Your contribution, your dedication, your integrity with all the decisions you made will leave your legacy in very good stead. We do thank you.

The change of leadership with us earlier this year resulted in some minor ministerial portfolio changes. While I am very pleased to have retained Health and Women I have also got the responsibilities for Strategic Growth, Small Business, Hospitality and Events which I will go to later in my contribution.

I will start by focusing on the health portfolio. It is an exciting portfolio and I do love it. I am very proud to be part of the Government that has spent so many years focusing on our health system and, indeed, it was only a few weeks ago that we saw the Premier come out and announce an additional \$600 million across the forward Estimates. I understand there are challenges in health and I will reflect on those in a moment but I believe that we also have a system that provides very high quality care to many Tasmanians over the course of every day of the year.

It has been such a privilege in my role being able to meet so many stakeholders. I have spent countless hours in hospitals, in ambulance stations, in community facilities, speaking with stakeholders, meeting with them, developing relationships. I very firmly believe that the Health portfolio touches all Tasmanians, community organisations, the private sector, and all three tiers of government. We need to have very open dialogue because the challenges we have in health and the opportunities that that provides cannot be solved by a single person or a single organisation. They can only be solved by us working together. That is one of the things I have found such a privilege in the role as minister for Health.

We know that we do have an ageing population and that has created unprecedented demand, not just in Tasmania but in other jurisdictions. We know that the acuity has risen. We know that the cost of providing health services is escalating above the rate of inflation. That is why, as a government, I have seen our responses financially but we also know that there is always more to do in Health. We have done that investing in our bricks and mortar and I can outline some of those investments later in the speech.

Delivery of health is not just about the buildings. We need to have world-class facilities but it is about people delivering services. It is pleasing that since coming to government I have employed over 1100 more FTEs into health to be able to deliver that care. Only last week I met some of the nurses we have who were finishing their first year of transition into practice and they were embarking on their careers in our health system. I had the opportunity to meet the transition to practice or the graduate nurses who were working in the private sector as well. We know that we have a highly-integrated system and to see people who were not just young, but people retraining from different professions and understanding why they have decided to go into health was motivating and empowering.

We know that our clinicians deliver world-class care to our patients in Tasmania and we also recognise that we need to support our staff with the pressures that we do have. There are some particular areas of health that put a lot of pressure on staff and I am deeply cognisant of that. I am focused on ensuring that we have the suite of measures that we need to address those challenges because I do take on board the impact it has on people within our system and people accessing our system.

One of those was the Access Solutions meeting that was held in the middle of last year in June. I was not the minister at the time so I was not able to attend. I know from speaking to others it was a positive and productive collaboration and it is pleasing that we have been able to implement all those initiatives. None of them are silver bullets but if we focus on them all, and as minister one of the things I am focused on is ensuring that body of work continues and is implemented.

I am pleased to have been able to attend a similar workshop at the LGH late last year to be able to bring together the key clinicians, the decision-makers and the influencers so that we can make sure that the initiatives we are implementing at each of our facilities are right for those facilities. I am pleased that there are a number of initiatives that came out of that workshop which are being progressed by senior leadership.

We also know that within a health system, particularly one that employs so many Tasmanians and covers the geographic breadth of our state that we need to have the right leadership structures in place to deliver the outcomes we want. To that end, earlier this year I, along with the secretary of the department, Kathrine Morgan-Wicks, announced changes to the governance within Health. I am pleased with this because I believe we need to have strong accountability around our decision-

making. We also need to enhance peoples' ability to be able to make decisions by empowering local management and by having the clear lines of responsibility that are outlined within this governance piece. By empowering people and by having the right decision-making structures around it, I am hopeful that is going to lead to good outcomes.

Another aspect I would also like to touch on has been the successful negotiation with Healthscope and the Hobart Private Hospital. There were calls from the other side of the Chamber to roll over the deal and I am pleased that the Government went out to market through a competitive process and got the best deal for Tasmanians. That is why we are here and with facilities that we either own or operate, we want to make sure we are getting the best outcomes for Tasmanians.

The collaboration between those two hospitals is wonderful. It was great to have visited that facility a number of times and see how it is working in a really constructive and collaborative way with the Royal and it is great to see that emergency department open. It is helping us relieve pressure on the Royal, but as I said before, there is no single silver bullet. While it is wonderful to have that other emergency department open, I am cognisant that there is still more to do.

With regard to the investment we have put into Health, I mentioned earlier the \$600 million the Premier announced earlier this year and it is important for Tasmanians more broadly to recognise that we have been increasing the proportion of the state budget invested into Health. A total 32 per cent of the budget across the forward Estimates is now invested into Health, up from 25 per cent a decade ago. I am proud of that, but it also goes back to my opening comments when I stood up today that we need to all be working together. This is a challenge but it is also an opportunity for all of us.

The investment we have both in the operational side of hospitals and our health infrastructure has been quite impressive. We have seen that in terms of our \$1 billion for health infrastructure that is being finalised and commissioned around Tasmania. We have big projects such as the Royal Hobart Hospital and the commissioning of that, which I am very hopeful will occur soon, the 44 beds that will deliver and the 2500 more Tasmanians we will be able to serve through that facility.

I share the disappointment and frustration particularly of those in the emergency department and the paramedics and will continue to do everything I can to have that facility opened as soon as we can but as minister, I take the responsibility for the welfare of our staff and patients incredibly seriously, so that will not happen until I receive the expert advice that it is appropriate but we are ready when that advice comes.

We have also seen impressive investment at the LGH. We have around \$90 million set aside for developments there and the master planning process is underway at the moment. It is wonderful that so many community members have had their say in that process. We will be having further dialogue with those stakeholders in the community with regard to that because it is a very loved hospital.

I am also excited that we have seen investment not only at the Royal and LGH but in the north-west at both North West Regional and the Mersey. The Mersey redevelopment continues and it is wonderful to see the rehabilitation beds opening and the clinical support they are providing for their community and the pride the staff at that hospital have in that facility. At the North West Regional, a hospital that is loved, it is wonderful that they have had so much success with procurement of more doctors. Having doctors coming to regional areas can be a challenge, not only for Tasmania

but for other regions. I applaud the staff there and the support they have had, particularly in the ICU area.

Acute care in our public hospitals needs to be supported by other areas of our health system and that is where the Community Rapid Response Service has been so successful and a wonderful example of Tasmanians being able to receive care in their own homes or in their own aged care facilities. Not only does this relieve pressure on our hospitals but it leads to better outcomes for the patients. I had the opportunity last year to meet Mrs Jenkins of Youngtown who was a patient within that service and was able to receive her care at home. Mrs Jenkins and her husband care for a foster son who has some needs to be met and it meant a great deal for her and her husband to be able to stay at home and continue their high-quality care for their foster son without the need to actually be in hospital. It was a lovely story and I could see from speaking to the staff that were involved how proud they were of the care being provided in this delivery model. I am so excited that this has been a success and we have seen that looking around the state.

With regard to care outside our acute hospitals, it is also very pleasing to see the Government's investment in rural and regional communities in our hospitals and ambulance facilities, with \$15 million being invested. Not only are we doing capital but we are investing in people. We have seen St Helens, Bicheno, Deloraine and Dodges Ferry roll out with new paramedics.

Three weeks ago it was wonderful to be able to meet one of the new paramedics based at Bicheno and to learn from people in the community how that is supporting more broadly the east coast but also supporting our volunteers. There are some amazing volunteers around the state who help serve our community week in, week out and often overnight, in between their own full-time jobs or caring responsibilities, so to provide our volunteers with support of having more paramedics in these regional locations is a great benefit. We are delivering on our \$125 million commitment for people in rural and regional areas to make sure they have that support.

I would also like to touch on the additional funding for Palliative Care Tasmania, which the Premier announced earlier in the week. Colleen and her team at Palliative Care Tasmania do a wonderful job and I have very much enjoyed working with her and her team learning more about what they do supporting other organisations. The Palliative Care Tasmania awards recently held at Government House highlighted that and the high-quality work that is done in supporting people and other organisations and raising awareness in the community. Sometimes we are not particularly good at talking about death and they play a very important role helping us have those important conversations and being supported to understand the decisions that we sometimes do not want to find ourselves in.

Before I reflect on my other portfolios I give my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff across our healthcare system. It is extraordinary. There are many dedicated people who love their facilities, love their patients, love their colleagues and go above and beyond every day. I particularly thank the people involved in the planning and response around coronavirus. Many people have been working incredibly hard since around the first week of January so I put my thanks firmly on the record for the role they have played.

I am fortunate to have been given the responsibility of Strategic Growth. When I stood in this place a few years ago and delivered my inaugural speech I said one of my motivations for becoming a parliamentarian was the sense of place that I have in Tasmania and I reflected on the fact that that sense of place comes not from our beautiful landscape, although it is lovely, but from the people, from Tasmanians. I said that I wanted to ensure that when I was in this place I was very focused

on that and helping support Tasmanians to have the opportunities that they want. This is why I am so excited about the Strategic Growth portfolio. As a state we are going well. Economically we are leading the country. I want to make sure that all Tasmanians have the opportunities to be able to participate in this growing economy. With this portfolio we have the opportunity to deliver that for so many Tasmanians. It is allowing Tasmanians, no matter what your age, your gender, your circumstances, your geographic location, your educational attainment, the opportunities and understanding what the barriers are for you grasping those opportunities. We are seeing that already with the \$1 million support package we have provided at George Town. I am very pleased with how that is going. FILT, the local community organisation or collective sees the community coming together to work in a collaborative way for initiatives. It is wonderful that this has been so grassroots-led. It is very exciting to speak to the mayor and general manager of George Town Council, because they are very enthusiastic about their future, as they should be. It is an area of Tasmania that has so much opportunity, especially for its young people.

Other work in our \$4.1 million Jobs Action Package has included Sorell, the Derwent Valley, the West Coast and Break O'Day. In the past week there have been further announcements on jobs and employment hubs in Sorell and Glenorchy.

Glenorchy is a great example. We have development opportunities there, we have the NBL opportunity, we have the MONA opportunity, and we know that we have substantial industry there. But how do we work with local stakeholders and work with the local community to make sure that people within that community are able to benefit from it?

I am privileged to be the minister for Small Business. As a small business owner, it is an important portfolio for Tasmania and for Tasmanians in terms of the jobs created and also the people who are self-employed in Tasmania. In this place we have the fortune of having a regular income stream. When you are a small business owner you are working very hard all the time. Making sure the Government has the right policy settings, the right training settings, the right support mechanisms gives businesses the confidence to be able to invest in their businesses and in turn employ more staff. That is something at my very core. I am pleased the Government has created the confidence that has seen over 21 000 jobs created by business since we came to Government, as well as new businesses. To see businesses growing in number as well as people employed is something that will be a great legacy of our Government. We have a small business growth strategy. Within that we are making sure that we are aligning our goals and targets for our small and medium businesses so that they can, again, take advantage of the growing economy.

I will pause and reflect on the coronavirus. I have had very positive engagement with the TCCI and a number of other stakeholders on the challenges and uncertainty. In Tasmania our business confidence has been one of our key strengths and key strengths for businesses. I am engaging with industry on uncertainty for the future and indirect impacts.

It is pleasing that this confidence extends to Bass. As I walk around Bass and see the building sites, I see people working. That makes me very happy. One of the reasons I got involved in politics was walking around Launceston and seeing the lack of confidence and the lack of young people engaged. It is so pleasing that we have had that positive impact on our community.

I have the privilege of being minister for Hospitality and Events. It was pleasing that the Premier announced the Government's support for the Unconformity Festival as well as our first international whisky festival. We have so many vibrant events in Tasmania over our calendar year. We should be very proud of this because so many of these events have been driven by local

communities and celebrate our innovation and sometimes our quirkiness. They have become great events. Former Premier Will Hodgman said one of his aspirations when he was the minister responsible for Tasmania was for us to be known as Australia's boutique events capital as well as one of the world's greatest event destinations. We are well on our way to achieving that.

We see the amazing community support for hospitality and events. The important thing is the number of people who are employed within the industry and the amount of opportunity there is. This is not an industry just for engagement in a transient way when you are at school or uni. There are significant opportunities for Tasmanians, whether you want to start your own business, whether you want to be a sole trader or whether you want to work in hospitality.

I am very excited about the partnerships that we have with the THA. I am very excited about the opportunities we have with tourism events to support the hospitality industry. We see the economic outcomes of this industry. I am pleased to support both the employers and the employees and the opportunities provided.

It is International Women's Day on Sunday. I was pleased to attend an event this morning. The Leader of the Opposition, Rebecca White, Mr O'Byrne, Cassy O'Connor and Elyse Archer were also there. It was wonderful to see that breadth of support. There was a very clear message from a sometimes difficult contribution from Jelena Dokic on her experiences with quite sustained domestic violence and her reflections on why we need to keep talking about domestic violence, why we need to keep investing in it and why all of us in this place have a very strong responsibility to be able to provide the support for people to be able to seek help. Towards the end of her contribution, when asked what has changed and what is the future, she said she felt it has become easier for women who are suffering from abuse to be able to talk about it and seek advice. We cannot rest on our laurels because we know there are still significant challenges. I hope we can always work together.

Rosie Batty described 'nation-leading initiatives' from the former Tasmanian premier. I know that the current Premier also feels very strongly about this area. It is something that we should never become complacent about.

Mr O'Byrne - It is also about men calling in other men as well. That was her message - the culture that was silence.

Ms COURTNEY - I agree. As evidenced by interjection from Mr O'Byrne, this is not just a women's issue, it is a community issue. I applaud the men who take very strong leadership roles and we are fortunate in Tasmania that we have many of them.

I am conscious of time. How long do I have?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Two and a half minutes but we will be finished in about 30 seconds.

Ms COURTNEY - I will conclude on the Women's portfolio before coming back for the last two minutes. The Women on Boards strategy has continued to see increases in participation of women on government boards and committees. If we look around our parliament we can all be very proud of the achievements we are creating both here and within the government sector. That is something within that portfolio that I am keen to see.

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

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Resumed from above.

[2.30 p.m.]

Ms COURTNEY (Bass - Minister for Health) - Madam Speaker, in the one minute and 45 seconds I have remaining, prior to the break I was providing the House with an update of our Women on Boards strategy which has been a success in Tasmania and in the Government in terms of composition on boards and committees. Over the time ahead as minister, I am looking forward to engaging with industry. I have had some very productive conversations to ensure that, importantly, women have access to permanent employment. For a lot of women who do not have access to permanent employment it does limit their choices, particularly for those with young children, not being able to get a home loan, not being able to get a car loan because they do not have that option available to them. Those industries are across primary industries, resources, fisheries, building and construction. There is enormous opportunity to provide pathways for women.

In closing, I will touch on the great seat of Bass of which I am a very proud member. It is wonderful to see so many things happening there in the community. The UTAS redevelopment at Inveresk had its first sod turned, which was exciting. We see the rehabilitation of the heritage C. H. Smith building. Although Bell Bay has had its challenges, the news from the Minister for Energy with regard to the first hydrogen hub potentially being at Bell Bay is exciting.

Mona Foma, Festivale, Junction Arts Festival, the Australian Musical Theatre Festival: we live in a very vibrant region and I am very proud of the community. I am very proud of the initiatives that we have, particularly around education that we are seeing with Legana school.

[2.33 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Madam Speaker, here we are in March of 2020 discussing the state of Tasmania. We now have the opportunity to reflect on the last 12 months and look at how things have changed in that time, to look at all the indicators where we would want to be doing well as a state and to look at the areas where we could be doing better.

Like most Tasmanians, I hoped to be able to look back and see that there have been only improvements in that time, that things are better, that people are better off, that communities are better off and that our state has improved, that more people are employed, that there are fewer people in poverty, that more people are getting the services that they need, that our quality of life is better and that our state is better, that things are improved and improving. That is what we hoped to see.

Unfortunately, it is not the case that we can see that in all areas to report back to the parliament over the past 12 months. We have seen a change of premier since we last stood here in this place, a chance for a refreshed look, hopefully, and a change in the style of government. In the last few days, the first sitting days of the parliament this year, we have seen nothing but the same from this Government. In question time each day we have seen the same old lacklustre approach. We have seen minister after minister drone on about Labor's last term of government now more than six years old. The people of Tasmania, and I personally, are getting very tired of hearing those same old tired

speeches, the same old tired game of blaming the last term of government no matter how long you yourself have been in power. It is predictable and it is boring. It is one of the many things that people feel disheartened about and one of the reasons that people feel disheartened and cynical about politics.

I believe Tasmanians want to see a government that is forward-looking, that has plans and ideas for Tasmania and for all of Tasmania, for the many, not just the few. We want to see plans, ideas and visions that will take us forward as a state, to see us lead the nation and the world.

Instead, what we see is increasing unemployment, increasing job insecurity, increasing housing stress, increasing food insecurity, less access to services, more space between rich and poor. We deserve better as a state. We must hold our governments to account. They cannot keep blaming the last term of government when they are now half way through their second term. They are the government the people of Tasmania chose and voted in and while people might be rightly disappointed in what they got, it is what they chose. As the alternative government, it is our job to keep them to account and to demand better on behalf of the people who relied on us and rely on us still to improve our state.

In his speech yesterday, the Premier promised what he called, 'a broad and sweeping review of the public service' which would bring the Tasmanian public sector firmly into the twenty-first century. While I am not one to back away from progress, I fear what those words really mean. My fear is that those words mean job cuts. A broad and sweeping review, he said. That sounds like job cuts. Rationalisation, that is a Liberal term for job cuts. Efficiency, that is another Liberal Party word for job cuts. This Premier has one plan, one priority for this Government: job cuts because job cuts, outsourcing and privatisation are in the blood of the Liberal Party and in the blood of this Government.

Since this Government came to power we have already seen millions of dollars ripped from state services and state government department budgets. In their first budget, they ripped \$750 million from the public sector with each and every government department having to make sweeping cuts to meet that target. I was still working in the public sector at that time and saw the effects firsthand. I saw amazing long-standing, professional, admirable public servants leave and not be replaced, their salaries being counted towards the savings goal. I saw the aftermath of that. I saw already small teams of five or six people reduced to just one or two staff with no reduction in their workload. I saw whole sections of the department having to shut down because someone was on much-needed sick or maternity leave and there was no-one to take their place. I saw teams and individuals struggle to get the same work done with fewer people there to do it.

Hot on the heels of that major cut came last year's cut of \$450 million to the same departments, to the same services. How that is being adjusted to I cannot quite imagine. I cannot imagine that it has been easy. No doubt, service delivery has definitely been the major casualty.

One public service area really feeling that pinch is the way that the state Government is providing family violence support. We have heard people speak about the Family Violence Support Service already this week. It is a team of just under 10 people working statewide on the front line to respond to people experiencing family and domestic violence. They are the only dedicated family violence support service provided by government and they do a hard and complex job. They are funded to take 1800 referrals per year but in one recent 12-month period they took a massive 6484 referrals. In real terms that means each one of those 10 staff has a caseload of around 600 people - a phenomenal and unsustainable workload. Enough staff to take 1800 referrals is dealing with

6484. Those numbers do not add up. No matter how you look at them, in any other setting this would not continue to be brushed under the carpet. As a society, family violence cannot continue to be brushed under the carpet. In any other setting of government service delivery, or any service delivery, such a serious staff shortage would be taken seriously. This Government does not take it seriously. It does not take Family Violence Support Services seriously. It does not take survivors or frontline services seriously.

It would not be handled like this in any other sector. For example, if a school was funded to take 1800 students but there were 6400 enrolments, something would be done. More people would be employed. If a health centre was set up to take 1800 patients a year and 6400 patients turned up, something would be done. The same is the case in the private sector. I have a hospitality background. If I was providing a service for 1800 customers and 6400 turned up, something would change. More people would be employed. You would not simply expect the same small group to carry that extra workload.

That unit has just under 10 staff. On the funding levels they have each member of staff should only have 180 referrals to deal with annually. That is still a high workload. Their real workload is much more than three times that amount. That is just one small snapshot of their work. In one long weekend in November 2019 the service received 67 referrals for family and domestic violence incidents. Twelve of those were witnessed by children, three involved pregnant women, there was a sexual assault, one woman was knocked unconscious, and there were forced entries including physical assault, theft and property damage, including a car set on fire and numerous uses of technology to threaten. Five involved strangulation. The statistics show us that non-lethal strangulation is a massive indicator for future homicide. Data suggests that women who are strangled are seven times more likely to be at risk of being killed by an intimate partner or seriously harmed than a person physically assaulted or threatened.

Why is this unit so understaffed? Arguably it is because of the place domestic and family violence takes in our society. Governments always say the right words about defeating family violence, about supporting survivors, protecting children, counselling offenders or potential offenders. These words are rarely backed up with action. This massive funding imbalance is just one example of that.

I recognise the legislation tabled this week that would reform section 194K of the Evidence Act to lift the gag on survivors of sexual abuse from talking about their story. It is not right that survivors of sexual assault in Tasmania currently have to go to court, an expensive and traumatic process in itself, in order to argue and then win their own right to speak out and tell their story. It is unfair and it is retraumatising. Survivors like Grace Tame, Steve Fisher and Tameka Ridgeway and others have had the strength and patience to go through that process and fight for their right to speak and to have ultimately led this Government into making the right decision to reform that section of the Evidence Act.

Recently Steve Fisher said to the media,

When you've been abused you've lost your voice, that's the feeling of it.

To be able to sit up and say, 'Hey, this is me, and this is what was done to me by this person' goes a long way towards the healing process.

Grace Tame, another person of immense strength and personal integrity, was repeatedly raped by her high school teacher when she was 15. She went through the court process to win the right under section 194K to tell her story. She took this fight on not just in her own right but the right of all people facing that reality. In a recent interview she told the media,

It is so important for people to tell their own story, their own narrative and to take back control of who they are. It's so important that survivors know that it is not their fault and to have the support of the community and support of the law.

How true that is. It is not their fault but it is their story and they should be able to control that narrative.

Tameka Ridgeway also went through the court process to lift the gag on her telling her story. She told the media recently,

The killer already knows my real name. The gag law doesn't protect me, it just works to silence me.

I commend the strength of those people and the people around them who love them and support them. Labor will be supporting that change. We will also be supporting the changes proposed to rename sexual offences against young people in the criminal code, another bill that was tabled this week.

As members may recall, when we were debating the creation of the new offence called persistent family violence, I proposed an amendment to rename section 125A of the Criminal Code, which is currently called 'Maintaining a sexual relationship with a young person under the age of 17'. This wording is misleading and wrong. It implies a consensual relationship between offenders and victims, which sends a terrible message about what is a heinous crime. While the Attorney-General did not accept my amendment at the time, she recognised the need for it and she committed to me in this place that she would review the code and correct this wording. The result is a good one. In the Attorney-General's amendment bill, section 125A will be renamed to the much more accurate wording of 'Persistent sexual abuse of a child or young person'. Further to this, all the other parts of the code which needed to be changed to reflect our more enlightened understanding of such unspeakable abuse will also be changed. For example, the crime of 'Sexual intercourse with a young person under the age of 17 years' will now be named 'Penetrative sexual abuse of a child or young person'.

It is not easy to talk in this place about such awful crimes. Labor and all members of this House unreservedly condemn all forms of sexual abuse or any abuse of children and young people. It is right that legislation keeps pace with community expectations and these two bills reflect the severity and seriousness of these crimes. Labor will support the changes. While these changes will not change behaviour or compensate survivors, cultural change can be affected by the words we use.

Speaking of compensating survivors, I am saddened to have to tell the Chamber that when it comes to individual survivors with civil claims against the state for sexual abuse suffered as a child, things are not going well. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse made hundreds of recommendations, including recommendations on how past cases of child sexual abuse suffered at state and private institutions' hands should be recognised and how monetary compensation should be settled. Claims to the Commonwealth Redress Scheme is one way in which survivors of child sex abuse can seek settlement. It is only one. Many people may not qualify for

redress or their chances of a higher amount are greater if they take civil action. This is a choice for a survivor to make.

The Government has rightly said that for civil cases their preferred pathway is to conduct informal settlement conferences. That is a good pathway. It is less formal and adversarial than a court hearing, it is less traumatising than going to court, and it is far less costly for both the individual and the state. Other states and territories are also conducting these informal settlement conferences.

In Victoria, it is taking government 12 weeks to 18 weeks to set a date for individual conferences. The process is respectful and straightforward. Sadly, in Tasmania the same is not being seen. In Tasmania, survivors are experiencing delays of up to a year to have a date set for a settlement meeting. These are people who have already suffered unspeakable trauma as children. Now they are waiting unreasonable lengths of time to have their matter settled.

For some clients, they are waiting, being left in limbo for so long that they are giving up on ever hearing back from government about a settlement conference date and they are, instead, resorting to filing in the court. This is unnecessary. It is not treating survivors with respect. Going to court is a much more formal process than attending a settlement conference. It can be retraumatising and it is financially more burdensome on them and the state. It is putting people through needless and avoidable stress. It is shameful that more trauma is being added to the harm they have already endured. I call on the Attorney-General to immediately allocate the resources needed in her agency to ensure settlement conferences can be held within 12 to 18 weeks, as they are in Victoria.

That is not all. The Government continues to ignore the dire working conditions for people working at Risdon Prison. Last week a magistrate slammed the state of the prisons, citing lockdowns and lack of rehabilitation programs as evidence that the system is not working. Magistrate Marron said prisoners were being parked there and not helped to rehabilitate or worked with, to avoid future offending. He gave the following vivid analogy -

As far as our jail system goes at the moment, it is probably the worst possible time for anyone to do anything about rehabilitation. It's like putting a jug of milk in the cupboard, leaving it there for six months, then taking it out after six months thinking it is perfectly okay to drink.

The system really is failing. It is failing inmates as described by Magistrate Reg Marron, but it is also failing the workers in the prison system, who face short staffing and lack of resourcing every day, which puts them and inmates at risk.

The Government's policies have seen drastic increases in the number of inmates without the corresponding increase in correctional staff or other resourcing. If the Government wants to talk tough on crime, it needs to provide appropriate resources to the justice system and correctional officers. It is not enough to talk the talk, it has to walk the walk.

By way of example, last week there was a fire deliberately lit by inmates at the Risdon Prison. Several people needed to be medically treated for smoke inhalation. Prior to this, those inmates had been in and out of lock-down for up to four days. No one should be subjected to danger in their workplace. I call on the Attorney-General to undertake a complete safety audit of the prison, including ensuring that appropriate safety equipment is available to correctional officers to deal

with critical incidents like that one. We recognise that working in a prison is an inherently dangerous job and thank those people who put their health and their mental health at risk to work there. Those people deserve a safe workplace and deserve to know that the emergency safety equipment they need is provided when they need it.

If the Government cannot adequately resource the current prison, how could they possibly be confident that they will adequately resource a proposed maximum security prison in Westbury? The Government continues to deceive the people of Westbury and the people of Tasmania about the future of the Westbury historic village and the plans to build a maximum security prison there. My colleague, Jen Butler, the member for Lyons, has been doing much-needed consultation work in the Westbury community and one thing is clear - the Westbury community does not want a maximum security prison in their backyard.

Labor supports the development of a prison but not without a proper process and this Government is not doing that. They are simply incapable of consultation. We have seen that laid plain in their lack of consultation around Westbury, but we have also seen it in their lack of consultation in the development of the Brighton school and their complete lack of consultation with industry on moving the *Spirit of Tasmania* ships to Geelong. This Government is so arrogant they simply do not consult. They announce and then panic in surprise when communities do not rush in behind them. They could learn a lesson or two from just these three failed consultation examples.

Labor has significant positive news for Tasmania and our people, especially people who are doing it tough. These are our communities, our families, our neighbours, our friends and they are people who rely on Labor to provide and protect the services that they and us rely on. That is why we have a plan for jobs.

Yesterday Labor Leader Rebecca White announced that Labor will be holding 17 jobs forums around the state as part of our plan to reduce inequality and create a better, fairer Tasmania. These forums, which will be held in all regions, are part of our plan to support job creation and lead to a conversation about getting more Tasmanians into work. We know too many young Tasmanians are being left behind, unable to get work or enough work. Unemployment and underemployment are demoralising. They lead to stress, family breakdown, ill health, mental ill health and they confound poverty. If you cannot get enough work or enough hours at work to meet your basic financial needs and living costs, everything else falls apart. No money for rent, food, school and medical costs is pushing too many Tasmanians to the brink.

For the first time in my lifetime we are seeing people sleeping out on the footpaths, in doorways, outside shops, people having to beg for money and goods in the streets in a way we have not seen in Tasmania before. Of course there has always been homelessness and sleeping rough and poverty and disadvantage, but never before has it been as bad as it is right now. Without work you cannot put a roof over your head. Tasmania's unemployment is the third worst in the country. When it comes to underemployment, having a job but not having enough hours to make ends meet, Tasmania is at 11.2 per cent. That is not just the worst in the country, it is the worst it has ever been in Tasmania and the worst it has ever been in any state or territory.

Labor wants to turn this around because our state deserves better. That is why we are holding these jobs forums around the state where we will hear directly from people about the barriers to work and how we can protect the jobs we have here as well as create new ones. The forums will be held throughout the state over coming months and I am looking forward to hosting my forum in the electorate of Clark later in the year.

We know one of the biggest barriers to getting a job is training and qualifications. Employers are crying out for skilled workers and cannot find them, while at the same time unemployment is at an unacceptably low level and many Tasmanians cannot get the skills and training they need to get a job.

One of the best ways to get a foot in the door for job is to get a chance at an apprenticeship or traineeship. That is why Labor has announced free TAFE courses in our fastest-growing industries to help Tasmanians into secure, well-paid jobs. Under a Rebecca White Labor government, we would provide free TAFE courses in building and construction, hospitality, aged care and disability services. These are our fastest-growing industries and they are crying out for skilled workers. It will mean more apprenticeships and traineeships. It will mean that it will be easier for businesses to hire qualified staff and cheaper for tradespeople who take on apprenticeships.

Under the Liberals, TAFE is broken and we have lost over 2000 apprenticeships across the state. Labor will change this. We will turn this around and we will rebuild TAFE. Under Labor's free-TAFE Policy, 500 students will be provided with the qualifications they need to find jobs in our fastest-growing industries.

Labor's Housing Works policy announced yesterday is a shining light which will relieve the massive housing pressure we are seeing right now in Tasmania. We know the cost of housing in the rental and buying markets has skyrocketed, locking thousands of Tasmanians out of any kind of roof over their head. There are more than 3400 people currently on the public housing waiting list, 1600 Tasmanians are homeless on any given night, and many other families are couch surfing, relying on friends and families moving from place to place, day to day. Others are living in sheds, cars or tents. It is heartbreaking and not good enough.

Under a Labor government our Housing Works policy would fast-track the building of 490 more affordable homes over three years. These homes would be provided to eligible Tasmanians at below market rent supported by a 10-year subsidy from government. Housing Works will slash the public housing waiting list by 15 per cent, including for people with disabilities and elderly Tasmanians, who unfairly often face an even longer wait time for housing. We know that elderly Tasmanians, especially women, are the fastest growing face of homelessness and poverty in Tasmania and Housing Works is one part of addressing that. I look forward immensely to being part of a Rebecca White Labor government that would deliver on this policy.

Finally, it is shameful that in Tasmania we have the worst political donation laws in the country. It may not surprise members of this House but it certainly may surprise members of the public that the current laws in Tasmania mean that individual politicians in this Chamber do not have any obligations to disclose donations they receive or money they spend on campaigns. Currently, only political parties have that obligation under federal law and, even then, the laws that apply to parties are nowhere near good enough. They only have to declare donations over \$13 800. That is ludicrous. Under current laws an individual could donate multiple lots of \$13 800, one a day if they like, and no-one would know. Meanwhile, that same individual could donate whatever they like - \$1 million, for example - to an individual candidate for election to this place and that candidate would never have to disclose that donation or how they spent it, not to their party, the Electoral Commission or the Tasmanian public. Labor has a plan to change this.

The last premier, Will Hodgman, said he would act on this but sadly, the new Premier, Peter Gutwein, seems to have backed away entirely, saying that he thinks the source of donations should

remain anonymous so that people can feel they can contribute. This Government does not take transparency seriously.

Labor will be tabling a bill in this sitting period that will mean candidates, members and parties will have to disclose donations over \$1000 or cumulative up to \$1000 from the same donor in close to real time. We will also apply spending caps for candidates and parties to report on the spending that they undertake in election campaigns. I look forward to bringing this bill to parliament in the coming weeks and look forward very much to hearing people's contributions on those ideas.

[2.58 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I stand here giving my address on the land of the mouheneener people and acknowledge their elders, past and present, and their current emerging leaders and the people who live amongst us today. This is land which was stolen across the whole of Tasmania from the palawa pakana. We as a party and as a state must be committed to returning lands, establishing a treaty and changing the date of Australia Day to a day which is appropriate for everyone in this country.

Something which was extraordinary was the inaugural Ballawinne Festival - Dark Emu - that was held in Cygnet in this January. It was organised by the South-East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation and some other people and was a festival of Aboriginal philosophy. It is truly a time where we need to open our minds, hearts and ears to how Aboriginal people successfully lived on this land for tens of thousands of years. They were people who survived multiple ice ages and survived conditions which most people in Tasmania could never imagine living through. We have so much to learn about their philosophy of life and death and the connection to place that Aboriginal people in Tasmania can give to us all. It was a beautiful sharing of ideas. The headline person who spoke, Bruce Pascoe, is now widely respected in Tasmania for his incredible book *Dark Emu* which documents -

Ms Houston - It is a good book, isn't it?

Dr WOODRUFF - It is amazing. It documents, in a very simple form, the evidence recorded in the diaries of explorers around the country of their first observations of Aboriginal societies as they tended to different places. I will rephrase that, Madam Speaker, and it just goes to show how I have been indoctrinated through my education that I used the term 'explorer'. There was no exploration going on. It was an invasion of the country which was owned by many different Aboriginal peoples around Australia. As people came in to take land, the first people who came in did make records and that is the substance of Bruce Pascoe's book. It shows the amazing richness of Aboriginal societies and we must learn the lessons that Aboriginal people live with and can teach us today.

Jamie Graham-Blair, a young and very inspiring Aboriginal leader from Tasmania, spoke on the radio yesterday about the importance of seeing Aboriginal philosophy and Aboriginal society as a whole. He said you cannot pick and choose the bits that you like. It is not up to non-Aboriginal people to delve into Aboriginal society and think that we can take a bit of burning practice or a bit of something else about culture, extract it, commercialise it, utilise it, consume it for our own purposes without looking at the whole context of Aboriginal philosophy. It is a very important point and one which we will continue to work with Aboriginal people in Tasmania to understand the knowledge that they have and to work together in the challenges that face us.

Taking stock of the start of 2020 must start with us recognising that we have so much more to do to provide justice to Aboriginal Tasmanians and to provide them with a real voice in the democracy. As we take stock, it is also incredible to think that this time last year there had not been a global school strike for climate. There had not been a global climate rally. Much change has happened in just one year. What a tremendous movement is taking place across the planet, not just from schoolchildren, although they have led the charge in Australia, but from all people who understand the science and who are looking and listening to the 11 000 scientific experts who have given us a very clear deadline of 2030. They understand we are in a climate emergency and they are warning us that if we do not radically reduce our emissions by 2030 we do not get to have any say in the changes in the global climate system that will be unstoppable.

In many parts of the system we have already, it seems, passed some tipping points. If we focus and put all our energies into understanding we are in a climate crisis, there is still a prospect of being able to stop the feedback loops which would make this planet uninhabitable for humans - the predictions now range from 2070 onwards. We do not want to argue about a couple of decades when we are talking about the habitability of this planet. We want to understand when we hear from the Bureau of Meteorology that since the 1950s summers in Australia are now on average 31 days longer than they were back then. So in only the past 20 years our summers have increased by 31 days compared to that 1950 period. The past 20 years is an incredibly short amount of time. That is an average across the country. In parts of the country, like in Port Macquarie, summers are 48 days longer. We have far shorter winters than we ever had and those of us who live in Tasmania know we do not want to wish winter away. We love winter. Winter is the reason that we have berries. Winter is the reason that we have security from fruit fly. Winter is the reason we love to go to the snow and be outside. It is not something to wish away. It is something to hold on to and nurture. Winter brings us protection. It brings us food that other places do not have. It brings us a sense of camaraderie. It brings us the Dark Mofo Festival. These are things to celebrate and to understand what loss means.

For those of us who live in Tasmania, the drought on the mainland is something that we have watched on the screens for six months. People who live on farms on the mainland are affected every day and continue to be affected. If they have not already, whole towns are on the verge of running out of drinking water. Whole farming regions are becoming unfarmable. This is not normal.

This is the longest and most severe drought ever recorded in Australian history. It is a dustbowl in western New South Wales. It is a place where parts of the sides of rivers have disappeared. Aboriginal people in tens of thousands of years have never seen the loss of their trees and vegetation in those areas. There is deep grief amongst Aboriginal people, amongst farming communities and amongst all the people who are supported by those farming communities. Deep grief is not just for the loss of livelihoods, but the loss of history, the loss of memory which is situated in those trees, in that vegetation, in those animals that have survived for as long as humans can remember in those areas.

The bushfires that occurred as a response to that super drying in eastern Australia was an emotional experience for the people who suffered through them. As someone who happened to be on the mainland, I knew three people whose houses burnt down. I had my husband's whole family stuck for two days, including 80- and 90-year-old relatives, on the beach in Malua Bay. Whole townships like Cobargo, gone. Places that cannot be rebuilt in the way they were. It is not like we can put back the industries of regions in parts of New South Wales and Victoria that have lost their

whole apple processing plants, that have lost their whole tourism industry plant, that have lost their whole dairy, milking, processing areas.

These are not things that a fairy godmother will come along and start them up again. Many of those industries were marginal already. What we are looking at is a whole re-understanding of parts of New South Wales and Victoria and we do not know where that is going to end, where communities are going to go. It is a work in progress.

Along with the people and the impact on houses, there were 10 times more houses burnt according to the New South Wales Fire Commissioner; 10 times more houses burnt than have ever been burnt before in a bushfire experience. There were at least 33 people who lost their lives, numbers of them being volunteer firefighters. Whole communities suffered through months of smoke at levels far higher than recorded anywhere else on the planet at the time.

We do not know how many people who suffered from lung conditions died as a result of that, but the evidence is there. The relationship between smoke inhalation and mortality is very strong, so people did die. People must have died because of that smoke. We are waiting to see what the results will be.

More than one billion animals perished in those fires. We all would have seen traumatising images of burnt koalas and so many other burnt animals. It brought out the best in Australians. It brought out amazing community spirit. It gave me so much hope to see how people came together to support each other, rejecting the false sense of community that was offered by the Prime Minister when he tried to insert his hand into the hand of some poor woman who had survived bushfires in south eastern New South Wales. They rejected that false community. People knew what mattered. It was people being true and people being real to themselves in hardship.

Bruce Pascoe was lambasted on the pages of *The Australian* and by numerous Liberal members of parliament at the same time he was fighting to save his house and the houses of his friends in Mallacoota. He had to chainsaw his way out through burnt forests and to open roads to come to Tasmania to the Ballawinne Festival.

This is yet another one of the Australian heroes who worked in community. I pay tribute to the leadership of Shane Fitzsimmons. He is the Commissioner of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service. He showed us what leadership looked like. He was always compassionate. He flew to speak in person to the wives and children of the men who were firefighters who lost their lives. He showed us strength and clarity. He called the situation as it was. He talked about the climate change charging of the atmosphere and the impact it was having on the fires. He along with 30 other Australians sought last year to speak to our Prime Minister and warn of the catastrophe that happened this summer. Three times they were knocked back. One of those 31 was Mike Brown, a previous Tasmanian Fire Service commissioner. Other people understand what is going on.

We must come together and act in the time we have available to us. It is not an endless amount of time. Along with an understanding of the gravity of the situation, a tremendous energy is building in the community. People fought back against the climate deniers in the Liberal Party who were trying to pretend climate change was not part of it. People whose houses burnt down on the mainland were tweeting that climate change burnt their house down. The farmers who were losing their stock and their livelihoods were tweeting that. You know this is true. The scientists know this is true.

This year the Greens will be working with everyone in Tasmania who understands the urgency of this climate crisis. We will be focusing 100 per cent of our energy on bringing a legislative agenda to parliament, putting pressure on the Government to take serious action on the climate emergency. What are we doing that for? It is because we know Tasmanians want a safe future.

Above all, that is what children and young people are feeling anxious about. They want a safe future and security in the future. They want to have a healthy life, filled with happiness and wellbeing. They understand that unless we sort this climate thing out, everything else does not mean a thing because it is not worth putting pen to paper about. That is the bottom line. Young people understand this.

The lack of leadership shown by governments is causing a rise in solastalgia. This is a new psychological definition - loss of connection with nature. It has caused a new term in the Macquarie Dictionary this year - eco-anxiety. This is what young people are tweeting about. The response to that has been a rise in the awareness of health providers. In Tasmania, a wonderful group, the Climate Resilience Network, has established that GPs, psychologists, psychiatrists and educators of children say that children and young people need action to build climate resilient communities and organisations.

It is through taking action that people will best be able to adapt to the changing climate. In a few months' time, on 30 April, there will be in Tasmania for the first time, the national conference of the Australian Association for Bush Adventure Therapy. What a wonderful thing. Finally, we have this amazing organisation here in Tasmania as a great opportunity for us. We understand the relationship between nature and health. This is yet another part of the story about responding to the climate emergency.

This year we will be focusing on climate change action and protecting nature. We recognise the current woefully inadequate state climate act is well past its use by date. It was an important start 11 years ago, but other than some work done by the Greens when there were climate change ministers from 2010 to 2014, nothing has happened. This Government killed off the Climate Action Council and it has killed off effective action on sectoral targets.

We will be introducing a bill that recognises that we are in a climate emergency, that understands that we have until 2030 to make massive reductions in emissions or the world's climate will move into an uncontrollable and increasingly uninhabitable state. Our bill will be based on the best available science. Instead of setting a far-off target of 2040 or 2050, which kicks the responsibility to governments in the future, we will set targets to bring down emissions across all sectors in every year. We will set targets and mandate state-wide plans that need to be prepared every four years to achieve emission reductions within each sector, to increase and protect our stores of carbon and to develop climate adaptation plans at state and local government levels.

This is a Tasmania-specific bill. It recognises the gains that we have already made in the clean energy sector, but they are not enough. We must use this advantage in the clean electricity sector to electrify transport, electrify agriculture and to make the big gains we can and must make.

The bill establishes a joint standing safe climate committee. It will also establish an independent safe climate commission of experts who will provide frank and fearless, and science-based, advice to government and the community about the actions we need to take for the climate emergency. This is legislation that would set us on a pathway to a future that is safer and better for the health and wellbeing of everyone in Tasmania.

Along with that important legislation, on which we will work with other parties and bring on in the spirit of trying to find cross-party unity on this matter, we also understand that we have to keep the carbon stores that we already have locked up in the ground. We cannot ignore the issue of forestry. Our emissions at the moment in Tasmania are currently effectively only within a few per cent of where they were 30 years ago. That is because we have had rapidly growing native forests thanks to the forestry agreement, but if we look at the emissions from all the other sectors in the Tasmanian forestry economy, other than the forests which have regrown because of the forest agreement, we find we have been increasing in 2016-17 relative to 30 years ago. We must change that. We must not return to large-scale native forest logging. In fact, we have to stop large-scale native forest logging. We have to not log any trees in the 356 000 hectares of forests and we have to make real emissions reductions in each other sector of the economy.

Crimes against the environment affect everyone. The situation in the United Kingdom is a light on the hill for us as people across the planet, because a legal case against the Heathrow Airport expansion just last week was pitting the need to tackle the climate crisis against the economic arguments that were put up by the developers to extend the runway for a third runway. The judges found, on behalf of the people of the United Kingdom and us as a planet, that the impact on the climate of emissions from a third runway, which would be 260 000 extra flights a year, would jeopardise the UK's ability to make deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. That is an important point. They recognised the failure of the assessment authority to take account of the UK's international obligations under the Paris Agreement. This ruling is a warning note to this Government and to all governments that the climate crisis means that we cannot take business as usual as our operating metric. In future, for economic and business decisions to have legal standing and political credibility, they have to take account of impacts on global heating. The impact itself of that legal decision will filter down through every country on this planet.

Meanwhile, the Greens in Tasmania understand that we need to focus on this issue of bringing to account people and corporations who violate the principles of environmental justice. It is a gap in our Tasmanian law. When people or corporations cause extensive damage to ecosystems or destroy them there is currently no mechanism within the Criminal Code to call these people to account. When people take actions that harm the health and wellbeing of other species, including our own species, we humans, by their developments or their active destruction of landscapes, they need to be held to account.

I foreshadow that this year we will be bringing in an ecocide bill that seeks to take account of the deficit in the Criminal Code of Tasmania whereby people and corporations are not able to be charged and convicted when they cause extreme damage to the environment and to human beings and other animals and plants within that environment. The Greens have long been concerned that the state's laws do not sufficiently allow for the environment's interest to be protected. There is a history of the failure of our laws to protect the Macquarie Harbour ecosystem from rapacious fish farming which caused known permanent damage to places and values of the World Heritage Area, as well as to other plants and animals within Macquarie Harbour. That experience, rather than providing the evidence that the Liberals should have taken for the problem with the laws, just emboldened them to go in harder and since that period in 2015 this Government has weakened the regulations and laws surrounding the expansion and development and operation of fish farming in Tasmania. That is a disgrace.

The approvals around Storm Bay and the massive expansion, a doubling of the fish farm industries around Tasmania, has been a corrupted process. It is well understood to be a corrupted process. The Marine Farm Planning Review Panel is a joke. It has the minister's final sign-off and

it is just an opportunity to tick a box and pretend to people who are not watching that there is some form of scientific credibility and independent assessment happening. That is far from the truth. Until the minister no longer has the final say over development applications and the Marine Farm Planning Review Panel is properly constituted, there will be no possibility of developers having to respond to concerns from the community and to the science -

Time expired.

[3.28 p.m.]

Mrs RYLAH (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure to reply to the Premier, Mr Gutwein's address. I congratulate him on his commitment to focus and deliver on the six key undertakings that we gave in 2014 to deliver a strong economy and jobs, to build the twenty-first century infrastructure we need, to keep Tasmanians safe, invest significant dollars in health, education and Tasmanians in need, to act to mitigate cost of living pressures and to protect the Tasmanian way of life.

We have demonstrated over six years we are a disciplined, united and responsible government, building a strong foundation for a strong economy and jobs growth for our state. The 35 costed initiatives announced by the Premier show we are building on the strong foundations and developing a remarkable state. The contrast to Ms White's lazy Labor response was stark. One un-costed thought bubble after 12 weeks just did not cut the mustard with voters.

Despite significant national and international head winds the Tasmanian economy and, unlike Labor, Tasmanians are putting their shoulders to the wheel in growing numbers, supporting this state's continued outstanding economic performance. This effort by thousands of Tasmanians we encourage and we have facilitated since we came to government in 2014.

On Tuesday, the Premier stated, 'we are continuing our efforts. These include continuing our efforts to record infrastructure spending, strong planning and a vision for a strong and vibrant Tasmania.' Our vision is one where every Tasmanian shares in the benefits. We have listened to Tasmanians and prioritised funding for the things that matter to them like health, education, housing and supporting vulnerable Tasmanians, taking practical and real action on adapting to climate change and most importantly, creating opportunities wherever we can for Tasmanians and for our Tasmanian brand. These are the central tenets of the Gutwein Liberal majority government.

Let us be clear, our priority as a government is a stronger economy. Our, and my, number one goal is more jobs. This can only occur under a strong, stable majority government because Tasmanians know intuitively that it is only when the state is governed by a strong, stable majority government that this state does best. In 2018, Tasmanians voted overwhelmingly to continue with our platform. Why do Tasmanians believe a strong and growing economy with more jobs is important? Tasmanians know that economic growth enables more consumers to consume and that means the utilisation of more goods and services and the enjoyment of a better standard of living.

The twentieth century showed that economic growth is the major factor in reducing absolute levels of poverty and enabling a rise in life expectancy, better education, better health and higher wages. That is why, when put together, these factors will make Tasmania an even better place to live and underlie why a strong, economic performance is essential. It is why sustained strong growth, more jobs, sensible and responsible budget management and a strong budget position are vital, and that is what we are delivering. We must attract investment to this state and we must make this state an exciting place in which to invest and we must grow jobs.

We are making a positive difference to the lives of a great many Tasmanians. We accept that there are many challenges and a lot more work to do. Intergenerational problems that are stubbornly difficult to shift and slow to change are part of the Tasmanian story and we know there is more that must be done. Over recent times, there has been some improvement but we must stay the course. We must keep strengthening our growing economy and bolstering support for cohorts not participating in the improvements or further supporting those impacted by issues and challenges where they are not improving. For example, in health we have increased investment and made significant changes to the governance of health. We recognise that the demand for services remains high and we must get better patient outcomes.

In Braddon, the \$35 million redevelopment of the Mersey Hospital continues with planning underway for a palliative care ward. The rehabilitation ward is now open, delivering a higher level and complex rehabilitation that has never been available before on the coast. This saves people extensive travel and time and enables the patients to be closer to family while receiving often lengthy treatment. I have had direct feedback from the family of a severe stroke patient who lost all her speech, her mobility, her balance and has difficulty with the swallowing reflex. Sybil's family have been very grateful that she did not have to go to Hobart for the months and months of treatment and is now being cared for in the lower level care at the North West Regional Hospital.

There is more to do in housing. We welcome the new youth foyer in Burnie, part of the \$20 million development to be built in two years. The extension of the First Home Owners Grant, stamp duty concessions and HomeShare all contribute to getting more Tasmanians into their homes sooner.

Today, Tasmania leads the country on most economic indicators: 21 100 jobs have been created since 2014, with 256 100 Tasmanians now in work. Employment in every region is now higher than when we came to government. A strong economy is the best buffer against emerging challenges and we will continue to prioritise the things that matter to Tasmanians today and things that matter for their future. These include showing strong financial management, building and maintaining confidence, growing the economy and creating jobs by attracting investment. Also, generating the revenues we need to spend more on health and education and supporting Tasmanians in need, keeping Tasmanians safe, building infrastructure our growing state needs as well as protecting our way of life.

After the state was driven into recession by Labor and the Greens, the majority Liberal Government has completely turned our state around. This was no easy feat and the damage the minority Labor government did in those 16 years cannot easily be rectified in just six years. To add insult to injury, we know that Labor still has no long-term plan for Tasmania after six years in the wilderness. They cynically oppose ours, sniping from the sideline. It is 'lazy Labor' over there on the other side.

Let us turn to the more positive and get some facts on the record. I refer to the recent Revised Estimates Report. It shows the budget continues to operate in surplus this year and across the forward Estimates. This state-of-the-state shows that Tasmania in 2020 is the best it has been for 30 years. We have the highest number of people in Tasmania working, over 256 000 as I mentioned. We have the highest growth in the employment rate in the country. We have the economy growing at the strongest rate in 15 years. In the north-west and the west coast, the unemployment rate is 2.3 percentage points lower than under Labor and the Greens. We know there is more that needs to be done so that more Tasmanians can share in our strong economy, to grow our jobs and skills, especially in the north-west.

Tasmania's economy is going from strength to strength with the annual measures of state final demand leading the nation and the highest growth rate in Tasmania since 2003-04. The RER notes that consumer and public spending, with a contribution from private investment, were the main drivers of Tasmania's strong economic performance. In the September quarter, Tasmania also had the fastest quarterly growth rate in the country. As I said, our domestic economy is continuing to strengthen and this strong growth means we have improved our own source revenues, revised upwards by \$328 million. These revenues are critically important to our state, as you would know.

Importantly, our strong growth is broad-based with all 19 Tasmanian industry sectors growing. This is the first time since the series began in 1989-90 that all 19 industry sectors are growing simultaneously. Our growth is wide and diverse. Furthermore, we are not reliant on any one sector, Treasury noting that in their forecasts that above trend economic growth is predicted by them to continue over the coming period. The anticipatory action we took to protect Tasmania by taking advantage of low interest rates and record infrastructure spending has protected our economy. The \$3.6 billion infrastructure spend, which has now become \$3.7 billion infrastructure on roads, traffic, housing, schools and bridges, is a record spend.

We are investing for growth and to maintain economic momentum because we recognise there are significant headwinds out there and they will challenge the state. Whether it is a 'black swan' event, like the coronavirus and its flow-on effects on national consumer spending or further cuts to our GST receipts or simply economic weakness in the mainland states following the bushfires, our economy today is a resilient one because it is broadly based. This is highlighted by exports to China accounting for only 30 per cent of our total exports, these being in the two areas of mineral ores and seafood. Two other relevant facts regarding the diverse nature and strength of today's Tasmanian economy are that no one industry produces more than 13 per cent of gross value-added to our economy and there is no one industry with a share of gross state product greater than 12 per cent. We are a truly diverse economy.

As we have been told, the Budget remains in surplus and across the forward Estimates, but I have no doubt that chirping from the other side will try to get up that the state is in net debt. That is wrong. Not only is it not true, the Revised Estimates Report details that the Government has improved its net debt position this year from \$284 million net debt to \$37 million net cash and investments, and if you exclude the lease liabilities that now need to be included, we hold \$384 million in net cash and investments, so we have an improved projected position.

The reason for this improvement is because the strong economy generates increased revenues to Government and here we are cutting to this chase. With a strong and confident Tasmania there is more conveyance duty, more land tax and with more jobs, more payroll tax, as well as larger contributions from our strongly performing GBEs. There is no doubt about our strong economy but there is more we know we can do.

I will now turn to some of the projects announced by the Premier. The initiative to make the development approvals timelines shorter and improved is welcomed, as is simplifying our approvals process so homes, businesses and manufacturing plants can be built sooner. I am sure we have all heard from businesses, investors and everyday people on these issues, particularly for our utilities of TasWater and TasNetworks. I look forward to seeing the new legislative timelines coming before the House. I also welcome the new draft major projects legislation. Optimising the timelines means creating greater value for major projects such as wind farms, transmission networks, major manufacturing and large infrastructure projects. This will be essential to be competitive with other states or countries vying for these projects.

In the tourism space, we have driven a fantastic story over the last five years. Total visitors have increased by almost 25 per cent and last year alone the visitor spend increased by 5 per cent to over \$2.5 billion. As a member for Braddon, I know how crucial it is that we encourage visitors into our region. To do this, we need to create unique and diverse events in regional areas. The announcement of increased support this year to \$375 000 for the drawcard event on the west coast, the Unconformity festival, will enable this event to transition beyond simply being an event to a community development vehicle that will deliver a range of ongoing programs and initiatives across the year. This festival has helped shape the west coast's cultural transformation and draws up to 4000 visitors to Queenstown. Accommodation is booked out and it is a huge boost to local businesses. This event has the potential to position the west coast as an internationally relevant destination with three world-class festivals over the next four years and will be a great year-round investment into the region's visitor economy.

I am delighted to be part of a government that will deliver \$125 000 for the inaugural International Whisky Awards in August this year. Anyone who loves whisky has to try the finest whiskies in the southern hemisphere, from Hellyers Road in Braddon to the many other distilleries throughout the state. Bringing such key connoisseurs to our state that the media and the agents will draw will market our state to the world. We produce not only great food but outstanding beverages, all of which we know visitors want. We have a fabulous package to offer.

The coronavirus is not only a health challenge as we look ahead, it is also an economic one, especially for our export-driven economy. I commend the rapid and comprehensive action taken in our health response and the swift actions taken to support our rock lobster and abalone fishers. I know this was appreciated by fishermen in Braddon.

Acting on climate change is the Premier's signatory action and strongly reinforces our quiet leadership and action to date. Irrigation schemes, energy and bushfire preparedness all relate to mitigating and acting on climate. We were the first state to achieve zero net emissions and we have the lowest per capita emissions of all states and territories. We are one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet but we want to take this further, as the Premier announced. The review of our 2050 target for net zero emissions and the 200 per cent new renewable energy target by 2040 will double our renewable energy generation. They are big steps and I look forward to seeing the renewable energy action plan in April.

Renewable energy underpins our economy in Tasmania and, as the Premier says, it is the most compelling twenty-first century competitive advantage we have. The new 200 per cent target will see Tasmania double our energy production and I welcome this. Braddon will benefit, whether it is hydrogen production and use, the Battery of the Nation and pumped hydro, Marinus, wind farms like Granville Harbour which I visited last week, or Jim's Plains near Montagu, which has recently lodged its DA. All these projects utilise the extraordinary skills of our advanced manufacturing sector in Braddon, expand our renewable energy production and create jobs and opportunities. Tasmania's low cost and reliable renewable energy means green hydrogen is not only possible but truly exciting.

The announcement of the Don irrigation scheme is a great boost for the highly productive Don Hills, Barrington and Sheffield areas. The 5000 megawatt scheme, costing an estimated \$28.5 million, will provide reliable irrigation water that will enable farmers to diversify, value-add and expand their farming operations, driving farmgate value of our agricultural sector towards the \$10 billion per year target by 2050. This scheme is the first of tranche 3 and I am thrilled it is in Braddon.

In the sphere of climate mitigation, bushfire preparedness is critical to this state. I want to take a moment to acknowledge the damage and loss to those who suffered in New South Wales, Victoria and the other states over the summer. At the same time, I put on the record that we note the Tasmania Fire Service chief stated that Tasmania was better prepared than ever before for the bushfire season, with fuel reduction burns having occurred in all regions.

We are of the view that more needs to be done to keep Tasmanians safe. I welcome the proposed streamline process to enable fuel loads to be reduced, with approvals to be granted in shorter timeframes when a bushfire hazard plan is in place. Giving all landowners, public and private, the responsibility to manage their land and the risk of fire by reducing fuel loads, removing vegetation where needed and working with neighbours to understand their concerns is the next step in keeping the broader community safe. The additional resourcing of two new fuel reduction teams with 12 extra staff and more resources to Parks shows we are providing the funding and the assets needed to further improve our fuel load levels and protect our communities.

I have a strong interest in children and education, with teaching being my first career. The announcement of the first-ever comprehensive long-term whole-of-government Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy is not only exciting but has been strongly embraced by the Children's Commissioner and others. We believe it is vital we build capacity to ensure all families and communities are able to provide safe, nurturing and supportive environments where children can thrive. This is crucial to learning and will drive better health and wellbeing among young Tasmanians. It is a splendid investment in Tasmania's future, bringing equity and inclusion.

On a similar line of assisting vulnerable Tasmanians I warmly welcome the announcement of the top-up funding of \$185 000 for Loaves and Fishes, based in Devonport. Their work is outstanding in providing food relief throughout the state.

Parks infrastructure needs to keep up with increased demand. We have committed \$31 million in this term. That is in addition to the \$56.8 million committed to Cradle Mountain and our \$20 million to develop the next iconic walk in the Tyndall Ranges on the west coast. I look forward to receipt of the feasibility study into this walk before July.

I now turn to mining. I pay my respects to the family, friends and colleagues of Cameron Goss, who was buried on Tuesday. I also acknowledge the outstanding efforts to recover Cameron by his colleagues, Henty mine management, the Tasmanian mining industry and nationally for the resources, knowledge and support put into this amazing task.

The mining and mineral processing sectors are key pillars of economic prosperity in Tasmania. These industries employ more than 5600 people and in the 12 months to the end of June 2019 produced over 55 per cent of the state's mercantile export value. A range of potential developments including the commencement of mining at Riley, restarting mining at Mt Lyell, a new tin mining project near Zeehan, and the ramping up of NQ Minerals at the Hellyer mine all provide encouragement and improve mining employment levels and mean that they should remain solid in the near future.

The Mt Read volcanic belt in the north-west and west of Tasmania is well endowed with minerals. Land access is a critical requirement for the discovery of new deposits. This Government is committed to ensure that there will be no more land lock ups.

That brings me to the Tarkine. The Tarkine has been the focus of mining and forestry for generations, yet it is still seen as an area of high conservation value. This highlights the success of our multiple land use strategies and our outstanding foresters and miners. The area is a critically important region for the forest and mining industries. It is particularly important for the production of specialty timbers, which are critical for our Tasmanian cultural heritage and identity. Our local woodcraft sector relies on these timbers for high value specialty products, such as wooden boats, furniture, crafts and musical instruments.

About 75 per cent of the Tarkine is reserved land managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service. Only 5 per cent of the region is production forest. The operational coupes contain a significant volume of high-quality sawlog, which is needed to meet Sustainable Timber Tasmania's contractual obligations to supply eucalypt sawlog and special species timbers to mills in the north-west of Tasmania. High quality eucalypt sawlogs are used in the manufacture of a range of timber products from floor boards to fine furniture, sequestering carbon. Our wood products store carbon after harvest and even more on the regeneration of the forest, multiplying the carbon benefits. It is the ultimate renewable.

Native forestry supports more than 40 per cent of Tasmania's 5700 forestry industry jobs -

Ms O'Connor - That's rubbish. You need to back up that data. That is absolute garbage.

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you very much, Ms O'Connor.

Mrs RYLAH - with more than 60 per cent of forestry jobs located in Tasmania's north and north-west. Native forests are vital in Braddon. The Government supports a renewable and sustainable native forest industry. According to polling 90 per cent of Braddon voters support the native forest industry. Native forestry provides a range of service and forest products -

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor please.

Mrs RYLAH - that are not available from plantation-based sources. Recently Dr Julian Amos said -

Most (and when I say most I am talking about 85%) of STT's eucalypt land is regrowth forest - it is not 'old growth' forest. It may look like old growth forest and feel like old growth forest, its timber may be the same as old growth forest. But it is in fact forest that has been harvested or burnt, and regrown.

I endorse his view having spent huge amounts of time in and around our forests in the north-west. These forests provide society with low-emission products. I and those on my side reject the simplistic argument that the cessation of harvesting is the best strategy for carbon emission mitigation. The use of residue materials for biomass, including bio-fuel and bio-energy, is a further opportunity we will investigate to lessen fossil fuel use and provide more opportunity for jobs and growth in our region.

The forest action in the Tarkine, at the Ta Ann factory, and at STT headquarters here in Hobart were dangerous and unlawful protest actions by the BBF workers, who put law-abiding citizens, employees and contractors at great risk. I condemn those actions -

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Mrs RYLAH - Climbing on to the top of operating excavator booms, locking on to gates so people cannot exit buildings or sites, or cutting boom gates are wilful trespass and damage to the property of the Tasmanian public. The incitement of young protesters to participate in tree sits in trees marked for felling by the BBF is highly irresponsible and demonstrates their stupidity. It is well known the forest actions by environmentalists is the best money maker for environmental organisations and that is the driver of the BBF. It is primarily a money-making venture -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I ask the member to withdraw. That is a terrible slur on the Bob Brown Foundation to say that they are a money-making venture. They have been established to protect the environment. That is a disgraceful slur.

Madam SPEAKER - That is a debating point. You can bring it up at adjournment if you wish. Some of your language has been appalling towards the other members, so I ask you to refrain.

Mrs RYLAH - I know it is not Ms O'Connor or Dr Woodruff or Bob Brown up those trees in coupes that were last logged 80 years ago. The Greens want to shut down all native forestry operations anywhere in Tasmania.

[3.58 p.m.]

Ms STANDEN (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to reply to the Premier's Address.

I acknowledge and congratulate Nic Street on his return to parliament following the former premier's resignation. I welcome him to the House and hope he enjoys his time in parliament as much as I am.

Reflecting on my second year in this place, I have enjoyed settling into my shadow portfolios in housing, climate change, environment, parks and heritage. I have enjoyed representing the people of Franklin. I have enjoyed the debates in this place and I have enjoyed being in touch with the thousands of people in my community and doing my best to represent their views, their concerns, and their needs.

The highlight for me in the past year has been my involvement in the Select Committee on Housing Affordability. I knew when I came into this place that this state was in a terrible place in terms of rising inequality, with 20 000 Tasmanians estimated to be living in poverty and some 8000 households in housing stress, and when we say households, that is 2.3 people on average per household so it is as many as 20 000 people, perhaps more. We know that over the period of this Government since they came to power the waiting list for the Housing Register has tripled and the waiting time for priority applicants has done pretty much the same, increasing from 20 weeks when the Government took office to now a woeful 67 weeks.

We know that private rental affordability, particularly in the state's capital but across the state, is the worst it has been. With one in four households in the private rental market it is a dire situation indeed. With the average rental household spending 30 per cent of their income in private rent, that makes the definition for housing stress and hence the difficult situation that people are finding themselves in in terms of meeting the cost of living.

As the Anglicare Rental Affordability Report showed so clearly, 30 per cent of Tasmanian households are dependent on income support from the Commonwealth as their primary source of income. For those households, in some areas there are literally no alternatives for affordable accommodation in the places they live, let alone for some categories anywhere across the state, meaning that more and more pensioners are sharing homes in order to make ends meet. No doubt this has in some cases led to increased demand for short-stay accommodation and the like. Our social fabric is changing in this state and demand has never been higher for safe, secure, affordable and appropriate housing.

Early in my term as shadow minister I argued for the establishment of the Housing Affordability Select Committee, I think in about May of last year, because the writing was on the wall and it was plain to see from all these housing indicators that there had been a serious decline in housing affordability over the last five years or so. It was interesting that the Housing minister, Mr Jaensch, took the opportunity to speak on the motion to establish the select committee. He said -

I have been on the record to say that I as a minister and we as the Government do not support but will not oppose the establishment of this inquiry ...

He then went on to talk about how everybody agrees that the overwhelming need for urgent action is there to deliver initiatives, stock and services outlined in the Affordable Housing Strategy. He argued that -

A several months-long committee process is not necessarily the best use of government resources.

However, he said if it is established by this House, 'we will not obstruct it'.

It is ironic that on this day the minister has got to his feet and argued strongly that the measures announced in the Premier's Address were linked to recommendations arising from that report and he is on the back foot now trying to defend his own woeful track record in relation to housing affordability and inaction in that area. What has been the Government action in relation to housing affordability? How can he reconcile his supposed interest for urgent action and so on with a \$39 million cut to the Department of Communities? We are yet to hear what that will mean in terms of housing, disability and other services delivery in this state and that is a big figure to reconcile.

What else has he done? This dithering minister has argued that collecting data on short-stay accommodation is enough, and despite stubbornly ignoring that this tightening rental market needs urgent intervention he has argued that data is the answer. The data is now in but there is no pathway forward. He has not outlined what he is going to do with this data and one supposes that he is putting that problem in the lap of local government that has no additional resources and no way to unpick that data to act on what it means in terms of policy measures. There is just no pathway forward.

What else has he done? Since last winter he announced an emergency accommodation package of \$5 million to address homelessness and yet he stubbornly refused to outline what the elements of that package would be. He has extended some shelters but only in the Hobart area, which is a good initiative and it is long overdue. The Government has purchased the Waratah Hotel to turn into supported accommodation. Again, it is a good initiative but it will not house anybody until at least the end of this year, I am advised. There are no people housed yet. Perhaps there are a few in the Hobart Women's Shelter, in the accommodation they have taken over from the university, and

housing families too, which is long overdue. That was a gap, as I am sure the minister knows, but he cannot argue that this is enough on its own.

He knows that the shelters are full and the select committee heard ample evidence of a service delivery system that is simply bursting at the seams, with hundreds of people being turned away from emergency accommodation right across the state. An expo was delivered under the emergency homelessness package, we suppose, but again we do not have transparency around that \$5 million package and what it bought but we have not seen any evaluation of it. One supposes it was quite an expensive initiative to undertake, much more so than the select committee itself, I would argue, yet he argued that that was not a very good use of government resources. Let us hear from him what the expo has delivered in terms of how many people have been housed. How much did that cost? Does he plan to do it again? What is the value? I would argue that the emergency homelessness package has delivered precisely nothing for people in regional Tasmania, particularly if they want to continue to live and be connected to families in their own communities.

The housing affordability select committee produced 61 recommendations, I would argue a comprehensive blueprint, with 25 urging the Government to adopt a long-term vision, a 25-year plan addressing everything from housing supply to liveability, private rental reform, services, planning, regulation, skills and workforce and more. It had tripartisan support and I put on record my grateful thanks to those who participated, my parliamentary colleagues and the many people who contributed to the evidence that was brought before the committee. It was a deliberately tight time frame to bring forward these recommendations in the fastest reasonable time for the Government to consider but there was a lot of effort and thought that went into those submissions and evidence received at hearings, and I thank everybody involved in that process.

You would think a comprehensive report like this with tripartisan support would be embraced by this minister and I look forward to a comprehensive response from the Government in relation to this. Unfortunately, in the week since the report has been tabled I have no evidence this minister has done anything other than ignore it, and that is shameful. Today he has claimed he is responding to recommendation this, that and the other, so I know he has at least looked at it, but why has he not provided any public comment and when will we receive a comprehensive response?

Labor acknowledges that there is a much bigger picture in terms of supply, private rental reform and such, and these things will take time. My argument is that under the former Labor government some 2200 social housing dwellings were built. In the first term of the current Government I believe fewer than 50 homes were built -

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor. You have already made your contribution on this debate. That is not a debating point.

Ms STANDEN - Madam Deputy Speaker, Labor was on record in 2018 early on in the piece where short stay accommodation was introduced in an unregulated fashion. We were early to call for a rethink on short-stay accommodation and a pause on short-stay accommodation, particularly in areas where there was tight housing demand, because of the tightening rental market and deterioration in the housing market generally.

I simply restate the case that the recommendations arising from the House of Assembly select committee interestingly reflect those of the Legislative Council select committee completed at the

end of last year. I restate the need that there must be some process to advise on policy measures in response to the data in the short stay sector and Labor is simply stating that a pause on permits for entire dwellings in areas where the housing market is very tight is a simple measure that the Government could implement immediately. I have met with representatives from the short stay sector and I know that they are anxious to protect their market position. This is not about attacking hosts, providers or anyone. This is about ensuring that there is some sensible process to arrest the further rapid decline in the housing market.

The horse has bolted, in my opinion, and if there was to be such a pause on new permits, given that December of last year was the time frame for which hosts needed to comply with the short stay accommodation act. Arguably, there may be little impact but we just do not know and this is the point. This is an unregulated market and unknown territory but we can point to other jurisdictions where the short stay accommodation sector has had a serious impact on markets and therefore it is worth looking at.

Inclusionary zoning is another area where the report delivered a series of recommendations, including recommendation 61 of the committee. It recommends amendments to the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 and Housing Land Supply Act 2018 to provide for inclusionary zoning in Tasmania's planning policies for all new housing developments to ensure continued sustainable increase in affordable housing supply. Labor supports this position. We think that sensible infill mixed tenancy developments will be part of the future for addressing housing affordability in this state and it has long been part of our policy platform.

The national housing body, the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute - AHURI - and the peak housing body, Shelter Tasmania, have long argued that housing is essential social and economic infrastructure. Mission Australia highlighted this in the select committee process. They said -

Housing underpins economic growth

- Housing is vital national infrastructure. A well operating housing market is a pre-requisite for productivity and social cohesion.
- A workforce that is stably and affordably housed is a pool of people able to save for retirement and invest in the future, including education for their children.
- For people unable to work, their use of government-funded services - such as in the health and justice systems - decreases when they are stably and affordably housed.
- Housing construction and maintenance also boosts productivity through more jobs.

Labor does not need to be convinced of the importance of housing underpinning the productivity and ability for citizens right across this state to engage in their community. It is impossible to apply for or remain engaged in work or education if you do not have a stable roof over your head. Yet under this Government over the period June 2014 to June 2019, net housing stock has declined by at least 598 homes since this Liberal government has come to power.

Dr Kathleen Flanagan, Deputy Director of the Institute for the Study of Social Change, told the select committee -

... net supply of social housing in Tasmania is declining and will continue to decline.

If you have a current need of 11 000-plus dwellings and the current affordable housing strategy has targets in hundreds, there is a fairly significant shortfall in terms of the capacity of that strategy to address the depth of need currently in the community.

With a current demand for social and affordable housing of more than 11 000 projected to grow to at least 14 000 in the coming years, it is a big target. There is no doubt that the community housing sector and the private sector has a part to play in this alongside the government.

In terms of the Government's commitment, this Housing minister has promised 2400 new affordable homes over eight years, yet at the six-year mark, he has delivered only 585 homes. That is a negative position in terms of the housing stock decline. That is an indictment on this dithering minister who refuses to accept and continues to argue that vacant lots of land is the same as a roof over a household's head. That is simply not the case. Last year, it was very pleasing that the Commonwealth agreed to the housing debt waiver. Labor and the community sector have long argued for this position and it is the community sector and their long advocacy that should be congratulated for this outstanding outcome.

For the Government, for this minister releasing his quarterly update in December last year, to take months to disclose what he was going to do with this windfall gain was surprising to say the least. Nonetheless, delivering \$12 million for second round community housing grants was a good thing and the announcement this week in the Premier's Address that that will be further extended is welcome news. Given that the Premier has now promised a further 220 homes by June 2023 with that funding, it raises the question, can this Government and this minister be trusted to deliver on that promise given the track record?

There is no doubt that we need to increase social housing stock. Shelter Tasmania has called for as much as 10 per cent of residential housing to be social housing stock. My figures are that we are around 6 per cent and that is still a substantial stretch. In a state with a social and economic disadvantage and burden we have here in Tasmania, that ought to be in the mix as part of the goal to go further. There is no doubt there is a major shortfall in affordable housing supply in this state.

In terms of Labor's response to this, I was proud this week to be part of the announcement alongside our Labor Leader, Rebecca White, to announce Housing Works. Homelessness, rental affordability and the public housing wait list keeps getting worse in Tasmania. This initiative, Housing Works policy, will support community housing providers to deliver affordable housing at lower than market rates. The total cost of the initiative of Housing Works is \$96 million and we will invest \$19.6 million in a partnership with community housing providers to rapidly construct 490 homes in the first three years of government. The cost of rent subsidies for the tenants over 10 years in these homes would be \$78.4 million. This would be a long-term investment in social and affordable housing in this state because the community housing sector would own and manage that stock into the future.

Half the homes would be made available to low income earners and half to social housing, cutting the housing wait list, in total housing 1100 people into new homes under Labor's Housing Works policy. This would be a substantial contribution to relieving housing stress in this state, injecting more than \$300 million of economic benefit into the economy and creating high quality jobs for more than 550 Tasmanians, including 75 apprenticeships. The training for these would be funded under Labor's free TAFE policy, giving people the skills they need to get a foot in the door to a good job.

The Housing Works policy will deliver jobs while enabling community housing providers to rapidly increase the number of affordable homes in Tasmania. The response from the Property Council of Australia to this initiative was that they welcome state Labor's plan to build 490 new homes should they be elected to government. The Tasmanian division executive director has said that it was a positive step to see Labor recognise the importance of housing supply. He said -

Following Tuesday's State Government commitment to implement statutory timeframes for all aspects of the affordable housing approval process, it is pleasing that the Labor Opposition has also placed increasing housing supply as a high priority.

The Property Council has championed the reforms required to improve housing supply for several years. Initiatives which stimulate the property market; house more Tasmanians; and create more jobs and apprenticeships is very positive.

I have spoken with representatives of peak bodies, such as the HIA, the MBA, also Shelter Tasmania and the community housing providers that have welcomed this initiative and see it as a positive contribution to the housing supply situation that is deepening in Tasmania. I have heard so many stories of people who are struggling with private rental affordability.

Take Jonathon, who is in private rental. Until about 18 months ago he was in stable income albeit part time, then he became sick and has been undertaking treatment for cancer. As a result he has been unable to work. Late last year, he and his partner were facing their rent increasing as a proportion of their income from 50 per cent to 60 per cent in one jump. Housing affordability is one thing but appropriateness is another. Given his illness, the heating, the bathroom and other aspects of the house were totally inappropriate yet there was no option for him. He remains on the priority wait list for housing.

Jenny has a very sad story. She is a grandmother living in regional Tasmania. Through no fault of her own she has gone from employment and in stable long-term rental accommodation to being homeless for over a year. She is living in her car with no access to services because those that are on offer to her would separate her from her family, her community and her caring responsibilities that give her life meaning and connection to her community.

It is unacceptable that there are more than 1600 homeless on any given night. The \$5 million emergency homelessness package barely scratches the surface. It would be nice to hear this Housing minister acknowledge that much more needs to be done in that area.

The Government is not providing enough emergency and transitional accommodation for people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness, particularly in regional Tasmania. People need safe, secure, affordable and appropriate housing in their own communities to give them the security and stability to thrive. I have countless stories of how a family is divided, first into

emergency accommodation, back into a cycle of couch surfing, separated because the housing that is offered is not appropriate for their circumstances. People have complex lives often with caring responsibilities and other issues going on in their lives. They simply need more support. There is a revolving door - people escaping domestic violence. I have had people going into shelters that offer just six weeks accommodation then into transitional accommodation of three months. You would hope those families would be then able to find stable, secure accommodation. All too often they face returning to a shelter or homelessness.

In other families there is a cycle of violence, issues with safety, sometimes getting in trouble with the law, into prisons. There are even sad stories of people offending in order to go into a prison in the winter period because it is better than being homeless on the streets of cold Hobart. People in and out of hospitals, being stuck in hospitals or in prisons longer than they would otherwise be because there is no home to return to. I have heard stories of dislocation of services, particularly in relation to mental health, alcohol and other drugs. For too long there has been a silo approach to service delivery in this state. We must provide more wraparound services to better support people in these circumstances.

I would like to hear a response from the Government on the select committee report. I would like to hear what the Government's thoughts are on the short stay accommodation sector. In relation to the 220 homes for \$22 million delivered under the housing debt waiver, my question is, how many are disability accessible? Can they be delivered? About one in four people on the public housing wait list require disability accessible housing.

The extension of the 20-year agreements to community housing providers is welcome. Labor supports this initiative. We recognise that funding security for banks is important. I would like to seek an assurance from the minister that this means that he no longer needs to consider transfer of title of these properties to the community housing sector under long-term funding arrangements.

In terms of stock transfer, this was initiated under Labor's Better Housing Futures. Why has he locked into the four existing community housing providers, or four of the existing community housing providers in this state? Does he contemplate competitive tenders? Can he provide a reassurance that there will be transfer of management only, not of title? Has he sought a reassurance from his federal counterpart about the Commonwealth Rent Assistance, which underpins this initiative? There is grave concern within the Commonwealth that the cost is increasing. Has he engaged with all community housing providers in this state to ensure their interest, their capacity to deliver and to leverage this funding for best outcomes within the state?

To what extent does he plan to promote the HomeShare initiative. At this time the Government is about 60 per cent to target. Closer to home in my electorate, at Huntingfield, I am yet to be convinced that there has been one brick laid in response to this so-called fast track rezoning process. We welcomed it at the time as legislation to improve housing supply. I am not sure that has been the case, given that the first land supply order was passed in March 2019. We were provided with an assurance that community would be consulted about the Huntingfield master plan by the end of last year. That has not happened.

The Safe Night Space funding is welcome and overdue. The Government was reluctantly brought to the table to provide that funding assistance. Nonetheless extending that initiative is a good thing. I have lobbied heavily for continuation of the Loaves and Fishes funding. It is a ludicrous situation that for just \$150 000 -

Time expired.

[4.28 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Housing) - Madam Speaker, as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs I take the opportunity at the opening of my response to the Premier's Address to acknowledge the original and traditional owners of the land on which we are gathered here today and to pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

I congratulate the Premier, Peter Gutwein, on his first state of the state address and for his ascension to the position of our 46th Premier.

I acknowledge the service and the leadership of Will Hodgman over his extended time as our premier and leader of our party, and as the first premier I served under as a member of parliament. I will always consider it one of the great privileges of my adult life and my career to have been part of Will Hodgman's team. I thank him for his service and look forward to many more weeks like this one working as part of Peter Gutwein's team.

Ms O'Byrne - Not months, not years, just weeks. We're counting the weeks, are we?

Mr JAENSCH - Years are made up of weeks, Mr O'Byrne. From little things big things grow.

I welcome my friend and colleague, Nic Street, back to parliament and look forward to working with him as part of our Government.

I will speak first in the context of my Housing portfolio and take the opportunity to pick up on a couple of points Ms Standen raised in her contribution including the references to the report of the select committee into affordable housing that she chaired. She is right; at the time when that was proposed we indicated that we believed the inquiry was unnecessary but we were not going to obstruct its progress, and we did not.

The inquiry has produced 61 recommendations and amongst them there is not very much that is particularly new. Reading through that report, one thing that I, my office and our Government took out of it was that of the matters raised therein we are familiar with those and the people who raised them. That was, I suppose, a measure that we are across it in this portfolio. We are across the literature, the thinking and the information that is out there. We welcome people bringing their ideas and information forward and it is no surprise that we are already acting on many of the matters raised. There are others that we have chosen not to.

We will detail more of our response in a whole-of-government response which is currently in preparation. Since the report was tabled we have taken the opportunity to divide its sections up amongst different portfolios of government because it crosses several different areas of government activity and a whole-of-government response is being prepared. However, this morning I was able to demonstrate that no fewer than six of the recommendations in that report align very strongly with initiatives announced and commitments made this very week that will be in this year's Budget, that are on the ground now, which did not arise as a result of the inquiry but from a similar understanding of the issues and needs that are reported in the inquiry's report. I am very happy that there has been that resonance between what we are doing and what others who have fed into that report have recommended.

What astonishes me is that Labor had the opportunity to do the same. In these last weeks there has been the opportunity for Labor to have created a policy platform response drawn from an extensive report that they have had unique insights into, but they did not. They did not do a thing with it. They did not launch their new year, their state of the state reply, their platform for what they would do with a statement of anything that was supported by or called for in the select inquiry report. Instead they launched a quasi-Tasmanian NRAS program which, for developing more housing, is a fair enough mechanism. I can understand the community housing providers being interested in a payment of \$200 000 over 10 years for a home they will own afterwards subsidised by the state. I can see how that mechanism would deliver more housing on the ground. However, the advertising for this policy suggested that it was about getting people off the waiting list and that now appears to be not entirely what it is about. Some of the mechanisms are still a bit foggy.

I also note that Ms Standen took the opportunity to pour scorn on one of this Government's priorities of ensuring the availability of suitably zoned and developed land for housing that is affordable in areas of greatest demand. If Labor is going to hypothetically help drive the development of new housing they are going to need land in areas of need. This is where our Government is recognising that you cannot build housing without there being suitable available land in the areas where there is the demand for it. When we talk to the community housing providers, and the building and construction sector, that shortage of suitable appropriately zoned land remains a key factor for them. We will continue, with or without Labor's support, our program of identifying rezoning and releasing land.

Ms Standen interjecting.

Mr JAENSCH - I did not interject on you. We must make sure there is the land to build these houses on and not only the investment in the capital housing itself or, in the case of the Labor proposal, a sort of partnered TRAS program for a limited period.

I refer to short stay accommodation. Ms Standen has acknowledged that we have now been able to produce Australia's very first comprehensive dataset which provides for government and local government, the local permitting authorities, a set of the listings under short stay accommodation by local government area and finer resolution as well. She also acknowledged that the footprint and market conditions in which short stays occur and operate varies from locality to locality, but she still rejects the idea that policy responses need to be able to respond to it at that level as well.

We still hold that if the nature, extent and role in the market of short stay accommodation is different from the city of Hobart to the town of Wynyard, there is no such thing as a blanket statewide decree on freezing the issuing of new permits by local government that makes any sense. You need to be able to look at the local data and respond using evidence and information and that is what we have provided, which no other jurisdiction in Australia ever has before.

I believe we are getting the balance right between allowing the market to operate and informing regulators, permitting authorities and planning bodies to be able to make adjustments locally, should they see the need to. That is where we are on that and I still see that Labor would prefer a blunt instrument of statewide regulation that treats every place as the same, regardless of the role that things like short-stay accommodation plays in local economies.

I want to touch on other parts of my portfolio and other areas of housing as well and, as we head into autumn and prepare for another winter, quickly update the situation of the package of

works that we have invested \$5 million in from the middle of last year. You will have seen media on the progress with the installation of 18 new temporary accommodation pods, single-bed units at Bethlehem House, which are close to being commissioned. There are another 10 two-bedroom units that are similar being installed shortly at the Hobart Women's Shelter and seven four and five-bedroom houses, that are being operated by the Hobart Women's Shelter that we have been able to broker a head lease on. These are now occupied and providing shelter space for families.

I have heard questioning about, where has the \$5 million gone? Well, that is it. That package of those 18 units at Bethlehem House, 10 at Hobart Womens Shelter, the seven family-sized units and the management supports and the other support services that wrap around the people who are going to occupy those shelters has come to at least \$5 million. We believe it is a good investment. It is a good investment in ensuring that there is more capacity in our shelter system to bring people in, help them to stabilise their lives and their living arrangements while they find longer-term accommodation with the assistance of those shelters and the other services that we can bring to bear.

We have also invested in a second extended period for the Safe Night Space project. It was referred to by Ms Standen as being long overdue. In fact, it is three months early. We have invested already in six months that falls due in June. We have taken the opportunity well before winter to confirm our contribution of another \$150 000 which will see the Safe Night Space pilot go from pilot to longer term through to the end of this year as far as the state investment goes.

We also have confirmed uncapped brokerage funds are available statewide for those homelessness services that need the ability to provide quick, responsive emergency housing through acquiring rooms, cabins, caravans, et cetera, for people who find themselves at short notice in desperate situations. We will continue to monitor that and work with our homeless services sector to ensure those resources are flowing and that they have the capacity they need to deal with demand.

The refurbishment of the Waratah Hotel is moving through its phases. We are preparing it now for builders to move in and conduct the necessary modifications needed to convert it from a hotel to a supported accommodation facility. There is a planning requirement when you change the use of a property like that to upgrade a range of its systems and services to ensure that it is safe in terms of fire managements systems, et cetera. That work will be undertaken this year and by the end of this year the Waratah will be a new home for longer-term residents requiring supported accommodation.

We have the Huntingfield master plan. We are liaising right now with Kingborough Council about the release of the Huntingfield draft master plan for consultation with the local community before we assemble a DA for the council to consider through its normal process. That has taken a little longer than we have hoped but we have need to be able to ensure that we are doing the right thing in terms of some Aboriginal cultural heritage items that have been in that site. We have been consulting on and getting the appropriate approvals and management of these. That has taken us a little longer than we had hoped. We are progressing that now with the Kingborough Council to get the master plan out and speak to the community about what we are proposing to do. We want to get their views and, hopefully, their support to be able to get that important development underway and get those new housing opportunities available to people.

We are also continuing to explore new sites where there is a need and an opportunity to rezone unused government-owned land for housing in various parts of the state and we will be saying more about that in the coming months.

At the moment in the Hobart area, we have a 25-unit complex at Goulburn Street for older and disabled residents. It is now well underway and coming up out of the ground. Quick panel construction there will ensure that now that we have the foundation and the below ground car park area completed that that will progress apace. We are looking forward to substantial completion of that later in the year. That will be an opportunity to house older Tasmanians in social housing with provision for them to age in place with some supports there as well. I will have more to say about the operating model for that down the track as with the Wirksworth integrated aged care facility on the other side of the river which is also going to have substantial commencement of its construction during the year.

As the Premier mentioned in his address, work is going to be brought forward into this coming year for key projects from the Affordable Housing Action Plan. This includes seven supported accommodation units for older men in the south, the expansion of the Magnolia House Launceston Womens Shelter, the Burnie Youth Foyer, the Hobart Youth Foyer, the Launceston Youth At Risk Centre modelled on the successful Colville Place facility at Moonah and the expansion of Thyne House in Launceston as well, and the moving forward of the capital investment program in them so that we can get those projects up and out of the ground earlier than we otherwise had planned to do. We are very grateful to the Premier and Treasurer for the assistance with getting that work into a time frame ahead of schedule.

The Premier's Address also announced the increase of the maximum government contribution available under HomeShare by 20 per cent to a contribution of \$100 000 in recognition of changing market conditions as well. We will be promoting that strongly. We are reviewing the HomeShare Program over this year to see what we can do to make it more available, more competitive and more a part of the home buying journey for more Tasmanians.

This year I am looking forward to progressing negotiations with the four larger community housing providers in Tasmania prior to transfer of 2000 more Housing Tasmania properties for them to manage as a basis for them to be able to finance and invest in more houses for Tasmanians to live in. I confirm that those will be transfers of management, not of title. The intention of working with the four existing Better Housing Futures - BHF - community housing providers, which is consistent with the National Housing Agreement, is to help these existing CHPs to gain some scale and to assist them with our time frames. As well, with the stock under their control they will be able to get some economies of scale and stability into their business model so that they can operate at a level more like some of the more mature models that are operating interstate.

We are a small jurisdiction. Our decision was to go for the consolidation of the business models that we already have rather than the introduction of more competition in what in the national context, is a fairly skinny market even though there is strong demand here right now. We have done a fair bit of work to ensure that the Commonwealth and the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation - NHFIC - and the managers of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance Program are comfortable with the arrangements that we have and that the 20-year life of those new agreements is a sufficient basis for them to be able to finance, for example, under NHFIC as well. This means that resources can flow as they are intended without us needing to relinquish title of our state-owned properties.

That is the size of that. I am very proud that we have been able to roll out that through two Community Housing Grant rounds with a capacity to deliver around 300 new social housing dwellings over the next three years. That has been something that we have been able to finance using funding liberated by the Commonwealth housing debt waiver achieved last year being put to

work now on the ground to deliver new housing for Tasmanians from the social housing register in the most efficient way possible. Our aim is for our investment to be about \$100 000 for a house that we own, the management of which is supported by Commonwealth rent assistance as well. That is an economic way of getting housing on the ground that we own forever as a state and ensures we can continually resize and redeploy to meet changing demands for public and social housing.

Moving from Housing to Planning, we have been the Government of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. I am very proud that Tasmanians are going to see the first planning schemes hit the ground in the second half of this year, and rolling out through the second half of this year to the end of 2021 the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, the first statewide planning scheme in Australia, will be hitting the ground starting from 2020. I really want to thank the 29 local government councils around Tasmania who have been working so very hard to take their interim planning schemes and translate them into the provisions of the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme. It is not a simple task and one which takes a fair bit of resources, but we have been able to bring our Planning Policy Unit and the Tasmanian Planning Commission alongside them to assist in a number of cases. We are very happy with the quality of local provision schedules that have been submitted. They are now working their way through a program that the Tasmanian Planning Commission has established to assess them. We look forward to the Tasmanian Planning Scheme taking shape on the ground and becoming operative from the second half of this year.

The next job is now to move into the development of Tasmanian planning policies. Shortly I will be releasing a scoping paper inviting the public, local government, businesses and peak bodies and organisations to contribute their ideas into what should be our guiding statewide planning policies to guide our planning scheme, our regional land use strategies and the next chapter of Tasmania's development. I will have more to say about that in coming months.

As I have said before, we are continuing in the planning sense to also respond to the housing challenge we face with further development of the Housing Land Supply Act and the identification and development of orders for new parcels of land. Nearly 700 new lots for residential development are being created through the five parcels that have been rezoned so far in Rokeby, Devonport, West Moonah, Newnham and Huntingfield and more are under consideration right now. We are looking forward later this year to introducing our new apartments code which will provide a process for permitted approvals for townhouse and apartment developments in our metropolitan areas.

Regarding major projects legislation, a draft bill is out for five weeks consultation as of Tuesday this week and there has been discussion on that. There will be more and I will not take up more time in this contribution to cover major projects. Suffice to say that strong economic growth is the new normal for Tasmania. Projects are larger and more complex than our planning system has been designed for and are going to become more normal, be they the new Bridgewater bridge, public infrastructure projects or things like new wind farms.

Dr Woodruff interjecting.

Mr JAENSCH - I suppose, Dr Woodruff, to pick you up on that, we want to have the planning tools ready as that demand grows and not wait until afterwards.

Dr Woodruff - On what basis do you think it is growing?

Mr JAENSCH - For example, there are the targets that we have to go to 200 per cent renewable energy capacity and the major projects, the transition lines and the other infrastructure that are going to be required to drive that. These are going to be large and complex projects.

Dr Woodruff - This is not about those sorts of things and you know that, Mr Jaensch. You're being false in what you're saying. It's about fast-tracking.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr JAENSCH - I am not going to engage any further with Dr Woodruff. She has already made her position known on this legislation before she has even read it so I am not going waste any more time on her, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Other portfolio areas that are close to my heart and are going through important phases and delivering important reforms involve the redesign of our Child Safety Services. We have now had the first full year of the advice and referral line which has transformed the way concerns are raised with the Government about the wellbeing of children and young people, the way they are followed up and addressed and the way we are intervening earlier to provide support for families. We are very much moving from a child rescue model to a family welfare model, moving earlier and with more integrated services to assist families to be safe places for kids and to help them to do their jobs well, not just waiting to intervene when it has already broken and a child has been hurt or at risk.

The results of those reforms are starting to find their way into the statistics that we are seeing reported about the number of kids entering our system. We are going to continue to move to the next phase of those reforms, including the move to more team-based case management and less reliance on individual officer allocations to ensure continuity and that wraparound approach for young people at risk.

We are looking closely at and developing more alternatives to the traditional special care packages for kids with very high-level complex needs, investing further in options for permanency for children who are in the out-of-home care system and can move out of it and more that we can do for the informal kinship carers who play such an important role in and around our system dealing with kids who need help but who are not yet officially on orders or in the care of the state.

This year we will see the commencement of physical works on site at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre, with \$7.28 million for the redesign and upgrade to make Ashley fit for purpose and delivering a model of care that is part of an integrated statewide therapeutic youth justice model. We will speak more about that work later in the year as it commences.

The Aboriginal Affairs portfolio has had much said about it in recent contributions from the Premier and others in the context of fire management and the management of our cultural landscapes which have always had people in them and burnt for thousands of generations. We need to rediscover that knowledge. That will be part of the program of resetting the relationship and sharing of cultural knowledge of landscape and management of land that will be the priority for the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio. It will be part of my new Parks portfolio over the coming year as well, including the cultural burning grants and three new positions in the Parks and Wildlife Service to assist with that and ensure that young people in Aboriginal communities across the state have the opportunity to share and discover together with our Parks managers the role of cultural burning in looking after our landscapes -

Time expired.

[4.58 p.m.]

Ms HOUSTON (Bass) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge the palawa pakana people as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

I listened with interest to the new Premier's state of the state address on Tuesday. For me, it highlighted the difference in priorities between the Liberal Government and Tasmanian Labor. As the Labor leader said in her reply on Wednesday, Labor wants to create a better and fairer Tasmania. That is our priority. Labor will always put people first. After all, it is our people that make Tasmania what it is. We particularly champion working people. After all, the availability of good jobs with secure incomes is essential to be able to make a living and build a life.

People need security to be able to buy a home, support a family and make the most of the unique lifestyle Tasmania has to offer. All of these things contribute to the ability to form communities and enhance the quality of life for all Tasmanians. Unfortunately, too many Tasmanians are leaving in search of work. Some are fly-in fly-out workers who leave their families behind to earn enough to keep a roof over their head and the family fed. Others are packing up and relocating to the mainland in search of training, education, apprenticeships and secure employment.

I hear from families all the time about how the kids or grandkids are leaving. Elderly people are particularly concerned that they will not have the support of family members nearby as they age. The drain of potential from our state must be stemmed. The best way to ensure people can build a life in Tasmania is to provide access to secure, full-time, well paid jobs. To achieve this it is essential that training and education is accessible to all. People must be able to obtain the skills and training and retraining to adapt to changing demands in the workforce. This is why Labor will make TAFE free. It is about creating opportunity. The importance of education and training and the link to jobs and improved life chances cannot be overstated. I personally know of a number of people who have transformed their lives through education and training. They have learnt new skills, honed natural talents and gained qualifications. They have pulled themselves out of poverty and make a good living. Some have started their own businesses and employ others. Education is transformative. That cannot be doubted.

However, many now tell me that the cost of TAFE is too much for them. Skills training has become out of reach for those who need it most. This must change so that those who need it most can gain access to TAFE. This is why Labor committed to free TAFE. It is apparent that the Liberal Government has different priorities to Labor. After all, our priorities are people. While the Government would have us believe that everything in Tasmania is fine, the reality is that too many Tasmanians are left behind. There is real suffering in our community and not enough action to address this.

Up to 25 per cent of Tasmanians are living in poverty. There are high levels of homelessness, long waiting times for social housing, long waiting lists to see specialists and have surgeries, bed block in public hospitals, a shortage of bulk-billing GPs, and many people struggle to make ends meet.

In addition to this, thousands of women and children live in unsafe situations because of family violence. Support and counselling is difficult to access due to the underfunding of frontline services. Every week a number of people approach my office or talk to me in the community about

how tough they are finding it. Many talk about how their earnings just do not go as far anymore. They are paying more and more for housing, fuel and food. Some people experience 20 per cent increases in rent. This is exacerbated by the reality that they often cannot get enough hours at work to earn the money to meet the most basic expenses. A number of working families are telling me they are increasingly accessing emergency relief so their families can eat.

Despite the picture painted by the Liberal Government, the figures back up what people in my electorate are saying. Unemployment in Tasmania is the third worst in the country. It does not look like the Liberal Government will come good on its promise to reduce the unemployment rate and be the best in the country by 2022.

The underemployment rate in Tasmania is of great concern. At 11.2 per cent it is not only the worst it has ever been in Tasmania, it is worse than it has been in other states and territories. There are currently 46 100 Tasmanians who are either unemployed or underemployed. The majority of new jobs are not full-time. In fact, 70 per cent of new jobs created since 2014 have been part time.

I know small business people who have taken second jobs because the downturn in the retail sector has hit their businesses hard. Others are working in excess of 80 hours a week to keep their heads above water because they cannot find the skilled workers required for their business.

At the same time I have people coming to me saying they have applied for hundreds of jobs but never even get an interview. These people often have years of experience and qualifications in their field but are often over 45 years of age and have found themselves out of work and unable to afford to retrain in a different field.

One person who spoke to me, Mary, has a number of qualifications, including a Diploma in Childcare, a Bachelor of Education and a Masters of Social Work, all obtained in Tasmania. She has a long and distinguished work history, excellent references and has applied for more than 70 positions in the last year alone. She is currently working on a casual basis, part-time as a child carer. Mary seldom got an interview until she removed her date of birth from her CV six months ago. Mary is over 55. Now she often gets to the interview stage of a job but has not yet made it past that. Mary lives on whatever income she can make working as a part-time child carer. She cannot save for her retirement.

Situations like this are increasingly common and result in women retiring with about half the superannuation of men. It contributes to the growing number of women over 55 who find themselves in hardship, at risk of homelessness and needing housing support.

There needs to be a solution. This is why Labor is holding job forums around the state to hear from real people about what their challenges are in accessing work. Labor is engaging in conversations about how it can help. In the north, about 600 women have lost their jobs in the past six months. This is of significant concern, given that financial independence is one of the things that allows women to leave family violence situations.

I have six children and like all parents, I would like my family to be able to make a living and build a life here in Tasmania. The key to this is the opportunity for young people to access training and good, secure jobs. Currently our youth unemployment rate is 12.2 per cent. If we are going to retain young people, we have to do better than that.

Tasmania is currently adrift on the issue. There is an increasing trend towards insecure work. Young people without secure employment are going to seek it elsewhere. Our children and grandchildren will leave unless we can create opportunities for security here. This situation is a mismatch with what Labor hears from employers about a shortage of skilled workers. It makes no sense that we have a skills shortage and a high unemployment rate. The solution seems obvious.

If the Liberal Government would support and adequately fund TAFE, this situation could be rectified. In reality, it is likely that nothing will be done until the next Labor government rectifies the issue.

I have some personal experience in this matter. My son is an apprentice electrician. He has recently completed his exams for the academic component of his apprenticeship. He will be fully qualified by the end of the year. It is a sad reality that he has had to live in New South Wales to undertake that apprenticeship. It is likely that he will struggle to find full-time work in Tasmania, even with the skills shortage we have. It will probably stand him in better stead than Tasmanian-trained apprentices, because his qualifications are from interstate. Data from the Productivity Commission tells us that industry is losing confidence in apprenticeships and traineeships in Tasmania. As a parent, I can only hope that once he has more experience and is established in his trade he will be able to secure full-time employment and return to live in Tasmania. I am hoping the lower house prices might lure him back.

There are many other families who have similar experiences and they would like opportunities for their children in Tasmania too. Only when quality training and job opportunities exist for young people, will they be able to make a living, put down roots, buy a home and enjoy the lifestyle Tasmania has to offer.

I turn now to issues in multicultural affairs. Access to jobs and training remain an issue for many in the north of the state. The cost of TAFE is a significant issue for some communities, particularly those who arrived as humanitarian entrants. Free TAFE would significantly improve access for these people.

On another matter of concern, it has been raised with me that people feel there is an increase in blatant racism in our community. The presence of the Ku Klux Klan in the south of the state, made obvious by a blatantly racist sticker on a vehicle parked in a Hobart public street and the blatant display of swastikas in the north of the state have caused concern to some in the CALD - the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse- community. Surely these public displays of hate need to be addressed. I am told by some elderly members of the CALD community in the north that they are afraid to walk from one suburb to the next in the middle of the day to access services and participate in activities because they are regularly harassed and attacked while walking. Of course my advice to them is always to notify police but it seems the offenders are nowhere to be seen by the time the police have been informed.

Community safety is not only an issue for members of the CALD community, it is raised frequently by members of the broader community. People living in Launceston's southern suburb where my electorate office is have reported concerns about the amount of crime and the increase in gun violence in the area. There have been numerous property crimes, home invasions, reports of gunshots, individuals shot and drive-by shootings. Incidents like these cause concerns for residents, particularly those who live alone and feel especially vulnerable.

However, the most prevalent community safety law and order issue in Tasmania remains family violence. It has been raised with me by every community I have worked with and many people have personal experiences of family violence that they have approached me about. We have repeatedly raised the issue of family violence in this House and have repeatedly talked about the need for resources to support women who are trying to escape violence and those who have left and need ongoing support. We have talked repeatedly about the desperate need for adequate funding for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service so they can address the massive increase in referrals to their service. The service is funded for 1800 referrals and in 2018-19 it received 6488. It is just not possible for an underfunded, understaffed service to provide the services required.

The Family Violence Counselling and Support Service North is unable to provide the medium and long-term counselling it has in the past due to the increase in demand. In 2005-06 when the service was established it received 954 referrals. In 2018-19 it received 1782 referrals with a full-time equivalent staff of 2.76 adult program workers. That equates to 646 referrals per worker in one financial year. That is 646 high-needs complex clients who require ongoing intensive counselling and support. I do not know if anyone else in this Chamber has ever done intensive complex casework, but a workload like that is unmanageable. The staff at the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service deserve our admiration and respect for attempting to provide a service under these conditions.

I am aware that all these things have been said before in this Chamber. I am aware that the Government has a plan to address family violence. The thing is, this cannot wait. There is a family violence crisis in our community that needs to be addressed right now. Family violence is at crisis point. In just one long weekend in November 2019 the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service received 67 referrals. The incidents covered family arguments and family violence incidents. The horror of these incidents is often lost in the terminology, so I will read from the snapshot from that long weekend in November to provide a true picture of what happened on that weekend. The incidents are rated with a RAS - a Resilience Appraisal Scale - that depicts their severity. From 1 to 12 is low severity, 13 to 25 is medium and 26 and above is high.

Incident 1 was a family argument. It did not get a RAS score but involved aggression, pouring petrol over the family car, and verbal abuse. This was witnessed by a child. Incident 2 was a family violence incident. It rated 27, so it was of high severity. It involved aggression, verbal abuse, threats to knock the victim out, physical assault, strangulation, the victim being in fear of their life, the removal of property, and the removal of a child from the address as well as technological abuse. This was witnessed by two children. Incident 3 scored 34 on the RAS, so it was very high severity. It involved aggression, verbal intimidation, driving in excess of 150 kilometres per hour, and physical assault - in this case the offender actually knocked the victim out twice and threatened to kill her. This was also witnessed by a child. Incident 4 was another family violence incident. It scored an 11 and involved aggression and verbal abuse and was also witnessed by a child. Incident 5 was a family violence incident that scored 12 on the RAS, so it was low and involved verbal aggression and was witnessed by four children.

Incident 6 was a family violence incident that scored 31 and involved physical violence, verbal assault, threats, sexual assault, technological abuse, an attempt by the perpetrator to get the victim to abort the child she was carrying and threats to take the child when it was born. The victim was pregnant. Number 7 was a family violence incident that scored 14 and was a breach of a family violence order and was witnessed by two children. Number 8 was another family violence incident, which scored 10 and involved physical assault and the taking of property and was witnessed by two

children. Number 9 was a family violence incident that scored 22 on the RAS scale, which is considered medium, and involved technological abuse, social abuse and threats. Number 10 was a family argument which involved verbal abuse and threats and did not obtain a RAS score. There was one joint family violence incident that was rated 16 and 14 respectively and involved forced entry to a property, threats and physical violence and was witnessed by two children.

Number 12 was a family violence incident that scored 25 on the RAS, which is still in the realm of medium. That involved verbal abuse, physical punching and slapping, strangulation of the victim while she was holding a child, and threats to kill her. One child was involved in that incident. That is considered a medium offence so you have to wonder what the higher ones involve.

Number 13 was a family violence incident that scored 10, which is low, and involved technological abuse. Number 14 was a family argument that did not attain a RAS but involved verbal abuse. Number 15 was another family violence incident with a RAS of 10 and was a breach of an order and was witnessed by three children.

Number 18 was a family argument that did not attain a RAS and involved verbal abuse. Number 19 was a family violence incident with a score of 9, which is considered low, and involved threats to their two-year old daughter and threats to kill her, a threat to kill themselves and the children, verbal abuse, and threats to take the children away. This was witnessed by four children.

Number 20 was another family argument. This issue had a significant history and third-party report of significant physical violence, though the victim themselves would not report it. Number 21 was another family violence incident. It scored 21 on the RAS and involved verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, threats to take a one-year old child, the removal of the one-year old child from the mother's care, prolonged physical assault, verbal abuse and strangulation whilst the victim was holding the baby. There was one child involved in that incident. Number 22 was a family argument which involved intimidation and no RAS score. Number 23 was a family argument which involved verbal threats and threats of suicide and was witnessed by four children.

Number 24 had a RAS score of 18 and involved verbal abuse and was witnessed by children. Number 25 was a family argument that involved verbal abuse and intimidation and the perpetrator had a knife that was used to cut up cloth in the face of the victim. That was witnessed by four children. There was also a family violence incident with a score of 18. Physical assault. Number 27 was the family argument with a RAS score and involved aggression. Number 28 was a family violence incident with a RAS score of 21, technological abuse, verbal abuse, multiple attacks, significant incidents of physical assault, property damage and damage to a vehicle, where the perpetrator stabbed two tyres on the victim's car to prevent her getting away. There were three children involved in that incident. Number 29 was a family violence incident with a score of 17: verbal abuse, strangulation, children witnessing the assault, intimidation and physical assault. Three children were involved.

Number 30 was a family violence incident with a score of 13: verbal threats to kill, threats to harm and other physical abuse. There were no children involved in that event. Number 31 was a family argument. There was a physical assault of the victim's 19-year old son and verbal abuse of the victim. There were also children witnessing that. Number 32 was a family argument that involved verbal abuse. One child was involved in that. Number 33 was a family violence incident with a score of 13 which involved physical and verbal assault. Number 34 was a family violence incident that involved strangulation and two separate incidents of physical assault. That had a RAS

score of 16. Number 35 was a family argument: verbal abuse and intimidation that involved children.

Number 36 was a family violence incident with a score of 14 that involved verbal abuse and threats. Number 37 was a family violence incident with a score of 22 which involved a breach of an order. Number 38 was a family violence incident with a score of 28 which involved aggression, verbal abuse, property damage, physical assault of a third party. There were children involved in that incident. Number 39 was a family argument with verbal abuse. There were no children involved in that incident. Number 40 was a family violence incident with a score of six and involved financial abuse, technological abuse and social abuse. There were two children involved in that incident. Number 41 was a family violence incident with a score of nine. It involved verbal abuse, threats to kill the victim and others. There were children involved in that incident.

Number 42 was also a family violence incident with a score of nine involving property theft, breach of an order and damage to property. There were children involved in that incident. Number 43 was a family argument with no RAS score and involved verbal abuse. There were no children involved in that incident. Number 44 was a family violence incident with a score of 24 involving technological abuse and verbal abuse. There were children involved in that incident. Number 45 was a family violence incident with a score of 15. It involved physical injury, the attendance of an ambulance and hospital treatment, verbal abuse, property damage and spitting. There were children in that incident.

Number 46 was a family argument with no RAS score. It involved verbal abuse. Number 47 was a family violence incident with a score of 26. It involved verbal abuse, spitting, verbal abuse of a child, intimidation, physical assault, including hitting, pushing a head into a wall multiple times, strangulation, kicking to the stomach and denying the victim access to a removed child. There was a child involved in that incident. Number 48 was a family violence incident with a score of 20. It involved verbal abuse, threats, intimidation and property damage. Number 49 was a family violence incident with a score of 14. It involved verbal abuse, aggression, physical assault, including headbutting. There was no child involved in the incident.

Number 50 was a family violence incident with a score of 35. It involved verbal abuse, property damaging, intimidation, threats to commit suicide, technological abuse, and threats to the victim's safety. There were two children involved. Number 51 was a family argument. It involved verbal abuse, verbal abuse of a child, threats to commit suicide and coercive behaviour. Number 52 was a family violence incident with a score of 14. It involved technological abuse, verbal abuse, property damage, the victim's car being rammed and her being threatened. There were no children involved in that incident. Number 53 was a family violence incident with a score of 8. It involved technological abuse, physical abuse, property damage, the perpetrator putting a hole in the door and smashing in windows. There was a child involved in that incident.

Number 54 was a family violence incident with a score of 18. It involved physical assault. There were children involved in that incident. Number 55 was a family argument with verbal intimidation. Number 56 was a family argument with verbal abuse involved. There were children involved in that incident. Number 57 was a family argument with verbal abuse involved. Number 58 was a family violence incident scored at 16 which involved the breach of an order and verbal abuse. Number 59 was a family violence incident with a score of 7: verbal abuse, and blocked access with a car. There were four children involved.

Number 60 was a family violence incident with scores of 17 and 12 because it involved two parties. It involved aggression, physical assault, threats with a knife and property damage. There were children involved in that incident. Number 61 was a family argument. It involved verbal abuse. There were children involved in that incident. Number 62 was a family violence incident with a score of 12 involving property damage and verbal abuse. Number 63 was family argument. It had a RAS score. It involved verbal abuse. There was a child involved in that incident. Number 64 was a family violence incident with a score of 31: physical abuse of a child times four, property damage, physical assault, threats to kill the victim and children and suicide threats.

Number 65 was a family violence incident with a score of 12 that involved verbal abuse, technological abuse and threats to children. There were children involved in that incident. Number 66 was a family argument. Number 67 was a family argument involving verbal abuse.

This is one weekend in November last year. Sixty-seven cases. Imagine walking into your office on Monday morning and finding that. A lot of this is strong violence. A lot of this is repeated violence.

The reality is that family violence causes long-term pain to victims, mostly women and children. We know that it is not only harmful, but can be lethal. I am a survivor of strong family violence. I have no doubt that had I not escaped that situation when I did I would not have got out alive. I had to flee interstate and go into hiding to be safe. I had to leave everything behind and start over. At least I got out alive. Too many other women have not. There was no family violence counselling support service then, no support service I could call, just a friend who paid for an airline ticket and arranged for somewhere for me to stay.

We can do better for victims of family violence now. It must be done now. At the very least the Government could provide the \$1 million to the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service that is needed to increase service capacity. Surely in the grand scheme of things that is not too much to ask. The Family Violence Counselling and Support Service is the only crisis service that can support those experiencing and fleeing family violence. This is a vital service. If this Government genuinely wants women and children to be able to leave violent situations and stay safe it must be funded adequately.

The majority of women who approach me about housing issues are in housing stress because they have escaped family violence. Others are seeking housing so they can leave. While we have heard extensively about the housing crisis in the south of the state, we have heard far less about the housing crisis in the north and the increase in homelessness. There are 3400 applicants waiting for social housing and more than 1600 people are homeless on any given night in Tasmania. Housing is one of the most common issues that constituents contact me at my office about. Many have spent in excess of a year on social housing waiting lists and are often in temporary and unsafe conditions and are forced to move around often -

Madam SPEAKER - I am sorry to interrupt. That was very profound but time is up and I have already let you go on for almost another five minutes. Thank you for sharing that.

Time expired.

[5.31 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, first I acknowledge the work our previous premier, Will Hodgman, achieved and his 18 years' service to the Tasmanian people.

The state of the state address delivered by our Premier, Peter Gutwein, contained a number of important announcements with over 30 commitments, delivering strong evidence that the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government's policy to create greater opportunity for Tasmanians is succeeding in delivering a better future for Tasmania. The Tasmanian majority Liberal Government recognises that investing in our farming businesses and communities is investing in Tasmania's future. This is why the Government has set a target of \$10 billion by the year 2050. This is why the state and Commonwealth governments are jointly investing \$170 million to deliver nation-leading irrigation infrastructure to support rural and regional Tasmania, once again creating jobs and expanding farm production.

Already in Lyons we have the North Esk Irrigation Scheme delivering 4685 megalitres of water in the Evandale, Nile, White Hills and Welby areas. The Swan Irrigation Scheme is delivering 2000 megalitres of water to farmers north of Swansea on the east coast. After many years a reliable water supply is available to the communities on the northern shores of the River Derwent. Water is provided by TasWater piped under the river near Granton. Water is transported by Tasmanian Irrigation to the eastern side of the River Derwent via an underwater crossing and onto the irrigation district via 85 kilometres of pipeline. There is a major pump station at Tea Tree Road and boost pumps at Shrub End Road and Table Hill. A 200 megalitre holding dam near Rekuna supports the reliability of supply when TasWater's ability to supply the district is restricted.

In the South East Irrigation Scheme, a farm water access plan is required to cover all land that Tasmanian Irrigation water is applied and to all dams that are used to store Tasmanian Irrigation water. The third stage of the South East Irrigation Scheme commenced operation in October 2015 with the capacity to supply 3000 megalitres of water over each summer and winter period. The district services agriculture, horticultural and viticultural enterprises producing cherries, apples, salad vegetables, wine grapes, apricots, olives and walnuts in and around the townships of Tea Tree, Campania, Orielton, Pawleena, Penna, Sorell and Forcett.

My electorate has benefited from the revitalisation of school farms such as Cressy District School, Hagley Farm School and Sheffield District School, the Midlands Highway upgrades at White Lagoon at Tunbridge to Mona Vale, \$23 million, and Epping Forest to Powranna, \$33 million.

The Don region in Tasmania's north-west is renowned for the production of high-quality vegetables, other high-value crops and dairy and that is why we have announced the Don irrigation scheme estimated at \$28.5 million, which will deliver up to 5000 megalitres of irrigation water at 95 per cent reliability to agricultural land in the Don, Barrington and Sheffield areas. Once fully operational, the scheme is expected to deliver 130 direct and indirect jobs.

Once completed, the proposed 10 irrigation schemes in the pipeline are expected to provide almost 78 000 megalitres of water, create up to 2600 full-time jobs, trigger an additional \$150 million in on-farm private investment and inject an estimated \$114 million each year into the sector and the economy. The Don irrigation scheme is the first of 10 tranche 3 irrigation projects to progress through the planning and approvals process. These vital irrigation schemes provide the assurance of water reliability, enabling further investment which will expand existing capacity.

As the Premier has said in his address, this Government was elected in 2014 with a number of key priorities, one of those being to deliver a strong economy and jobs. One way to continue to deliver those jobs, particularly in our more regional and rural areas, is to support the timber industry. Forestry is critical to Tasmania's future. Tasmania's forest industry supports over 5700 direct and

indirect jobs. That is 5700 families that have a life dependent on forestry and forestry-related industries. Of those jobs, at least 40 per cent of them are involved in the native forest sector. This Government supports that sector and reject the Greens notion to shut down all native forestry. It is a ridiculous notion to shut down an industry that provides us with valuable timber resources for use in building and furnishing our homes and for use in our internationally acclaimed boat building and artisanal ventures.

The Greens attracted less than 7 per cent of all votes in Lyons in the last election and less than 4 per cent in Braddon, yet they think they can dictate to every Tasmanian what they can and cannot do for a living and how they manage their own land. This is not how a democracy works. The ancient Greeks, the fathers of democracy, would be appalled.

Tasmanian forest management standards are world's best practice and we regrow all our harvested forests. It provides the framework for the sustainable management of the land and the forests that according to the science allows for the maintenance of biodiversity, productivity and potential for provision of ecological, social and economic functions. Our forest industry is managed sustainably, something that the International Panel on Climate Change has highlighted. It is a great way to maintain or enhance forest carbon stocks and maintain forest carbon sinks, including by the transfer of carbon to wood products.

It is widely understood that growing trees is good for the planet and deforestation is bad, but what is not well understood is just how powerful strategically growing, harvesting and then replanting trees in a primary production landscape can be. Planting trees on farms with the intention of harvesting and replanting is a win-win for the environment, society and landowners. Total productivity of farm systems that include trees is usually higher than in monoculture systems. Field trials across a range of climate and soil regimes around the world have documented these benefits, including case studies conducted by Private Forests Tasmania, UTAS and CSIRO.

Trees provide wind reduction and shade. This results in less damage to leaves on crops and less water evaporation, which increases plant growth. Trees also provide shelter for livestock, which improves conditioning and reduces mortality in bad weather. Tree strips have also been found to improve palatability of pasture grasses. Tasmanian case studies have found that farm systems that included trees were more productive and profitable than agricultural only enterprises, with internal rates of return typically around 8 per cent. The shelter value of trees in the Tasmanian case studies exceed the value of the timber by two to three-fold.

Tasmania's environmental record is second to none. Our level of protection is more than three times the Australian average and more than three times the world average. We still have almost two-thirds of the forest cover which existed at European settlement. Half of our state is covered by forest and more than half of our forests are reserved, including more than 80 per cent of our old growth forests.

Not only do trees help deliver more food, fuel, water and better carbon balance, helping us to achieve the United Nations' sustainable development goals, the renewable wood fibre is also replacing other materials like metals, plastics and toxic chemicals made from non-renewable resources. In Tasmania, we are seeing projects to develop new industrial green chemicals such as solvents made from renewable products created from wood biomass. Solvents such as cream are highly sought after by international customers who are in need of non-toxic green chemicals. The government remains a strong supporter of our forest industries and will not support a call for more land lock-ups and the associated loss of opportunity this industry provides Tasmanians.

Every summer bushfires threaten homes and businesses throughout Tasmania. In January 2013 a series of devastating bushfires impacted several rural communities with significant loss of property, livelihood and our natural environment.

Back in 2015, the Tasmanian Government invested \$28.5 million in a cross-agency program strategically targeting burns to reduce the amount of potential fuel for a bushfire. This statewide fuel reduction program focused on areas that posed the greatest risk of bushfire and included both public and private land. High risk locations were identified by each of Tasmania's 10 fire management area committees. The risk assessment used a combination of local knowledge and computer modelling, undertaken by the Fuel Reduction Unit of the Tasmanian Fire Service.

Burns are only conducted when it is safest and smartest to do so. The conditions required for the safest burns largely exist during Autumn and Spring due to the variability of Tasmania's weather. Burn schedules can change at very short notice. Fuel reduction burns are managed and therefore smoke is kept to a minimum. However, smoke is an unavoidable part of burning.

Bushfires respect no boundaries, so the Tasmanian Fire Service works with the Parks and Wildlife Service, Sustainable Timber Tasmania, local government and private landowners to implement the fuel reduction program on both public and private land. The Tasmanian Liberal Government will establish two new dedicated burn crews within the Tasmania Fire Service to enable more burns to be conducted when conditions are favourable. We will introduce a bushfire mitigation measures act 2020. Under existing laws, in a bushfire emergency the state controller can immediately take steps to put into place firebreaks and reduce fuel, but this is only when the threat has materialised. Outside an emergency situation, there are a number of permits, hurdles or challenges that the Tasmanian Fire Service or a private landowner must overcome for them to take preventative action to protect their property.

To keep Tasmanians safe, the Government will introduce legislation to make it easier to reduce fuel and mechanically clear vegetation once a bushfire hazard management plan has been issued to better protect life, property, infrastructure and environmental assets. The legislation will introduce a new streamlined process to enable fuel loads to be reduced while balancing environment and community concerns. We will cut red tape by allowing approvals to be granted in a shorter time frame making it easier for both public and private landowners to undertake fuel reduction burns on their land, taking preventative action in order to keep the broader community safe.

We will provide the Tasmania Fire Service with clearer powers to ensure landowners take responsibility for undertaking fuel reduction activities where there is an unacceptable bushfire risk. The development and roll out of a new landowner support program will better educate, engage and support landowners to manage their bushfire risk.

We will provide more resources to the Parks and Wildlife Service and we will create a \$100 000 pilot grant program working with the Aboriginal community, drawing on their expertise in fuel reduction and maintenance of landscapes through cultural burning. The Tasmanian Liberal Government's nation-leading fuel reduction strategy has helped to reduce the statewide bushfire risk to 83.3 per cent, the lowest it has been in 15 years. To ensure we keep Tasmania safer we need to introduce more legislation, which is why we are acting.

The Tasmanian Government has identified renewable energy as a key economic driver for the future. The Australian energy sector is currently undergoing a period of unprecedented change. As traditional generators retire, Australia must invest in a modern renewables-based energy system.

Tasmania is strategically placed to provide low cost, reliable, clean energy to the National Electricity Market.

My electorate of Lyons has seen a \$30 million refurbishment of the Repulse Power Station as part of our renewable energy Hydro power network. The global supply and use of energy is dramatically shifting as countries are now looking to cleaner, renewable forms of energy in order to decarbonise their economies. Tasmania is ideally positioned to play its part in this transition.

Tasmania has a proud 100-year history of hydro-industrialisation, which has established our presence as the renewable energy state of Australia. The Tasmanian Government has identified renewable energy as a key economic driver for the future. Tasmania is one step away from reaching 100 per cent full self-sufficiency in renewables. This represents an invaluable competitive advantage for Tasmania's brand, placing our state in a prime position to attract new industrial investment.

Tasmania currently has a number of large-scale renewable energy projects under development. Project Marinus, Battery of the Nation and major wind farm developments, especially on the north-west coast and through the Central Highlands. The Tasmanian Renewable Energy Plan 2020 will build on Tasmania's natural competitive advantages influencing existing and planning investments to significantly grow Tasmania's renewable energy sector. The plan sets out three key priorities: one, transforming Tasmania into Australia's renewable energy powerhouse; two, making energy work for the Tasmanian community; and three, growing the economy and providing jobs.

By 2030 the Tasmanian Government aims to ensure Tasmania is a producer and exporter of renewable hydrogen, making energy work for the Tasmanian community by achieving lower prices and delivering a reliable and secure energy system powered by clean, renewable energy. As the energy market undergoes rapid transformation and technological change, ensuring that Tasmanian customers are empowered to manage their energy needs and take advantage of new technology and market offerings will also be a key objective. Vulnerable Tasmanian customers will be supported with targeted concessions and assistance with improving energy efficiency to lower bills.

By 2040 we aim to generate 200 per cent of our 2022 renewable energy production levels transforming Tasmania into Australia's renewable energy powerhouse. The Government will also conduct a detailed analysis of the pathway and impacts to achieve a target of zero net emissions before 2050 as part of the review of the Climate Change Act. Using Tasmania's natural advantages and existing renewable resources through the Tasmanian Renewable Hydrogen Action Plan will insure Tasmania is perfectly placed to benefit from the emerging global hydrogen industry. Continuing our strategy of utilising renewable energy as a key economic driver that benefits all Tasmanians through job creation, the Government will act to ensure that Tasmanians can get the skills and training they need to take advantage of the employment opportunities Tasmania's expanding renewable energy sector will provide.

The Government will also continue to promote and develop Tasmania's renewable energy brand, both nationally and globally. The target for Tasmania to generate twice as much as we currently consume by 2040 is informed by a baseline of 10 500 gigawatt hours per annum being the current on-island consumption. Producing more renewable energy than is needed on island will allow export via the existing Basslink Interconnector and via the new interconnection project, Marinus.

The Department of State Growth has consulted with Hydro Tasmania in relation to the framework as the basis of a potential Tasmanian renewable energy target. By 2040 Tasmania will be utilising Marinus link, generating significant additional capacity through the Battery of the Nation pumped hydro projects and substantially increased wind generation. Additionally, to fully optimise this enhanced dispatchable capacity we expect to attract additional on-island load such as hydrogen and the electrification of the transport sector.

The Tasmanian Government will invest \$50 million to encourage the development of hydrogen energy in Tasmania with a goal to have a renewable hydrogen generation facility operational by 2022-24. The Renewal Hydrogen Action Plan includes a \$20 million Tasmanian Renewable Hydrogen Fund, \$20 million for concessional loans and \$10 million for support services. To be able to commercially export hydrogen by 2030 will create hundreds of local jobs and inject billions into the Tasmanian economy.

The Government's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-23 aims to tackle housing stress and homelessness around the state. Stage 2 of Tasmania's Affordable Housing Strategy builds upon the work we are doing to increase the supply of houses across the spectrum. We are investing an additional \$125 million for this plan, bringing the Government's investment to almost \$200 million over eight years. This will be the largest state government investment into affordable housing in Tasmania's history. Our new plan builds on the Affordable Housing Action Plan 1 2015-19, delivering an extra 1500 new affordable homes to Tasmanians. It is estimated that this will create approximately 900 jobs in the building construction industry, which will be a boost to our economy.

Over the next four years the plan will deliver around 380 new lots for new affordable homes, more social housing, 607 new homes in areas of high demand and more homeless accommodation, 88 more units for those in crisis and better planning that makes it easier to build new homes and increase supply. The plan will also improve access meaning more people in home ownership - 287 low income households will be helped to buy their own homes. The plan will support people into private rental - 200 tenancies to assist low income households. There will be new support for the vulnerable - 418 people or families in supported accommodation. This plan will also deliver responsive services, connecting clients to support services and finding safe and secure accommodation for Tasmanians most in need.

It will also deliver better data. The Government will undertake work with UTAS in consultation with peak housing bodies to update and adjust its projections for housing demand and supply necessary housing across the spectrum so that we can ensure key movements are identified early and the investment delivered under Stage 2 is well targeted and responsive. We are confident that our strategy will ease the pressure on Tasmanians currently experiencing housing stress.

On 3 March 2020 we announced a major policy that provides certainty over the long term for our community housing sector and increases the supply of social housing for people on the housing register. The Government will extend its current agreements with four community housing providers through to 2040, providing long term certainty for the sector.

It will transfer the management of around 2000 Housing Tasmania properties, meaning housing community providers will access an extra \$6 million of revenue through Commonwealth rent assistance each year. The additional revenue will see an estimated 700 new social and affordable houses delivered over the term of the agreements. We have committed \$22 million to help deliver an estimated 220 new social houses over the next three years. This is in addition to the \$12 million capital grants announced in December and is on top of the work already underway as part of our

affordable action plan. This additional \$34 million investment into social housing has been made possible because of the historic agreement signed last September with the federal Housing minister to wipe Tasmania's housing-related debt to the Commonwealth.

The Government will also do more to support people into affordable home ownership by increasing the Government's maximum contribution under its HomeShare program from \$83 000 to \$100 000. This increase reflects the changing conditions in Tasmania's housing market and will result in eligible home share recipients remaining competitive in the market while also saving more in mortgage repayments. The \$20 000 first home owners grant will be extended to June 2020 and the stamp duty concession for eligible pensioners and first home buyers will continue.

Not only will these initiatives help more Tasmanians into a home but will also create more jobs in the construction and housing sector. The Government is proud to announce these initiatives, which provide certainty for the future of key sectors within our community. We will work hard every day to put shelter over the heads of people who need it most.

The Government is committed to strengthening our fast-growing economy and create more jobs. Since 2014, there have been 21 100 jobs created. It is initiatives like the South East Employment Hub and the new Glenorchy jobs hub that are outstanding examples of building relationships with industries and businesses to give more people the opportunity to gain employment.

The Government is helping to make this happen by confirming an extension of the South East Employment Hub, with funding of \$300 000 for a further 12 months and a commitment to work with our local and federal government colleagues, stakeholders and community partners to ensure that this already successful model continues to meet the current and future needs of the community. One hundred people have secured local jobs as a direct result of the transport and training opportunities the South East Employment Hub provides. Local job seekers in the region have benefited from the hub and it has helped to turn their lives around. This has been a game changer since the Government began investing in the hub as part of our \$4.1 million jobs action project.

The South East Employment Hub provides a place where individuals can network with the community, business and industry to seek further work opportunities, as well as having access to transport for training and work experience to assist with the pathways to employment. This extension and commitment to work with all levels of government provides confidence for the municipality, particularly to those who have currently engaged with the South East Employment Hub as they continue to gain experience and work towards a job.

This initiative demonstrates that local communities working together can create new opportunities for people to achieve employment in their local areas. That is why we are working to identify other areas around Tasmania where this successful model can be replicated, ensuring that all Tasmanians, no matter where they live, their backgrounds or their circumstances, have the opportunity to participate in Tasmania's growing economy.

We are helping to make this happen by the addition of the Glenorchy employment hub with funding of \$1.3 million. The Tasmanian Liberal Government is committed to helping and overcoming employment barriers and connecting employers with the local jobseekers in a number of regions across Tasmania.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Bus Services in Northern Tasmania

[6.00 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Madam Speaker, I continue yesterday's contribution on the northern bus service changes that I started telling some of the stories that have been coming through to my office. There are quite a number we are compiling for the minister.

To go on with some of the commentary I have received from people:

My daughter has been left at her school now four times because the bus which has a route on her road does not even take that road or stop there on some days. I have spoken to the company a number of times and with many drivers but because she catches it irregularly, they skip the stop.

My son ends up at LC by the end of his bus trip but every day it is a lottery as to which bus stop at Cressy the 720 bus stops at, it seems to depend.

My eldest starts university at Alanvale this week but in their wisdom, the 6.45 a.m. bus from Cressy now leaves from Longford.

The Metro picking children up at St Thomas More's this afternoon is arriving later than 3.15 p.m., more like 3.25 p.m. That is fine but it is often full and children frequently have to stand, which is very unsafe. The primary school children who get off that at St Pat's to catch the Redline out to Hadspen are almost always missing their bus, causing unnecessary stress.

This is a different electorate, but we have had our bus stops removed from our street in Punchbowl which is now causing us to have to walk further to catch a bus to town. We have also had a lot of our bus times reduced. So now we do not have any bus service going past our school to get the kids to school on time during winter or in fact, at any time that they might have to get a bus, unless they catch the one at 7.50 a.m. which gets them at school too early because they are not supposed to be on the school ground until 8.30 a.m. with duty of care.

That means that kids have to stand outside of school for 15 or even 30 minutes on their own which they are not allowed to do. I hope the powers that be can fix this problem and rethink the buses and the stops they have taken away.

I am writing to you on behalf of myself and my partner because we are dissatisfied with the service our eight-year-old children are experiencing. They miss a connecting bus that ensures they get home safely, not once but twice on consecutive days.

Our children have been catching the Larmenier bus service home from mid-last year without issue. This year they are required to change to a connecting bus and this is where our angst and dissatisfaction has occurred.

The service they are now utilising is the 8.22 a.m. That leaves Larmenier at 3 p.m. arriving at St Patrick's College at 3.38 p.m. and an undisclosed stop according to the website. They need to make their way to Stop C by 3.40 p.m., two minutes later, which gives a very slim changeover time.

I have expressed my concerns with Launceston Metro staff. I was assured that bus drivers communicate and the bus would be held up to ensure that all children make their connecting bus. This is obviously not the case.

On 20 February I received a call from my children at 3.49 p.m. to alert me they had missed their connecting bus. On 21 February I received a call again from my children at 3.44 p.m. to alert me they had again missed their connecting bus.

This parent goes through the difficulty that is for her and her husband who are working to ensure that their children are safe.

Another one:

I too would like to express my disappointment with the removal of some Metro bus routes. I have lived in this area for more than 30 years. Now, as a retiree and a regular Metro user, I find the routes that service Mulgrave Street, Meredith Crescent and Ormiston Road have ceased. Therefore, for me to travel to Prospect for my medical appointments or shopping, it makes it very difficult.

The new schedules are promoted as making the journey time shorter but instead it will now more than double the time for this trip. I have the option of a 15-minute walk to Westbury Road to catch the bus from the city or travel via the bus from Kings Meadows to the city to connect with a Prospect bus.

I question the need to remove the service as anyone wishing to travel to Prospect can also use this bus. Even if the number of daily services were reduced, at least this route would still be operating.

At a time when we are being encouraged to use public transport, it seems not everyone's needs are being committed. I wonder how many of these people who make decisions ever use public transport.

Another letter, a similar situation has occurred at South Norwood:

The previous route going through Charlton Street is now bypassed with a saving of two minutes. The new bus stop is too far for many people and impossible due to the uphill climb for others who are elderly or handicapped.

Total disregard has been shown towards previous loyal patrons.

Residents may not be aware that on 20 January Metro general public bus services to Trevallyn, Dandenong, Delungra Road and Reatta Road hilly areas were ceased. Presently, Trevallyn bus services which traversed these routes travel to Riverside North terminal and then via the West Tamar to the St John Street terminal. They have eliminated the two five-minute routes for residents who wish to travel to the Windsor Park medical centre which incorporates the closed Trevallyn

medical centre and the major Riverside shopping centre. In effect, this modernisation has resulted in closing the five-minute loops and has created 30-minute loops from York to St John streets, traversing the remaining parts of Trevallyn twice on each trip.

South Launceston has been cut up in the Metro services in the name of efficiency and so-called more direct routes. The Metro mantra is for less diversions and quicker trips from suburbs to the city. In South Launceston this results in the residents now having to walk up to a kilometre in order to catch a bus. What madness is this?

Additionally, the fiasco surrounding the old Metro service past the Launceston General Hospital highlights the 'yes Minister' stupidity of these changes. Metro management has privately stated these changes are set in concrete. Could I suggest a jackhammer be taken to the changes and commonsense used to restore the services? Even governments and public servants could admit mistakes and rectify them.

This woman tried to get some information about the city High Street-Talbot Road-Punchbowl Road route so that she could get a bus into the city. In order to get a bus into the city, which you used to be able to get on Talbot Road, she now has to go to the other side of Talbot Road and take that bus along High Street-Talbot Road-Punchbowl Road and then into the city via Amy Road and Abbott Street. Instead of a direct route into the city she has to go around the city in order to make it to the city and had significant issues getting any kind of understanding about it when she raised it.

I have had people who attended the forums that were conducted by the Government and by Metro and by the Department of State Growth who felt that their needs and questions were really quite dismissed. There was one issue around the Delungra Road area where residents raised the concern of the bus stops being removed for the elderly and for the children and in their wisdom the department did decide to keep the bus stops for the children but not for the elderly residents. So, whilst it is great that the kids can get to school, elderly residents have to traverse a really steep hill in order to be able to access their public transport.

I have a number more and I am realising I am out of time. We are compiling them for the minister. One of the biggest concerns that I have is that when people have been raising these concerns with the minister, the department or Metro they are not feeling that their needs are being met.

The review started in 2016. It was complex. It was deferred to get by the election period. There was a trial in the middle of last year and then quite some time before the routes were advertised, a very short period of time for the routes advertised, and I think only 16 000 letters were sent out for a route service that certainly services substantially more people than that. We do need to have a serious look at it and we will be asking that the minister makes State Growth staff and Metro staff available to meet with these people.

Tasmania Police - Comments made by Ms O'Connor

[6.08 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I bring to the attention of the House the abysmal unparliamentary behaviour of one of the Greens members today, Cassy O'Connor, when she brought the reputation of Tasmania Police into disrepute.

When a protester's car was allegedly rammed, Ms O'Connor stated that Tasmania Police had not investigated the matter. I will read out what she said today in the Chamber:

There has been no police investigation or follow-up.

Then she went on to say:

So pro-loggers are above the law.

In fact, we know that yesterday a person was charged in relation to this incident and they also have potentially more charges pending. Tasmania Police was not at fault here at all. A member of parliament has claimed that Tasmania Police first did not investigate, did not follow-up and then also said that they were putting pro-loggers above the law. It is outrageous that a member of the House of Assembly can blatantly show disrespect for the Tasmanian police service. So busy to spit vitriol about respect, manners being 'you are better than that', and taking the high moral ground when in reality this member will throw anyone under the bus for their own party's survival. It is desperate and not fitting for someone who boasts to have been better than all of us all the time.

I believe Tasmania Police is the best police service in this country. Tasmania Police put their lives on the line. They are often first responders at most traumatic events and also those awful fearful moments. They keep us safe and for the member to be so scathing and wrong is blatantly unprofessional and so, so, so disappointing.

I would like the member to apologise to Tasmania Police about the mistruth, correct the record and sometimes, if she can remember, that the focus on your own sense of eco-justice can be skewered to suit your own blinkered agenda. It is time to apologise.

Tasmania Police - Comments made by Ms O'Connor

[6.10 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I would like to reiterate the comments of my colleague, the member for Lyons, Jen Butler.

We have parliamentary privilege in this place and that is a privilege that allows us to speak freely so that we do not have to fear being sued if we walk outside. That is a privilege and it should not be used to simply machine gun people's reputations.

Since coming into parliament three years ago now I have seen many instances where the Greens, and especially Ms O'Connor, the member for Clark, has come into this place and machine gunned people's reputations with no quarter given.

On 21 February, we saw that a protester's car in the Tarkine was allegedly rammed. That is a very terrifying incident for all the people involved. We know that the police have a very fine line to tread. They are the ones who have to manage peace in the forests, to try to at times separate protesters from pro-logging groups, also to get protesters out of their tree sits, to actually unlock them when they have chained or locked themselves onto equipment, and also arrest them when protesters fail to leave.

What they do not need is outrageous, baseless slurs. We heard today in the matter of public importance - and it is clear on the video - Ms O'Connor accuse the police of not acting on this incident from 21 February when the protester's car was rammed. Ms O'Connor said there had been no investigation or follow-up by Tasmania Police and then went on to say, 'so pro-loggers are above the law'. This is an outrageous slur, impugning Tasmania Police who are walking this fine line when it comes to forestry protests, to balance people's right to protest but also make sure that they are safe and if they break the law that they are removed from the protests.

Then at 2 p.m. today the Bob Brown Foundation announced on Twitter that somebody had been charged in relation to this matter. It was yesterday in fact. Ms O'Connor simply re-tweeted with the single word 'Good'. I argue that that is not good enough. There should have been an apology. Maybe Ms O'Connor was hoping that nobody actually heard the way that she bagged out Tasmania Police.

Tasmania Police is trying to keep the peace in the forests when what we see from the actions of the likes of Ms O'Connor is they actually want less peace in the forest. They want a forestry war simply to drive back memberships and build on their abysmal 4 per cent of support which they have in Braddon. Ms O'Connor should come into this place at the earliest opportunity and apologise.

The House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.