



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Thursday 3 April 2025

REVISED EDITION

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Thursday 3 April 2025

The Speaker, **Ms O'Byrne**, took the Chair at 10.00 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

The SPEAKER - Speaking of trespassing against us, there were 15 people warned yesterday. Let us not do that again today. Let us have a very civilised and appropriate parliament that everybody gets to spend the entire day in.

QUESTIONS

Energy - Transmission Costs for Major Industrials - Comments by Minister for Energy

Mr WINTER question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN

[10.01 a.m.]

Yesterday, you issued a statement in which you said, 'Our major industrials have faced nowhere near a 20 per cent increase in transmission costs as claimed by the opposition.' Was that statement accurate? Will you repeat it in the House today?

Mr Ellis - I thought you wanted to increase power prices?

Mr WINTER - If you do stand by it, will you outline the average transmission price rises for our major industrials this financial year?

The SPEAKER - Leader, I am going to ask you to repeat the question. Minister Ellis distracted me and I did not hear it, and I need to hear it for supplementaries.

Mr WINTER - Excellent. The entire question, honourable speaker?

The SPEAKER - From the question bit, yes.

Mr WINTER - The entire thing, I think you mean, honourable Speaker.

The SPEAKER - I am happy with that. I did not actually get the question in, so I will hear it again.

Mr WINTER - Minister, yesterday you issued a statement in which you said, 'Our major industrials have faced nowhere near a 20 per cent increase in transmission costs as claimed by the opposition.' Was that statement accurate? Will you repeat it in the House today? If you do stand by it, will you outline what the average transmission price rise has been for major industrials this financial year?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question and his continued interest in energy and transmission prices. I point to the member's calls recently for the North West Transmission Developments stages 1 and 2 to be built immediately in its entirety and without

delay. A reckless statement if ever I have heard one. It is a reckless statement because this is a really important place, and it is critical to the mums and dads of Tasmania, who pay their power bills -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Member for Bass.

Mr DUIGAN - to the businesses of Tasmania, and to the major industrials that we take a prudent and a considered pathway forward. That we do the work - not that we come out and make bold and frankly ridiculous statements in media releases. We need to do the work. That is the easy bit; that is the easy part. The assertion that our major industrials faced a 20 per cent increase in transmission costs is categorically incorrect.

Over a year ago, on 30 April 2024, the Australian Energy Regulator - who I would trust somewhat more than the Tasmanian Labor Party - approved TasNetwork's final 2024-2029 regulatory proposal, which sets the business' allowed revenue investment and pricing for the next five years including major industrials. This is how it works. It is not only build it and charge what it costs; it is prudent. Overall transmission costs have gone down in the past 10 years, according to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) report.

Members interjecting.

Ms Finlay - Major industrial transmission costs went down this financial year?

The SPEAKER - Member for Bass.

Mr DUIGAN - Overall transmission costs have gone down over the past 10 years, according to AER reports. Major industrials have commercial arrangements within the regulated maximum allowable limit. The AER sets the maximum allowable revenue that TasNetworks can recover from all transmission customers including major industrials at 4.1 per cent per year smoothed over the five-year period. Actual costs to transmission customers are set through network charges. Transmission costs for individual major industrials are negotiated directly with TasNetworks within the maximum allowable levels set by the Australian Energy Regulator.

Supplementary Question

Mr WINTER - Honourable Speaker, a supplementary question?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mr WINTER - The minister did not answer the question.

Mr Ellis - It sounded like he did to me.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, minister Ellis. You are going to be heading to the highway very early today.

Mr WINTER - If he does deny that the major industrials' price rise has gone up by almost 20 per cent this year, then what has been the average price rise for major industrials this financial year?

The SPEAKER - The final part of the question, which I did get, was the average transmission price rise. I will call the Minister for Energy and Renewables.

Mr DUIGAN - I think I very clearly stated that Mr Winter's assertion that our major industrials faced a 20 per cent increase in transmission costs is categorically wrong and incorrect. Overall transmission costs have gone down over the past 10 years, according to the AER. Major industrials have commercial arrangements within the regulated maximum allowable limits.

Members interjecting.

Mr DUIGAN - Where are you are getting your numbers from, Mr Winter, is an interesting question.

The SPEAKER - The minister will refer his answer through me and I draw him to the question.

Mr DUIGAN - They have commercial arrangements.

Energy - Transmission Costs for Major Industrials - Comments by Minister for Energy

Mr WINTER question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN

[10.07 a.m.]

Unlike the Minister for Energy and Renewables, over the last week I have spoken to every major industrial in the state. They faced average transmission cost increases of almost 20 per cent this year. I have been informed that, based on initial conversations with TasNetworks, they have been told to expect a price rise next year of more than 10 per cent for their transmission costs. Can you confirm that this is true? Did you mislead Tasmanians yesterday and this morning in a blatant breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

The SPEAKER - Before calling the minister, I remind members that allegations of that nature are incredibly serious. I ask the House to take it seriously as the minister comes to answer the question.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I again point Mr Winter to the fact that transmission costs in Tasmania have gone down over the past 10 years. Major industrials have commercial arrangements that they will deal with. I also point Mr Winter to comments that he has made about transmission build-outs in this state, which would have very large material impacts not only on major industrials but all customers in the state. You cannot have it both ways, mate. You cannot say, 'Build it all,' and then, 'Oh no, the prices are going to go up.' That is what happens. That is why you need to do the work.

Members interjecting.

Ms Finlay - You also need to understand the responsibilities of your role.

The SPEAKER - Member for Bass, it was not your question. I will draw the minister to the question.

Mr DUIGAN - We have a very substantial energy agenda in this state that we are progressing. It is progressing in an orderly fashion. We are working towards the FID decisions for Marinus, and for the North West Transmission Developments. These are very large investments for Tasmania. They have huge upsides for our state and we need to do the work. That is the important part. That is the part that we are getting on with.

Ms Finlay - Everyone is asking for you to do the work.

The SPEAKER - Member for Bass.

Mr DUIGAN - You might like to go around muckraking and spreading doomsday scenarios for our major industrials. I am sure the people who work in those businesses are not enjoying what they are hearing coming from you, Mr Winter.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - The House will come to order.

Mr DUIGAN - We need to be very solid on our support for those businesses and those jobs for Tasmanians. I will do what I am able to do in the energy space, providing energy through the gate for those large businesses, and continue to provide that certainty. I again point to the fact that Liberty Bell Bay and Hydro Tasmania struck commercial terms on a new 10-year agreement late last year. That is very clear demonstration of Hydro's willingness, and also the business' willingness, and the conditions that exist here in Tasmania for large energy users to find a deal - not just any deal, not a brown power deal, but a green energy deal. That is hugely important. We will continue to support our businesses. We will continue to make sure they have the power they need to power their businesses. That will be commercial arrangements. That is, as I see, the appropriate way for that to go forward.

Supplementary Question

Mr WINTER - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mr WINTER - Unlike the Minister for Energy and Renewables, I have actually met and been to these major industrials, so I do know what is going on. The question, to repeat it, was did the minister mislead yesterday, in a blatant breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct? Can he confirm that power transmission price rises have gone up by almost 20 per cent?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Any member on my right can stand up and take a point of order before I rule on whether that question is acceptable, but just commenting is not helping either. It is the original question about misleading. The minister can make a short response to that within the one minute that he has. I call the minister to the question.

I take allegations of misleading in this house on all sides extremely seriously. They are both serious matters for the person if they have it, but also serious matters if the allegation is made wildly as well.

Mr DUIGAN - It is fascinating and deeply ironic that the Leader of the Opposition would be talking about these transmission costs and the nature of the price rises, given it is in fact the Labor Party's pathway back to surplus to maximise the returns being generated through the GBEs. Presumably, you would have very large -

Ms FINLAY - Point of order, Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance.

The SPEAKER - I will take 45, relevance. Minister, it is the supplementary question and I will draw you to the question please.

Mr DUIGAN - As I think I have already stated, Speaker, I reject the assertion.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Project of State Significance

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.12 a.m.]

We know your decision to walk away from the Project of State Significance (POSS) process for your stadium dream is an attempt to shut out the community from having a say. Tasmanians will not be shut out. They only get louder and angrier when governments try to silence them.

We know you are running Paul Lennon's pulp mill playbook on the stadium, and are now backed in fully by his protégé, Mr Winter. Paul Lennon left office abruptly after his preferred premier rating fell to 17 per cent, largely because of perceptions of corruption in his fast tracking approval of the Gunns Pulp Mill, which had effectively bypassed normal planning procedure. How long do you expect it will take you, Premier, to get to 17 per cent? Do you accept your stadium will leave you in the political wilderness?

Mr Abetz - How long will it take you to get to 17 per cent?

Mr Rockliff - I thank the member -

The SPEAKER - I give the Premier the call.

ANSWER

Sorry, honourable Speaker. I thank the member for your question. If I went down to 10 per cent, I would still be backing the stadium.

The SPEAKER - I will take Ms Johnston. I will be punished for that later, I imagine.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Risks and Responsibility

Ms JOHNSTON question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.13 a.m.]

Labor will back the stadium unconditionally. However, Premier, you have a choice. Where does your sense of responsibility begin? Is it the cost blowing out to over \$2 billion? Is it the safety issues for construction workers exposed to contaminated land and toxic fumes? Is it the federal government withdrawing \$240 million because there is not enough room to build the urban precinct? Is it the crippling impacts on traffic? The high risk of flooding on the site? The impact of the marine ecology? The lack of disability access? Is it the extraordinary and crushing level of debt that generations of Tasmanians will have to pay?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my right, including Mr Ferguson.

Ms JOHNSTON - Is there a line you are not prepared to cross in pursuit of your stadium? What is that line, Premier? Like Labor, will you do absolutely anything for the AFL?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members on my right. The Premier has the call, not you.

ANSWER

Mr ROCKLIFF - Where do I start?

Mr Winter - I thought they banned Dorothy Dixers.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, on my left.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. There is a lot contained in that. It almost reminded me, verbatim, of Ms Peg Putt's talking points about the pulp mill in 2008, where it was going to be Armageddon, of course. This is a building. It will be a very environmentally friendly building at that, I have to say, and a huge opportunity for Tasmania and Tasmanians. What we did not see from the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) report was the enormous benefits that the stadium can bring. This is why I am surprised the member -

Mr Bayley - Is that the best you have? Auskick?

The SPEAKER - Deputy Leader of the Greens.

Mr ROCKLIFF - who is mirroring the Greens' opposition to this, despite the fact, in my humble opinion, the electorate that the member represents, particularly the area that the member represented when it came to local government and Glenorchy, which strongly back the opportunities that present for young people in this state and southern Tasmania, north-west, east coast and west coast. That is why we are backing it in. Very clearly.

Yesterday, I said that I was perplexed by aspects of the TPC report. Today, I am deeply concerned about the report. Mac Point's legal advice released this morning is that the TPC's report contains errors of law, approach and analysis. It is argumentative and lacks balance.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It should be given limited, if any, weight. Clearly, the legal advice from Mac Point. This is deeply concerning.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members of my left, broadly.

Mr ROCKLIFF - At the very least, it throws into extreme doubt the timeline for the Project of State Significance assessment. As I have said, the clock is ticking and we must get on with the job. This is a democratic institution; it is Parliament House. We are in the Project of State Significance process right now. Every person in this place, and indeed in the Legislative Council will have their say on the stadium infrastructure that is so crucial, essential, a must have, to ensure the -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Supplementary Question.

Ms JOHNSTON - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Ms JOHNSTON - The original question, Speaker. Is there a line that you are not prepared to cross to back in the stadium for the AFL? Is there a line? A limit?

The SPEAKER - It was the original, final question. It is more a debating point than a question. The Premier can address it briefly, if he chooses to.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This will be a well thought through stadia infrastructure. We will get the job done. Your talk is extreme, to say at the very least. Similar language is probably used in other states of Australia including South Australia, Perth, Townsville - if my memory serves me correctly - and others. People have pushed through and got the job done for the benefit of the Tasmanian community. I have every confidence that the challenges that will no doubt present with such a large project will be worked through. I had the pleasure yesterday of meeting with the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU), in actual fact, who are very keen to work collaboratively to see this project being built. I commend them for it because they understand the impact on their members and the thousands of jobs this will create.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Members interjecting.

Mr Abetz - We are buddies, Josh.

The SPEAKER -As I said, interjections that are humorous will stand.

Mr O'Byrne - I am not going to engage in that one.

Bruny Island Ferry - SeaLink Service

Mr O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

[10.19 a.m.]

In 2018, your government controversially awarded a 10 year contract for the Bruny Island ferry to mainland company SeaLink. The tender was partly awarded based on a controversial booking system, which your government has finally abandoned after seven years. The tender also stipulated that no on-land infrastructure was required or be built. Within months, you capitulated, much to the outrage of those who were unsuccessful in the tender, and spent millions on hopelessly delayed boat ramps. The new vessels, whilst well made, are too small and cannot keep pace with demand, with cars frequently queuing onto the Channel Highway.

SeaLink recently announced a significant reduction in the services to the island, despite previous assurances that this would not happen. These changes impact people's ability to get home from work and limits children's ability to participate in sport. We have now heard that SeaLink is to be sold by its parent company. Is it not time your government acknowledged your mistakes and retendered the service for the island?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Both of us represent Bruny Island, which is an essential part of the seat of Franklin. The Bruny Island ferry service is a very important facilitator for social and economic activity for the island. That is why the government has been concerned to ensure that there is a reliable service. As a result of community feedback that I received early on as Transport minister, I indicated to the Department of State Growth to liaise with SeaLink to drop the idea of a booking system. That has occurred.

There was a plan put forward by SeaLink and the Department for a reduced timetable during the winter period. That is something that is not unusual for Bruny Island. That used to be the case, I think, up until recent years, because the demand for the ferry service was substantially reduced.

SeaLink had a meeting with the Bruny Island Reference Group. I think that was on Monday evening of this week. I am still awaiting the full details of the outcome of that. I have spoken with Simon Tamlyn of SeaLink, encouraging him to see what can be done, especially for the Sunday morning services; getting kids off the island so that they can play sport on - if I can use the term - on the mainland of Tasmania, and also the evening services for those who work off island to be able to get back home in an evening. Those discussions are taking place.

Discussions in relation to the timetable, with respect, should be seen as completely separate to what SeaLink is doing in relation to seeking - and that is all it is doing at this stage - seeking to divest itself of its ferry services, not only in Tasmania but around Australia. They are trying to restructure their business. In the meantime, it will be business as usual by SeaLink to deliver the services that are so vitally important, as the member would know, and I am sure he would not wish any government to do that. The time for retendering will be at the time the contract expires. To pull the contract at this stage would be precipitous and unwise. We are in active discussions with SeaLink and the Bruny Island community to ensure that we get the best possible outcome to ensure that we get value for money for the taxpayer.

The SPEAKER - The Minister's time for answering the question has expired.

Supplementary Question

Mr O'BYRNE - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, this is no reflection on the workers of SeaLink who worked very hard to provide the service. There has been a litany of problems over the years. The tendered service is actually not doing the job required and the proposed cuts were put forward by SeaLink as a response. The service has changed significantly since you awarded the tender. It is not working. Will you move in to retender the service?

The SPEAKER - I will call the minister the question. It is similar to the original question. The minister may have addressed it.

Mr ABETZ - No, we will not move in to retender the service. What we are doing and will continue to do is to have a sensible discussion with the provider and the Bruny Island community to come to a landing that is fair and reasonable for all concerned.

State Debt

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.24 a.m.]

In your state of the state speech last month, you told Tasmanians that after 11 years of the Liberals, the state was broke and there was an unsustainable level of debt.

Mr Rockliff - No, I did not.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my right may take a point of order - which I am now hearing from the leader of government business. The question's time will pause.

Mr ABETZ - If I may, Speaker, there has been a -

Mr Barnett - Pattern of behaviour?

The SPEAKER - I am going to need a Standing Order.

Mr ABETZ - a pattern of behaviour by the Leader of the Opposition asserting that the Premier and ministers on this had said or asserted which is patently untrue and the *Hansard* does not represent that which is being asserted. I invite you to ask the Leader of the Opposition to ensure that he faithfully and truthfully represents that which is being said by the Premier and ministers on this side.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I am happy to rule on it. I will allow a response to the point of order, but then I am happy to make a ruling on this one.

Mr WINTER - I will rephrase the question.

The SPEAKER - Before you do rephrase the question, if members believe that something said in this House is untrue, then they may make a substantive motion to deal with that. If a member believes that they have been misrepresented, then they can, under Standing Order 127, make a personal explanation. If a member takes personal offence, they have an opportunity for Standing Order 144. They are the Standing Orders that apply. You are all bound by Standing Order 2, which requires you all to be truthful in your approach to this parliament. The Leader of the House has some latitude, as does the Leader of Opposition Business, for most parties to put cases for these things, but I do ask that you all have a look at the Standing Orders.

Government Business Enterprises - Proposal for Privatisation

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.26 a.m.]

Your state of the state speech left Tasmanians with a message that after 11 years of the Liberals, the state was broke and you had left an unsustainable level of debt for them and generations to carry. Worse, you said your plan to fix the debt crisis was a fire sale of Tasmanian assets. In that speech you proposed a TasNetworks 99-year lease. You put Tasmanian energy up for sale and that is part of Hydro. You said public transport operator, Metro, was for sale, and so was the Motor Accidents and Insurance Board (MAIB).

In the days that followed, you confirmed the *Spirits*, our ports and our rail network were all on the market as well. Both Houses of parliament have now confirmed they are opposed to your privatisation policy. Your entire agenda is in tatters because Tasmanians know that it means higher prices for them and less money for schools and hospitals. Do you accept that your plan cannot happen, and why do you not just drop it?

The SPEAKER - The timing was a little flawed because of the hearing of the points of order, so I will call the Premier to that and remind members about the obligations to not reflect on a vote of the House.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I will not be dropping it, because I believe in it. We have Mr Eslake commissioned to do some work and analysis on these matters. That work will continue. I do not run away when the going gets tough like you, Mr Winter. You sent poor old Mr Willie out there yesterday providing unconditional support for the stadium, which I appreciate very much. I thought to myself that deserves naming rights - the Josh Willie stand - at some point in time.

Mr Willie - I will take it.

Dr Woodruff - That will be snuggled up next to the Jeremy Rockliff stand.

Mr O'Byrne - I reckon the Josh Willie Toilet Block.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members. Dr Woodruff, repeating of Ms Badger's joke is probably not appropriate. Give credit where it is due.

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a view I have of the member, the Leader of the Opposition, when it comes to staying the course, believing in something and getting the job done. I have quoted the member a few times in this place. I go back to 2014 and the like. I believe I have got one from 2016 here, which is a little closer to home. You tweeted at the time, 'Eslake's Looking Forward: this document is a great summation of what's needed and TCCI (Tasmanian Chamber of Industry and Commerce) must now set a reform agenda.' It was interesting to actually refamiliarise myself with the Looking Forward report.

Mr Winter - I remember that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Well, good.

Mr Winter - You guys were not there.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You might save me a minute or two if you remember it. I will quote from one part of it, 'Reduce the unfunded super liability so as to create headroom for greater investment in productive infrastructure. Sell or lease assets such as poles and wires or ports to offset some of the liability.' These were the matters that were endorsed by the member back then, and I suspect a little more recently.

Ms Dow - Point of order -

The SPEAKER - Thank you. Members on my right. We will stop the clock for a bit. I am getting some time before hearing this point of order.

Ms DOW - Point of order, honourable Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. The Premier needs to come back to 2025 where we are now and to questions before him.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you members on my right. You can stop helping, because it is really not that helpful. The Premier actually answered the question in his first line. He is now

using his time to expand upon that; he has 30 seconds left to do that. it does help though- once you have answered the question you are quite welcome to sit down. That will avoid any supplementary. The Premier has the call.

Mr ROCKLIFF - In the remaining time that I have - it points out the hypocrisy. Here we have the honourable member who previously called on the TCCI to stand up, and here we have now the TCCI calling on the Labor Party to stop playing politics. I would call on you, Mr Winter, to get some spine, stop letting your shadow treasurer -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Supplementary Question

The SPEAKER - I am hearing a supplementary?

Mr WINTER - Yes, arising from the answer the Premier gave. The Premier mentioned -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, Leader, you can be warned as well. You know that the latitude of the Premier does not actually extend to you.

Mr WINTER - The Premier mentioned Saul Eslake's work. Can the Premier outline how much he is paying Saul Eslake to conduct this review into the privatisation that cannot happen with the House's position?

The SPEAKER - I will draw the Premier to that question only in that he mentioned it. I am actually a little conflicted on that one.

Mr WINTER - He talked about the work that Saul Eslake was doing.

The SPEAKER - The Premier can address it insofar as it responds to the commentary that he made about engaging Mr Eslake, but that is as far as you will be able to go, I think, Premier.

Mr Ellis - Encore.

Mr Abetz - Give us another.

The SPEAKER - Allowed.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are working. It is a multi-stage piece of work. Incidentally, we first announced this when we announced our GBE reform discussions paper with the Treasurer in October-November last year. I am more than happy to be open and transparent around the work and the funding of the work when that is finalised.

Mr Willie - You were not at the election.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Project of State Significance Process - Cost

Mrs PENTLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.32 a.m.]

Tasmania's budget emergency is now well established, with a net debt on track to reach a massive \$16 billion by 2035. Despite this, your government is building an unfortunate track record of wasting money. The *Spirit* saga, the abandoned northern prison plan and overspending on consultants are prime examples, and now you are set to ditch another expensive undertaking. How much has been spent on the Project of State Significance process for the stadium so far and what will the total bill to taxpayers be if you walk away?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We are still in the Project of State Significance process right now, but it is all good work. It is all work that is necessary, and I said that I welcomed the issues paper. I have made some further views known today for good reason, but we need to work all through these issues.

It is complex. There are areas we need to work through in great detail, and you would appreciate that the Macquarie Point Development Corporation are working through that. It is outstanding work being done by Anne Beach, I have to say, a considered and measured approach to this complex but necessary infrastructure.

I am sure there will be further information around associated costs when we get to the scrutiny of the budget, and that will be displayed in all transparency. I assure the member that we are keeping our options open, as you would appreciate we need to do, given the urgency of the timeline in constructing the stadium. We are still in the Project of State Significance process.

Supplementary Question

Mrs PENTLAND - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mrs PENTLAND - I was wondering if perhaps the Premier might take that on notice and come back to the House with a figure of how much has been spent on the process so far.

The SPEAKER - Is the Premier able to provide that data to the House or would you seek to take it on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will take it on notice.

The SPEAKER - As to what you can provide? I appreciate, given the Premier's commentary, and still being in the process, it may be difficult to achieve, but if the Premier could do what he could to take that on notice, that would be appreciated by the House.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Cost

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.35 a.m.]

When you first announced plans to build a billion-dollar stadium, you batted off claims that it would negatively impact investment in health, housing and other essential services. You said you could walk and chew gum at the same time. Since then you have announced a job-freeze, job and service cuts, and a plan to sell off Tasmanian assets.

You tried to walk and chew gum at the same time and have clearly tripped and choked. Your counterpart, the leader of the so-called opposition, is as bad, willing to support the stadium without articulating how Labor would manage that without your plan to decimate the public service and state assets. Do you really think it is a job of a government to gut essential services to fund a \$1.2 billion gift to the AFL?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, we will not be gutting essential services; that is what you did in 2011. We have learned our lesson there. When I say 'our' - the Tasmanian people learnt their lesson there. It is not what we will be doing, in actual fact. We are going to continue investing in our health services, and the budget will clearly demonstrate a continued investment in health services and provide very clear detail about where that investment will lie.

Since March 2014, the number of nurses employed in our health system has increased by nearly 52 per cent. We are still recruiting nurses and doctors. The number of doctors has also increased by more than 60 per cent. The number of ambulance operatives have also increased some 86 per cent.

Since April last year, we have put on 2675 healthcare workers. As we have said a number of times, health makes up 32 per cent of the budget across government, and with \$12.9 billion over the forward estimates and around \$8.8 million a day.

We will continue to invest in health services and investing in our schools, investing in our hospitals, investing in community, keeping our community safe. This is a very tired scare campaign from the Greens. Yes, we can walk and chew gum at the same time. I do not characterise the stadium infrastructure as you have characterised it. This is infrastructure for Tasmania. It is intergenerational infrastructure for Tasmanians, which Tasmanians will benefit from.

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Premier said that he will not be gutting services. Can you please confirm then that you will be abandoning your job-freeze and you will be abandoning the job and service cuts that you have announced recently?

The SPEAKER - Thank you. It does arise from the answer the Premier gave.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As we have said many times, we have invested in recent years to ensure that we are building infrastructure to provide for a growing economy. We are considerably investing in services and community services organisations when it comes to the pandemic, as you expect us to do. That is upwards of around \$2 billion dollars

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. I asked the question quite simply: will he be abandoning the commitments that he has made to freeze jobs and to cut jobs and services? I did not ask about the things that are increasing.

The SPEAKER - The Premier is addressing the question. It might not be the answer that you are wanting to hear, but at this stage the Premier is addressing the question. Premier.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have clearly said as outlined in the State of the State Address.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Mental Health Support for Retired Police

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

[10.40 a.m.]

I met yesterday again with the members of the Retired Police Association who are deeply concerned that they have heard nothing regarding the motion I moved calling on the government to immediately fund ongoing mental health support for retired and former police officers. Can you assure the House that the funding will be allocated in this year's Budget to support the mental health needs of retired police officers as agreed upon in the motion passed in parliament?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Mr Jenner, your wife has great taste.

This is a very important matter. It was great to see David Plumpton and the Retired Police Association of Tasmania in the corridors yesterday. I have spoken with them personally, particularly David, since you passed that motion. I am really looking forward to working together on this.

At the outset, I offer for yourself and myself to go along to wellbeing services that we have as part of the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management and meet with the director there. We think that there are some good opportunities to build on the current services that we have for our Retired Police Association members and the retired police fraternity or profession more broadly.

Obviously, we are working through a budget process at the moment. I am not going to pre-empt that. Suffice to say, your advocacy and the advocacy of this House has been noted.

We want to make sure that we are backing in our emergency services; those who are serving now and those who have done such wonderful service for us in the decades and years past.

We are working through a process. We have some services that are currently available through the Retired Police Association in conjunction with wellbeing support. We look forward to exploring those options and funding options with you further.

Supplementary Question

Mr JENNER - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will take the supplementary question.

Mr JENNER - It was just part of the agreed-upon motion - will it actually be put into the Budget? I appreciate what you said, but I wanted an answer as to whether the funding for that mental health as agreed upon by the motion was going to be put into the Budget. That was my original question.

The SPEAKER - It was the original question. The minister said he will not pre-empt the Budget. I am sure the minister is aware of the obligations of motions that have passed his House. You can address it further if you wish, but I am comfortable that you answered it. It may not have been the answer Mr Jenner wanted.

TasPorts-TasRail-TT-Line Merge

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.43 a.m.]

Last year, you announced that you were seeking to merge TasPorts, TasRail and TT-Line. Can you confirm that due to overwhelming opposition, particularly from the business community, this proposal will be scrapped, just like your so-called reforms on local government, the fire tax and your ridiculous UTAS policy?

Ms Butler - Certainly has not got the Midas touch.

The SPEAKER - Member for Lyons, the Premier has not even made it to the lectern before you interjected. Please do not do that again. The Premier has the call.

ANSWER

First, you asserted that we would merge those entities. We did not say that.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members to my right. The Premier is doing fine without you.

Mr ROCKLIFF - To the Leader of the House's point before, you need to be called out when you deliberately get up and misrepresent and mislead Tasmanians - even though it is a question - in this House. You do it repeatedly. We are calling it out right now -

Mr Winter - You were not seeking to merge them?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That was on the table for discussion, as we clearly said we would -

Mr Winter - You have abandoned it too.

The SPEAKER - Leader.

Mr ROCKLIFF - to provide commentary, and consult, and all the things that you would quite rightly call on us to do. No decision has been made at this point, so that is the answer to your question. You mentioned reform, and structural reform. It is interesting what you said back in - I mentioned 2016 before, and we are going back to 2019 now. We are getting a little closer to 2025, albeit you were in parliament. Metro was up for discussion. You said, 'I do not want to make this sound as if I am attacking Metro. There is a structural problem'. It went on to say:

In other states there are different structures around. Looking at some of the structures that exist in other capital cities and states may be part of the response that sees us with a more strategic approach to public transport which does not currently exist.

The structures in other states, as I see it, is privatisation and those services are run by private companies.

Mr Winter - We are talking about a public transport commissioner - the Public Transport Commission, you dill.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Once again, you have been caught out.

The SPEAKER - If the member feels he has been misrepresented, he may take a point of order.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you. The House will come to order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am sure Mr Willie is not looking forward to going out once again to the lawn today and defending your honour because he refused to go out there and answer questions of the media. Our position is very clear when it comes to reform. Discussions about reform, as outlined in the discussion paper led by -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Member for Lyons. Deputy leader.

Mr ROCKLIFF - the member, minister and Treasurer Barnett, and we look forward to continuing to consult with the committee on these matters.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Transport Access for People with a Disability

Mrs BESWICK question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.46 a.m.]

On Tuesday, I highlighted criticisms from the Planning Commission about the government's transport plan and the fact it does not properly cater for Tasmanians with mobility issues. Now you are contemplating ignoring the TPC altogether. What faith can the public have that the needs of Tasmanians living with a disability will be considered? Can you guarantee that in your rush to get a stadium built, vulnerable Tasmanians will not be left out?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. That is a very good question. I assure you that we are working through the POSS process. I am not ignoring aspects of the TPC issues paper -

Mr Bayley - No, you are not, you are working your way around it.

The SPEAKER - Deputy Leader of the Greens, it is not your question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not ignoring those aspects. No, I am not. I will give you some comfort around that and particularly when it comes to people with disability. This needs to be the most inclusive stadia infrastructure in the country, if not the world.

I got some insight when I visited Adelaide Oval a few weeks ago where Adelaide Oval will make provision for a sensory room for children and young people with autism and other special needs. I was really impressed with that because it was a dedicated room where young people could come in and 'regulate', if that is the right word, in the beginning of the fixture and then be able to go outside and sit down with their parents or carers in a dedicated seating position and be able to enjoy the match or whatever the event was at the time. I was really heartened by that and impressed by that and I came away thinking that needs to be part of what is incorporated in our stadium infrastructure as well as, of course, the physical infrastructure in terms of access to ensure that people of all abilities can enjoy the events.

Government Business Enterprises - Proposal for Privatisation

Ms DOW question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.49 a.m.]

The *Government Business Enterprise Act* mandates that any sale of government businesses is approved by both Houses of parliament. Both Houses of parliament have expressed their view already, that privatisation means higher prices and less money for schools and hospitals, and they will not support it. Can you confirm that if you are to proceed with your

plan to privatise TasNetworks or part of Hydro, as you said you will, the *Electricity Companies Act* requires you to also hold a referendum. Have you thought your fire sale through?

Members interjecting.

Mr Winter - Plough through, plough on.

Mr Rockliff - Hm?

The SPEAKER - Thank you. You can just answer the question, not the interjection, Premier.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The Treasurer has been conducting a series of roundtables on these particular matter, and for good reason, we have put forward all government businesses and state-owned companies up for discussion, apart from the Hydro, to see what is best in public hands and how our services could be better enhanced by some GBEs moving to the private sector. We are going to continue with those discussions and we will comply with relevant acts.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Labor Support

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.51 a.m.]

The odious, unpopular, unaffordable stadium is now as much the Labor leader's as it is yours. Labor, under Mr Winter, has abandoned its duty and its promise to scrutinise your government on this issue and given its unconditional support to the stadium, no matter what the facts or the cost or the utter subversion of process and exclusion of Tasmanians it requires. This is the Rockliff-Winter stadium. It is shameful and it is a pox on both your houses. Why do you not do away with the pretence -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I need to hear the question. Thank you.

Dr WOODRUFF - Why do you not do away with the pretence and admit you are joined at the hip with Labor and that neither of you are prepared to prioritise the interests and wellbeing of Tasmanians who put us all here?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - The Premier has the call and should be the only voice I am hearing.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I reject the assertions in the question. Your question may well have come from the Lucy MacDonald ABC analysis, which I read, as I read all ABC analyses on various issues.

Dr Woodruff - It came out of the Greens' own minds, thank you very much.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, Leader of the Greens. If the Leader of the Greens feels she has been misrepresented, there is a standing order. Otherwise the Premier has the call and you will cease interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I saw Lucy's last couple of sentences and it very much pointed the finger at Mr Winter and myself as well, which is fine. That is what we have an ABC for; to keep everyone accountable. I reject the premise of aspects of your question. I am not sure what the point of the question really is, to be honest, because -

Dr Woodruff - What is the difference between the two of you? Have you done a deal on this?

Mr Abetz - Yes, hear, hear. It was a speech.

The SPEAKER - The Leader of the Greens will be silent and so will - I believe it might have been - the leader of government business. Thank you.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Dr Woodruff, whether you like it or not, and you talk about parliament as the ultimate arbiter of these matters, and the ultimate arbiter of the stadium will be through the Project of State Significance process or enabling legislation, as I outlined very transparently yesterday. You can shake your heads, but this is a democratic institution. The last time I thought -

Members interjecting.

Mr Bayley - Will you make a decision with no assessment?

The SPEAKER - The Deputy Leader of the Greens is warned now. You have had a lot of interjections today.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Every person in this place will get one vote, one value.

Ms Ogilvie - A chance to have a say.

The SPEAKER - Minister.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are still in the Project of State Significance process. I doubt I can persuade you and the Greens to back the stadium, disappointingly. I will try and I will continue trying -

Members interjecting.

Mr Fairs - I bet she will be there, though.

The SPEAKER - Mr Fairs, this is unlike you. Do not pick up bad habits from the others.

Mr ROCKLIFF - because I always live in hope but I am not relying on your vote. I will be ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to have their say, as the community are having their say now on the Project of State Significance process which will be finalised on 8 May, as I said yesterday. That is about all I can really say to your question.

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question, as Mr Bayley almost explodes from not interjecting through that one.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Premier said very clearly that he will be bringing the stadium to the parliament through the POSS process or enabling legislation.

The SPEAKER - Yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can he tell the parliament what the timing of his decision will be around whether it will be the enabling legislation, special legislation process -

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members on my right, I am attempting to hear this.

Dr WOODRUFF - or whether it will be the POSS because Tasmanians have got a right to know. He is treating them with contempt at the moment.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I believe the time for the supplementary question has expired. I will allow it because it did actually come from the answer the Premier gave about the two options for the further progress.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We are still in the Project of State Significance process. I am seeking advice, as I said yesterday, very openly and transparently, that will include a timeline and the community will be informed.

Dr Woodruff - Will you table the advice?

The SPEAKER - The member will not interject. She has an opportunity, I believe, for one more question.

Government Business Enterprises - Proposal for Privatisation

Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.56 a.m.]

You have been unable to convince both Houses of Parliament to support your privatisation plan, and you have no hope of convincing Tasmanians your policy means anything other than higher prices and less money for schools and hospitals. Given the average cost of the recent Federal Referendum has been more than \$3 million per seat, can you confirm that the cost of holding privatisation referendums across Tasmania's five electorates would likely exceed \$15 million, which is enough to pay for an extra teacher in every primary school in the state? Is this not this the sort of reckless, wasteful Liberal spending that has caused your budget crisis in the first place?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, this is scraping the barrel. I will repeat. The TCCI calls on the Labor Party and the Crossbench to back in these reforms.

Mr Willie - You need Tasmanians in a referendum.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You say that we are not able to convince the parliament. It sounds like Mr Winter is unable to convince his party room on his position on privatisation. Why do I live in hope that we can have a sensible discussion about this and to ensure that through measured, sensible discussion, with good information and analysis, that we can change the Labor Party's view?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Opposition, shadow treasurer, I just called you.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Why do I live in hope? It is because the member who asked the question in the not too distant future, had a couple of little Facebook ditties: 'Liberal priorities, stadium any cost', you said Mr Willie, 'less than 3 kilometres apart, wrong priority', you said Mr Willie.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Premier, I am hoping you are just quoting from that document and not using it as a prop.

Mr ROCKLIFF - 'Tasmanians should have their say on the stadium.' 'Wrong priority.' Yesterday, of course, and we welcomed it, and I commend you for doing your leader's dirty work, where you said, 'Yes, we will be supporting the stadium through parliament. There is no question about that.' If I can convince you mob on the stadium, which I have done, I can convince you on privatisation as well.

Mr WILLIE - Point of order, Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, members on my right. The member has a right to raise a point of order, and you can all be very quiet or all of you are going to be spending some time outside. I wonder if I can eject an entire cabinet?

Mr WILLIE - It might be an inconvenient truth, but the question is about a referendum, which is in the act, and the cost of that.

The SPEAKER - I will take the point of relevance. The question was about that. I will draw the Premier to the question. Otherwise, I am sure we will have a supplementary.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I said before, whatever is required by law, we will comply with the law. We will argue our case very strongly to the benefit of either holding on to government assets or selling -

Mr Willie - \$15 million referendum. Your privatisation agenda is in tatters.

The SPEAKER - Sorry, Premier, Mr Willie was obviously busy interjecting and missed his first warning. He has just got his second.

Mr ROCKLIFF - public assets to enhance service delivery for Tasmanians.

Commission of Inquiry - Children Held in Adult Facilities

Ms ROSOL question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.00 a.m.]

Evidence of your government's warped priorities is everywhere. There is no starker example than what we heard last week at the parliamentary committee looking at the commission of inquiry response. In devastating detail, a corrections worker shared his grave concerns about the practice of keeping children in adult watch houses. He says 400 children a year go through these adult facilities. He described children locked in these tiny spaces while adult detainees were screaming, yelling, abusing, and coming off drugs. Referencing a national media story about a teenage girl held for three days in a Northern Territory watchhouse, he said this happens 'weekly' in Tasmania. As if this situation -

The SPEAKER - Before you recommence your question, I will allow you to start it again. Just reminding members, when you are on committee, it is the obligation of the member to ensure that the only thing that you repeat is matters that were given in public evidence and not matters that are subject to the confidentiality of committees. More broadly, we will be writing to all of you soon about committees and the way in which committees are being conducted and spoken about. I will ask the member to recommence her question and just ask her to be aware. As Speaker, I was not a member of the committee. I have no knowledge as to what the member has knowledge of, so you do need to be very careful yourself that you are not breaching the Standing Orders.

Ms ROSOL - Premier, evidence of your government's warped priorities is everywhere. There is no starker example than what we heard last week at the parliamentary committee

looking at the commission of inquiry response. In devastating detail, a corrections worker shared his grave concerns about the practice of keeping children in adult watchhouses. He says 400 children a year go through these adult facilities. He described children locked in this tiny space while adult detainees were screaming, yelling, abusing, and coming off drugs. Referencing a national media story about a teenage girl held for three days in a Northern Territory watchhouse, he said this happens 'weekly' in Tasmania.

As if this situation is not appalling enough, workers have not had the training they need to assist and support these children. That is despite repeated requests from the United Workers Union. Premier, this is happening on your watch. What are you going to do immediately to fix it?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question and acknowledge the very serious nature in which you have detailed the lived experience of a person that provided evidence to a committee. We are developing a youth justice system that achieves better outcomes for young people. We are investing significantly in the commission of inquiry implementation recommendations and will continue to do so. This includes implementing a range of early intervention, prevention and diversion options and supporting children and young people who are on bail. The 2024-25 state budget provided a \$15.85-million investment over four years in line with the commission of inquiry recommendations and our Youth Justice Blueprint to focus on early intervention and diversionary services that target the root causes of youth offending, divert young people out of the youth justice system, and provide support to young people on bail.

As we progress with this work, our government has taken a number of proactive steps to keep young people safe in watchhouses in line with the recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry. These include acquiring body-worn cameras for staff engaged with young people; implementing body scanners across Tasmania Prison Services (TPS) facilities; the Australian Childhood Foundation developing and delivering specific training for Tasmanian correctional officers on trauma-informed engagement with young people in custodial settings; senior staff visits to watchhouse facilities to enable staff to ask questions and receive guidance on managing young people; and the review and amendment of key directors' standing orders to comply with the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act*.

The detention of young people in watchhouses, which you alluded to in your question, is not a Tasmanian-specific issue. All jurisdictions across the country use watchhouse facilities for adults and young people for transitional periods during the justice processes. I am advised that under no circumstances is a young person placed in a cell with an adult. They are managed separately to adult detainees with no physical contact. I am also advised that the Tasmania Prison Service has specific policies that apply to managing young people consistent with the *Youth Justice Act*. However, I take your question very seriously. We need to do better and we are doing better when it comes to the range of recommendations we are implementing as a result of the commission of inquiry, including significant investment -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Supplementary Question

Ms ROSOL - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Ms ROSOL - I thank the Premier for his answer. A lot of what he referred to was broad responses to the commission of inquiry. This is a specific situation that the evidence came out last week, and we are asking what immediate action will be taken in response to that evidence.

Mr ABETZ - On a point of order, Speaker, Standing Order 141 says no reference should be made to proceedings of a committee until the reports are received from that committee - I raise that to your attention.

The SPEAKER - That was the point that I made when I reset the question, and as long as the member is only commenting on evidence that has been given publicly and therefore exists in the public domain, then it is okay, but they cannot reflect on any proceedings or deliberations of the committee outside of that.

I caution members. With the extension of committees in this parliament, there are a lot of members who were not on committees when they used to exist. I think there is a misunderstanding in some way and that each committee is being treated like a scrutiny committee in the same way that Estimates is done or GBEs is done.

Select committees are quite different. The rules are different; the obligations and requirements are different. That is some information that we will be sharing with committees and providing some training and advice to ensure that we are all following the rules appropriately, because these committees are about finding information to inform advice for the committee that is then given to the House.

We do need to be very conscious of the difference between a select committee and a scrutiny committee. Having said that, minister, the reference that I gave the member reflects the fact that individual members have to be sure that when they are speaking they are only speaking about public evidence. As long as Ms Rosol has done that, then she is within the framework and certainly within the obligations of 141.

The original question was around immediate action. The Premier is detailing action that is taking place, so technically that is an answer to that question. If the Premier has something to add, I will allow the supplementary, but otherwise I think technically he has actually answered the original question. Premier, it is in your hands whether you wish to provide additional information.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will just make some final comments, because I would not want to be accused of dismissing such a serious question. I will take what you have said in the question and the information at face value. The committee will do good work in a bipartisan way to ensure that on the matters that you have raised, there will be outcomes and recommendations.

I can say that, in terms of immediate actions, when matters of such nature are presented, then it is obviously concerning to the government and the minister responsible to see what actions could be done immediately to address a number of those concerns. I do not have that at

hand now. I have detailed areas more broadly in terms of the reforms we are making, but I look forward to the outcome of the committee's work.

Government Business Enterprises - Proposal for Privatisation

Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

Neither House of parliament supports your privatisation policy. That is because, like most Tasmanians, we can see that your policy means higher prices and less money for schools and hospitals. It is a point that has been made by Saul Eslake too. Last month, barely a week after you appointed him to lead your privatisation policy, Mr Eslake gave a public presentation where he explained that the return from selling Tasmania's energy assets to offset your record debt would be less than they return currently through dividends and company tax equivalents.

If even the person you are paying to lead your privatisation agenda is giving examples of how the numbers do not stack up, how do you think you are going to convince everyday Tasmanians in a referendum?

The SPEAKER - I will allow the question, but remind members again that we are not really supposed to reflect on votes of the Houses. In framing your question, which you could have framed in a better way, just be conscious of that in the future.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. What is concerning is that you have gotten yourselves in such a muddle over there.

Members interjecting.

Dr Woodruff - Yes, that is true.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Dr Woodruff and I agree.

The SPEAKER - That does not make her interjection any more appropriate.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will tell you why. A few weeks ago, you came into this place to set up a committee to look at matters about privatisation, and for good reason: to engage in -

Members interjecting.

Mr Willie - You did not like it.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie, you have had two warnings. You will be out if you speak again, other than when you have the call.

Mr ROCKLIFF - to engage in discussion and bring forward evidence. Everyone who put themselves forward for that committee did so in good faith that they would be working through these issues in a very sensible and measured way. When your leader got torpedoed in

parliament - when we highlighted the fact of his inconsistency on privatisation -you torpedoed the committee that you set up, highlighting your hypocrisy.

Ms Finlay - You got torpedoed yesterday and lost the vote four times.

The SPEAKER - Member for Bass. It would be really awkward if everyone is asked to leave in the last question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Anything you say on this matter is a smokescreen for your leader's past positions on these matters - as embarrassed as you are - and hypocritical in nature.

We will continue to do the work. We believe the work should be done. We believe in being very sensible and measured when it comes to ensuring that we understand what assets are best remaining in public hands and what assets can be sold to private entities to deliver better services for the community. Very sensible. We have ring-fenced the Hydro in that - unlike you at the last election, when you chose to gut Hydro for 48 hours.

Nonetheless, I reject the hypocrisy -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you, both sides. I will go get myself a cup of tea, and we can come back when I am ready. A little bit of respect? The Premier has the call.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. Laced with hypocrisy, and yesterday bore that out.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Salmon Industry - Reputation Following Salmon Mass Mortality Crisis

Mr GARLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.14 a.m.]

More and more people are choosing not to eat Tasmanian salmon because of concerns with how it is being farmed in Tasmania. Just this week, Mures, Tasmania's flagship seafood restaurant, announced it would no longer be serving Tasmanian salmon. What action is your government going to take to clean up this industry?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I will not involve myself in what private businesses choose or not choose to do with their respective menus. I can assure the member that I will continue to eat salmon and proudly purchase it from whatever retail outlet, restaurant or hospitality venue serves salmon, because I am a proud supporter of the industry.

I am also ensuring through our robust regulatory environment, which we created as a government, that the industry is monitored very clearly and held accountable for any breaches of the act. Marine farm debris is an example of the penalty provisions and is one example. The independence of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is there clearly, and we have

strengthened the independence not only more generally, but ensuring that the EPA itself is more independent. We have made reforms in that area since the EPA was established, if my memory serves me correctly. I thank you for the question. I believe I have outlined the answer well, Mr Garland. I am a very strong supporter of the industry and I will continue to consume the quality product that it is.

Time expired.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

West Head Foreshore - Greens Beach

Ms FINLAY question to MINISTER for PARKS, Mr DUIGAN

[11.17 a.m.]

Mary from Greens Beach has asked: when will maintenance and upgrade of the walking tracks on the West Head foreshore be scheduled? Residents, shack owners and visitors would love some serious effort to be made in making the track walkable for all ages. An upgrade could be a wonderful tourism opportunity as well as addressing the health and current concerns and the safety concerns on the site. The community has been asking this for some time. When will the minister make sure these works are attended to?

Legana Ambulance Station

Mr FERGUSON question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mrs PETRUSMA

The question is relating to a constituent of mine who recently contacted me after the celebration of the wonderful opening of the Oatlands Ambulance Station, who asked me for an update on how the ambulance station is progressing. As the minister would know, this is a key commitment from the Tasmanian Liberal government and something that I, together with my colleagues in Bass have been advocating for strongly for some time.

The question to the minister is: would she please provide an update on the Legana Ambulance Station, its location and also an expected timeline for its completion, of course, together with an indication of what the projected commencement of the new service with our paramedics for Legana?

False Statutory Declarations

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

A constituent has raised with me concerns about individuals making false or dishonest statements on statutory declarations. Can you provide information about what the government is doing to ensure the integrity of statutory declarations and how many instances in the past 12 months have individuals been charged or investigated for making false statements on statutory declarations?

Heritage Tasmania - Building Eviction and Staff

Ms FINLAY question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

Jean from Launceston asks: why is the Premier evicting Heritage Tasmania staff from their offices after 20 years in Launceston? Jean would like to know: Is this part of the government's program to slash 50 per cent of the Heritage budget? How many staff work in the building now compared to 2014 and can the Premier please rule out selling the public buildings?

Public Transport - Bus Travel Times

Ms BURNET question to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

My question is on behalf of Sharon of Taroona, who wrote to you on 3 March, then again on 27 March. She says: 'I had an appointment in North Hobart and left time at 9.50 a.m. to arrive in time by bus. I parked near the bus stop as my street is steep and I am a bit disabled at the moment. The 429 bus had not arrived 14 minutes after it was scheduled, so I drove to Lower Sandy Bay, caught a connecting bus to North Hobart, arriving at 11.05 a.m. After my appointment, I eventually made it home by 12.50 p.m. To sum up, exactly three hours of travel for a 25 minute appointment; all up almost two hours waiting for buses.'

How have you let things get so bad that even people who want to use the bus cannot rely on it? Will you also invest in more protected cycle lanes as a safe alternative to travelling by bus?

Time expired.

APPROPRIATION (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION FOR 2024-25) BILL 2025 (No. 1)

Bill returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

DISABILITY RIGHTS, INCLUSION AND SAFEGUARDING (TRANSITIONAL AND CONSEQUENTIAL PROVISIONS) BILL 2025 (No. 8)

First Reading.

Bill brought down from the Legislative Council and read for the first time.

The SPEAKER - For the confused members at the back, it is a bill that was initiated in the other place but does need to go through the full reading process here.

**RESIDENTIAL TENANCY (NO CAUSE EVICTIONS) AMENDMENT
BILL 2025 (No. 13)**

First Reading

Bill presented by Mr Bayley and read the first time.

MOTION

Seeking of Leave to Suspend Standing Orders

[11.23 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion without notice for the purpose of moving the suspension of Standing Orders to debate the following motion -

That the House censures Dean Winter MP on the following grounds -

- (1) Since abandoning Labor's opposition to the stadium after the 2024 election, Mr Winter has consistently said that the stadium's cost to the state needs to not exceed \$375 million and that Labor will scrutinise the stadium in detail and hold the government to account;
- (2) Subsequently, Mr Winter called for the government to fast-track approving the stadium before the state Budget, bypassing current assessment and scrutiny processes.
- (3) Mr Winter has now made it clear that Labor will vote to approve the stadium regardless of the cost to the Tasmanian taxpayers, the impacts on the city and without the credible planning assessment that involves community engagement.
- (4) Mr Winter has betrayed his party's commitments during the 2024 election, his subsequent commitments to the people of Tasmania, as well as his responsibilities as Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER - Just letting you know, because we did have some confusion last time. The question before us is that the member is seeking leave. In order to initiate a motion for suspension, the member has the call. There is a 35 minute debate available. We have three minutes and 34 seconds.

Dr WOODRUFF - Honourable Speaker, this is urgent because what we heard Labor say yesterday - Labor, under Dean Winter. Josh Willie made the comments in response to a question from a reporter yesterday:

That we have acknowledged the stadium is necessary and our position is that we support a stadium. How that eventuates is up to the current government but if they cannot do it then we will, regardless of whether it stacks up financially, 2 April 2025.

Mr Winter himself has said:

Labor's support does not mean the Premier will be let off the hook for the promises he has made, far from it. He needs to deliver his cap spend of \$375 million with private investors to cover any shortfall.

Mr Winter has previously said to Tasmanians:

I have said we will continue to hold Jeremy Rockliff to account for delivering this stadium and a local content plan is a key part of that.

What we know now is that Labor has abandoned its duty and promise to scrutinise the government on the stadium. They have given unconditional support to the stadium, their words, 'unconditional support,' no matter what the facts or the costs, no matter what the utter subversion of the process will be, that we are looking at, which was foreshadowed by the Premier: a shortcutting of the POSS process and special legislation that would cut out the community's voice, no matter the exclusion of Tasmanians' voices.

The SPEAKER - We are on the seeking of leave.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is why we are here today: Dean Winter is planning to subvert the process and cut out Tasmanians' voices. He is planning on working in coalition with the Premier. He is joined at the hip to dishonour his promise to Tasmanians to scrutinise -

The SPEAKER - We are not in the substantive motion. We are in the Seeking of Leave motion.

Dr WOODRUFF - the stadium, and to hold the government to account on the \$375 million. Thank you, Speaker. This is absolutely urgent today because it is very clear that Dean Winter has broken numbers of promises. This is the first instance that we have to draw him -

Mr Winter - Which one?

Dr WOODRUFF - Your promises to Tasmania and your commitments under Standing Order 2 for ethical standards, which requires that members make proper use of their office to respect, to represent and serve the community, to conduct themselves in ways that maintain the trust and confidence of the public. Tasmanians can have no confidence in Dean Winter and Jeremy Rockliff. They are the same person. You are acting together against the interests of Tasmania.

The SPEAKER - The member will refer to members of this House by their title or their position. You will direct the commentary through the Chair.

Dr WOODRUFF - The point that we are here for today is that you have made promises to Tasmanians -

Mr Winter - This is bizarre. I actually cannot believe you are this ridiculous. You look ridiculous.

Dr WOODRUFF - Mr Winter has made promises to Tasmanians and he -

Ms BUTLER - Point of order -

The SPEAKER - Members on my left, you will have an opportunity. I will hear the point of order.

Ms BUTLER - Speaker, that is so unparliamentary. To refer to the Premier and the Leader of Opposition as the same person is highly unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER - The member for Lyons will resume her seat. If either of those members mentioned wish to take personal offence they may do so. There is not a Standing Order that allows you to do that.

Dr WOODRUFF - We need to have a discussion today about what the Leader of the Opposition, Dean Winter, has been doing in the last couple of days, and how he has utterly abrogated his duty as Leader of the Opposition to the motion.

Time expired.

[11.28 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, the Leader of the Greens looks absolutely ridiculous this morning. We are here to scrutinise the Government of Tasmania. I have been doing that every single day in this House. The Leader of the Greens comes to this House during a cost-of-living crisis, during a health crisis, during a housing crisis that they claim to care about, and arrives here and wants to scrutinise the Leader of the Opposition. What a ridiculous stunt this is. This is the Leader of the Greens who claims that minority parliaments are good, who claims that these are the best ways to get things done, and every opportunity she has she stands up here and wastes the parliament's time scrutinising the Leader of the Opposition instead of the Premier.

I am here every day scrutinising the Premier of this state. I am disgusted with the way this state is being run. We have \$1 billion dollars-worth of ships sitting on the wrong side of the world and the Leader of the Greens has not asked a single question about it. She has not asked a single question in the last few weeks about some of the really critical issues that matter to Tasmania. Instead of spending her time dealing with the Premier and an 11-year old government, she wants to come in here and play politics.

The approach she has taken to this place is shameful. Do you know the first question the Leader of the Greens asked during this parliamentary term? She asked the Premier about the Archbishop of Tasmania. Do you know the first question I asked the Premier? It was about the *Spirits of Tasmania* fiasco. I stood here every single day scrutinising the Premier. It was Labor that did the work to bring down the Deputy Premier of Tasmania. Where were the Greens? Where were they on the issue? They turned up right at the end.

Yes, I believe in an AFL team for Tasmania because I know what it means to young people. I want young people to stay in this state. I want young people to live in this state and I want them to have a future. I want them to have an AFL team that they can aspire to. I believe in it. The Labor Party believes in the power of participation in sport. We believe in it every single day.

I do not believe that the parliament should be wasting its time with stunts like this, stunts like we saw out the front this morning from people who should know better.

We absolutely, totally and utterly oppose the government's privatisation agenda. Yesterday, it was me standing up against the privatisation agenda. It was not the Greens standing up against the privatisation agenda. This government has completely wrecked our budget. They put Tasmania into \$10 billion worth of net debt. Not a single question from the Greens about it. They prefer to deal with smaller issues.

Dr Woodruff - \$2 billion stadium.

The SPEAKER - The Leader of the Greens will not interject.

Mr WINTER - It has led to Tasmanian Labor holding this government to account. Every minute they spend trying to scrutinise the Leader of Opposition is a minute they do not spend scrutinising an 11 year old government that has let so many Tasmanians down.

Do you know they have a plan to build 10,000 new homes? They are currently counting vacant lots in part of that. That is what this Liberal government is doing. Do you know that waiting lists are getting longer? Do you know this government planned to ban ramping? They plan to ban ramping. They said they completely ban it.

The SPEAKER - Leader, I bring you to the matter before the House, which is a seeking of leave, not a substantive motion.

Mr WINTER - That is what this government did. This motion is a waste. This is a waste of the parliament's time. Just like it was late last year. Just like it will be every time they try and blow up this parliament. This is why minority parliaments do not work because of minor parties like the Greens trying to play politics with this place. This is a serious place that should be filled with serious politicians, and the Leader of the Greens is not serious. This motion is not serious, and her questions this morning were even less serious.

When you have a health crisis, when you are sitting in a hospital, when you cannot get the support you need when you cannot get in to see a paediatrician: there are so many people in our electorate who cannot, Leader of the Greens. To know that you have a leader of a political party in this place doing stunts like this would make you devastated. This is an absolutely shameful approach to this parliament. This is a serious place. I am a serious Opposition Leader and I have held this government to account every single day.

Dr Woodruff - No one believes what you have just done.

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Greens is warned.

Mr WINTER - This is a government that cannot build a berth for two new ships. This is a government that said they were going to ban ramping and has not even touched the sides. This is a government that said they built 10,000 new homes and has not got anywhere near it. This is a government that after 11 years is letting every single Tasmanian down. This is a crossbench and a Leader of the Greens that continue to play politics in this place and waste our time.

Honourable Speaker, this is a waste of time, and it is an embarrassment for the Greens.

[11.33 a.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Minister for Business, Industry and Resources) - Honourable Speaker, lovers' tiffs are always untidy and unseemly, although it is, I must say, somewhat delicious to observe and sit back and see what is going on between the Labor Party and the Greens. Can I also say, in relation to the urgency of this matter, I am disappointed that the Leader of the Greens only found four reasons to censure the Leader of the Opposition and has wasted so much paper - and there is also a blank page on the back. There was a stack of opportunity.

All that said, and frivolity aside, this is a waste of the parliament's time. The government's attitude will be that we will allow the leave, but we will vote against the suspension.

[11.34 a.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, we do need to achieve leave so that we can debate this motion. I think the Leader of the Opposition's contribution there demonstrates exactly why he led with a conversation about the health, the housing, the education crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, and yet this motion is fundamentally anchored to the Labor Party's abrogation of its responsibility to properly scrutinise the government and hold it to account over the stadium. A \$2 billion dollar debt burden over 10 years. A huge amount of money that is going to be invested into it. A development that is going to impact on the very fabric of our city, the transport, the pedestrian capacity and safety and the like.

Mr Winter - Did you agree with this plan this morning?

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Opposition.

Mr BAYLEY - The Leader of the Opposition talks about the Greens not being serious in this place. Leader of the Opposition, how many bills and how many pieces of legislation have you brought into this House and passed?

Mr Winter - Industrial manslaughter last year.

The SPEAKER - The Leader of the Opposition is warned. The Deputy Leader will address the seeking of leave.

Mr BAYLEY - It is it is urgent and it is necessary that we debate this motion because Labor is abrogating each responsibility. It promised the Tasmanian people that it would fight this stadium. It promised repeatedly in social media presentations, in petitions, indeed in policy announcements in the lead up to two elections in 2024. Not just the general election that we went to, but the Legislative Council election, including the Legislative Council seat of Elwick, which was vacated by Mr Willie. They did not even -

The SPEAKER - We are currently debating a motion to seek leave to move a motion to suspend, which is the urgency one. This is a seeking of leave. Can we just address it? Then we might be able to move to the next motion.

Mr BAYLEY - I am very keen to make sure that we do get to speak to this motion -

The SPEAKER - The motion at the moment is seeking leave. Please address the seeking of leave, not the substantive reason for a suspension, which is the next motion.

Mr BAYLEY - because it is urgent that we debate this. At the moment, this House is going to be asked - it looks like it is going to be asked - to consider special enabling legislation for one of the biggest infrastructure projects that this state has seen, and indeed the biggest infrastructure project that is on the books at the moment - an infrastructure project that the government's own expert panel, full of its people that it has picked, has roundly condemned.

Yet the opposition leader and the Labor party has vacated the space. It promised to hold the government to account - not only to scrutinise the spend, not only to scrutinise the project, but to hold the government to account in terms of the cap.

The SPEAKER - Some latitude has been given to three people - the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Greens and the Leader of the Opposition - on the seeking of leave, but this is only about the seeking of leave. The next motion is where you put your case for why it is urgent to suspend Standing Orders. This is a seeking of leave to do that. Please address that, and if you have read the numbers, you can probably move to that given the statements that have been made.

Mr BAYLEY - I respect your ruling on that, and I will just reiterate that leave is critically important because we do need to get to the point where we debate this motion. It is in the interests of Tasmanians that we have a conversation about the credibility of the Labor Party and the Labor leader when it comes to his commitments and their commitments in relation to this stadium. This is a stadium that will have severe implications for the future of Tasmania - not only our debt but the functionality of this city.

In terms of leave, we need to get to the point where we can debate this motion so we can have a proper conversation about the commitments the Labor Party and the Labor Leader made, and the abrogation of their responsibility and the abandonment of those commitments.

[11.38 a.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I am not sure who thought this was a good idea. I understand we need to define a choice and you have to play the robust game of politics, but whilst I will agree to the seeking of leave, this is a phenomenal waste of time of this House.

I have never seen anything like this occur in this manner. At the end of the day, if you disagree with other members in the House, there are forms of the House to have that argument. Ultimately, in terms of the Leader of the Opposition, the ultimate arbiter are the people of Tasmania, not a bunch of politicians wanting to score political points inside the House.

This is a silly thing to do, and I think we should learn from this. Let us focus on the real debates. Tasmanians are watching this. This is embarrassing. I will pick up the Leader of the Opposition - do not brush us all with the same brush over here. I would be very careful about that because that could come back to bite you. My view is that I agree with the seeking of leave, but seriously, are we going to debate this?

[11.39 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, Mr Winter has been very clear; we will not be supporting the seeking of leave. It is an utter waste of time and I think it is out of sheer desperation that it has come to this point - sheer desperation for relevance from those on the crossbench. I am surprised the government would even support the seeking of leave. It is an utter waste of time, but they do not have much legislation on the books at the moment, so maybe they want to use up a bit of the time in the parliament.

We are going to finish early today, I reckon, with the amount of book work that you have got on the books today, leader of government business. We do not support this. We have full confidence in our leader and the positions that we have taken on specific issues in this state. This is valuable time that could be used for debating a whole raft of issues and moving onto legislation, but at the moment it is being held up by the irrelevance of the Greens and crossbench.

Ms BURNET (Clark) - This is a matter of urgency. This parliament is part of the Westminster system. To function as a parliament, it relies on a functioning opposition led by a functioning leader of the opposition, and we are not seeing much of that on display. The main function of the parliament is all of us contributing. We are here - the opposition, the crossbench - to scrutinise the government, not back them in. This is what we are seeing from the Leader of the Opposition.

Might I add that it looks clear that he is abrogating his responsibility of calling to account the government. There seem to be these wacky tactics from the opposition -

Mr Winter- Wacky tactics? Hello?

The SPEAKER - The member will address the seeking of leave.

Ms BURNET - Yes, I am getting to that.

The SPEAKER - No, you will address the seeking of leave.

Ms BURNET - We are talking about the fact that the opposition are not providing bills. They were only forced into taking on something when the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, introduced industrial manslaughter - then they decided to put a bill forward. We need to see that they are looking at what the government is doing, and we are not seeing this kind of leadership.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Thank you members for Franklin and Bass. This is an unusual enough circumstance without us all getting thrown out during it.

Ms BURNET - We are not seeing this leadership from the Leader of the Opposition, and it is urgently required. We have one of the most fundamental pieces of infrastructure coming before us - the most expensive in Tasmania's history -

The SPEAKER - The seeking of leave. Not the urgency, but the seeking of leave.

Ms BURNET - Yes. It is very important that we get this leave to discussion this motion because it is really questioning how the Leader of the Opposition is functioning.

[11.43 a.m.]

Mrs PENTLAND (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I am extremely disappointed in Labor stepping away from properly scrutinising the Macquarie Point Stadium by basically offering the government a blank cheque. I do not always agree with my colleagues on the crossbench, but I was proud to stand with them this morning to commit to properly scrutinising this extremely important project -

The SPEAKER - and on the seeking of leave?

Mrs PENTLAND - Yes. Labor is well within its rights to back in the stadium, but the role of the opposition is to put pressure on the government to make good decisions. It is a healthy tradition and a theory that leads to better outcomes.

While I would urge the Labor leader to reconsider his approach to scrutinising the stadium, I will not be supporting the seeking of leave. Parliament's time is precious, and there should be more discussions about policy and less pure politics.

I was enormously proud and grateful for the support shown by the House when we discussed maternity services last night, and I strongly believe it will lead to better services. To me, that was parliament at its best. I do not believe a slanging match today is what Tasmanians expect. We have made it clear what we think of the opposition's position on the stadium. There is no need to use too much of parliament's time discussing it further.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is that -

The seeking of leave be granted.

The House divided -

AYES 21

Mr Abetz
Ms Badger
Mr Barnett
Mr Bayley
Mr Behrakis
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Mr Garland
Ms Howlett
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Petrusma

NOES 9

Mrs Beswick
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad
Mrs Pentland
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Ms Butler (Teller)

Mr Rockliff
Ms Rosol
Mr Street
Dr Woodruff
Ms Burnet (Teller)

PAIRS

Mr Shelton
Mr Wood

Dr Broad
Mr Farrell

Leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Debate Motion Forthwith

[11.50 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable speaker, I move -

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent such a motion from being dealt with forthwith.

We took this matter very seriously. A number of people have made comments about why we would be focusing on the Leader of the Opposition in this censure motion. It is a high bar. We are here to hold the government to account, but we expect, and Tasmanians expect, that the opposition and the crossbench will be united in our duty to hold the government to account.

What we are seeing happening today, yesterday and going forward, is that the Labor opposition leader, Mr Dean Winter, has abrogated his responsibility, duty and promise to Tasmanians to scrutinise the government on the biggest infrastructure project in Tasmania. It dwarfs the Bridgewater bridge; it dwarfs the *Spirit of Tasmania* that had Labor asking question after question last year.

What we are looking at is a massive infrastructure project with capital core stadium costs estimated by the Tasmanian Planning Commission at \$653 million. The capital cost of the stadium-related infrastructure would be \$774 million. The capital cost including stadium-related infrastructure, precinct infrastructure and the preliminary work is \$959 million, just shy of a billion. That is not the debt that we will accrue in 10 years' time. We will be at \$1.86 billion - minimum.

What we have now is a Labor opposition who have promised time and again that they will, first of all, not support the stadium, and Mr Winter was on record in January 2023 saying:

Labor will focus on the priorities that are going to make the health of Tasmanians better, not an unnecessary stadium.

He then said:

Labor's support for a stadium does not mean the Premier will be let off the hook for the promises he has made, far from it. He needs to deliver his capped spend of \$375 million with private investors.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my left will cease interjecting and the member will address the urgency of the motion.

Dr WOODRUFF - What we know from the Tasmanian Planning Commission is that there will not be any capped spend of \$375 million. It is a fiction; it always was. What we are facing now is a Labor opposition leader who has made a promise that he will walk away from scrutinising the government and worse, do anything that is required, including, we assume from what he said and what other members of his party have said, supporting fast track enabling legislation that will cut out the community's voice.

It is absolutely shameful action by a member of parliament, the Leader of the Opposition. It is a protection racket that he is offering the Liberals. The Liberal and Labor parties together are preventing scrutiny of the biggest infrastructure project in Tasmania's history.

It is not just about asking questions, it is about the fact that Mr Winter is now providing a shield for the Liberal Party to go ahead and do anything they want on Macquarie Point at any cost, at any ruin to Tasmanians, now and into the future, for decades to come. Any impact on the community, any impact on transport, any impact on the Cenotaph and the RSL, any impact on Aboriginal heritage - all gone. Worse, what he is proposing to do is to fast-track a planning process that will mean that he and other members will be forced to sit here and make a decision that is not at the end of the Tasmanian Planning Commission's process.

He is talking about utterly subverting that process utterly and pulling it out of the planning process, pulling it out of the conversations that Tasmanians are about to have - the submissions they are writing right now, that hearings the Tasmanian Planning Commission will hold to hear their voices and the response to the stadium. The planning process has not finished. To pull out of it at this point would be an utter betrayal of Tasmanians' proper planning - an utter betrayal of everything that he and his party members have promised Tasmanians.

He does not give a fig about the cost. It is him in lockstep with the Premier supporting the stadium and it is an utter abrogation of his role as leader.

Time expired.

[11.55 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Deputy Speaker, this has just reminded me of what a strong and good position it is from Labor to never, ever govern with the Greens. What an absolute rabble this leader of the Greens is running this morning. This is a ridiculous waste that we have heard from the Leader of the Greens this morning.

This is a party that has now talked about, this morning, holding the government to account whilst they do the exact opposite. The motion here today takes the pressure off the government that you are so concerned about and puts it onto the Opposition of all people. What a ridiculous position. This Leader of the Greens is ridiculous. This Leader of the Greens is unserious.

I think, when Mr O'Byrne spoke earlier today, they were looking around at each other thinking, 'Gee, maybe he's right, we might have actually stuffed this up a little bit.' I do want to say to the member for Franklin that he is not included in what I said, obviously, and not having been out there this morning on the lawn. We are holding the government to account on the delivery of multiple projects and we have been doing that since we arrived.

If there was a POSS vote into the *Spirit of Tasmania* berth, we would vote for the berth but that does not mean we do not scrutinise the government for its delivery, as we have done almost every single day in this parliament. We are scrutinising this government. I tell you what, there is a lot to scrutinise, but it will not be scrutinised during this debate because the Leader of the Greens has decided to take the pressure off the Premier of Tasmania and waste an absolutely ridiculous amount of time. This is a Leader of the Greens who talks about housing but has a University of Tasmania policy that stops 2000 new homes being built in Sandy Bay. This is a leader of the Greens who has a climate policy and talks about the climate emergency, but her policy on renewable energy is to stop every new renewable energy project in this state. Does not want any wind farms. Wants to drain Lake Pedder. This is a Leader of the Greens who talks a big game on climate change but actually wants to make it worse. Wants to continue to import dirty brown coal. The biggest friend of the coal industry is actually the Leader of the Greens.

That is where she gets her donations from and that is the industry that she supports. The Greens have been ridiculous in this motion. The Greens talk about minority government and how good it is and yet this is how they treat minority governments. You could not do this in a majority parliament, but the Leader of the Greens has chosen to use this opportunity to do the exact opposite, instead of holding the government to account, to attempt this heist on the parliament and waste its time.

The government today could not table a single bill. Our notice paper today is barren of business. The so-called Strong Plan is in tatters and no one knows what it is. They are going to struggle to fill out the time this afternoon except for one thing - the Leader of the Greens moving this motion. The happiest person in the parliament today is the leader of government business because he has been worried overnight about what he was going to do for the afternoon. He would be finished by lunchtime if not for the leader of the Greens.

Tasmanian Labor has been holding the government to account and we have been moving bills. Industrial manslaughter was brought to this place by the Labor Party. Industrial manslaughter was announced first by the Labor Party, the member for Clark. The Labor Party moved that bill because it is absolutely a first-order issue for us but I cannot fix everything from over here. I cannot fix everything. I will do everything I can, but we need to get onto that side of the House. As I said, today has solidified in me an absolute desire to never, ever govern with the Greens. They are reckless, irresponsible.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Interjections will cease, including yours, minister Ellis.

Mr WINTER - On the stadium, this is a choice between Tasmanian young people having an AFL team to aspire to, or not. The group that stood outside parliament today has chosen to oppose an AFL team for our young people. They want to go to every young person in Tasmania and rip out the Devils stickers on the drink bottles of young people. They want to go to the

Tasmanians who have dreamt of this for generations and tell them no. This is the Leader of the Greens and a Greens party that actually withdrew their support for a Tasmanian AFL team.

Dr Woodruff - Absolutely not.

Mr Willie - It is on the public record.

Mr Bayley - We withdrew it for the stadium.

Dr Woodruff - Rubbish.

Members Suspended

Member for Franklin - Dr Woodruff

Member for Clark - Mr Willie

The SPEAKER (cont) - The Leader will cease his commentary. Mr Willie and Dr Woodruff will both leave the Chamber. I have asked both of you to stop interjecting repeated amounts of times. You can return for the vote, and then I will see you for the MPI.

Mr Willie withdrew.

Dr Woodruff withdrew.

Mr WINTER - Speaker, we do not support the motion.

[12.01 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, we are against this censure motion and the urgency of it, because we support the Leader of the Opposition continuing in the role as leader of the opposition for a long, long time. In the event that the censure motion gets up, the Labor Party might think of changing leader, and that is something we clearly would not want to see. We are on a unity ticket in that regard.

Ms Haddad - When is your leadership vote?

Ms Finlay - What about you guys? What is happening with the leadership on your side?

The SPEAKER - The member for Bass is warned.

Mr ABETZ - Paragraph (4) of the motion tells me that Mr Winter has betrayed his party's commitments, as well as his responsibilities as Leader of the Opposition. I think those facts are well-known and there is no urgency to remind the people of Tasmania of those facts.

At the commencement of each day, you kindly pray that we not be led into temptation. I was reminded of that when looking at this censure motion. Can I tell you we were sorely tempted to vote? We were sorely tempted to vote for a censure motion, but only for a nanosecond because, seriously, Speaker and members of this House, this is the sort of waste of time that does none of us any credibility. My fellow colleague from Franklin summed it up in relation to the seeking of leave discussion: the people of Tasmania do look on us, consider

these matters, how we behave in relation to these matters, and I fully accept and understand that the Greens have a strong view in relation to this.

The Labor Party have changed their minds on this, thankfully, and we as a government are appreciative of that. However, let us try to the best of our abilities to keep the debate in relation to the policy issue, to the actual issues at stake, rather than trying an assassination attempt on the Leader of the Opposition. Tempting though that that be, we on this side will desist and not play those sorts of games.

I could understand why Mrs Pentland and Mrs Beswick voted against this seeking of leave. Since coming to this place, I have learned that, in general terms, the parliament supports the leave even if afterwards we then oppose the suspension. That was the attitude that the government took in relation to that vote, to at least allow the Greens the - whatever it is, 35 minutes - to air their concern about whatever the particular issue is. Had they a motion, and I understand Mr O'Byrne has a matter to discuss the stadium after this, that is the time when the Greens could have entered the debate and indicated their opposition to the stadium and why.

Believe it or not, this issue of the stadium has been around for quite some time, and the idea that somehow all of a sudden it has become urgent and everything else has to be thrown out the window because of this urgency, is very hard to make out in any rational way. Similarly, the Labor Party's backflip, yes, we chide the Labor Party from time to time as to what they went into the last election with, with their policy and then their change of policy, and these are matters for discussion as well, from time to time. Believe it or not, I think all of us and all our parties have changed our attitude in relation to issues from time to time - just as much as the former Greens leader championed a coal-fired power station in the Fingal Valley one day. I dare say he has changed his mind in relation to that.

People will change their minds for a whole host of reasons. Let us discuss the reasons and the rationale, but not just seek to do a demolition derby on a particular individual in this place and that is what the Greens are trying to do in relation to the Leader of the Opposition. Tempting though it be, we as a government will desist and try to inject some maturity into the processes of this place.

[12.06 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, this is urgent and we do need to be suspending Standing Orders so we can debate this motion, because, at the end of the day, this week should have been a circuit breaker when it comes to the push for a stadium at Macquarie Point in Nipaluna/Hobart. The Tasmanian Planning Commission's report, the draft Integrated Assessment Report, is a damning assessment of the stadium. Not only is it a damning assessment in relation to the budgetary issues; the Leader of the Opposition talked about the health, housing, and cost-of-living crises. This report demonstrates that this stadium is going to add to our debt. We have a debt crisis as well. We all know that. We have debated that at length and we are going to see it again in the budget in May. The draft integrated assessment process makes it really clear that almost \$2 billion over the next two years, associated with the capital investment plus losses, is going to add to our debt so much so, it is so significant, that it might impact on our credit rating.

I hear the opposition bang on at length about the risk to our credit rating in terms of debt but here it is, the Integrated Assessment Report, the panel stood up by the Tasmanian Planning

Commission, saying that this is going to add to our debt. There was not a peep out of the opposition in relation to that. Not only is it the debt and the financial issues in relation to what that will do to our health, housing, and education, to our capacity to protect the environment and other desperate investment, this Integrated Assessment Report makes it really clear that it is going to have a significant cost to our city, the function of our city, in relation to the historic heritage of the Sullivans Cove precinct, and in terms of its impact on the Cenotaph. Any other state opposition would stand with veterans and the RSL to defend the oldest state war memorial in the country from the impacts of a development like this but again, not a peep from the opposition. It is going to wreak havoc when it comes to traffic and it is going to wreak havoc when it comes to pedestrians: indeed the safety of pedestrians.

This report is damning and that is why we are bringing on and want to talk about this censure motion. It is because the opposition and the opposition leader is running cover for the government. The Premier is talking about circumventing the process that they together agreed on less than 18 months ago. Together, they voted for this process. We are not big fans of the POSS process. Let me be clear. It abandons existing planning schemes. There is no third party rights of appeal so it is normally a developer-friendly process. This stadium is so bad that it has even categorically failed that process. It is here in black and white. Yes, the government has released some dodgy legal advice this morning but make no mistake, that is little more than a PR exercise to try to distract from the categoric findings that the Tasmanian Planning Commission has delivered.

We do need to be debating this motion because, at the end of the day, the Labor Party has betrayed even its own people in abrogating its responsibility. Yes, we are spending time talking about you, Mr Winter, and you are talking about us taking up time and not holding the government to account but the very reason is because you are not holding the government to account. You have written a blank cheque to this government over the stadium.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - You will direct the comments through the Chair. Members on my left will remind themselves of the people who are no longer in the chamber and consider whether they wish to hang out with them.

Mr BAYLEY - The impacts of the stadium are so significant that we need to debate this. Your party went to two elections. Admittedly - and I correct the record from my previous contribution - you did not take the party to the last general election, but you did take them to the Legislative Council elections, both times with a position opposing the stadium. You did not even have the courtesy to wait until the writs were returned from Mr Willie's old seat of Elwick before changing your stadium position to make it pro-stadium.\

At least it had some conditions. At least you were going to hold the government to account about their cap on spending the \$375 million, and at least you were going to scrutinise the government and the decisions it makes in relation to their impacts on our city. Yet what we saw yesterday, and that is why this is urgent and we need to debate this motion, is that Mr Willie, on behalf of the Labor Party, absolutely walked away from any of those commitments and gave unconditional support for the government to abandon the process and pass special legislation.

There are probably hundreds if not thousands of people today writing their submissions to the Tasmanian Planning Commission opposing the stadium, and yet we have a situation where the rug may well get ripped out from under their feet, a situation that absolutely treats them with contempt. That is why, Mr Winter, we should debate this censure motion because it is such a categorical failure.

[12.11 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, as I said in my previous contribution, Mr Winter has the full confidence of us on this side and we do not support the suspension of Standing Orders or the urgency about this motion to debate it today.

It is a waste of time and, quite frankly, it is an extraordinary turn of events in this place. The real fact of this matter is that this is entirely about the Greens. They have got no pathway to form government with anyone in this place anymore. This is what this is about. They wanted a 35-seat Lower House but it has actually made them more irrelevant. It has entirely backflipped on the Greens and now they have to bring this rubbish to the parliament today to waste the time of the Tasmanian Parliament when we should be debating other matters and the government should be bringing on more legislation for us to debate.

The problem the Greens have is they are not a solitary voice anymore. They have all the voices across the crossbench and so they have brought them together in some kind of quasi-leadership to put this forward today. I admit that there are members, such as Mr O'Byrne, who has not been part of that today, and I put that on the record. He has seen sense in what is an absolute rabble. That is right, it is. It is a disgraceful use of the time of this parliament.

The Labor Party can take a position on anything we like. That is what we are elected to do under the new leadership of Dean Winter. We can do that. We can take a position. That is what political parties do, and the Greens clearly do not want Tasmanian AFL women's and men's teams. They do not want them because if they did they would understand quite clearly that it is contingent on a stadium.

We will scrutinise the Premier's stadium. The Greens cannot have been here on Tuesday during Question Time, because that is exactly what we did, and what we will continue to do. It was not the Greens that held this government to account over the largest infrastructure stuff up in history. Where were they?

Ms Brown - They are irrelevant.

Ms DOW - That is exactly right, Ms Brown. They are irrelevant. They do not talk about the issues that are important to Tasmanians. They have no understanding of regional Tasmania whatsoever and yet they see fit to make judgments about what happens to people's livelihoods and futures in regional Tasmania, particularly in Strahan, part of my electorate.

We are the opposition and we will continue to hold this government to account. Quite frankly, it is absolutely extraordinary when we have the worst government in history in government in Tasmania at the moment. We have got the worst budget position -

Members interjecting.

Mr Abetz - You hurt us.

Mr Behrakis- We are not in a recession, at least.

Ms DOW - It is a fact, Mr Abetz, you are the worst government we have had.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - You will direct commentary through the Chair and note that they are debating points - who does that tutting all the time?

Mr Bayley - Skippy.

The SPEAKER - I will refer you to Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* that says things like hissing and such interruptions are quite unparliamentary.

Ms DOW - Honestly, there are so many issues confronting Tasmania, and you have a government that has lost the ability to govern. They are a coalition of chaos. They lost vote after vote in this House yesterday afternoon. They cannot get anything done, they are caught up in their own red tape, and the Greens insist on bringing this motion today to censure our leader Dean Winter.

We have been holding the government to account. We will continue to do that and ask questions in this place each and every day, through the media and through whatever medium we see fit because that is our job as an opposition. These guys are not a quasi-opposition. Quite frankly, they are irrelevant and they know that. That is the reason why they have brought this nonsense motion to the parliament today.

[12.15 p.m.]

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I want to speak to the urgency of this motion and to the whole idea of an opposition being for scrutiny. We know that the way democracy works is that scrutiny is critically important, and that people's voices are important in that. What we have is a report that was released by the TPC, the Draft Integrated Assessment report, that was quite damning of the stadium and indicated that there are many issues with the stadium.

The government's immediate response was to dismiss that report and minimise it, and we are seeing that happening further today. That was the opportunity for the opposition, led by Mr Winter, to hop up and say, 'This is something that needs to be looked into further.' We have a draft report that is saying the stadium will not be good for the people of Tasmania, it will not be good for the budget of Tasmania and it will put us into great debt.

We need to make sure that there is opposition, there is scrutiny and that there are active actions taken that will call out and draw out all the information that we need as a state to make a good decision. If we continue on this path of just acquiescing to what the government wants and saying we give them full support, and if Labor continue to say there is unconditional support for this stadium, then the voices of the people will be lost. The accurate information that needs to be assessed and drawn in and submitted will all be lost and wiped out.

This is urgent because we do not know. The government has not given us any indication yet of what their plans are with their special legislation that they may well introduce into this

parliament. It could happen at any time. It is important that opposition happens now, that we do not let this slide and that we do not stand back and do nothing.

The opposition leader mentioned that the opposition provides scrutiny on things like health and hospitals - all of those things are under threat with this stadium. We already have a government that has a budget deficit, and because of that they are introducing cuts, hiring freezes and efficiency dividends that are impacting significantly on services within Tasmania.

If we want to stand up and call out the government on those cuts and on those freezes and on those impacts on the people of Tasmania being able to access the service that they need, we have to think of the bigger picture. We cannot just call out those cuts now and say, 'Well, we're scrutinising this,' when we know that the stadium is going to take us into far greater debt.

It is important that we debate this now, that we draw attention to this now, that we say democracy is important and people's voices are important, and the government cannot be allowed to get away with what it wants to do as quickly as it wants.

This process from the TPC is a process that has an established plan and an established timeline. We know that people are being invited to make submissions until 8 May. We know that there will be hearings in July. We have to protect that process and we have to protect it now. It is important in doing that that we have this debate today, that we call out the opposition leader and say, 'We need you to do your job to scrutinise the stadium.'

Yes, keep scrutinising all those other things that you are scrutinising, but scrutinise the stadium as well.. The people of Tasmania need us to do that. They need us to be in here fighting for them. They need us in here making sure their voices are heard. They need us in here highlighting that we already have a stadium that would be perfectly suitable for AFL in the north of the state at York Park Stadium.

We are the voices of the people of Tasmania who do not agree with what the government is doing. We must stand up, we must speak and we must do it now.

[12.20 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) -Honourable Speaker, I was not going to speak on this urgency motion but having heard the contributions of other members and reading the room, I think it is important to put on the record my thoughts on this.

I will be supporting the suspension of standing orders. I want to wholeheartedly endorse the comments of the previous speaker, the member for Bass, in her contribution. This is an urgent matter. It is about the defence of democracy and the principles of the Westminster System, and the importance of this parliament and parliamentary processes. It is about the purpose of the opposition.

After the announcement by the Labor Party yesterday that they would unequivocally back in the stadium without any scrutiny, I was inundated with people who were concerned about the lack of opposition in this parliament and about the parliamentary processes we are about to go through.

They understood that Labor's position before the election was that they would not support the stadium. After two elections, it then became that they would scrutinise the government

about it. People were horrified to hear that there would be no scrutiny by the opposition of the stadium. This is the state's largest infrastructure project that we could possibly imagine: the largest one, with the most enormous impact on not only Tasmanians now, but also generations to come. Regardless of whether you think the stadium is good or not, it needs proper scrutiny to make sure that if it goes ahead we get the best product possible at the end of it.

Labor are abandoning that position, and that is not okay. The reason why this matter is urgent, honourable Speaker, is that with the abandonment of Labor's scrutiny, we could potentially see the government tabling a bill on Tuesday next week and debating it Thursday. The stadium came out of nowhere. It was a poorly thought through process. It is entirely possible that they are busily working away on the weekend on enabling legislation and getting it tabled on Tuesday and potentially debating it on Thursday.

The SPEAKER - It has to sit on paper for three days now. We have changed the Standing Orders; it would not be able to be done then.

Ms JOHNSTON - I understand that, honourable Speaker, but we have seen the suspension of Standing Orders for other bills to be urgently debated, and it seems that we have got a unity ticket here, so that is likely to happen.

That is my real concern. Tasmanians expect proper processes in this place, and a proper process of scrutiny. It is incredibly important that the opposition does not abrogate its responsibilities to scrutinise. That is exactly what this motion is about.

I take offence at the deputy opposition leader's suggestion that the crossbench is irrelevant in this parliament. This is the parliament that the Tasmanian people elected. It is a minority parliament where there needs to be a coming together of minds for anything to occur, whether it be a government proposition or opposition proposition. It requires the crossbench to agree on that. The only time the crossbench is irrelevant is when there is a unity ticket between the opposition and the government. That is the only time, and that occurs when there is a lack of scrutiny by the opposition of what the government is doing. The crossbench is absolutely relevant.

It happened on the *Spirits of Tasmania*. I remind the opposition leader, had it not been for the voices of the crossbench joining the opposition in their questioning of the conduct of former minister Ferguson, there would not have been the pressure on the former minister to resign.

Members interjecting.

Ms JOHNSTON - It is absolutely the check. If you had brought a motion without the possibility of crossbench support, it would have fallen flat. That is the reality. We are about scrutiny. We are about hearing the voices of not only all the people in this parliament but, most importantly, of Tasmanians.

It is urgent that we debate this. It is urgent that we uphold the principles of democracy and parliamentary scrutiny, because that is what Tasmanians are relying on us to do. We need to do our jobs. The crossbench are more than willing to do that, and we are calling on the opposition to do it. That is what they are elected to do. They took on the position of opposition

because they did not want to take on the position of government. That was very clear after the election.

Mr Winter - We did not want to deal with any of you lot.

Ms JOHNSTON - In opposition, they are supposed to apply scrutiny. They are missing in action. The community deserve better and we deserve to debate this motion.

Time expired.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is -

That the suspension of Standing Orders be agreed to.

The House divided

AYES 6

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Ms Johnston
Dr Woodruff
Ms Rosol (Teller)

NOES 24

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Ms Brown
Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Mr Garland
Ms Haddad
Ms Howlett
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Street
Mr Winter
Mr Farrell (Teller)

The SPEAKER - Before I call the results of the division, I remind members that the audio is still recorded while divisions take place. Be conscious of that in your loud contributions.

Motion negatived

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Macquarie Point Multi-Purpose Stadium

[12.31 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: Macquarie Point multi-purpose stadium

There is no doubt that this is a major project. This is a significant moment in Tasmania's history on a whole range of fronts. It is no doubt that this is a big project. It will be an expensive project and it is being proposed for a site which is complex. All of those things are known and all of those things are matters when you have any major development that need to be considered and dealt with.

However, we need to understand the opportunity that is before us in this moment in time in Tasmania. This is a project that will, if seen through to its fruition and its finality, create significant economic activity, significant confidence to the state, thousands of jobs and thousands of indirect jobs. That is not to say that there should be no scrutiny; it is important that these things are held to account, because they are a convergence of two things. Whilst the AFL team and the AFL licence is the trigger, the two major beneficiaries are things that have been needed and required for a generation. Clearly, Tasmania has fought for an AFL licence and AFL team, and we have our licence not necessarily in our hand, but within reaching point. Also, the Macquarie Point Stadium will be a major improvement and increase in capacity for our conventions and events. In fact, Events Tasmania has openly said that this is a game changer.

The reason - in the short time that I have - that I brought this debate on is we have obviously had the Tasmanian Planning Commission produce their report. We need to remember that the Project of State Significance was a political process triggered by two former Liberal members - John Tucker and Lara Alexander - who raised this issue with the support of the Opposition, who at that stage opposed the stadium, to impose that on this parliament, and that is the process that we have agreed to. It is not a perfect process.

The report that was released earlier this week does raise significant concerns for me. For example, it relies heavily on Mr Gruen's report. That is unusual, because there were no public submissions. Mr Gruen's report was a report asked for by the Jacqui Lambie Network in terms of their confidence and supply agreement so, it was interesting they relied heavily on that. I respect Mr Gruen, but his report is not beyond a critique. There are a number of positions that he put forward in his report which I question, which are echoed in the Tasmanian Planning Commission's interim review.

For example, Mr Gruen estimates the cost of moving the Goods Shed at \$18 million, despite Macquarie Point estimating the cost at \$6 million and the Gruen-appointed quantity surveyor estimating it will be \$7 million. He based his \$18 million on conversations he has had with other people. That does not stack up. He does not consider naming rights revenue in his document. He talks about crowds and underestimates crowds and selectively chooses which games he relies on for those crowds.

In terms of the TPC report, it is interesting that they are concerned about building and construction noise that will occur regardless of the development at the site. In fact, the TSO has existed in that place, with Macquarie and Davey streets on either side - heavy traffic - and Dark Mofo and a whole range of events. There is noise there and there will always be noise there; it is the middle of a city. A number of issues that are concerning me is the discounting without justification of travelling fans and the economic activity generated by that: twenty five per cent down to 15 per cent based on past Tasmanian AFL games, completely ignoring Tasmania is a new team, there are lots of Tasmanian expats and the big games will be coming to Tasmania.

They talk about pedestrians, and they are worried about the interaction between traffic and pedestrians. If you have been to any major event in any place in any city in the world, when you leave the MCG with 90,000 people, Victoria Police run Wellington Parade for at least half an hour, making sure people safely cross the road. Traffic management and pedestrian management is a part of a major development.

They are also concerned about the construction and the events having an impact on hotels and places close to the Macquarie Point site. That is the point - it is a hospitality area and we want people to be there. Anyone who has gone to Dark Mofo would have seen the amazing amount of foot traffic and activity and how that can be managed. The Tasmanian Planning Commission report raises some serious questions, but I seriously question the methodology they are taking regarding Macquarie Point. We have a once in a generation opportunity to get this right. Let us not blow it. Let us be on the right side of history.

Time expired.

The SPEAKER - Can I remind members that Standing Orders say that you are not supposed to gather in the galley ways to have conversations with each other. In particular, you are not to have lengthy conversations with people who are given permission to sit in the Speaker's gallery. Conversations that occur with advisers are permitted, but ministers Howlett and Barnett; member for Lyons, Ms Butler; and member for Bass, Mr Ferguson, cannot stand and have long conversations with guests in the gallery. You can go outside.

[12.37 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, the multi-purpose stadium - and let us be clear, it is a multi-purpose stadium - will be a game changer for our state and the capital city of Hobart. It will be an iconic gateway to our city and it will provide a facility for cultural, sporting and concert events. It will be a game changer for our economy.

This government has backed in the concept of the stadium from day one. The economic benefits are unassailable. What I would say to those who seek to quote figures, be it from Dr Gruen or the TPC or whatever, if you really believe that the 44 cents in the dollar or whatever the figure is - 53 cents from the TPC or 69 cents from KPMG - should be the one and only metric, if you applied that, there would be no roads built in any part of regional Australia, infrastructure would only be built in Melbourne and Sydney, we would have one hospital in Tasmania and so the list goes on. If that is the principle under which the Greens in particular wish to pursue this debate, let them be honest and say as a result we do not support regional roads and we do not support other hospitals in Tasmania.

In relation to the TPC report, let us be clear - and I note that the Macquarie Point Development Corporation issued a media release this morning, and appended to it was a persuasive, if I might say, opinion from MinterEllison, which tells us that this draft report does not comply with the requirements of the act and it contains errors in law, errors in approach and errors in analysis. For an issues paper, I think it let down the people of Tasmania.

With an issues paper, you would expect it to say on the one hand, and on the other hand, and we are seeking submissions to assist us on coming to a conclusion on this particular issue or area. Instead, unfortunately what the TPC has done is come to a conclusion and said, 'Having come to this conclusion, we want to hear from you.' Their minds, unfortunately, are made up.

That said, there are many aspects of the report which are helpful, and which we will look at and consider in some detail. It sort of misadvised itself by adopting elements of the Gruen report, but it is not listed as a relevant agency from which it should be taking advice. I remember reading with great admiration a commentary piece in the Hobart *Mercury* authored by the member for Franklin, David O'Byrne, providing a bit of commentary and critique of Dr Gruen's report. As the member said, Dr Gruen's report is not beyond criticism and nor is the TPC.

The wonderful thing about the stadium is what it will bring to the youth of this state. Indeed, a northern member, Rosemary Armitage, was on radio and she said that whilst there were split opinions, she had detected within her community overwhelming support amongst the young people and parents with young children because of the aspiration that it provided to those young people.

I am sure the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, would know these figures better than I would, but the Lauderdale Football Club has had a huge surge in Auskick membership over the past two years - virtually doubled.

Is that a social benefit? Of course it is. The TPC completely ignores that. It heard no evidence in relation to the growing support. When young people are involved in sports, I think we all know that their mental health is a lot better - their wellbeing, their physical health and indeed their social interaction, that sense of team spirit, all those wonderful character-building provisions come through these sorts of teams and sporting clubs. This will add to the social structure of our state. The government fully supports the multi-purpose stadium.

[12.42 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for Franklin for bringing this forward. Some of us in the House have been on a journey. I will start by addressing some of the Premier's comments in question time today, wanting to attack me for previous social media posts and things like that. We have been on a journey, including him, because he stood in this House in September 2022 and told Tasmanians that the stadium was not part of the bid, but we know from scrutiny in the Public Accounts Committee that the government had signed up to 11 work streams with the AFL, including a stadium, in 2021. The Premier can offer all the criticism he wants about people who have gone on a journey, but he has as well, and I want to point that out.

It is going over old history, but our position before the last election was to renegotiate the deal. We were not able to form government to be in a position to do that. The timelines in the agreement now mean the rubber hits the road. The timelines in the agreement mean that the stadium will start to be delivered during this parliamentary term.

We have to accept this for what it is or you are against the teams. The AFL has reiterated its position; they have made it very clear. Politicians who are telling Tasmanians that they support the teams but do not support the stadium are not being honest with Tasmanians. That is not the deal, so you may as well be honest and tell Tasmanians you are now campaigning against the stadium and the teams, because that is effectively what you are doing.

We want to see this. Good governance matters, whether you are for or against the stadium. My criticisms of the Premier and events leading up to him signing that deal are on the public record. We want to see the Premier do better in terms of delivering this project. We want to see him come to parliament and address some of the concerns that the TPC is raising. He has made a commitment to do that.

He also made a very clear commitment to Tasmanians that he was going to deliver the stadium for \$375 million and not a red cent more. It is up to the Premier to come to parliament and explain how he is going to do that.

We absolutely deserve these teams. Tasmania has been a heartland football state. We have produced some of the best players the game has ever seen. People like Peter Hudson, Royce Hart, Darrel Baldock, Matthew Richardson, Alastair Lynch, Rodney Eade, Nick and Jack Riewoldt are greats of the game. We deserve to have these teams. We have fought for these teams for generations.

We accept the situation for what it is. It is not perfect; nothing ever is. The critical point I made yesterday is that we will become the laughing stock of the nation if we do not deliver this major project now. The nation is watching Tasmania. We have made commitments to the AFL to deliver this stadium. The government has made those commitments on behalf of Tasmanians. If we do not build this we will lose the opportunity for the teams. It also sends a very big signal to investors on the mainland and people looking at Tasmania as a place to do business and get things done, that we do not want you here, which would be an absolute tragedy and that will impact the Tasmanian economy.

Last night on *Footy Classified*, we had football commentators like Eddie McGuire and others talking about views of the other club presidents, and the AFL, and their uneasiness with how this is all playing out. Why can Tasmania not do what other states have done and have the same opportunities here for the population? Why can we not do that? Yes, it is going to be difficult in the short to medium term. Nobody is denying that but I think in the future, in 30-40 years' time when we have AFL teams playing both in the men's and women's competition, we will look back on it and say that was the right decision. We need to make Tasmania an interesting place to live, where people want to stay and they see a future here, where they have the same opportunities for events and sports and employment and education as they do on the mainland.

We have had 10 consecutive quarters of negative interstate migration. This is a huge problem for our state. Making sure that we have the opportunities that the mainland has will stop that gravitational pull. I, for one, am very excited about this. I have a son who is running around in the Auskick program, 40 per cent growth across the state, 100 per cent growth in the south, loving the Devils. He is one of thousands.

[12.47 p.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for Franklin for bringing on this matter of public importance, because it gives me the opportunity to address some of the fallacies that have been put on the record in this place, and other places, about why we do not need this stadium. It is of an immense frustration to me, some of the things that have been said. Fallacy number 1 is that we have two perfectly good stadiums in Tasmania. That is simply not the case. When the \$130-million development of UTAS stadium takes place, we will have a fit-for-purpose stadium in the north of the state.

The fact of the matter is that there is no amount of money that can be spent over at Ninja Stadium, Bellerive Oval, that will make that fit for purpose for Tasmania's AFL team. To expand the capacity to match what we are going to build at Macquarie Point would require the purchase of an entire street behind the hill over there, and the demolition of the houses to expand it. We either play games at Bellerive permanently in front of 15- let us be generous and say 16 000 people, or we deprive 8000 people per game of attending those matches. I have no doubt that every game in Tasmania will be sold out for the team. We do not have two perfectly good stadiums. We are going to have one perfectly good stadium in the north and we will require the Macquarie Point Stadium in the south for the team.

Another fallacy that continues to be trotted out is that the AFL is somehow blackmailing Tasmania. As a lifelong follower of the AFL, I can list any number of grievances that I have with the AFL, particularly with previous administrations. I do not mind naming Andrew Demetriou as a former CEO and Mike Fitzpatrick as a former chair, who treated this state with disdain the last time we were pushing for our own teams but the fact of the matter is that Gil McLachlan, the former CEO, and the current administration are doing the right thing by Tasmania by granting this licence. What people in Tasmania need to understand is that it makes no business sense for the AFL to put a team in Tasmania. It is a captive market for the AFL regardless of whether they put a team here or not.

They are doing the right thing by granting us a licence. What we need to do is meet that commitment by providing the appropriate infrastructure to support that team. I quote the CEO of the Tasmanian Devils, Brendon Gale, who said yesterday:

I cannot stress the importance of this infrastructure to our club enough. Put simply, without it we do not exist. But there is a very sound reason for that as the stadium will set us up for long term success and an aspiration that we should all hold for our club. I am committed to making sure that this club does not make up the numbers in the AFL, but instead is a club that we can all be proud of and aspire to be part of, both on and off the field. Tasmanians and their fans deserve that. The stadium is a critical ingredient to us achieving that.

The AFL did not put the stadium requirement on Tasmania to make life difficult for us; they did it because they know that it is an imperative to support the economics of supporting the stadium, much as building the High Performance Centre at Kingston is critical towards the success of the team.

Fallacy number three is that the stadium will do nothing for the community. Other people have already talked about this. Fiery interjection in Question Time, Mr Bayley said to the Premier, 'Oh, is Auskick numbers all you have?'

Mr Bayley - In terms of criticism of the TPC report, thank you very much.

The SPEAKER - The Deputy Leader of the Greens has already been warned. That is still in play.

Mr STREET - The fact of the matter is, Auskick numbers is where the growth of the sport comes from, and Mr O'Byrne knows, as the president of the Southern Football League (SFL), that community football has been dying in Tasmania for 20 or 30 years and we have had clubs fall over. The only way to turn that around is to increase the Auskick numbers and then make sure that we develop a community football system that encourages those kids when they come through the underage ranks.

They all start wanting to play for the Devils. We know for a fact that they are not all going to play for the Devils. What we have to make sure of is that the football infrastructure and pyramid in Tasmania encourages them to keep playing football after 17 or 18 years of age if they do not reach the highest level.

We want them playing for North Hobart, we want them playing for Lauderdale, we want them playing for Rocherlea, we want them playing for Glenorchy, for Kingborough. We want them playing community football and we want those communities to be gathering on a Saturday and playing games of football against one another and bringing people together. That is what football does when it operates at its best. We need these Auskick numbers to restart community football in Tasmania and that is exactly what the introduction of the Devils has done.

Fallacy number four, and it was repeated again today, is that somehow this stadium is a gift to the AFL. It is not a gift to the AFL. It is intergenerational infrastructure for Tasmania. As the minister pointed out as well, it is not just about football, it is not just about sport, it is about art, it is about concerts. Importantly, one of the things that is not talked about is business events and how important they are to Tasmania.

[12.52. p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak on this matter of public importance and thank Mr O'Byrne for bringing this on, because there is so much that I want to say in relation to the stadium, but time permits me to only focus on a few things.

Like a tsunami, this stadium has a cascading impact on Tasmanians, not just now but for generations to come. It will have a serious impact on our precious waterfront, there is no doubt about that, just by its mere magnitude. It will have a lasting impact on our finances with \$1.86 billion of debt at least. That is an impact that will be felt by Tasmanians for generations to come, in the landscape of a budget that is already in deep in crisis.

It has a serious impact on our sovereignty because we have the AFL dictating the terms of what this government is doing and the activities of this government. It is a clear and utter sovereignty risk here. It is quite clear to me that the AFL, as Mr Street has just said, did not see Tasmania as a market of opportunity.

They put out their ridiculous terms that they thought no one in their right mind would agree to, but apparently our premier did, and now we are expected to deliver on the most extraordinary terms in order to get a team terms that no other team has been required to meet and quite clearly do not relate at all to the financial viability or the sporting viability of a team.

The AFL are laughing, they are all laughing at us. We are the laughing stock. They could not believe that Tasmania would accept these terms and we are going so far down this path. It is an absolute attack on our planning system that we are going to throw out not only the proper planning process that we ought to be going through, but now the project of state significance process; we are going to shut out community voices. That is a serious impact. It is a massive attack on our democracy when we see the opposition missing in action in terms of holding the government to account when it comes to the largest infrastructure project that this state has seen.

Mr Willie, the shadow treasurer, said that the Labor Party has gone on a journey when it comes to this stadium. Absolutely, it has gone on a journey. In fact, it has taken Tasmanians for an absolute ride because it promised them they would not support the stadium. They change their mind and promise them that it would scrutinise the stadium, and then in the last 24 hours we hear it is a blank cheque. Do what you like. It does not matter how big the stuff up is, we are backing you the whole way. It is an absolute attack on our democracy.

I am very concerned about the misrepresentation of what the TPC has delivered this week, and I want to touch on that very briefly. The TPC has delivered a draft integrated assessment report. The keyword here is draft. It is not the final report, it is not the final assessment. What it has done is highlight the issues that need further investigation, further analysis and it is inviting the community to have their say. It is inviting Macquarie Point Development Corporation (MPDC), the government, other stakeholders to have their say.

It is very targeted in what it has got in the report as the issues. It says quite clearly there are things that are not contentious that they agree with. They recognise that there are benefits to this stadium. It is listed here. Yes, those benefits are not necessarily highlighted in great detail because they are not controversial. They accept them but what they want to hear is an analysis, some opinion and submissions on those things that are issues.

There are many, many issues with this stadium. I want to read into *Hansard* very quickly what it says at the very start on page 5 of the report, in terms of what this report is all about.

It focuses on key challenges, concerns and potential problems relating to the Project, and their potential effects. Is intended to initiate discussion on those issues and to explore through exhibition and public comment any potential solutions that may alleviate or mitigate the issues. There are aspects of the Project that the panel considers do not present any significant issues, and as such these are not addressed in the draft in IAR [Initial Assessment Report]. The draft IAR is intended to be read in this context.

The legal advice and the Premier today, trying to discredit the TPC report for not being balanced, is a complete misconstruction of what there is. This is an issues paper. It does not mean to say that these issues are necessary fatal to the project, but these are things that ought to be explored and if we are going to circumvent the exploration of these issues and the potential to find solutions by putting through and banging through with the Opposition's willingness, it is a disgrace.

Time expired.

[12.58 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, let me start today with the latest development in the stadium saga, this so-called legal advice that the government has released today.

Honestly, I really wish I did not need to spend much time on this because what has been produced is plainly nothing more than a PR exercise to help the Premier walk away from the stadium process and bring in special approval legislation instead. We just cannot let it go. I will start by saying that unlike the Liberal Party room, the TPC and panel are not a bunch of stooges. The panel has six experts. Notably, one of them is a former assistant Solicitor-General who actually acted as a Solicitor-General too: someone the government deeply entrusted with their most serious questions of law. Another of them is a former Treasury secretary, someone who you would think was entrusted with managing the state's finances, and you would think that that is a person who would know a thing or two about money.

These two, along with four other experts, spent significant time considering matters related to the stadium and developing assessment guidelines, receiving the POSS application, requesting additional information from the proponent, considering it and then authoring this draft integrated assessment report. Well over a year of examination and then just a couple of days we see this superficial letter coming back from a multinational law firm. What did it come up with? A couple of points of legal contention to be sure, questionable as they may be, and then paragraph after paragraph that I am pretty sure I have read before in a Liberal Party media release or maybe heard the Premier talk about in this place.

It is ironic that the lawyers criticised the Planning Commission for making unsubstantiated arguments when that is what they spend most of this letter doing. I said at the beginning that this is not really a credible legal advice. It is a cooked-up pretence to justify a decision the Premier has already made to pursue special approval legislation for this -

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

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Macquarie Point Multi-Purpose Stadium

Resumed from above.

Mr BAYLEY - Deputy Speaker, to recap, as I said at the beginning, this is not credible legal advice. This is a cooked up pretence to justify a decision the Premier has already made to pursue special approval legislation for the stadium.

Yesterday, the Premier compared himself to Paul Lennon. I was glad that was captured on *ABC News*, because I found it remarkable. Today he has compared the stadium to the pulp mill, a baffling admission from him, but we could not agree more. This is the pulp mill playbook indeed. It is dodgy, it is stinking and it is all about sidelining Tasmanians but Tasmanians will not be sidelined. We will not be silenced. Labor might be comfortable with selling out every principle they have to back in the Liberals, but the Greens are going to fight this every step of the way, and judging by community sentiment, we will have many people on our sides.

To cover off on a couple of issues raised during this debate: Auskick. I interjected on the Premier to raise Auskick yesterday, as it was the one thing he chose to pull out of the TPC report to question its integrity and findings. In fact, the TPC report discusses social benefits at length - pages of them but they are clear: the social benefits, including things like the uptick in Auskick, sheet home to the teams, not to the stadium. The TPC report is clear that social benefits can and will occur with the teams without a stadium.

The Devils are already there. They are already out there promoting Auskick and the benefits are flowing without a stadium. Before there are any interjections reiterating the AFL blackmail of 'no stadium, no team', let me say this: if Labor showed some backbone and together with the crossbench, which is already standing up to be counted on this issue, signalled no to a stadium to the AFL, Tasmania's hand would be strengthened.

As it stands, with Labor and the Libs on a unity ticket backing the stadium come what may, no matter what the financial, planning, social or heritage costs, and prepared to bypass the current process to get it, why would the AFL renegotiate?

Tassie deserves a footy team and we have done so for decades. There is no national competition without us. We have stadiums where AFL has been played for years. We do not need a new one. With one of the oldest, sickest, least literate and least secure populations in the country liable for skyrocketing debt, and more economic shocks to come, we simply cannot afford a stadium. The polling says we do not need one. We do not want one. We cannot afford to be blackmailed by the AFL.

The stadium is in the wrong place and it comes from the wrong place. It is born of deceit where, despite already agreeing to one with the AFL, the Premier repeatedly denied that a stadium was part of our bid. It is still up on the web today on the AFL news website: 'Premier confirms new stadium won't be part of Tassie's bid'. Well, that was untrue.

As Mr Willie has said, both the Liberals and Labor have been on a journey - a journey of deceit and deflection, of backflip and broken commitment, to now be joined at the hip unconditionally supporting a stadium and content to treat Tasmanians with contempt. Today people are penning their submissions to the TPC with special Liberal-Labor legislation to fast-track approval, irrespective of the planning evidence. They are cutting off the community's voice at the knees.

Time expired.

[2.33 p.m.]

Mr GARLAND (Braddon) - Deputy Speaker, I would like to start my contribution by talking about the curious case of Edward Gibb, who is a frequent flyer on my Facebook page. Whilst I have never met him in person, I have invited him to my office with no luck. He never misses a beat in giving the Liberal Party a shout-out and a cheeky criticism or meme in the comments section, especially on posts about the AFL stadium. I jokingly commented once that I come for the comments but I stay for Edward Gibb. The repetition of comments means that Edward Gibb is quite clearly more than just your average critic: Edward Gibb is a premium critic. The question on everyone's mind, however, is who is Edward Gibb?

The often speculated but yet to be confirmed identity of online keyboard warrior Edward Gibb remains a mystery. In the past, Liberal staffers have been outed as making

comments under fake profiles on sensitive issues, so I wonder, is this the case now? Are the Liberal Party concerned about the public narrative so much that they are sending out workers to troll no stadium advocates' pages online? Based on community comments in person, online and in survey polls, I think most Tasmanians do not want the stadium. Regardless of the reasons, this is the reality. It is my view that parliament needs to listen to the community when they speak. That is why we are elected: to represent and listen to the community.

Recently posted on my Facebook page was an article by the reporter, Matt Maloney, "'No Stadium, No Team": AFL chief won't budge on 2028 Tasmanian team licence', published earlier this week on Tuesday 1 April. There were several comments below the post, but the comment that really stood out was a long list of arguments as to why the stadium is needed. This comment was very strange indeed because it was remarkably consistent with official talking points of the Liberal Party on the stadium. The points raised in the article were highly polished and strategic and aligned with Liberal Party rhetoric.

The question is: does the Premier's office or the Liberal caucus encourage the practice of astroturfing to shape public discourse because they know that the community support for this stadium project and the Liberal government is low, and if so, why cannot the Liberal Party listen to the community for once, instead of trying to ram home yet another largely unwanted project? The government can talk about the perceived benefits of any project until the cows come home, but if they do not listen to the community they get booted out of office. Can I make this point? Sixty per cent of the people in the north-west oppose this project. This was before the damning TPC interim report.

My last point: if anyone from the Liberal Party has any intelligence on the identity of Edward Gibb, you can contact me or my staff.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Family Violence Amendment Bill 2024 (No. 51) - Consideration of Legislative Council Amendments In Committee

[2.37 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Deputy Premier)(by leave) - Deputy Speaker, I move

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the following item of private members business from being dealt with during government business time. Order of the day number 12, Family Violence Amendment Bill 2024, Bill No.51, consideration of amendments of the Legislative Council.

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - I do not necessarily have a problem with this as long as we are ready to do it, but I think it would be courteous for the government to have notified other members of this place, unless I have missed something. Has anyone been notified?

Ms Haddad - Yes.

Mr Barnett - And Dr Woodruff.

Mr BAYLEY - You have? Okay, my apologies. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

FAMILY VIOLENCE AMENDMENT BILL 2024 (No. 51)

In Committee - Consideration of Council Amendments

Legislative Council amendment to clause 5 -

Ms JOHNSTON - Deputy Chair, I move -

That the amendment of the Legislative Council be agreed to.

Page 5, proposed new section 34, subsection (2), paragraph (a), subparagraph (iii).

Leave out that paragraph.

In doing so, I acknowledge that the amendment is just a simple amendment to the bill, recognising concerns about the wording, in the generic nature of the wording. I am more than happy with the amendment.

Whilst I am on my feet, I thank the Attorney-General and the minister Palmer for their assistance with this particular bill and collaboration on it. I thank in particular the community sector for the advocacy on this particularly important issue. It is a minor amendment. I am very excited that hopefully this bill will pass and that we will be making Tasmanian lives a lot safer as a result of it. I am very keen to see this amendment pass quickly and move on to making Tasmanians lives safer.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you, Deputy Chair. I thank the member for her remarks and her support. In respect of the collaboration around the parliament, this is a very good day. This is excellent on the importance of working together to improve the outcomes for women in Tasmania, but also all members in our community in providing a safer place.

To explain on the record our proposed amendment in this bill in the other place, which was supported by the independent member for Clark, as we have just heard. The proposed amendment removed of a subparagraph in relation to the grounds of a costs order being made due to an unreasonable impact on a party. Members will recall that our government supported the member's bill late last year and indicated we would work with the member to undertake further consultation over the parliamentary break. We did that. Consultation occurred between 19 December through the 7 February 2025 and resulted in 10 submissions from external stakeholders and five government submissions. The large number of submissions received demonstrates the value in undertaking further public consultation processes.

Submissions were overall supportive of the bill and this is a testament to the work, as I say of the independent member, but are also working together with government. In this regard,

I do thank my department for their work and consultation to help make this happen. Section 34 of the bill is designed so parties - both the victim and alleged perpetrator - bear their own costs in private family violence order applications, except in the circumstances outlined in section 34 of the bill. Clause 34 provides where costs could potentially be awarded against a party in cases where the liable party made the application, objected to the application or withdrew the application, in certain circumstances. The clause being removed refers to, 'A manner that has an unreasonable impact on another party to the application.'

The government's proposed amendment to remove the clause follows consideration of matters including the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service. Their submission raised that the term 'unreasonable impact' was too broad and vague. They were concerned that this was a risk that this provision could be exploited in instances where cost applications were made in systems abuse cases. In other words, where alleged perpetrators used the justice system to further their control, such as economic abuse of the victim. The subparagraph is unclear, making it difficult for legal representatives of victims to provide them with certainty that their family violence order applications do not run the risk of costs being ordered against them. This would continue their current hesitation from victim/survivors having to make genuine Family Violence Orders (FVO) applications.

There was also consideration as to whether this provision in the bill should be retained or refined. The government considered it was not necessary to retain the provision. The other elements of Section 34, as I have said already, cover the kinds of unreasonable impacts that would merit consideration of costs against an unsuccessful party, for example, if either party uses the court action to control, intimidate or cause mental harm under that section. Reviewing Tasmanian acts and other jurisdictions' relevant legislation, the Department of Justice also noted that the term 'unreasonable impact' is also not used in their cost provisions.

Ms Johnston has supported this amendment and I am very grateful for that, as did our colleagues in the other place. Our government, of course, will be supporting the bill as amended today. I again acknowledge all those who have made submissions during that consultation process. We have improved the bill as a result of that. I thank again the member for bringing this bill forward and also with my department. Departmental representatives are here today and I acknowledge their good work and support for the member.

This is a good thing: working together as a parliament to help make a difference. I want to put on record my sincere thanks to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence, the honourable Jo Palmer, who took this amendment through in the other place and who has worked very carefully on this bill. She is a wonderful advocate for women in Tasmania and a wonderful Minister for Disability Services, Education, and a whole range of other things. She has done a terrific job to progress this through the Upper House and more generally in the public arena as a great advocate in this space. It has been great to work together with the Honourable Jo Palmer, with the honourable member for Clark, and I support the amendment and the bill.

Ms BADGER - Chair, I would like to echo the comments that we made back in November when this bill first came to us. This is a very simple piece of legislation. Now we are seeing a very simple amendment to it, but it is going to make an enormous difference in the lives of many Tasmanians. I thank again the member for Clark, Ms Johnston, for bringing this on for everybody across the sector who has advocated for this and brought it to this place.

It is important to acknowledge that this was done as a simple fix because we have not seen the much-anticipated, the much-needed full review of the *Family Violence Act*. We have to remember that that has to take place. We have to see some action and some commitment to that going forward.

For the interim, the Greens are very happy to support the amendments that very sensibly went through and thank everyone from all sides of the parliament in this place and the other for working collaboratively to make this happen. We will absolutely be supporting it and we hope to get this bill through today, as I am sure it will.

I have no doubt that when the family violence review finally does happen, we will see the same amount of engagement and collaboration across all sides to make sure that Tasmania is as safe and kind and caring as it possibly can be.

Ms BROWN - I thank the member for putting together this bill and bringing it to the parliament, and thank both houses for supporting it. Labor will of course be supporting this bill. As it has been said, it is a simple bill, but as we know in this place, one out of five women has experienced violence since the age of 15, and on average one woman is killed every nine days by a former or current partner.

A simple bill does make a huge difference in this scope and every simple bill is a step forward to abolishing family violence in our state and our country. Thank you again to the member for Clark and we are supporting this bill.

Legislative Council amendment agreed to.

Reported the Committee had resolved to agree to the Council amendments.

Resolution agreed to.

JUSTICE MISCELLANEOUS (REPORTING PROCEDURES) BILL 2025 (No. 10)

Second Reading

[2.50 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Justice) - Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill contains amendments to reporting procedures in three acts within my justice portfolio. Importantly, one of the amendments implements recommendation 19.6 of the commission of inquiry into the Tasmanian government's responses to child sexual abuse.

As I have said before, the government is committed to the important work of implementing all 191 recommendations of the commission of inquiry. This bill is another step towards fulfilling the commitment well in advance of the 1 July 2026 due date identified by the commission. In fact, this amendment was originally consulted on as part of a broader justice

miscellaneous bill scheduled for introduction at a later date, but I am pleased to have the opportunity to bring this amendment forward.

The other two amendments are in relation to the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court. They achieve greater consistency with reporting dates in other legislation. This streamlines processes and improves the timelines of tabling their end reports in parliament, for more timely reporting.

I will now outline the proposed amendments. The amendment to the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* implements recommendation 19.6 of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings report. Recommendation 19.6:

The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013*, to clarify that in addition to the duty to report in certain circumstances, any person can notify reportable behaviour to the registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme.

The Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act establishes a screening and monitoring system for people who work with vulnerable people including children and young people. Currently, the act provides that it is a duty of a reporting body to notify the registrar of reportable behaviour. A reporting body includes a government department or state authority, other licensing bodies, Tasmania Police, and any other prescribed bodies. Reportable behaviour is prescribed in the regulations as behaviour that poses a risk of harm to vulnerable persons by reason of neglect, abuse or other conduct.

The commission of inquiry found that although the act contemplates the registrar receiving information about reportable behaviour other than through the duty to report, there is no specific legislative provision for receiving this information. It therefore recommended that the Act clarify that any person can notify reportable behaviour to the registrar.

I should say that members of the public do already notify the registrar from time to time. This amendment will clarify an important part of the registrar's work within the broader system under which concerned Tasmanians can raise concerns.

The primary response systems for raising urgent child safety concerns are the Child Safety Service's Advice and Referral Line under notification provisions in the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, or notifying police. For example, the Advice and Referral Line can be contacted online or by phone on 1800 000 123.

Child Safety Services and police both already notify the registrar of concerns they receive. However, this amendment does strengthen the options. The message in the government's work to implement COI (commission of inquiry) recommendations is that a person does not need to know the best government agency to notify regarding child safety concerns, as we have a network of response systems.

The new 53AB inserted by the bill provides for voluntary notifications of reportable behaviour by a person. It provides for a person notifying the registrar if they become aware of

or suspect that another person is engaged in reportable behaviour, and believes that person is registered or has applied for registration under the act.

A voluntary notification is to include, as far as it is known, the name of and any other identifying particulars of the person who engaged in the behaviour. This may include, for example, any places the person works or volunteers. It is also to include the details of the alleged reportable behaviour.

The bill clarifies that this notification provision allows a person to report behaviour whether or not it occurs before or after the commencement of this act. The bill also includes a clarifying amendment to the regulation-making powers so regulations can be made, if needed, in relation to the new voluntary notification provision, in addition to the current regulation-making power for reporting bodies.

Making regulations for notifications has not been necessary to date, but if any further statutory guidance is required this power can be used. This amendment was added to the bill when finalising it.

To implement these amendments, it is intended that the registration to work with vulnerable people website will be updated to include an online reporting pathway for the public to register concerns with the scheme. Other reporting options are also being considered.

The reporting pathways will be accompanied by guidance about how to report and what information to include. In addition, people raising concerns about immediate risk to vulnerable people will be directed to Tasmania Police and the Child Safety Services Advice and Referral Line for immediate response. Importantly, concerns provided to Child Safety Services or Tasmania Police are already referred by them to the registrar.

Once reports are received, they will be matched where possible against the register of applicants and registered persons and appropriate action taken in line within the provisions of the act. This could include seeking further information from the person making the report or other bodies, further risk assessments, making determinations regarding a person's application or registration such as cancellation or suspension, and/or providing information to other authorities for action.

Currently, on or before 30 November each year, the Chief Justice and the Chief Magistrate respectively must prepare and provide to the minister an annual report that includes details of the administration of justice and other matters for each court. The minister must cause a copy of the annual report to be laid on the table of each House of Parliament within 10 sitting days of receiving it. Annual reports are an important tool for government, parliament and the public to assess the performance and achievements of any of an entity throughout the year. The bill changes the date the annual reports are due from 30 November to 31 October. This change will ensure consistency with many other annual reporting statutory time frames. As a result, this means reports will be received in time to be tabled in parliament by the end of the relevant calendar year. I would like to thank the public and other stakeholders who considered these amendments during the consultation period.

There was support from relevant agencies, but no external submissions on these amendments received for publication on the department's website. The bill released for consultation did include other amendments, some of which did receive stakeholder comment.

The feedback on those other amendments is under consideration so they can be progressed in later sittings.

I am pleased to progress these amendments which update and strengthen reporting provisions in the relevant acts, most importantly in relation to the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* to clarify and improve our systems for protecting children.

Deputy Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

[2.59 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to be able to make a contribution on behalf of the opposition to the Justice Miscellaneous (Reporting Procedures) Bill 2025 and indicate we will be supporting the bill.

As we heard the Attorney-General explain in his second reading contribution, this bill amends the reporting procedures under a number of pieces of Tasmanian legislation. One of them relates to one of the recommendations of the commission of inquiry, that being recommendation 19.6 of that report of 191 recommendations of that Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government Response to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

That recommendation, 19.6, reads that the Tasmanian government should introduce legislation to amend the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* to clarify that in addition to the duty to report in certain circumstances, any person can notify reportable behaviour to the registrar of the registration to work with vulnerable people's scheme.

As the Attorney-General outlined, that act that governs the working with vulnerable people scheme provides not only a duty of the reporting body to notify the registrar, but also there is an expectation that anyone can report to the registrar. This amendment makes clear that the registrar is able to receive reports from anybody.

It is an important change, simple as it might seem in its drafting, because one of the things that was made quite clear through the commission of inquiry is that there should be a 'no wrong door' approach to reporting suspected wrongdoing. Much of the evidence that was provided to the commission of inquiry pointed to there being terrible circumstances where some allegations or perhaps even actual instances of child sexual abuse fell through the cracks because of multiple layers of reporting and different reporting bodies having different jurisdictions and different responsibilities. That change that has been made in this legislation is a positive one.

It does not just go to child sexual abuse, because reportable behaviour that is prescribed in regulations is defined to mean 'behaviour that poses a risk of harm to vulnerable persons'. It is quite a broad definition. It is a positive thing that that means a registrar - while they could already receive those notifications, it is made clear through this amendment that they can.

I had a question for the Attorney-General about this change. I might have misunderstood the second reading speech, but my understanding was that if a person makes a report to the registrar of a concern of immediate risk to vulnerable people, they will be directed to Tasmania Police and the Child Safety Services Advice and Referral Line (ARL) for immediate response.

It goes on to say that concerns provided to child safety or Tasmania Police are already referred by them to the registrar as well, so there is that two way communication that is essential

for the scheme to work effectively. As I said, I hope it is a misunderstanding of mine, but if a member of the public makes a notification to the registrar, they will be directed by the registrar to the ARL or Tasmania Police, then the communication channels open between the ARL, Tasmania police and so on.

My question is: what happens if a person makes a report to the registrar, they are directed to go to the ARL or Tasmania Police and they do not do that for whatever reason? What happens to that referral or that report rather? Does that make sense?

Mr Barnett - Yes.

Ms HADDAD - That was my only question about that: whether there is an automatic notification by the registrar to either the ARL or Tasmania Police, or both, or whether that member of the public needs to make that further report to those bodies. I also note that the Attorney-General has said that the website for the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme will be updated to include an online reporting pathway for the public, which is a really important mechanism as well.

I do not intend to make substantial comments on the other changes in the bill that are procedural - changing the reporting date for both the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court from 30 November to 31 October. Bringing them forward by a month will bring them into line with other annual reporting dates for those annual reports that are tabled in the Parliament. I assume that those courts have been consulted and are in agreement with that change.

I also had a general question about this bill. Attorney-General, you have noted in your second reading speech that the amendment to the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* was contemplated in a broader Justice miscellaneous bill but has been pulled out to be dealt with separately. That is totally fine, but I wondered why, and what your timeframe is on the other changes that were consulted originally on that broader Justice miscellaneous bill. I also wondered whether or not the submissions that were made on that larger bill by members of the public or committee organisations and others will be published on the Justice Department's consultation website, and whether there has been any change in policy to when those community consultation submissions are published online.

I note that there used to be, or at least when I was first elected there seemed to be a pretty standard practice that as soon as a consultation period had closed on a draft bill, the submissions were uploaded pretty much at the same time. I have noticed a change over the past seven years where now sometimes those consultation submissions are uploaded on the day that we are debating the bill in parliament, or sometimes not at all. I wondered if there has been a policy shift or a change in direction in terms of when those community consultation submissions are published, because they are really useful views, usually shared. Even if they are ones that we do not agree with, I feel like it is partly my role as a member of parliament to put some of those concerns on the record when people have made the effort and taken the time to make a submission on a draft bill.

With those brief comments, I conclude, and look forward to the Attorney-General addressing those few questions.

[3.08 p.m.]

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to provide a response from the Greens to the Justice Miscellaneous (Reporting Procedures) Bill 2025. The Greens support this bill. I would like to make some comments around the changes to the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act*, and to say that we have many mechanisms in place across the state to keep our children and vulnerable people safe, and they are all important.

In volume 8, page 128 of the commission of inquiry report, the former registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme, Peter Graham, described some of the importance of this, and I am going to share some of that here. He described the obligation to notify the Registrar of 'reportable behaviour' as the 'backbone of the scheme', because 'it forms the basis of information available to the registrar to consider when conducting a risk assessment of a person applying for registration or an additional risk assessment of a person who is already registered under the scheme.

Mr Graham said:

Notifications made under this obligation give the registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme significantly more information when undertaking risk assessments than is contemplated by the National Standards for Working with Children Checks. The information available to the Registrar includes criminal intelligence and other information provided by reporting bodies, including allegations that haven't been tested by an investigation (unsubstantiated allegations).

We welcome the expansion of the act to allow for anybody to report to the working with vulnerable people registrar. We appreciate that this will strengthen the scheme and enable the registrar to ensure that those people who are registered to work with vulnerable people are indeed safe, because they have access to more information.

We welcome the legislation here in part 3 that amends the original principal act. That is all I have to say on this. We support the bill. We are glad to see another commission of inquiry recommendation being completed and hope that this will be part of the suite of things that we continue to do as a state to keep children safe in Tasmania.

[3.11 p.m.]

Mr BEHRAKIS (Clark) - Deputy Speaker, as the Attorney-General has stated, this bill implements recommendation 19.6 of the commission of inquiry into the Tasmanian government's response to child sexual abuse. For the benefit of members and for *Hansard*, I would like to provide the commission's rationale for this amendment, which includes an overview of our *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act*.

The *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* establishes a screening/monitoring system for people who work with vulnerable people, including children and young people. If a reporting body, which includes the state service agency and the police service, becomes aware by any means or suspects on reasonable grounds that a person registered under the act has engaged or may be engaged in reportable behaviour, they must notify the registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme as soon as practicable of the name and other identifying details of the person and the behaviour. Reportable behaviour is behaviour that poses a risk of harm to vulnerable persons, whether by neglect, abuse or other conduct.

The *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* also contemplates the registrar receiving information about reportable behaviour other than through the duty that a reporting body has to notify the registrar. However, there is no specific legislative provision for receiving this information. There is nothing in the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* preventing an entity, including a government department or any individual from notifying the registrar of concerning behaviour involving any person. They would need to ensure they are not in breach of the general prohibition on the use or disclosure of personal information under the *Personal Information Protection Act*. Sharing relevant information with the registrar would generally be for determining whether the person is suitable to either be registered under the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme through a risk assessment, or to stay registered under the scheme through an additional risk assessment.

These purposes are for the broader purpose of protecting public safety, for the assessment of the suitability of the person for employment. Both purposes are exceptions to the general prohibition on the use or disclosure of personal information in the *Personal Information Protection Act*. Our view is that the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* should be amended to clarify that any person can notify reportable behaviour to the Registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme.

On the 1 December 2023, the Tasmanian government released its formal response to the commission's final report titled *Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust*, which outlined agency responsibilities and timeframes for implementing the recommendations across three phases: phase 1 by the 1 July 2024, phase 2 by 1 July 2026 and phase 3 by the 1 July 2029. As the Attorney-General has outlined, the introduction of this legislation fulfils this recommendation by the commission of inquiry well ahead of the recommended timeline of July 2026. As part of the implementation, the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People website will be updated to include an online reporting pathway for the public to register concerns with the scheme.

Members may be aware that our government has recently launched the new user-friendly Registration to Work with Vulnerable People website, which streamlines processes and improves the overall experience of users seeking to register for the scheme. The new streamlined website includes fact sheets and sector guides and news about upcoming changes to the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme. The new website also provides more direct and easier access to everything you need to know about Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.

As the Attorney-General has outlined, this bill also amends the *Magistrates Court Act 1987* and *Supreme Court Civil Procedure Act 1932* to change the annual reporting dates from 30 November to 31 October. Annual reports are an important tool for government, for the parliament and the public to assess the performance and achievements of an entity throughout the year. The Chief Justice and Chief Magistrate must prepare and provide to the Attorney-General an annual report in respect of the year that ended on the preceding 30 June. The annual report must include details as to the administration of justice in the court during that year and may include any other matter that the Chief Justice or Chief Magistrate considers appropriate.

The minister must then cause a copy of the annual report to be laid on the table of each House of parliament within 10 days after receiving it. Bringing forward the reporting date in line with other bodies means reports will be received in time to be tabled in parliament by the

end of the calendar year, in line with our government's commitment to improving openness and transparency. Annual reports are an important tool for government, parliament and the public to assess the performance and achievements of an entity throughout the year and the court's annual reports for 2023-24 included important information on improving access to justice, education and community engagement. Both courts' annual reports outline key measures used to assess the performance of the courts, including:

- The backlog indicator - which is a measure of effectiveness in relation to the timeliness and delay.
- Clearance rate - an efficient measure of the inputs per output unit.
- The attendance indicator on time, case processing - an effectiveness measure of timeliness and delay.

These changes, as has been broadly noted by the House during this debate, are all about ensuring that we are meeting those recommendations and our responsibilities as a parliament and a government and ensuring that we are keeping people safe.

Deputy Speaker, with that, I commend the bill to the House.

[3.17 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Member for Bass) - Deputy Speaker, I really appreciate the government's work in this space and I want to take the opportunity in rising to speak on behalf of my constituents in the electorate of Bass, our appreciation for the work of the Attorney-General and his team in bringing this particular bill to the House.

There are some important improvements that the bill brings to the laws of our state. In particular, I know that all of us want to see an effective, timely and successful implementation of the recommendations from the commission of inquiry. Most of us in this chamber have walked a lot of that journey as Tasmanians and as representatives of the Tasmanian people and we want to see a safer state for children. I want to see the safer state for all Tasmanians, young and old. The commission of inquiry particularly gave us a significant body of work based on levels of urgency and aligned those to different tranches of recommended tranches of reform.

While the commission of inquiry's focus was quite properly on the safety of children, there are improvements that the Attorney-General is bringing in this legislation which will also provide some additional support and care to other vulnerable Tasmanians - people for whom the working with vulnerable people check is so important. I want to see that system still be user friendly, Attorney-General. I want it to be seen as something that the community supports. I want to see that system being one where legitimate and serious concerns can be raised with the authorities in a way that people of different walks of life or different levels of literacy feel that they can make a notification based on information they have come by, or based on some observations they have seen. None of us wants to see frivolous or vexatious notifications, but there is a process, I know, for dealing with those.

What we all want to see is the systems that government and this parliament are responsible for, being effective, and able to rescue children from dangerous situations as quickly and as effectively as possible. For any of us here today who are parents or grandparents, we understand this so keenly, but you do not have to be a parent to appreciate the deep need

that we have as a community to protect the most precious, the most vulnerable Tasmanians, as I always say, our children.

For the benefit of the House, I have had a good look at the commission's own rationale for recommending one of the amendments in this particular bill, and that includes an overview of looking at the act for registration to work with vulnerable people. That act in itself has established a screening and monitoring system for people who work with vulnerable people. Yes, I emphasise children and of course young people, but there are also others - people with disability or significant cognitive impairment or older people in different settings that have people who have the vulnerable person's trust and indeed have the community's trust to do a good job and to look after the interest of their family member or their care client or that child in their classroom.

Without going into too much detail as to the specifics, the reporting body includes a state service agency or the police service that becomes aware by any means or suspects on reasonable grounds that a person registered under the act has engaged or may have engaged in reportable behaviour. I will not go into the reportable behaviour. I think that has already been well understood by members, but in that reportable behaviour there are groups of people and categories of employment where Tasmanians must notify the registrar of the scheme, as soon as practicable, of the name and other identifying details of the person and the behaviour. I will come back to that in a moment, if I may, but the reportable behaviour I referenced from the act is behaviour that poses a risk of harm to vulnerable persons, whether by neglect, abuse or other conduct. The registration also contemplates, but does not necessarily follow through to the level required, that the registrar might be able to receive information about reportable behaviour other than through the people who have a duty.

To put that another way, there are certain categories of people, and every member of this house is in this category. We are all mandatory reporters. That was an important improvement that came through for members interested in the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* in Section 14. It has all the prescribed persons. MPs came through in a later tranche, and that is a good thing, under subsection (1)(jb); there we are, MPs. The clergy are there, teachers are there - they have been there for a long time. Medical practitioners are also there; in fact, anybody registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law is included. They and we have a duty to report a reportable behaviour when and where we see it. As I am sure members here will attest, in our offices from time to time we receive information from members of the community. I have to say, as a long-time MP, I have received information on numerous occasions, or I have become aware of it, or observed it, or listened to a conversation where a confidence was placed in me.

I do not know if the other person has made a report, but I am not going to leave it to chance. I have a standard practice in my office, which I commend to any other member or anybody listening. I just report it. I just ring the police or I will send an email to the police, to the Commissioner's Office sometimes, or I will pick up the phone and call the hotline. I will do that because I know I have to discharge my duty as a mandatory reporter under the act. Not only do I want to fulfil the duty, I do not want to leave it to chance that the other person has done it themselves, because I do not know if the other person will do it themselves.

There is no problem with the abuse hotline becoming aware of the same child from numerous people. They can work through that, triage it, and collate the information. Perhaps multiple sources of concern might help to gather a body of evidence about whether or not that

child is at risk, or whether or not that vulnerable person, perhaps a person with significant disability, or an older person, is in any danger. Our law enforcement and the good people who manage the Working with Vulnerable People scheme deserve our full enthusiasm and support, and the same from the community, to ensure that when information or suspicion emerges about a risk to somebody who may not be in a strong position to defend themselves, that we are there for them and the system will be able to intervene and protect them and consider their long-term best interests.

I come back to the point that the scheme does not have a clearly legislated pathway for people who are not mandatory reporters; that is, for members of the community who do not have the legal obligation as professionals, usually, to report reportable behaviour. That is what the Attorney-General is doing through this legislation, so that we will have in the future a specific legal provision for receiving that information where it was not actually mandated. There is nothing currently in the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act* preventing an entity, including a government department or any individual, from notifying the registrar about concerning behaviour involving any person. However, and this is I think really why we are here, they would need to ensure they are not in breach of the general prohibition on the use of personal information. None of us here today want that person, that member of the public, to have to worry about that, or to have to withhold information because they are worried about breaching the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. Today we are going to resolve that once and for all, and it is a good thing, too.

I am really pleased with this. I know it is not the most groundbreaking legislation, but what we are doing here today may save a child. It just might. This bill itself might make the difference for that one piece of information that may rescue a child or vulnerable older person from a situation that otherwise would not have been known to the authorities. The bill will clarify that any person, whether you are a mandatory reporter or a man or a woman on the street, any person can notify reportable behaviour to the registrar knowing that they themselves are doing so in a way that is not only contemplated but indeed protected under the act.

I will make a quick point as well that the registrar is a person, appointed from time-to-time, who this parliament is entrusting to consider these important matters. From that point of view, that pathway to consider reportable behaviour does overrule, or if I could put it another way, out-compete the other concerns about privacy and provides security for the person who is voluntarily reporting in the same way it applies to those of us who are obliged to report and already have the legal cover of the Act. As the Attorney-General has outlined in his speech, the introduction of this element of the bill fulfils the recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry well-ahead of the recommended time frame: points to the government, points to the Attorney-General.

I am also advised, as part of the implementation, the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People website will be updated. In fact, it has already had a major upgrade and that was, I think, launched only a few days ago. It will, subsequent to this legislation, also include an online reporting pathway. I believe that is coming; not live yet. It will be made live when the law is passed. That will be yet another portal, another way, for members of the public to register concerns with the scheme. I might leave it to the Attorney-General to discuss whether or not you have to put your name or whether you can be anonymous. I believe I know the answer, but I will leave it to the Attorney-General to make that comment.

We encourage people not to wait for a website to come online. Get yourselves familiar with the advice and referral line. It is a number I have used. I might speak about that in just a moment. 1800 000 123. It is a number you cannot forget. 1800 000 123. I have made notifications to that phone line. I was treated with respect. I was not asked questions with which I was uncomfortable. I was assured of my own confidentiality and that I did not need to worry about the family or the institution becoming aware of my name in the making of that referral. I was asked if I would like to be kept informed about the matter, and my usual practice is to say no. I do not personally need to know where the matter goes. I just want to be assured that I have provided the authorities with the information that they need to protect and look after our children and vulnerable people. The number that I have given is, of course, for Child Safety Services. If anybody has got any doubt ever, contact the police and the different arms of government and law enforcement can work together.

I will conclude by addressing the work on updating the timeframes for the annual reports. It is a wonder that this has not been called for before. It is something that interested me, for unlike most other annual reports, which are presented and due by 31 October, that will now become the case for the reports of the Chief Justice and the Chief Magistrate. This probably has something to do with the fact that these reports are usually not contentious, but they could be in the future. The changes that the Attorney-General is bringing forward make sure that parliament gets a good look at those reports before the end of each calendar year. Congratulations, Attorney-General. I thoroughly support this legislation and thank you for it.

[3.31 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Justice) - Deputy Speaker, I thank all those who have spoken on this bill and concurring with their remarks. Thank you for the support, foreshadowing support for the bill, which is a good one. It does improve the law.

I will respond to the shadow attorney-general, Ella Haddad, shortly, but I wanted to indicate a thank you also to Cecily Rosol, Simon Behrakis and Michael Ferguson for your warm remarks and also your desire to improve the processes and the environment in which we live to make it safer for children and vulnerable people in Tasmania and to improve our processes when it comes to more open and transparent approach with respect to the Supreme Court and the Magistrates Court.

Because this is the first of two bills this afternoon, I wanted to indicate that these Justice miscellaneous amendment bills are important. It does give this parliament and the public an opportunity to ensure our legislation remains up-to-date and the public is supported accordingly. Sometimes they amend or correct minor errors or deficiencies that have become apparent after legislation has been operational for some time, sometimes to address issues that have arisen in existing acts because of the passing of other amending legislation. As members will be aware, a lot of legislation that is considered in this place can be complex, and that is particularly true of legislation in the justice portfolio.

As lawmakers, we make every effort both during the development of legislation and during the passage of legislation through the parliament to ensure that no errors or other issues arise. However, from time to time, that may be necessary some sort of foreshadowing that in the next bill, but I wanted to capture the importance of the miscellaneous amendment bills.

Having said that, with regard to the first part of this bill in relation to the amendments to the registration to work with vulnerable people act, I want to say thank you again to those who

have spoken. The member for Bass in particular was quite erudite and comprehensive in his remarks and the importance of protecting vulnerable people. If this amendment today can protect one vulnerable Tasmanian then we have done a great job, colleagues.

This is the spirit of collaboration and goodwill again being expressed across the Chamber to get legislation done. It is a bit disappointing frankly, that the media only see the feisty remarks and perhaps adversarial comments across the Chamber in Question Time or at other times when, frankly, most of the time, we are working in a very collaborative way. The parliament is effectively working and working effectively. I wanted to put that on the record.

With regard to the registration to work with vulnerable people scheme, for those persons who work and volunteer with children and volunteer and vulnerable people throughout Tasmania, that is what it is all about. Under the scheme, people who work or volunteer with vulnerable people, including children, must be registered. That is the key point I want to emphasise as fundamental.

During that registration process, applicants undergo background check and a risk assessment. The process makes sure that they are suitable to work or volunteer with vulnerable people. If the risk assessment determines that a person poses an unacceptable risk of harm to vulnerable people, their registration will be denied. I will not go into too much more about that, but the commission of inquiry did make a recommendation. We are responding to that and doing it effectively and I have outlined that in my second reading speech.

With regard to the register, certainly it was the register to work with vulnerable people launched a new website on 31 March. The streamlined new website moves from being housed on the Consumer Building and Occupational services site to become part of the Justice site. It provides more direct and easier access to everything related to the register for applicants, registrants and employers. It will also house growing resources like fact sheets and sector guides to explain the register scheme and future changes.

There have been a number of questions and remarks today about the website and when it is intended for the new online reporting pathway to come into fruition. The intention of our government and my department is that the register's website will be further updated to include an online reporting pathway for the public. Other reporting options are also being considered. The reporting pathway will be accompanied by guidance about how to report and what information to include.

A person may notify the registrar of reportable behaviour if the person making the notification becomes aware by any means, or suspects on reasonable grounds, that another person has engaged or may engage in reportable behaviour, and they believe on reasonable grounds the person is a registered person or has applied for registration under the act.

In short, in response to the member for Bass and others who are interested: if the bill is successful through this place and then successful through the other place and is proclaimed, shortly thereafter the website will be updated accordingly; once the legislation is enacted and proclaimed. That is the answer to that question.

Under the *Acts Interpretation Act 1931*, a 'person' includes any body of persons incorporated or unincorporated. The amendment therefore applies to groups as well as

individuals. For example, a sporting organisation may voluntarily report, or community groups and the like.

The bill requires that a voluntary notification includes, as far as is known, the name of and any other identifying particulars of the person, and the details of the alleged reportable behaviour. This recognises that a reporter may not have complete information about a person, but this should not prohibit them from making a voluntary report. The quality of the information will, however, impact whether it can be used - for example, whether it includes sufficient detail to identify a person. Guidance on what information to include in a voluntary report will be developed. For example, it may include providing any known places where the person is employed or volunteers.

I will respond to some of the questions from Ms Haddad and then add some final remarks regarding the second part of the amendment today. Regarding information coming to and from the public from Tasmania Police or the Child Safety Service's Advice and Referral Line, under the legislation's section 54B(3) the regulations allow the registrar to provide certain information to Tasmania Police and any agency under the *State Service Act*, such as departments, if the registrar considers it appropriate to protect vulnerable persons or a class of vulnerable persons from a risk of harm.

The primary response systems for raising urgent child safety concerns will remain Tasmania Police and the Department of Education, Children and Young People's Child Safety Service Advice and Referral Line. These bodies both already notify the registrar of concerns they receive.

There was a reference to my second reading speech and how that may be interpreted. The second reading speech was referring to the fact that the online reporting tool will give guidance that emergency and urgent risks are best reported straight to the police and the referral line. However, if urgent risks are notified to the registrar, they will be shared by the registrar as appropriate. I hope that assists the member.

Ms Haddad - Thank you.

Mr BARNETT - Regarding the member's queries about what happened to the other issues included in the consultation draft of the bill: the issues in this bill were consulted on as part of a broader Justice miscellaneous bill, and I am pleased to have brought these amendments forward to update, clarify and improve the law, and to implement another important recommendation of the commission of inquiry. The remaining issues from the consultation draft are intended to progress in the Justice and Related Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2025, scheduled to be tabled very shortly pending consideration of the feedback provided.

I also wanted to add, in terms of the publication of submissions, as I am advised and as per the Department of Justice website, submissions will be published after the government's consideration of the submissions has concluded. Usually, this means when a bill is tabled. In relation to the amendments in this bill, no external submissions were received on this particular bill, but that is the usual process.

In terms of the targeted stakeholders on the last part of the bill, I think there was a question about the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court and if they were consulted. The

answer is yes, in terms of that direct consultation on the amendments in that section. They were sent to the relevant people for comments, and they were the Chief Justice; the Chief Magistrate; the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management; the Department of Education, Children and Young People; Consumer Building and Occupational Services; and the Register to Work with Vulnerable People.

That was the consultation on the bill, which included obviously the first part and the second part of the bill. The advice I have is that other government departments and legal and community stakeholders were directly consulted as well. I wanted to put on the record, because we are speaking about improving processes with respect to the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court, that this will assist not only members of parliament, but members of the public and key stakeholders as well, to have access to the good work of the Supreme Court and the Magistrates Court in a timelier way.

Bringing that date forward means it will be tabled in this parliament, it will become public, and there will be able to be open and transparent comments accordingly. I think that is a good thing. Certainly soon after I became Attorney-General, I was thinking, 'Why is this happening? Why is there a delay in the tabling of these reports?', or what seemed to be a delay. The argument was 'Well, it is not required by a certain date'. I then followed up and we have had consultation - yes, consultation has occurred - and I think we are delivering a better public policy outcome for the people of Tasmania and this parliament. It is an improvement and, as an Attorney-General, I am very pleased with that.

I also wanted to take this opportunity, because there was consultation with the former chief justice, Alan Blow, to thank him for his final annual report and commend and thank him for his wonderful and outstanding contribution to the Tasmanian justice system in our state. I thank all our judges, Supreme Court and also Magistrates Court - chief magistrate and magistrates - as well as their dedicated court staff, for their ongoing work and support for the justice system in Tasmania.

I would like to particularly shout out and say congratulations and well done to our new Chief Justice, the honourable Chris Shanahan, and Judge Kate Cuthbertson, who have recently been appointed. I congratulate both of them. I had the opportunity to be with the Chief Justice and host him in parliament last night, and introduce him and his wife, Deanna, to other colleagues in this place. It was excellent. I appreciate his work, settling into the role, and thank him for it. Tasmania's Supreme Court just celebrated a bicentenary - 200 years - just last year. It is the oldest Supreme Court in Australia. We should be very pleased and proud of that.

I was able to host a special celebration in this parliament, and we had the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and many other chief justices from around Australia to celebrate that special event. I could not be more pleased and prouder on behalf of the government and the people of Tasmania in that regard. I certainly will continue to meet and work with the Chief Justice and the Chief Magistrate to deliver an improved justice system in Tasmania.

In conclusion, I wanted to thank my department as well - again, Bruce Paterson and Alice Lynch. Thank you very much for your support to my office as usual. They are stars; they provide great support not just to me but to other members of this parliament, and I am very grateful indeed. Having said that, I commend the bill to the House.

Bill read the second time.

**JUSTICE MISCELLANEOUS (REPORTING PROCEDURES)
BILL 2025 (No. 10)**

Third Reading

Bill read the third time.

**JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS
AMENDMENTS) BILL (No. 2) 2024 (No. 45)**

Second Reading

[3.47 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Justice) - Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

The bill contains minor and non-controversial amendments that update and clarify a number of different acts, 10 of which are within my Justice portfolio and two fall under the responsibility of the minister for Small Business and Consumer Affairs.

The amendments arise from requests from the Chief Justice; Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management; Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; the Tasmanian Electoral Commission; the Ombudsman; and outputs within the Department of Justice, who frequently deal with particular legislative provisions. I will now outline the reasons for each of the proposed amendments in turn.

The bill amends Section 2B of the Criminal Code, as requested by the Director of Public Prosecutions, to make the definition of 'sexual intercourse' retrospective. When the change in the definition of 'sexual intercourse' in the Criminal Code occurred in 2017, it was not made retrospective to avoid encountering practical problems, for example, with charges for the crimes of penetrative sexual abuse of a child or young person under Section 124, persistent sexual abuse of a child or young person under Section 125A, and indecent assault under Section 127, that are retrospective.

This bill provides for the expanded definition of 'sexual intercourse' to be taken to have applied in relation to a crime since 4 April 1924. That is the date when the Criminal Code commenced. By making the definition retrospective, it will avoid future confusion as to what constitutes 'sexual intercourse' for the purposes of sexual offences across the relevant time period under the Criminal Code. What constitutes unlawful conduct for the purposes of the definition of 'sexual intercourse' under the Criminal Code will not criminalise any conduct that was not otherwise unlawful. The bill also makes a necessary amendment with the insertion of Section 466 to provide that the definition of 'sexual intercourse', being retrospective, does not affect proceedings that have already been determined.

During the progress of the *Justice (Miscellaneous Commission of Inquiry) Bill 2024*, it was identified that a position of authority offence in that bill to which the 'difference of age' defence supplies should be included in Section 14A of the Criminal Code. In proceedings for specified sexual offences, Section 14A of the Criminal Code provides instances in which

a mistaken belief by the defendant as to the consent is not honest and reasonable and therefore the defence under Section 14 may not be relied upon.

The Director of Public Prosecutions has requested the inclusion of:

- Section 12 A - 'penetrative sexual abuse of child or young person by person in position of authority';
- 125A - 'persistent sexual abuse of child or young person';
- 125C - 'procuring child or young person for sexual abuse';
- 126 - 'penetrative sexual abuse of a person with a mental impairment; and
- 170A - 'persistent family violence in Section 14 A to avoid negative implications for victims, where the specific age, defence or where an accused raises the defence of mistaken belief, can arise.

Under the *Dangerous Criminals and High Risk Offenders Act 2021*, the Director of Public Prosecutions may apply for a high-risk offender (HRO) order in relation to serious offenders who do not meet the threshold for being declared a dangerous criminal but may nevertheless pose a risk to the community if no supervising conditions are in place when they are released post sentence. This act also allows for an interim HRO order, the purpose of which is to provide the public with temporary protection until such time as the final decision can be made as the appropriateness or otherwise of the HRO order.

The Chief Justice has requested an amendment to the *Dangerous Criminals and High Risk Offenders Act* to clarify the criteria to be relied upon when making an interim high risk order. Currently, under the act, a judge must assess such an application using the same criteria as when making a final assessment under an HRO, which is too high a standard to meet from interim HRO order where all evidence is not yet available. This bill amends section 37(1) subsection (b), to clarify the criteria a judge is to consider when an application for an interim high-risk offender order is made to the Supreme Court and distinguishes the criteria on which interim HROs are based for the criteria that apply to a final HRO.

Amendments to the *Electoral Act*. Currently the *Electoral Act* provides that it is an offence to vote at an election in a division after having voted in election in respect of another division held contemporaneously with the first mentioned election. The intention of this offence provision is to preclude an elector from voting in more than one division at either a House of Assembly election or a Legislative Council election. The bill amends section 186, subsection 1 to clarify this and avoid any confusion in the rare event that there is a dual polling day for House of Assembly elections and periodic Legislative Council elections.

In terms of the *Evidence Act*, section 194M of the *Evidence Act* operates in relation to specified sexual offences and precludes inducing or eliciting evidence that discloses or implies the sexual reputation of the complainant, unless leave is granted by the judge or magistrate where particular requirements are met. The Director of Public Prosecutions requested that section 194M be amended to include a reference to the crime of persistent family violence under section 170A of the Criminal Code to avoid negative implications for victims of persistent family violence and to remedy the omission of this section from when the crime was

inserted into the Criminal Code in 2018. This bill extends the operation of section 194M of the *Evidence Act 2001* to include the crime of persistent family violence.

The *Family Violence Act* contains a serial family violence perpetrator declaration framework which is designed to identify perpetrators who repeatedly commit family violence offences. Currently, the act provides for a process for serial family violence protection declaration to be reviewed, but only on application to the relevant court by the Director of Public Prosecutions or the declared offender. This bill amends section 29D to provide for Tasmania Police to make applications for review of declarations that have been made in the Magistrates Court. This will be a more efficient process, as police prosecutors make applications for such declarations in the Magistrates Court and therefore have ready access to the relevant material for review purposes.

Fingerprint evidence is obtained in Tasmania under the provisions of the *Forensic Procedures Act 2000*, an act which is administered by the Department of Justice. Forensic procedures legislation seeks to facilitate the sharing of forensic material such as DNA and fingerprint information with other Australian jurisdictions for law enforcement activities consistent with an agreement made by the then Australian Police Ministers Council in 1998. Under section 63, subsection (1) of the act is an offence to disclose information obtained by a forensic procedure that is forensic material taken by police to discover the identity of a person. There are exceptions within section 63 to enable Tasmania Police to undertake investigations, including 'for the purposes of the investigation of any offence or offences generally'.

Tasmania Police requested that section 63 of the act be amended to clarify the lawful purposes for which forensic material may be provided to other law enforcement agencies in other Australian jurisdictions.

The current existing legislative licensing requirements for automotive gas-fitting work under the *Gas Safety Act 2019* and the *Occupational Licensing Act 2005* do not cover the technology of vehicles that derive energy from hydrogen fuel cells. The reason is that hydrogen-consuming fuel cells produce electricity to propel vehicles and so do not fall within a traditional internal combustion engine in the existing legislation.

This means there is a regulatory gap once the technology and associated servicing industry develop. This bill amends section 3 of the *Gas Safety Act 2019* to expand the definition of automotive gas fuel system to include hydrogen fuel cells. Further, the bill amends section 2 of the *Occupational Licensing Act 2005* to cover the qualifications, training and safe work standards for those working on hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

The definition of health service within the *Health Complaints Act* is 'a service provided to a person for, or purportedly for, the benefit of human health'. It has been recognised that it would be preferable for this definition to be amended to capture certain procedures, for example some cosmetic medical procedures, where there may arguably be no benefit to physical or mental health.

This bill amends the definition of health service to ensure that Tasmanians can implement the National Code of Conduct for healthcare workers who provide a health service but who are not registered under the National Health Practitioner Regulation Law and who failed to comply with proper standards of conduct or practice.

Under this act, a joint Standing Committee of Integrity is established with a number of functions, including monitoring and reviewing the performance of the functions of an integrity entity and reporting to parliament on such performance. For the purposes of this part of the act, an integrity entity includes the Integrity Commission, the Ombudsman, or the custodial inspector.

This bill amends section 23 to future-proof the act to cover potential changes in the future composition of the parliament. Currently, the act requires the committee to consist of three members of each house of the parliament and from the members from the House of Assembly there must be at least one member of any political party that has three or more members in the House of Assembly.

The bill allows some fluctuation in the number of committee members. Six or eight should there be up to four parties with three or more members in the House of Assembly, while maintaining the equal representation from both houses. There is also an associated amendment to the quorum required for the committee.

The Director of Public Prosecutions requested that sections 71 and 72 of the *Justices Act 1959* be amended to reinstate the crime of fraud under section 253 Capital A of the Criminal Code in the operation of these sections to reduce the backlog of criminal matters in the Supreme Court.

In 2020, the *Justices Act 1959* was amended by the *Justices Miscellaneous Court Backlog and Related Matters Act 2020*. This legislation was to address certain issues rather than waiting for the finalisation of the *Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division) Act 2019*.

Two of particular note are: duplicating the list of minor offences and electable offences in the new Magistrates Court legislation, and increasing the property value thresholds for minor offences dealt with summarily from \$5000 to \$20,000 and for electable offences that can be dealt with summarily from \$20,000 to \$100,000 in line with the provisions in the later act.

The *Justices of the Peace Act 2018* introduced a new and more comprehensive framework for the appointment and regulation of the conduct of Justices of the Peace (JP); in particular to increase the transparency of the process of appointing JPs. In administering this act, the Department of Justice has identified some small amendments that are required to meet the original intentions of the act, including the following: requiring prospective JPs to undertake training; clarifying when a JP may commence the exercise of their powers of office; an application for reappointment to be made 12 months before an appointment expires, instead of six months before or six months after, as is the current requirement; the period of reappointment to be extended from the current two-year period to a period of five years; validating the act of appointed JPs who are no longer appointed as a JP, whether through expiration or appointment or reason other than suspension, but who are unaware of this and acts in good faith; enabling the Secretary of the Justice Department to contact JPs more regularly in order to efficiently maintain the register of JPs.

My department has been in contact with all three of the Justice of the Peace Associations in Tasmania in relation to the matters that this bill covers, and each has indicated support for the amendments. In addition, I thank those stakeholders who were consulted where necessary during the drafting of this bill. Given that the amendments are non-controversial and minor

clarifications, a public consultation process was not required before presenting this bill to parliament.

Having said that, Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

[4.03 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I am pleased to be able to contribute to the debate on the Justice and Related Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Bill No. 2 of 2024. As we heard from the Attorney-General, this, as is usually the case with justice miscellaneous bills, contains a number of fairly procedural changes to a number of pieces of legislation. These ones have been requested by a number of people working in the justice system, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), the Chief Justice, the Electoral Commission, the Ombudsman, Consumer Building and Occupational Services (CBOS), Integrity Commission and the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. They mostly go to clarifying the operation of different pieces of legislation, making it clear what the intention of the parliament is and clarifying where things might not be operating in the way intended or in the most efficient way.

First of all, the bill amends the Criminal Code to make the definition of 'sexual intercourse' retrospective and includes references to a number of sections to make those definitions relevant. That is: section 124A, penetrative sexual abuse of a child or young person by a person in position of authority; section 125A, which is persistent sexual abuse of a child or young person; section 125C, which is procuring a child or young person for sexual abuse; section 126, which is penetrative sexual abuse of a person with a mental impairment; and section 170A, which is persistent family violence - that is one of those new offences introduced a few years ago by former attorney-general, Elise Archer - and section 14A, which is a mistake as to consent in certain sexual offences. It also inserts section 466 to provide that the definition of 'sexual intercourse' being retrospective does not affect proceedings that have already been determined. I believe proceedings that have already been commenced, but I am sure the Attorney-General will tell me if I am wrong about that. I might have missed it in your second reading contribution, but is there a government amendment to that section, Attorney-General?

Mr Barnett - An amendment?

Ms HADDAD - I assume we will be dealing with that in committee.

Mr Barnett - Yes, in committee.

Ms HADDAD - The *Dangerous Criminals and High Risk Offenders Act 2021* is amended as well to clarify the criteria required when a judge is assessing whether or not to make an interim high risk order.

That was a piece of legislation that was quite meaningfully debated in this place, because we were making a decision as a parliament in passing that bill to basically apply parole conditions to people at the end of their sentence, which is unusual because generally in law, if you have served your time, then you have served the punishment that has been dictated to you by the court that sent you to prison. There was a recognition that there are some people who continue to pose a risk to the public. This makes a change to what a judge needs to look at in relation to the test to make an interim high risk order.

High risk orders were a new category of definition for somebody leaving the prison system that was introduced in 2021 that sit alongside the dangerous criminals rules around how someone can be declared a dangerous criminal. Again, that high risk offenders category was a new thing that needed to be given serious scrutiny in this parliament. We supported that bill at the time, but not without some debate around the curtailing of civil liberties involved in the parliament making those changes.

The *Electoral Act* is amended in a very simple way to make sure that no one is charged with an offence of voting more than once if they are actually voting more than once in two different elections that happen to occur on the same day, and that did happen a few years ago when the upper House elections for that year were held on the same day as the lower House election.

The *Evidence Act* is amended to include the crime of persistent family violence at section 170A of the Criminal Code in the operation of section 194M, and we heard the Attorney-General explain what that means in terms of its operations in his second reading contribution.

The bill also amends section 29D of the *Family Violence Act* to enable Tasmania Police to apply for a review of a serial family violence perpetrator declaration where the original declaration was made by the Magistrates Court. That is a practical change that will make things much more streamlined in terms of dealing with those offenders who are convicted of serial family violence offences.

The *Forensic Procedures Act 2000* is amended to enable Tasmania Police to continue to share fingerprint information with law enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions. The *Gas Safety Act* is amended and Schedule 2 of the *Occupational Licensing Act* to cover the emerging technology of vehicles that derive energy from hydrogen fuel cells, and the *Health Complaints Act* is amended to change the definition of health service to ensure Tasmania can implement a national code of conduct for healthcare workers who are not registered under the National Health Practitioners Regulation Law, so expanding that definition.

The *Integrity Commission Act* is amended to clarify the membership of that joint standing committee on integrity, and it amends the quorum rules for that committee as well. That is prudent as we are seeing changing parliaments around the country. It is not impossible that another minor party could, as we saw at the last election - in fact, three members from another minor party were elected, although those memberships have changed in the interim.

The *Justices Act* is amended to restore reference to the crime of fraud under section 253A of the Criminal Code within sections 71 and 72. I had a question for the Attorney-General, not specific to that change, which I know was requested by the Director of Public Prosecutions, but more about the implementation of the changes that were contained in the *Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division) Act 2019*. That was a piece of legislation that was eagerly anticipated by people working in the justice system. I would be appreciative if the Attorney could provide the House with an update on how implementation of all of those changes from that 2019 legislation is going.

Finally, this bill amends the *Justices of the Peace Act* to streamline the administration of that act. I know there was a standalone piece of legislation a few years ago amending the *Justices of the Peace Act* that made some pretty substantive changes to how Justices of the

Peace operate and how that is regulated. This bill makes further practical changes, including: a definition of 'eligible person'; clarity around the exercise of powers of the office of a JP or someone who is a JP; and information around reappointment 12 months before the expiry of an appointment.

I remember that when parliament dealt with that larger piece of legislation around JPs, there were many people still registered who were probably not eligible to be JPs anymore for various reasons - criminal records, some had passed away and some had moved interstate. I actually remember years ago when I was an adviser in government having the task of trying to pull together those lists, and it did not ever go anywhere. It was a large task to be achieved by the minister's office and department back then. That was a bit of an aside, but this bill goes on to make some other straightforward changes to the *Justices of the Peace Act*.

I would like to put on the record during this debate my appreciation of people who undertake that role of JP. It requires training and a commitment of time that is unpaid and voluntary. I know particularly in some small communities, where there might only be one JP, they are very much relied on by their community to witness and certify documents for all sorts of reasons, and I think they do a tremendous service to the communities that they serve. However, it is really important that the integrity of that scheme is maintained.

Those are my brief comments. As the Attorney-General said, it is not a controversial or complicated bill. I conclude my remarks.

[4.13 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) -Honourable Speaker, the Greens support the amendments before us in the Justice and Related Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill (No. 2) 2024. On behalf of the Greens, I am taking carriage of this bill in the House for our spokesperson, Ms Cassy O'Connor MLC.

My substantial comments relate to the changes to the *Criminal Code Act 1924*, probably one of the most significant changes in this bill. The bill before us amends the *Criminal Code Act 1924* to make the definition of 'sexual intercourse' apply retrospectively to 1924. This is definitely a departure from the status quo in law, which explicitly provides that such a definition would not be retrospective.

For the history prior to 2017, the definition of 'sexual intercourse' was limited to penetrative sexual intercourse by male genitalia only. That was the only definition of sexual intercourse. In 2017, this was amended - a long overdue and long fought-for amendment by women working in sexual violence, by feminists, by women generally who understood that an amendment was appropriate to also include penetration by other body parts or foreign objects.

The 2017 amendments explicitly provide that the definition only applies to offences that were committed after 2017. The amendment in the bill before us today provides that the definition applies retrospectively to crimes that were committed before 2017, back to potentially 1924, excluding any matters that have already been determined.

Cassy O'Connor received a briefing on this and I thank the staff who provided that briefing. She asked then about this retrospectivity issue in relation to these prisons and, as I as I understand, retrospective criminal offences are understandably rare in Australia and tend to only be introduced when the conduct at the time was considered 'criminal according to the

general principles of law recognised by the community of nations'. The explanation for this retrospective provision before us today is that, although it does broaden the application of several offences to certain offending prior to 2017, that particular conduct would still, regardless of this amendment, be criminal under other offences. In other words, the retrospective amendment broadens the range of offences that a person may potentially be charged with for certain conduct, but does not make any non-criminal conduct criminal.

To be clear, as I understand it and I would appreciate the minister clarifying again for us - you have done so, but just clarifying again - that this amendment will not open the door to a potential volume of charges being taken against persons for past acts that they did which, at that historical point, were not criminal acts. My understanding is that in this sense, it is different from establishing a law and making it retrospective, which would obviously open the door to a whole range of other potential fresh cases being taken.

The changes to the *Forensic Procedures Act 2000*, as they have been drafted, allow for the inter-jurisdictional sharing of forensic material for criminal investigations, also for court proceedings, immigration matters, the identification of people who have died and for criminal history checks. I understand that the amendment before us that has been flagged to this section and tabled by the minister is made following concerns raised by Ms O'Connor from the Greens about the broadness of this provision as it is currently drafted in the bill before us, and the amendment, which I understand the minister will be introducing in the committee stage, changes this subsection to instead clarify that references to an offence in existing forensic material-sharing provisions will apply to 'an offence under the law of this state or the law of another state, a territory or the Commonwealth'. That seems to be a much clearer and straightforward provision and so we believe it would be a good outcome and we appreciate the minister's preparation of that amendment to Clause 15 through the insertion of a new 3A, which the minister will talk about later.

The other sections of the bill before us are all supported by the Greens. I want to mention the changes to the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*. That has been amended in the bill to allow for either six or eight members on the Joint Standing Integrity Commission. Currently the number is six and that has been made on the basis that we now have a 35-seat house and it is important to provide more opportunities for members to be involved in committees, especially such an important committee as the Joint Standing Integrity Committee.

On a related matter, the Greens asked for the Public Accounts Committee and for other committees to also be expanded so that we had the opportunity to be on those committees, but that request was denied by the government. I would like to understand the minister's thinking for making these changes to the Joint Standing Integrity Committee but the government not being open to expanding the number of people on particularly the Public Accounts Committee, which is a very important committee, and to other committees to make allowance for the increased number of members in the House and for a better equity and involvement in the activities of committees by members of different parties or independents.

The changes to the *Justices of the Peace Act 2018* are substantial and important. Allowing the secretary to set training requirements for JPs, which are currently only able to be set by regulation, is a sensible change. The prohibition on JPs from exercising their powers until they are provided with a registration number, I find that interesting that it is not already the situation. On the face of it, that is a very important matter to have clear before a person starts exercising their power. Extending the time frame that a JP has to apply for a reappointment from six to 12

months before the expiration of that appointment, yes, that is a valuable change. I guess that is done on the basis that it takes time for these things to happen and it takes time for people in a busy life who are acting in that important role on behalf of the community essentially as an additional duty as a very important activity that they do for us all, that they need as much time as possible to be able to get the matters in order to be able to make a reapplication that is necessary for a reappointment to occur. To make sure that process is as smooth as possible makes sense.

Extending the appointment period for JPs from two years to five years is manifestly sensible. Could the minister make any comments, if you are aware of the processes, if there was a concern a person in the community had about a diminution in the capacity of a person to act in the role of a JP? It is an additional length of time, two years to five years. If there were any concerns about how a person was executing their role as a JP, can you just describe if you know what the mechanism would be to write to make an alert to the secretary or the minister about that person and what the process would be for perhaps winding up a JP if allegations were made and they were found to be substantiated? I assume it would be the same process and that there would be a process in place now and the same process would stand. If you could just confirm that is the case and there is no change to that process, that would be helpful.

The JPs act changes also extend the validation provisions to include the circumstances where a JP's term has expired, but they were not aware of that and they were acting in good faith; also a very fair situation, and removing the limitations on the ability of the secretary to require information from a Justice of the Peace.

Currently, as it stands, that can only be done not more than once every five years, unless there is a reasonable suspicion of contravention of the act or of misconduct. That goes to what I just mentioned before. If, as it stands, any sort of concerns about contravening of the act or misconduct on behalf of the JP can only occur once every five years - I do not quite understand the situation as it is and the change that has being made.

I would obviously have thought that we need a system that provides at any time an opportunity to raise allegations of a JP contravening the act, or acting with misconduct, or being incapable of performing their role. It sounds from the changes that have been proposed in the bill that it removes the limitations there were on the secretary getting some information from JPs more than once every five years previously, and this bill changes it to make it on an as-needs basis. Could you please explain the changes being proposed under the bill?

Finally, it requires every JP to be issued with a unique registration number. Again, that is a manifestly sensible idea and we support that.

I wanted to mention the *Electoral Act 2004*, which currently has it as an offence to vote in two divisions for an election on the same day. There is currently some ambiguity on whether or not it is an offence to vote in both Assembly and Council elections on the same day when these elections are held on the same day. The bill clarifies that that is not an offence, so that ambiguity is removed. There was a situation when that issue came up, I think in 2021.

I look forward to the committee stage where we tidy up that small change that we have noted. With that, I can give the Greens' support to the bill.

[4.29 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to make a contribution. I have a high level of interest in this particular legislation, and I will not attempt to cover the length and breadth of it. There are two particular areas that I wish to make as my focus.

First of all, thank you to the Attorney-General and the government for bringing this legislation to the House. As has been made plain by other speakers, there are a lot of amendments in this bill, most of them quite minor, most of them non-controversial. Some of them have been suggested by key stakeholders, for example, our Chief Justice, the DPP and other people who use these acts, to improve the operation and contemporise the administration of these acts.

I am pleased that the government has worked closely with relevant stakeholders to deliver the amendments contained in the bill, and I am aware of the body of work that has gone into this particular bill. We have a justice and related miscellaneous amendments bill most years, and they vary in their seriousness and the level of detail or the level of reform that is included in them.

We often have these kinds of debates where we run through what often are a collection of smaller amendments. I want to focus on the amendments to the Criminal Code together with the changes to the legislation surrounding high-risk offenders and the making of interim orders to protect our community. In fact, I am very glad that the legislation will finish the job, if I can put it that way, which commenced in 2017, about getting the language right. We will probably never finish the job, actually, but I see this today as a significant current set of needs around the task that was commenced in 2017. That might be a better way to express it.

Making the definition of the terminology 'sexual intercourse' - which is in section 2B of the code - retrospective is appropriate. I make the point that was offered by Dr Woodruff: that whenever you make anything retrospective through this parliament, we need to be extremely careful before doing so. Whether I am getting Dr Woodruff's words right or not, it is my understanding very squarely that offences that will be made retrospective were already offences, but in different parts of the code.

Dr Woodruff - That is right.

Mr FERGUSON - They were in the code. They were criminal offences. They were not just police or other offences; they were crimes. To think that even today, with the important legislation - and I was a member of this House in 2017. I have a vivid memory of it, for reasons that will become obvious. In 2017, Matthew Groom, the acting attorney-general, brought this legislation in to provide for the first time a comprehensive definition of 'sexual intercourse', apart from its traditional, ordinary meaning, which is obviously in a very old piece of legislation which had served the state perfectly well for a long time, but we had to remedy that definition with contemporary understanding.

I say acting attorney-general because my dear friend, Vanessa Goodwin, was the attorney-general at that time and was severely unwell, and this was her work. Yes, there were stakeholders and people urging reform, but this was Vanessa's work. It was her bill, actually. It was her initiation through the Cabinet drafting process and as an area of law reform. It is just one of a number of reforms to Tasmania's legal system that she genuinely is entitled to a lot of

credit for. I loved working with Vanessa. She was a beautiful soul and a wonderful person. Politically she was a little different to me, but not very, and she was a wonderful, trusted colleague: somebody who spoke with gentleness and frankness. She made a major contribution to Tasmania and Tasmanian public life.

Dr Woodruff - Hear, hear.

Mr FERGUSON - I really miss Vanessa. She was such a sweet and kind person and deeply respected by people, not just across the community, but across the political divide. In many times in fact, she closed the political divide, not just with the reforms that she pursued, but also in the way that she did it. She was very good at consulting. I think all our attorneys-general have been, actually. They are the positive things I wanted to say about the late Vanessa Goodwin, who tragically lost her battle with cancer on election day in 2018. We really miss her so much.

I wanted to mention that. Vanessa's work brought up to date that definition of 'sexual intercourse', which I have to say - I am not going to read it out; I think parts of it have been now - it is pretty horrible reading, section 2B of the code, but we need that descriptive detail in law to leave no doubt ever that some things are wrong. In fact, not only are they wrong, they are illegal. Not only are they illegal, they have always been wrong. Whether it has been captured by the code or not, it has always been wrong.

Is that not the point? If we can agree on the bill, the parliament is saying, 'Well, that is why it has been made retrospective, because it has always been wrong'. To deal with the current unsatisfactory situation, I have a specific way of expressing this. The current situation is not satisfactory when the crime of rape is charged for conduct occurring prior to 2017. It only captures circumstances where a man assaulted a woman.

Other circumstances, which are today clearly a crime of rape, such as between women or by a female perpetrator against a man or boy, were in the past charged as either indecent assault or aggravated sexual assault. This parliament has already decided that that is rape, that is the term, and that is what it is. As a result of today's bill, that is how it will be treated in the future, regardless of when the offence occurred, before 2017 or since then.

The definition was changed in that year as a result of that legislation I have discussed, brought through by the then-acting attorney-general, and should be changed to reflect our contemporary understanding of these heinous crimes and ensure that all victims of crime receive justice. Those changes are important, although it is perhaps more for the Attorney-General to provide the doctrine on this. There can be no doubt that while the retrospectivity element of this change that has been made is not as if these things were not already illegal, they were, but they will be treated in an appropriate way going forward with the coverall of the appropriate terminology.

Although the bill does not deal with this, I will also mention that I was an enthusiastic supporter of then-acting attorney-general Archer in relation to a significant body of work around modernising terminology for some other revolting offences, and we forever dealt with the totally inappropriate but long-standing language about, for example, maintaining a sexual relationship with a child or young person. That has gone where it belongs - in the bin - and it has been replaced with proper language, proper terminology, which actually reflects the gravity

of the offence, the inability of the child to consent, and it also has the educative value of sending a message to the community about what is appropriate and what is absolutely not.

Briefly, if I may speak to the *Dangerous Criminals and High Risk Offenders Act*: that was a breakthrough piece of legislation in 2021. It was about one thing. It was not about punishment, it was about keeping our community safe. It was an important piece of reform that modernised what had previously been quite an arcane approach to dangerous criminals. It modernised it and made it bulletproof so that the government and law enforcement, prosecutors and courts, could actually deal with the most dangerous members of society in a fair and just way, but also in a legally robust way.

That was really important legislation. I understand that the Chief Justice, if I have this right, requested an amendment to the way in which interim orders are made. I will not worry the house with the detail as to the legalese around this, but I found it interesting that the current language which reflected that 'one of the two criteria for setting an interim order was that the matters alleged in information before the court would, if proved, justify the making of a high-risk offender order in relation to the offender'. There is some, perhaps I will not say problematic, but I will say language that others felt could be stronger or better, so 'would, if proved, justify' will be replaced instead with 'would be likely, if proved, to justify.'

There must be great minds who understand the benefit of the change. I respect that and I am pleased to see that through the making of that particular amendment we are able to ensure that people who are about to be released from custody, a jail, or who are running out of time on their standing high-risk offender order can be considered for interim temporary orders while more durable lasting orders are being applied for in the usual way. Hats off to the men and women of the Department of Justice for their work, in particular, the Attorney-General and those stakeholders who have lobbied for these changes. By supporting this legislation, we make the state a safer place for vulnerable people, for people who have been viciously attacked by people who have no right, none at all, to do what they have done to those people and also to ensure that people who are dangerous are kept locked up or under some significant curtailing of their freedoms to make our state safer.

One thing I will always stand for as Liberal member for Bass is a safer state - one that is necessarily tough on crime. Yes, rehabilitate while you are in custody, but the community needs to be put first in a set of competing priorities. Community safety must come first. The other debates are interesting, and we should have those, whether it is the way in which people are treated while they are in custody, or if it is the level of engagement or the management nature of reform when in custody. Those things are all important, those things are all interesting, but for me, they take a secondary position to the first priority for me as an MP, and hopefully for members of this house, which is community safety, because it is constantly challenged. People who just want to live their lives with confidence and freedom; yes, bad things happen, but when they do they are dealt with so that those people believe that they have been given a level of justice.

Secondly, we should have taken every effort possible as legislators to mitigate or reduce the chance of that offending occurring in the first place. The bill that the Attorney-General has brought here today helps us progress toward that goal, and I am really pleased about it. I commend the Attorney-General and the Cabinet for their work here, and the opposition and the crossbench for their support as well. I certainly commend the bill today.

[4.43 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Attorney-General) - Honourable Speaker, I thank and acknowledge the excellent contributions from those across the Chamber indicating support for this important legislative reform. I would like to respond to a range of questions, queries, and remarks, but in short, today is another day where we are collaborating, working together, and improving our justice system and delivering better outcomes for Tasmanians.

The legislation is becoming more contemporary and it will absolutely improve the operations of our laws. This second Justice miscellaneous amendment bill for today is another example of that. I am very grateful to the justice stakeholders and I want to acknowledge them and thank them for their input and consideration because this bill before us has 12-plus important amendments across our justice system, so I want to acknowledge all those stakeholders. I want to acknowledge members of the Justice Forum. I re-established the forum upon becoming Attorney-General more than 18 months ago. It is incredibly valuable to not just myself as an Attorney-General, but to the Department of Justice and I believe the entire government. We are working well on a whole range of issues, business improvement across our courts and across the justice system. It has been incredibly useful and beneficial, and it is productive and enjoyable, so I acknowledge that.

I recently met with the president of the Law Society, Will Justo, and the Dean of the Law School, Professor Gino Dal Pont, to discuss ways and strategies to attract and retain law graduates in our beautiful state of Tasmania, and that was most productive as well.

Before I sum up, I want to foreshadow two minor technical administrative amendments in terms of the *Criminal Code Act 1924* and amend the *Forensic Procedures Act 2000*. That amendment has been circulated so I will not go into it too much now, but it does introduce two new positions of authority on sexual offences which are similar in structure to section 124A and under clause 5 of the House amendment, section 14A of the Code will apply to these two new offences and then amending the *Forensic Procedures Act 2000* under clause 15. I will address those - if it is the will of the House - in committee, subject to progressing through the second reading.

First, I acknowledge all those who have contributed, as I have said - my shadow Ms Haddad; Dr Woodruff on behalf of the Greens; member for Bass, Michael Ferguson - for excellent contributions for which I am very grateful.

One of the questions related to the progress on commencing the *Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division Act) 2019*. I can advise that the Department of Justice is well-advanced in the development of the IT solution to enable that commencement - that is, the Justice Connect, or Astria. It is a significant and complex program of work that will address the shortcomings of existing systems, processes and data supporting the criminal jurisdiction. The production release for the corrections and rehabilitation components of Astria are due to go live very shortly in April. This release will represent the first major release of the Astria system. The go-live date for the courts and prosecutions component will be established following completion of the scoping phase of the South Australian system, which is built on the same software. This will simplify and likely expedite the court's implementation. This will enable us to then move to commence the criminal and general division legislation. That is a short summary there.

Regarding other points: the first release of the jury management system went live in November 2022, and members of the public have been interacting with that since March 2023. The Parole Board module is expected to go live mid-to-late 2025. Release 2 will enable both Community Corrections and Tasmania Prison Service to work in the same system using the same data, which will significantly help eliminate the potential for human error or unnecessary doubling-up on data. We know this has unfortunately happened from time to time, not very frequently, but it does happen. This is, again, an improvement that is coming our way, and this is going to be better for our justice system.

The courts and prosecution stream: Release 3 is progressing despite experiencing several challenges that included the complexity of court and prosecution processes, especially with designing processes to fulfil the requirements of the *Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division Act) 2019*. Many future state processes and requirements for the *Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division) Act 2019* have had to be incorporated into the system build. I look forward, like the member and others, to the full rollout of Justice Connect and commencement of that legislation, and look forward to having more to say in this place and elsewhere in the months and years ahead.

Regarding some of the questions from Dr Woodruff and the Greens, and also to put on the record what I believe to be some very important points about the amendments - do they create new crimes - which is a point that the member for Bass summarised very well, too. As mentioned in my second reading speech, the proposed amendment to make the definition retrospective will not - I repeat, will not - make any previously legal activity illegal. It may affect what charge is brought under the code, given the definition of 'sexual intercourse' that was in place at a particular point in time. For example, the definition was expanded in 2017 to move away from the historically gendered and restrictive definition involving penetration by a penis. A sexual assault that occurred prior to the new definition coming into effect on 14 July 2017, which involved penetration by an object or other body parts, would be captured as an indecent assault, or the old charge of aggravated sexual assault.

Consider a hypothetical example of circumstances in which a defendant is standing for trial for multiple counts of sexual penetration of a child, where count one was an allegation of digital penetration committed in June 2017; count two was an allegation of penile-vaginal intercourse committed in June 2017; count three was an allegation of digital penetration committed in August 2017; and count four was an allegation of penile-vaginal intercourse committed in August 2017. In this instance, the previous definition of 'sexual intercourse' would apply to count two and the expanded definition to count four. This would result in the jury being directed as to two different definitions of 'sexual intercourse,' despite the conduct being identical. I hope that makes sense.

Despite the conduct in counts one and three being identical, count one could not be charged as a section 124 offence, as digital penetration was not sexual intercourse prior to the 2017 amendments. This would have to be charged as the old aggravated sexual assault pursuant to section 127 A of the code. This would result in the jury being directed as to a completely different offence for count one, despite the conduct being identical to count three. This adds an unnecessary level of complexity to a sexual assault case. This bill seeks to overcome this unnecessary complexity for charges under section 124 and other charges that rely on a definition of 'sexual intercourse' by providing for one definition that applies across the relevant time period under the code. Additionally, the insertion of section 466 by the bill makes clear that the definition of 'sexual intercourse' being retrospective does not have any

implications for criminal matters that have already been determined. I think that is quite clear, and I think the examples I have provided are helpful.

Following the identification of some practical issues involving the definition of sexual intercourse in the code for sexual offences, the Director of Public Prosecutions requested the definition be made retrospective and I shared those remarks earlier in the second reading speech. I thank the Director of Public Prosecutions for his input and contribution and work in this area.

Regarding Dr Woodruff's questions about the Justices of the Peace, I want to indicate the question regarding clause 31 of the bill and the period of reappointment being extended to a period of five years and how concerns such as a concern regarding diminished capacity of a JP would be addressed. I can understand those questions and I want to summarise that in circumstances where there are concerns regarding the conduct or ability of JP, an individual can contact the secretary of the Department of Justice to raise their concerns. The Department of Justice has guidelines that outline how the department handles complaints against JPs and they are available through the online website including a portal through which a complaint or a general concern can also be raised. It is quite an open process through that online portal.

Dr Woodruff - Thanks for that.

Mr BARNETT - It is a pleasure. In terms of Dr Woodruff's question about the Joint Standing Committee on integrity being increased, but not membership of other committees such as the Public Accounts Committee, just to be clear, in the Integrity Commission Act it explicitly refers to the constitution of the Joint Standing Committee by reference to political parties of three or more members, and this is what led to the amendment due to the changing number of such parties at the time. For comparison, the Public Accounts Committee does not have references to political parties, so was not amended at this time.

Those matters can be discussed in other places. House committees are in this place and across the parliament, but that is the explanation for this bill dealing with the Integrity Commission Act. I hope that assists the members with that.

Before I wrap up, I wanted to concur with the remarks with respect to Vanessa Goodwin. I knew Vanessa very well. She was compassionate, caring, big hearted, but very clever and professional at all times and she was a wonderful person to work with. I had the privilege to be acting minister for corrections for a good period of time during her absence and of course, still in this place, we miss her dearly. I know on this side of the House, but I think I can speak for all of us, I acknowledge and pay tribute to the late the honourable Vanessa Goodwin again, and pay a wonderful tribute to her for her law reform measures that we are still dealing with today, for which we are very grateful. I think, on behalf of the community, I acknowledge that here in this place right now. I also acknowledge the honourable Matt Groom for his work as acting attorney-general at the time and for his service to the community, as I did more recently in this House, commending him for his work.

I have those two minor amendments. I thank the House. I commend the bill to the House.

Bill read the second time.

**JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS
AMENDMENTS BILL (No. 2) 2024 (No. 45)**

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

Clause 5 -

Schedule 1 amended (Criminal Code)

Mr BARNETT - Clause 5 amends section 14A of the Criminal Code to extend to new offences under the *Justice Miscellaneous (Commission of Inquiry) Act 2024*. The amendment act that commenced on 1 November 2024 introduced two new positions of authority sexual offences which are similar in structure to section 124A of the Criminal Code. I am proposing an amendment to clause 5 to extend these amendments to the further two sexual offences that commenced on 1 November 2024: section 124B, Indecent act with or directed at child or young person by person in position of authority; and section 124C, Indecent assault of child or young person by person in position of authority. These two offences include a similar age defence regarding consent. This defence is limited to when the accused is 18 or 19 and the other person is 16 or 17.

The similar age defence regarding consent is based on a realistic understanding that young people may engage in consensual sexual relations with the mistaken belief that their partner is slightly older than they in fact are. Section 14A deals with mistake as to consent. It outlines when a mistaken belief as to consent is not honest and reasonable and therefore when the similar age defence may not be relied upon. For example, a mistaken belief is not honest and reasonable if the accused was in a state of self-induced intoxication or was reckless, or did not take reasonable steps to know the complainant was consenting.

I am committing to updating and clarifying the law. Moving this amendment on the floor is the fastest way to insert the two new sexual offences into the operation of section 14A and confirm when mistake as to consent is not honest and reasonable. I understand those amendments have been circulated.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

**Answer to Question - Macquarie Point Stadium -
Project of State Significance Process - Cost**

Answer to Question - Encrypted Messaging Services - Retention of Messages

[5.01 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, in answer to a question from Mrs Pentland to the Premier, I can advise that much of the core work undertaken to date on the project and information provided would be required for the development of the stadium regardless of the planning approval process selected, such as the stadium design, project management and site investigations. Costs that are specifically related to the POSS process to date are estimated at \$1.8 million - \$0.6 million in legal fees;

\$1.05 million in consultancies related to planning, visualisations, heritage, financial analysis and master planning; \$0.15 million of costs charged so far by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Forward looking, the corporation has estimated the cost of completing the project of state significance process will be a further \$5.2 million, which includes \$0.5 million expenses responding to commission inquiries; \$2.7 million in legal fees; \$1 million for expert witness and consultants to appear at hearings; and \$1 million in commission costs.

In answer to a question from Mr Garland on 2 April, I table the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) Information and Technology Services Information Paper. I can also indicate the Department of Premier and Cabinet maintains an information management policy which stipulates that all business information is appropriately created, collected, preserved, and appropriately stored and managed. Business information is defined within DPAC's policy as:

Information that relates to the official functions and activities of DPAC. It is information created, collected, or distributed in the course of the work of any DPAC employee which documents processes and transactions, and which leads, or may lead, to some kind of decision or action. It does not include non-work related information or insignificant information such as reminder notes and incidental conversations through email and instant messages that do not result in any business transaction.

In this regard, instant messaging conversations can be considered along similar lines as direct telephone and face-to-face conversations that occur as part of the everyday interactions occurring between members of parliament and their officers and between ministers and their agencies.

The SPEAKER - I want to put on the record that minister Abetz did come to me yesterday wanting to correct the record because the document that he had thought had already been circulated to Mr Garland had not yet arrived with Mr Garland. He did not have an opportunity to correct the record, but Mr Garland was happy for that to be taken on. Just in case that was raised, I wanted to make sure members were aware that the minister did all he could to resolve that issue.

Men's Mental Health

[5.04 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about men's mental health and the importance of blokes talking to each other to share stories, vulnerabilities, fears, and aspirations.

Spoke to a Bloke is a men's mental health charity. Its origin story on the website clearly articulates its genesis . Spoke to a Bloke started when our brother and mate sadly took his own life whilst going through some mental health issues. Unfortunately, he felt he had no other option and, much to our shock and disappointment, no one to talk to. Spoke to a Bloke runs a number of projects that are all about giving men the tools they need to reach out and seek help, be it clinical or collegiate.

Men in Need of Digital Support (MINDS) brings together a wide range of mental health experts, knowledgeable individuals and everyday blokes to create 24/7 help content aimed at

supporting adult and younger men. Let's Get Men Talking is a partnership with Mental Health First Aid International that is all about offering subsidised Let's Get Men Talking sessions in the communities where there is an engaged constituency and local advocates who can drive this program forward.

These training pathways will help increase mental health knowledge and support at a grassroots level in communities. Mental health first aid is a growing discipline being rolled out in communities across the country. Offering training at a community level for mental health first aid is as critical and lifesaving as physical first aid. The ability to recognise and support a mental health crisis is increasingly important.

One-to-One is a Spoke to a Bloke initiative that delivers direct, professional help through a network of specialised psychologists for blokes in financial hardship but in need of expert assistance. Money should not be a hurdle for blokes who would benefit from direct professional help, so Spoke to a Bloke steps in. Eligibility for subsidised mental health services under the Medicare Better Access to Mental Health Care might not be adequate depending on circumstances. While critical, the Medicare services might not always be available, easily accessed or enough. Spoke to a Bloke can step in with its One-to-One program where a partnership with selected psychologists who specialise in men's mental health can be offered at subsidies or no cost to the blokes who need it most. All this is supported by fundraising.

While Spoke to a Bloke works with corporates to help fundraise for its programs, its grassroots efforts are important and a critical element in this effort is the annual Walk for a Bloke. In some ways, Walk for a Bloke started well before Spoke to a Bloke was even created. Nick, the bloke who passed and inspired the charity, organised an annual 25-kilometre mental health walk in Sydney from the Spit Bridge in Manly to the Watsons Bay Hotel. Originally it was a chance for mates to get together to do some exercise, but also to check in with each other over a long walk followed by a few beverages.

The first walk was four guys in 2019, followed by six in 2020 and then a whopping 110 from all around Australia in 2022. Two weekends ago I signed up for Walk for a Bloke, the inaugural walk in Lutruwita. Together with 40 other blokes, we gathered in the darkness at Blackmans Bay, got acquainted and briefed, and set off for a 25-kilometre walk to the Botanical Gardens, as much as possible via the coast.

The simple act of walking in solidarity and with blokes you do not know is a tonic for the heart and soul. For sunrise we were at Boronia Beach and morning tea at Taroona. En route, the generosity of Robbie Browns at Kingston saw us stop in for a juice and a breather. While I had to peel off at Taroona to get to another event, I reconvened with the group when they made it to the gardens, sweaty, sore but successful.

Globally, 2428 men walked for the common cause of men's mental health and suicide prevention across 29 locations. With 150 volunteers pulling the events together, the walk was a cracking success, not only raising dollars and awareness but joining blokes together and stimulating connections, storytelling and a solid foundation for future support, should it be needed. In Tasmania, there were events in Launceston, Devonport and Nipaluna/Hobart.

I acknowledge the work of the team in Hobart. Thanks to Al and Dave as the key organisers and Karen for her support in the morning. Also to Dave No 2 - there was a sum total

of about five Daves on the walk, and Dave No 2 provided the physical first aid support for the walk.

Thanks to all the blokes for stepping out in solidarity with each other and supporting brothers struggling in their own skins. I will be back in 2026 because men's mental health issues are not going anywhere and the more we can do to promote and normalise the seeking of help and raise money to fund it, the better off blokes will be.

Braddon - Road Safety at Schools

North West Regional Hospital - Hydrotherapy Pool

[5.08 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, I rise tonight to speak on the Adjournment about two issues from my local community. The first one relates to road safety at local schools. The two schools I want to mention are Cooee Primary School on the outskirts of Burnie and Havenview Primary School.

I was recently contacted by concerned parents at Cooee Primary School about funding that they provide from their school community to staff their school crossing in the mornings and afternoons. I would like to question that with the Minister for Education and the minister for the Department of State Growth, because a lot of other schools across our municipality have their school crossings funded by the Department of State Growth, and it seems to be quite a discrepancy.

I might add, this is funding that, whilst being used for a very important purpose at the moment - being road safety at a local school - it is not actually the intent and purpose of this funding. That funding is to provide student support at those schools. I would seek an explanation from both of those ministers about this and I will be writing to each of them regarding this matter.

The other point that I want to make is to share on the *Hansard* some representations from the school community about their concerns, and to note that there is a pedestrian crossing on Fidler Street outside Cooee Primary School, but it is incredibly dangerous and does not offer a safe passageway for students and families.

I want to raise a concern from a parent who said:

I was waiting at the crossing with my younger children this morning and a smaller Cooee Primary School child stepped out onto the road from next to us. The car on our side had stopped; however, the vehicle on the other side drove through despite myself and five other students being lined up waiting. Raising this as it is quite a regular occurrence, and with some buses too.

The other point that I want to put on the record is some representation from the Year Six Student Representative Council at Cooee Primary School, who also have collected data to demonstrate the large number of students who generally walk to school and the amount of traffic that is on Fidler Street before school. The students found that 51 students either walk to or from school on any given day across the week. On the morning of 28 March this year, students recorded 249 vehicles crossing the crossing, including buses crossing on 23 occasions.

I would add that the crossing does not have any crossing guard on it from 8.20 a.m. to 8.30 a.m. because the staff at the school are unable to do that time slot.

I wanted to bring this to the attention of the respective ministers. I think that there needs to be some action taken by the government to ensure that funding is allocated to this from the Department of State Growth rather than the school funds that are for student support.

The other school, Havenview Primary School, has no school crossing. It is marked on the road but there is no one manning it, and the school have been told that it would be up to a volunteer from the local community to do that. I think that is entirely unacceptable. They are a very small community, but that does not mean that road safety is not important for their students who are crossing a very busy road that has heavy traffic on it, including trucks going to and from a local factory. It needs to be addressed.

The second issue that I want to talk about tonight is the hydrotherapy pool at the North West Regional Hospital. I have been collecting signatories on a petition about this pool for a very long time now and it was my intention to present it to the House next sitting week, but in the interim it has been brought to my attention by a local physiotherapist that the pool has actually been closed. It was closed officially in February by this government, and they did not inform anyone that they had done that.

The pool had been out of action since COVID, and I understand now that it is going to be used for office space. It was a valuable asset for our community. It was used for therapeutic care for children from the local support school in Burnie. They have had nowhere for that therapeutic care to be provided since that pool has been unavailable to them. It was also used by many people before and after surgery and before childbirth. It was a very well-utilised service. We know that hydrotherapy plays a very important role in keeping people out of hospital and fit and well in their local community, and improves recovery time from surgery.

I think it is absolutely appalling that the government did not inform the community, and I will be following up with the minister. Those who have made representation to the minister about this pool and its availability, being local physiotherapists, are absolutely at their wit's end over this and they feel very let down by this government.

Time expired.

Macquarie Point Multi-Use Stadium

[5.14 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak on the Adjournment to continue a contribution I was making on the MPI around the Macquarie Point multi-use stadium in terms of the critique of the Tasmanian Planning Commission report. I acknowledge it is an interim report that is designed to flag issues with the development, which I think, as a matter of process, is a completely appropriate thing to do, but apart from reiterating the unusual nature of involving the Gruen report as a part of their major critique, which I think is completely inappropriate given the process that had been agreed to, there are a number of other elements of the TPC report which I think demand some query and inquiry.

For example, I was referring in my contribution earlier to their unilateral dispensation or reduction in interstate visitation based on what I think are a really poor set of assumptions. It goes on: they actually make a number of other poor assumptions. The TPC report assumes that interstate visitors will spend less time in the state on visits beyond their first visit with no basis of logic or fact, with no justification. They might even stay longer. We do not know, but for some reason the TPC said 'No, we will just deduct that and we will take that away as an economic improvement'.

There are a number of other things. For example, they make a reference to the Goods Shed. The report says:

The panel finds that the relocated Goods Shed is currently proposed to be accessible only during events or for dedicated functions, which is problematic in terms of its effects on the surrounding public space.

Incorrect. Stadiums Tasmania - and it is in the report - intend to have the Goods Shed operating seven days a week as part of activating the precinct. When you have these factual errors and when people in the community are using this report as the nail in the coffin for the stadium project, it does not stand to rigour and does not stand to any sort of argument. I am glad it is an interim report because we can work on and we can improve this misinformation or these errors in the report.

The other thing is it really needs to be understood about why we have the stadium. Some people refer to it as an 'ego project' or it has been forced on us by the AFL. I am no fan of the AFL with regard to their long history of not supporting Tasmanian football and taking our best away from us but they have done the right thing in this case by giving us a team and giving us a licence. What they are actually doing in terms of the stadium is ensuring the club has a revenue model built for success.

Let me give you an example. Prior to the AFL buying and taking over Marvel Stadium in Melbourne, five or so years ago, in the one season St Kilda had a stadium deal at Marvel. Fremantle came over and played at Marvel. There were 21,000 to 22,000 people there.

Because of the stadium deal that St Kilda had at the time - and games are the one of the biggest revenue opportunities for clubs - they only made about \$100,000 from that game. That is marginal, so that club missed out on significant revenue because of the stadium deal. Fremantle Football Club, a number of weeks later, came across to Melbourne and played Geelong at Geelong. Geelong run and sort their own team stadium at Kardinia Park at Geelong. The same Western Australian club, and they also attracted 21,000 to 22,000 to that game and estimates of revenue for the Geelong Football Club for a home game against Fremantle was anywhere between \$500,000 and \$800,000. By having a stadium where you have a revenue model which underpins the activities of the team is not an 'ego project', it is not a stadium that has been forced on us, it is a requirement to ensure that the business case stacks up.

The presidents and the AFL Commission made it very clear they would not support a licence just because we wanted one. We have wanted one for 30 years and we have not been able to get it. We had to establish a business case. A part of the business case is a revenue model. That is why we have \$130 million going into York Park to upgrade it, to improve the revenue model. It absolutely goes to reason that having a stadium in the south which has the possibility of a revenue model which underpinned the team, makes the team successful and is

crucial. We need to be clear for those people who say let us put the team in Launceston, in York Park: you kill the team. It is a stalking horse. It is like the other proposal was a stalking horse for the Macquarie 1.

Let us be clear, if you do not support the stadium, do not say you support the team, because you do not, because they are connected at the hip. No stadium, no team. Let us get it done.

North East Forests

[5.19 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, last week I had the great honour of visiting some of the spectacular forests and wonderful communities in north-east Tasmania: communities around Nile, Deddington, Musselroe, Burns Creek, Blessington and Upper Blessington. The Liberals have plans to log and burn the forests in those areas that have previously been slated for protection and that communities understood were permanently protected already. They are the backgrounds, they are the playgrounds of these communities and they are deeply loved by the people to whom we spoke. We visited Ben Lomond National Park and experienced those spectacular *delegatensis*, *viminalis*, the *obliqua* forests that sit like a mantle over that great forest, that great mountain's foothills. As you come up there you see those incredible awe-inspiring dolerite columns that circle that fantastic peak, The forests there are under threat all around the flank of Ben Lomond National Park.

From the east, the south and the west, Forestry Tasmania is looking to go in and harvest, to clear-fell and log places that are the home to species like the green and gold frog, the white morph; the grey goshawk, the spotted-tail quoll, the Tassie devil, the masked owl, wedgies, sea eagles; it is such an incredible place. It is a stronghold for the Forester to kangaroo.

It is also Ben Lomond, the snowy winter playground of people in the north-east and it is a mecca for bushwalkers, for rock climbers, for people all over Tasmania and far beyond. It is really incredible, unimaginable really, that any caring, sensible, future-thinking government would look to log the habitat right to the boundary of such a treasured National Park, leaving it sitting like an island in a wilderness of destruction.

Jeremy Rockliff keeps showing communities across Tasmania, especially now in the north-east, that he is drunk with power and deaf to what people in the communities are really saying about the places they love.

We also visited the southern slopes of Mount Barrow, which is a complex, steep landscape deeply loved by the locals we spoke to. The southern part of Mount Barrow has similar flora and fauna to Ben Lomond, but it also has other cool and unique species like the alpine appleberry and the Skemp snail. It is another special corner of Tasmania that the Liberals would happily slash and burn right up to the scree slope on the base of the south side of Mount Barrow. It is an absolute criminal act to even imagine doing something like that.

The evening we were there we met with community members in Upper Blessington. Some of them had generations of relationships with these places. A number of people spoke openly in the community group about the deep trauma they still have from the forest battles of

the past. It was obvious that these traumas were not far below the surface. They came from experiencing the wilful, needless and careless destruction of forests by rogue corporation Gunns Limited. The people we spoke to were farmers. They were not against forestry per se, but they were against what they had seen over decades: the destruction, the pointless destruction of beautiful forests and the gross misuse of the power of Gunns Limited, and now, what is being proposed by the government.

We heard from people who live along the Nile River, which is finally running clear, they say, after logging has stopped. That beautiful river is smack bang in the middle of lot 145, the FPPF (future potential production forest) lot that is on the chopping block, one of the five that the Liberals plan to go into. It is the home of Uncle Jim Everett-puralia meenamatta. He has talked about the importance of protecting Country and the Greens are standing with him, and all the people from the north-east, to fight to protect these forests. It is a betrayal to consider -

Time expired.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

[5.24 p.m.]

Ms BURNET (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I would like to recognise the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and celebrate multicultural action at the local government level and across our Tasmanian community.

On Friday, 21 March, the International Day of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I took part in a march along the Hobart waterfront which led to an event at Parliament House lawns. The event was billed as a celebration of Hobart's cultural diversity, which it certainly was, and it was organised by the six Greater Hobart councils in conjunction with the Migrant Resource Centre of Tasmania.

I commend the mayors, general managers and staff who led this event and worked so hard to make it a success, particularly their stance against racism.

Community leaders from Brighton, Clarence, Glenorchy, Hobart, Kingborough and Sorell councils marched in unity alongside leaders and members from the multicultural community in Tasmania, as well as ministers and MPs.

Councils are often the frontline for reports of racial vilification and for community members who need help, and they now have the resources available for advice and how to stand up against racism in its many forms. They are available on each of the council's websites.

During the event we were reminded of the importance of anti-racism education and being proactive rather than reactive when it comes to taking a stand against discrimination of any kind. From time to time a shocking incident will make the news, but what we do not see as often are the day-to-day microaggressions, the unconscious biases, the passing remarks and casual insults that do not make headlines but do have a devastating impact on people's lives. Having this kind of challenging discussion is the hard work that must be done to confront racism.

The Tasmanian community is strengthened as we continue a long history of welcoming migrants from around the world. The Greens, at all levels of government, stand in solidarity with the Tasmanian migrant community. It is so important to ensure people like senator Nick McKim are re-elected to ensure the Greens' voice on behalf of migrants is strong in federal parliament.

I now turn to those people and groups who are doing their bit to increase and celebrate diversity - particularly multicultural diversity - in Tasmania. One group that has been working hard over a number of years to combat racism through their messages and plays is Students Against Racism. The next screening of their film *Our Journey* will be held at the Moonah Arts Centre on Tuesday 15 April. Check their website to get more details.

I acknowledge the former Multicultural Council of Tasmania (MCOT) chair and community advocate, Syeda Aimen Jafri, and the honourable Peter Gutwein, who have been appointed to the newly established Australian Multicultural Council. They join leaders from across the country and will play a vital role in providing independent and robust advice on key recommendations from the Multicultural Framework Review.

Lastly, I would like to say how much I enjoyed the Nepal Festival held on Saturday 29 March, and thank all who were involved in sponsoring and making this second biennial festival on Parliament House lawns such a success. The panche baja trumpets were playing and there was dancing, a celebration of Nepalese culture, plenty of Nepali spoken, and good food eaten. Thank you to the Nepalese community of Tasmania for making us feel so welcome.

National Greyhound Adoption Month

[5.28 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Lyons - Minister for Racing) - Honourable Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about National Greyhound Adoption Month. April is the time to celebrate these gentle and loving creatures and to raise awareness about greyhound adoption. All month, we are celebrating everything that makes greyhounds such amazing pets - from friends looking for their forever home, to fostering opportunities, and much more. The month helps highlight greyhounds in the community and why they make such excellent pets, with the aim of finding loving permanent homes for these amazing dogs, transitioning them into family pets.

Greyhounds are a very loving, gentle and unique breed, and make exceptional family pets. I know the independent member for Clark in this House adores her Freddie, and also Alice Giblin with Izzy. They would also attest to them being loving creatures and beautiful members of their families.

The Tasracing Greyhound Adoption (GAP) is helping to celebrate Greyhound Adoption Month throughout the month of April. The GAP program is managed under the direction of Tasracing Chief Veterinary and Animal Welfare Officer, Dr Martin Lenz, with the support of the highly qualified GAP coordinator, behaviourists, and staff.

GAP have a strategic goal regarding responsible pet-ownership and appropriate matching to forever homes. A crucial part of the adoption process is ensuring that the greyhound and family are compatible. Through the assessment process and foster care program, GAP are able

to identify which home a greyhound would be best suited to. Getting this match right from the start is really important, ensuring both the dog and family are perfect for each other.

The Liberal government is committed to continuing to invest more than \$1 million to support animal welfare initiatives each year. This \$1 million per annum will support initiatives designed to ensure that Tasracing meets its greyhound adoption goal of rehoming 150 greyhounds per year through the program. There is a community of people that are very passionate about greyhound ownership across the state. GAP support this community in many ways, including by promoting community organised walks and catch ups. GAP will be joining GREAT Company for a walk together as part of Greyhound National Adoption Month, including the walk in Launceston on 13 April.

GAP will also be hosting an information session at Ninja Stadium during the AFL match between Clarence and North Hobart on 9 April. I encourage anyone who is interested in adopting, fostering or just learning about these amazing, lovable dogs to please visit the GAP Facebook page during the month of April.

Wilderness Society Forest Meeting

[5.32 p.m.]

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I rise this evening to speak about a community meeting that I attended last Friday in Lilydale. This meeting was a forest meeting, and it was run by the Wilderness Society, but it was very much a community event. It was attended by over 150 people at the Safe Co Facility, and people were spilling out onto the footpath.

There was so much interest within the community to know what is happening with the forests around Lilydale and Mount Arthur. What was also interesting was that there was a wide cross-section of the community there, so it was not just people who would typically support protecting forests - there were many people across the community who were interested in being there.

We know that this community has a long history of caring for their forests. I have heard from people in the community who say they see themselves as protectors of the mountain. They love Mount Arthur, they love the forests on it, they live around the base of the mountain and see themselves as the guardians and protectors.

We know that the community have done amazing work in the past to protect the forests there. Back in the early 2000s, they formed a group that did quite incredible work in assessing the value of the forests out there and identifying the many species of animals, plants and trees that were out there. They were able to tabulate all the value of the forests, not just heart value, but also actual value in terms of species there.

They identified the Mount Arthur burrowing crayfish that was living there and the iconic *Eucalyptus delegatensis*. We know also that there is Mount Arthur Boronia, only found on Mount Arthur - nowhere else in the world. These are incredible forests that have really precious species living amongst them. We also know that these forests provide mature habitat for the swift parrot and for masked owls. I do not think that we associate forests with the north-east very much or with Bass, because so much of it has been lost, but that is what makes these forests incredibly precious.

They were protected through the community's actions back in the 2000s, and some of the reasons that they were protected was because they were recognised as being remnant forests. There were reserved areas and some non-reserved areas, and the land that was protected was recognised for the connectivity that it provided. That connectivity was crucial for the animals and the plants in that area and provided an opportunity for that habitat to be protected in ways that was necessary for species in that area.

We know that the forests around Mount Arthur are also the watershed for Launceston's water supply, and that was another reason that those forests were protected. It is incredibly troubling to hear that those forests are now under threat. The Greens, along with the Wilderness Society, were able to identify from right to information (RTI) and requests that the forests around Mount Arthur are on a priority list for the government to log. That is deeply concerning because the forests are precious, because the community love them, and because the community are active in their forests - they hike there, they live there, they run businesses there that rely on those forests. It is deeply distressing for the community to know that those forests are under threat. That was why so many of them came on Friday night to hear what was happening.

We will be continuing to work with the community. I know that the Wilderness Society will also be working with them and fighting and making it clear that these forests are valuable: they are precious. They must not be cut down. They must be protected as they have been protected. The protections must not be reversed, but they must be kept in place. These forests have far too much value for us to lose them to throw them away for woodchips. They need to stay standing.

Lake Malbena - Halls Hut and Wild Drake

[5.37 p.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, another week and another chapter in the Lake Malbena saga. This is the exclusive heli-tourism project in our Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) that is protected for its outstanding natural and cultural values. Just to recap after the summer break, on 12 September, proponent Mr Hackett personally replaced Wild Drake, which is the company that he is exclusively the sole director of, as the entity for the project on the EPBC (*Environment Conservation and Biodiversity Conservation Act*) referral. The following day Wild Drake went into a court-ordered liquidation. On 30 September, the Parks minister saw fit to revise the exclusive lease over our World Heritage land to 31 March 2025.

In November a Greens RTI showed that both Wild Drake and Mr Hackett had thousands of dollars in arrears in unpaid invoices to our parks. On 10 September, this is three days before Wild Drake's court-ordered liquidation, Mr Hackett paid \$2420 off that debt but it is unclear when the overdue parks invoices owed by Wild Drake were ever paid up. To all of this, the minister for Parks said, 'I think that survives the pub test.' It certainly does not. This is shameful. This is a clear example of the lack of credibility through this exclusive lease and licence project that is justified by this Liberal government as a source of tourism income. What an absolute joke when the proponents are not even paying for those lease and licences.

In November, I was at Lake Malbena and Halls Island. No, I did not get to go to heritage-listed Halls Hut, of course, because that is falling into disrepair under the current

custodianship. It was extraordinary, can I say, walking through this country. As bushwalkers and fly-fishers know, this is incredibly special land and it has been walked for thousands of years. It is easy walking country. That is why so many Tasmanians go there for generations, because people can take their children. It is okay for bushwalkers who have perhaps spent a few too many years climbing too big a mountain, who might need a rest for their needs. This is most special country for the Palawa people. It was a true privilege to walk on their country and to paddle their waterways.

With permission, we accessed Lake Malbena and the walk-in via Palawa country. This is country that would be disrupted, that would be flown over by helicopters if this tourism proposal were to ever get up. With permission, we visited an incredibly special cultural site. It is such a privilege and it just shows that it is accessible country that has been inhabited for thousands and thousands of years. There is a well-worn pad in this area to walk through, a pad that honest bushwalkers have respectfully used for generations and a route that delicately skirts around the sensitive vegetation.

Today, in the other place, the minister admitted to a lease extension, not for six months this time, but for a full 12 months, another year. It is shameful. Just like the last update, he said, 'Oh, it is all live, it is on the website, the deed of variation.' No, it is not. Again, it is not. There is an explicit condition of this lease, a quote that the operator has made all necessary referrals, for example, the EPBC referrals and provided all plans, assessment reports and other requested materials by the deadline of the lease, which was the 31 March.

Why the 12-month extension, minister? Were the EPBC documents updated? The additional information required for the EPBC process, as we stand, was first requested by the federal government back on 13 November 2023. That was for 'a thorough Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment report.' As of Senate estimates in November, the federal department said the last time there had been correspondence with the proponent regarding this thorough cultural heritage assessment was in August 2024. There have been two lease revisions since then. Let us also remember in the proponent's original concept he intended to offer visiting guests trips to cultural heritage sites and interpretation of them.

As it currently stands, the required assessment for the lease renewal and the consultation with the Aboriginal communities are absolutely integral, not just for this project but for the entire TWWHA. I am absolutely devastated to hear from the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania that they have not been contacted by this proponent. These documents have not been updated and I call on the minister who is repetitively renewing and revising this lease, who is exclusively leasing-off our World Heritage land, land of the Palawa people, to go and actually meet with the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania. That is the basic level of respect that he should be doing while he is exclusively leasing off our land for a peppercorn rent. It is absolute shame.

The House adjourned at 5.42 p.m.