

Wednesday 11 September 2019

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

MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR

Division of Clark - Election of Madeleine Ogilvie

Madam SPEAKER - I wish to advise the House of the following communication I have received from Her Excellency the Governor, dated 10 September 2019 and addressed to me.

Dear Madam Speaker,

I send herewith the Certificate of the Electoral Commissioner stating that a recount has been held under the provisions of Part 9 of the Electoral Act 2004 to fill the vacancy in the Division of Clark caused by the resignation of Mr Scott Bacon MP.

Following the recount of the resigned member's ballot papers, Madeleine Ogilvie has been elected to that vacancy. The election takes effect from today.

Yours sincerely,

C A Warner
Governor

QUESTIONS

Elective Surgery Waiting List - Commonwealth Government Funding Promise

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.02 a.m.]

During the federal election campaign, Scott Morrison led Tasmanians to believe that he would deliver 6000 additional elective surgeries with a \$20 million promise. 'This plan will reduce the anxiety around waiting lists in Tasmania', Mr Morrison said. The election promise looked like a con job at the time. The revised Tasmanian Health Service 2019-20 service plan released yesterday proves that is the case. There are 9426 Tasmanians languishing on the elective surgery waiting list, yet the total number of additional elective surgeries that will be funded by this Liberal election promise this financial year is only 18. That is right, Premier, it is 18. Of the promised 6000 additional elective surgeries, all Tasmanians will get is an extra 16 in the north, two in the north-west and none in the south. This follows the Hodgman health razor gang slashing elective surgeries in Tasmanian hospitals for 15 per cent. How do you explain this massive broken promise?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. There has been and will continue to be strong collaboration between this Government and the Commonwealth toward investing in our

health service. That includes reducing waiting lists and elective surgery waiting lists. This Government has reduced elective surgery waiting lists to the lowest ever on record. That was because of additional support from this Government that is supplemented by additional support by the Commonwealth, which we welcome. We welcome them recognising during the federal election campaign that there is a lot more to do to bring our waiting lists down -

Mr O'Byrne - You would put Shane Warne to shame with your spin.

Madam SPEAKER - Mr O'Byrne, warning one.

Mr HODGMAN - and we recognise that. We are investing more into our health system. There is increased demand. We see around 28 000 emergency and elective surgeries performed each year and more than 89 000 Tasmanians have received their elective surgery under our Government over the past five years, with those record investments from the Commonwealth and the state. We continue to work closely with the Tasmanian Health Service to maximise timely access to elective surgery.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It is standing order 45, relevance. The question was specifically about the election promise that has only delivered 18 additional elective surgeries. I ask you to draw the Premier's attention to the question and seek a response.

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order but I have allowed it on *Hansard*.

Mr HODGMAN - I explicitly told the Leader of the Opposition in the House that 89 000 Tasmanians had received elective surgery. More needs to be done and more will be with our additional commitments to Health and our investments into our hospital system across the state. For Labor to talk about elective surgery waiting lists is laughable because there were people on elective surgery waiting lists for a decade under their government. We have reduced the time people are spending on those elective surgery waiting lists and we will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth to improve them further.

Women's Health - Elective Surgery Admissions

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.06 a.m.]

One of your desperate deals with the member for Clark to hold your Government together was a \$4 million women's health package. The former Health minister, who cackles over there, Michael Ferguson, promised the package would deliver an additional 900 procedures. The member for Clark went further and said that the waiting list would be reduced to zero in 24 months. This was another broken promise. The revised Tasmanian Health Service 2019-20 service plan has reduced the number of elective surgery admissions under the women's health initiative from 567 to 458. How do you explain the fact that 109 fewer women will receive their surgery this year? Is women's health another victim of the Hodgman health razor gang?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The last statement puts the lie to the question, which is demonstrated by the fact that we are increasing our investments into Health and

this area, as the Leader has referenced. I can inform the House that we recognise that the need for targeted investment into initiatives that support Tasmanian women is important, as evidenced by our commitment. Through our women's health package, we are providing an additional \$7.2 million to deliver 1029 additional surgical procedures targeted specifically at women who have waited for their surgery longer than clinically recommended, and to develop alternative treatment options for women who choose not to have surgery or where surgery is not considered the best clinical option.

The commitment of \$7.2 million is split across 2018-19 and 2019-20, with \$3.6 million in each year and, in 2018-19, \$2.9 million was allocated for surgery to a targeted cohort of 478 women who had waited for their surgery longer than is clinically recommended. Within that cohort, a specific sub-cohort of 413 longest-waiting women was identified for removal from the waiting list as a priority. A further \$700 000 was allocated for non-surgery to the identification and development of alternative treatment options for women who choose not to have surgery or where surgery is not considered the best clinical option and the development of non-surgery options in 2018 was limited, primarily due to delays in the recruitment process. Consequently, only \$59 000 of \$700 000 allocated was expended. The unexpended non-surgery funding was reallocated to the surgery component, bringing total surgery funding to \$3.54 million. This additional funding enabled the delivery of an extra 93 surgeries above the original cohort of 478, bringing total surgeries to 571.

Mr O'Byrne - You are getting mugged by reality.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Mr O'Byrne. Warning number two.

Mr HODGMAN - Of the 413 priority sub-cohort, 402 were removed from the waiting list. In 2019-20, \$23.06 million is allocated to 458 women who have waited longest for their surgery, inclusive of pre and post-operative consultation. A further \$540 000 is allocated to non-surgery to deliver allied health initiatives targeting women, including physiotherapy, psychology services and chronic pain programs. Recruitment and staff training has commenced to support these initiatives.

Aboriginal Place Names - Usage

Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.10 a.m.]

Premier, on 26 January 2015 as the newly minted premier, or relatively so, you promised to reset the relationship with Aboriginal Tasmanians. Since then your Government has returned no lands, is pushing to reopen tracks through ancient heritage in takayna, is actively dividing Aboriginal communities, and you have walked away from the portfolio leaving failure in your wake.

Now your Government is moving to fine Aboriginal people up to \$8400 for using place names that have been in place for thousands of years but have not yet been formally recognised in a move linguist and Aboriginal community leader, Theresa Sainty, has defiantly called 'absolute arrogance'.

As Premier, what is your response to Ms Sainty and the community she represents? How did you let this happen?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the true leader of the opposition for the statement. It was not really a question but I am happy to speak more about what we are doing to support reconciliation to advance

initiatives and programs that support Aboriginal Tasmanians, to close the gap, and to ensure that we are able to work constructively on areas where there are opportunities.

Joint land management arrangements, land return, is an important mechanism for reconciliation, as we have always acknowledged. We have a strong desire to progress those things as per the statements we have made to this place. Progress is being made.

I make reference to the dishonest claims in relation to the place names bill. As often is the case, contrary to accusations made by the Greens, the penalty provisions in no way impede freedom of speech. There are examples in the media that are wrong. There will be no sanction for the use of colloquial names or Aboriginal names, whether dual or otherwise. The penalty provision will only be used as a last resort if a person misuses a place name with the deliberate attempt to mislead or deceive; listing a property for sale as being in one suburb when it is within the boundaries of another.

Ms O'Connor - That is not clear in the bill.

Mr HODGMAN - Claims that the minister is somehow taking control of the naming process are false.

Ms O'Connor - Well, he is.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor, warning number one.

Mr HODGMAN - In the old act, the minister had the power to overrule the board following an objection. In the new act, the minister may only approve a recommendation put forward by the panel or deny the recommendation and send it back to the panel for review. He or she can no longer make a unilateral decision. This new system provides greater community representation and better protects the public.

We will continue to progress another important number of initiatives. Our commitments are to not only reset the relationship but build upon it. More than ever before, all Tasmanian Aboriginals are now recognised by government policy. That was a strong decision we took to do so. More Aboriginal Tasmanians have not only been recognised in their home state but are also able access services and support. We were able to ensure that Tasmanians were recognised in our state's constitution. It was long overdue; we were the last state to do so.

I point to the incoming member for Clark, Madeleine Ogilvie, who was instrumental in advocating for Tasmanian Aboriginals to be included in the constitution. That was a great example of the positive contribution that Ms Ogilvie made in the parliament during her last term, which is why we said we would welcome her back to it again. She has been able to positively and constructively bring forward things to support Tasmanians.

I ask the question again: does the Leader of the Opposition have a position on this yet? Is Madeleine Ogilvie going to be welcomed back, or not? It is starting to look a little like a reality television show.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, relevance. I am not interested in this politicking and nor is Theresa Sainty. Perhaps you could answer the question rather than indulging in cheap politics.

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr HODGMAN - I have done so. It is like a reality television show. Will they welcome Maddie back? Will the tribe have her back, or are they going to send her to 'Exile Island'? Let us wait and see.

International Trade and Tasmanian Antarctic Gateway Strategy

Mrs RYLAH question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.14 a.m.]

Can you outline the Hodgman Liberal Government's strategy to help Tasmanian businesses grow our international trade and, especially, to build the Tasmanian Antarctic Gateway Strategy and the benefits of this approach to the Tasmanian economy and people?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question and her interest in the economy. I note also the Leader of the Opposition's claim that Labor is now also interested in the economy; how it works and what government can do to support its growth. The first thing they should do is have a plan. They have not been able to develop an alternative budget outlining what they would do, but it would be a good start.

What we are doing is delivering our plan through our Budget to maintain the growth as evidenced by last week's national data, which shows that our state is once again outperforming all others, and the nation, in economic growth.

Our plan also includes Tasmania's first trade strategy developed by this Government and designed to position our local businesses to be globally competitive and to offer their products to the world. It identifies that one of our great competitive strengths and opportunities for further economic growth is building our Antarctic gateway, strengthening the Antarctic and Southern Ocean's research, education and training; driving growth and supporting logistics capabilities, attracting more international research and resupply visits.

In September 2018, I led a trade and investment mission to China which had a strong focus on promoting the Tasmanian Antarctic gateway. China is our most important trading partner with about one-third of our total exports. The value of our merchandise exports to China has grown over the last year. As a direct result of the trade mission, we secured a commitment for the Chinese and Antarctic icebreaker, the *Xue Long*, to port in Hobart last summer. It is important to note that port calls of this type are estimated to inject \$1 million into our local economy. I am pleased to be able to announce that both their Antarctic icebreaker research vessels *Xue Long 1* and *2* will port in Hobart this year. This is the first time that the newly built *Xue Long 2* will visit Australia's International Antarctic Gateway and it will be its first ever international port visit. The new ship, the *Xue Long 2*, is expected to arrive on 5 November with the *Xue Long* following on 7 November, the first of five scheduled visits by the Chinese Antarctic program this summer. As I have said, it is estimated to inject \$1 million into our local economy per ship each visit, into a sector that employs more than 850 Tasmanians.

The Antarctic season will see hundreds of international and Australian expeditioners transit through our gateway city on their way to Antarctica from a range of nations including Italy, France, Korea, New Zealand and Japan. Many will fly direct from Hobart to Antarctica.

As part of the Hobart City Deal, in collaboration between our Government and the Morrison government, we secured a commitment from the federal Liberal Government of additional funding of \$450 million for the modernisation of Antarctic stations and infrastructure over the next 10 years; another important way of governments working together to secure positive outcomes for our state.

In contrast, after five-and-a-half years in opposition, Labor still has not come up with a plan of their own. How could they? They only realised a fortnight ago that the economy is important. They have no strategy for trade; no strategy for the Antarctic. Ms White still has not been able to decide on who should be the shadow treasurer. She cannot decide on whether they will welcome Madeleine Ogilvie back into the Labor Party. The clock is ticking. We know the decision is being made by others, it would seem. Power brokers in the Labor Party will tell Ms White whether she will be back. I am not referring to Mr O'Byrne as a Labor power broker necessarily, although he likes to believe he is - and perhaps he is. Unlike Ms White, he said very clearly that he would welcome Ms Ogilvie back into the Labor Party. He was at least willing to break ice with Ms Ogilvie. We are happy for them but we hope that Ms White will not let others make decisions for her.

Port of Hobart - Shortage of Pilots

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.19 a.m.]

My question to the Premier is particularly relevant given your most recent answer. Tasmania's ports are a vital lifeline for our state, but under your Government you have taken a completely hands-off approach to their management. Over the past 12 months Labor, unions and the community have been raising concerns about a shortage of pilots to ensure that freight, cruise vessels and Antarctic icebreakers can dock safely and efficiently at our ports.

Premier, are you aware that the Hobart port is now down to just one single pilot who is required to cover the port 24 hours per day, seven days per week for at least the next month, and has been doing so since early August? It is not only unsafe to expect one pilot to be on-call for every second of the day, but heading into the busy cruise ship season and the visits by icebreakers, as you have just announced, it does present an unacceptable risk to all users of the Hobart port. Given we have been raising this issue now for over 12 months, will you finally intervene and take action, or will you, like your Government's approach to anything important, continue to take a hands-off approach?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. The economy is important. We have not needed former premiers to tell us that; we have known that for as long as we have been in this business because it is essential to fund the things we need to and to invest in the infrastructure that our growing state needs. The nonsense about this Government being hands-off on the economy, when the Australian Bureau of Statistics has confirmed last week that we are the best-performing state in the nation, is frankly laughable from a member who was economics development minister in name but delivered a recession to our state.

We understand the importance of our port infrastructure, which supports not only the export growth of which I referred but is also an important part of Tasmania's island economy. I acknowledge the new leadership in place with TasPorts and wish them well. They will be subject to constant criticism and negativity from the member who asked the question and his colleagues, and no doubt at a personal level, but the Government welcomes the new leadership and acknowledges the importance of it in supporting Tasmania's port infrastructure. TasPorts has confirmed that a Hobart-based marine pilot recently suffered a workplace injury that resulted in only one pilot being available in the Port of Hobart for a short period of time in mid-August, and during this time the injured pilot remained on light duties.

The Port of Hobart currently has three marine pilots. The third pilot is currently on accrued long service leave and a fourth pilot has recently been recruited and will commence duties in late September. To ensure no disruption to shipping, a marine pilot from north-west Tasmania is providing coverage to the Port of Hobart during this period, August and September, which are traditionally quieter times for the Port of Hobart, with an average of five to six shipping movements per week.

TasPorts' management is satisfied that the steps implemented enable the organisation to safely deliver marine pilot navigation services to comply -

Ms O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 3, which requires the Premier to be honest in his approach. Can the Premier tell us when he will be coming back to the House to update his answer, because what he said is patently untrue?

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr FERGUSON - On that point of order, Madam Speaker, that is a disruptive comment from the member and I suggest that she should not attempt to make such claims. The Premier is answering truthfully, based on the advice he has.

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you very much for that advice and I agree it is out of order. Please proceed, Premier.

Mr HODGMAN - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I repeat that TasPorts' management is satisfied that the steps implemented enable the organisation to safely deliver marine pilot navigation services, comply with its MAST obligations and meet the needs and expectations of customers. TasPorts has been in continual contact with MAST during this period.

The members opposite may not appreciate the advice I have given and the advice we have received from government, because it disabuses the claims made by the member who asked the question, but those are the facts.

Tasmanian Health System - Coroner's Report

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.23 a.m.]

Yesterday I asked you a question about the tragic death of John Novaski. Mr Novaski's death has made national headlines and has shone a light on the true extent of the health crisis in Tasmania, but there is one person who was oblivious to Mr Novaski's death, and it was the one person who should have been in a position to act on the findings. Yesterday, failed former health minister

Michael Ferguson said he was not aware of Mr Novaski's case, despite the fact the coroner's report was released on 1 March this year, well before Mr Ferguson was dumped as health minister. Premier, how is this possible? If your ministers cannot be trusted to read coroner's reports when people die because of overstretched services in our hospitals, how can Tasmanians have any confidence that your Government is capable of fixing the health crisis?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question and again, importantly, extend my thoughts and our condolences, and those of the Tasmanian community more broadly, to Mr Novaski's family and friends. As I also said yesterday, the health care of Tasmanians is a top priority for our Government and those who work within the health system as well, our staff and our clinicians. We take very seriously coroner's reports and any recommendations on what we can do to improve quality and safety systems in place. In Tasmania we have quality, robust safety systems which meet national accreditation standards. All serious incidents undergo thorough investigation and processes and they are continuously reviewed and improved.

With regard to this case, I am advised that a case review was undertaken at the Launceston General Hospital in 2017, which is an important clinician-led process that requires and ensures significant system issues are identified and addressed through appropriate changes to processes and culture. The LGH has implemented a number of improvements since that time, including revised arrangements for sign-off of ECGs, increased numbers of senior emergency department staff, a chest pain clinical pathway has been developed and introduced statewide this year and work is underway to improve the supervision of our registrars and other junior doctors, with medical students receiving an orientation session and clear rostering to ensure and enable senior medical staff to supervise the students more closely.

I commend the staff at the LGH and those who are close to that health system and in that hospital, and their commitments to their patients and to working continuously to improve the care we provide. As I have said, we are responding more broadly to increased demand in our health system.

Dr Broad - Why didn't he know about this? Did he forget or just didn't know?

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Broad, warning number one.

Mr HODGMAN - We have, despite the claims of the Leader of the Opposition, responded to this tragic circumstance as I have outlined.

Glamorgan Spring Bay Council - Funding for Prosser Pipeline

Dr WOODRUFF question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.26 a.m.]

In 2016 you signed a \$4 million Tascorp loan to the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council to construct the Prosser water pipeline. Now cost blowouts mean the council cannot afford to finish the job. It cannot supply the water to Tassal, or anybody else, and will not be able to recover its costs. No serious financial modelling for this loan was ever shown to Glamorgan ratepayers or to previous councillors and the loan deal between yourself and the previous mayor and general

manager was highly secretive and publicly and widely criticised for being so. Simple back-of-the-envelope maths of loan repayments show servicing this massive debt over decades places the council into a perilous debt trap. Mayor Wisby said yesterday her council's borrowing capacity is extremely low and there is no money for emergency rebuilding of bridges or any other infrastructure. This is gross malfeasance on your part. You gave a leg-up for two private commercial operators at the expense of Glamorgan ratepayers. Why did you let this happen and what are you going to do about it?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question and her interest in this matter. The simple facts of the matter are that the council has substantially underestimated the cost to complete the scheme.

Ms O'Connor - Oh, it's the council's fault.

Madam SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, warning two.

Mr GUTWEIN - Those costings for the scheme have proven to be insufficient to complete the various stages. The council approached the state Government for support in the last term and we went through the normal processes. I make the point regarding the language the member uses that she says it was highly secretive but then says it was publicly criticised. How do you have a highly secretive process but then at the end of the day the arrangements were publicly criticised?

Dr Woodruff - The lack of information.

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, warning two.

Mr GUTWEIN - This is a matter for the council. When they applied for the borrowings they were within the normal metrics that would be applied by Tascorp in terms of lending money to any government authority. They went through the process. Tascorp looked at this and determined that they were in a position to meet their obligations in terms of the loan. Interestingly enough, the terms of the agreement with Tassal are such, as I understand it, that once water begins to flow, over a period of time Tassal will pay for the loan and interest repayments associated with the pipeline.

The council has put itself into a spot of bother and the circumstances the mayor finds herself in now were not of her doing. I spoke with Mayor Debbie Wisby on Monday evening about this matter and she is engaged with Tassal to look at what potential options may be.

In terms of Glamorgan Spring Bay's capacity to borrow and the metrics that were applied, they are exactly the same metrics and process we go through with every other council. That the council entered into a project where the cost estimates have not worked out as they thought they would is not a matter for the state government. It is a matter for the mayor, the council and her current general manager to work through. We will support them and I have been engaged with that council every step of the way since Mayor Debbie Wisby began working through this issue with a number of acting general managers in recent months and we will continue to play our part.

The process the council engaged in was exactly the same process; the same metrics and the same approval process was applied to this council as would be applied to any other council. The council has itself in a challenging situation because the costings associated with the project have

blown out. We will work with the council and with the community to ensure a suitable solution can be found. I understand the mayor is working with Tassal regarding this matter.

Emergency Response Workers - Health and Wellbeing Program

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

[10.32 a.m.]

Can you please provide an update to the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's initiatives to better support the wellbeing of our emergency response workers?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Franklin for her question. The health and wellbeing of our emergency responders is a key priority for the Government. We acknowledge that our first responders are exposed to stressful situations, which is why the Government has committed \$6 million over four years for a proactive health and wellbeing program that supports the physical and mental health of our emergency services personnel and aims to provide better preventative support.

I have the pleasure to announce the launch of the MyPulse program today. This is an Australian-first program that prevents and detects health and wellbeing risks impacting Tasmania's frontline emergency service staff. The program has been specifically designed to meet the needs of Tasmanian emergency services. Access to the MyPulse online hub is the front line for frontline emergency services and staff. They can choose to engage in a range of preventative measures designed to assist them to improve wellbeing.

The online hub delivers: health and wellbeing information and resources and access to health and wellbeing training and education through face-to-face and e-learning delivery; the ability to opt in to confidential screening tools that show how someone is tracking in a range of physical and mental health wellbeing measures; confidential coaching support to maintain and improve wellbeing to those who present with moderate or high-risk factors. Specifically included for firefighters, MyPulse includes a cancer screen link to the 12 types of cancer under our preventative worker compensation legislation. Many elements of MyPulse are also available to volunteers, non-frontline staff and their families.

Mental health and physical health go hand in hand, so MyPulse takes a holistic approach that complements the other suite of health and wellbeing support services already offered, including: ready for response, a 12-week fitness challenge; a mental health first-aid training and wellbeing capability training; critical incident stress management; psychological support; and wellbeing support officers, noting that we have recently recruited two additional wellbeing support officers to the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management in May of this year; one in the north and one in the south, allowing additional support to be extended to Ambulance Tasmania.

We are committed to supporting our emergency service workers. While others may focus on themselves, the Hodgman majority Liberal Government has been getting on with delivering with our plan. This year, we removed barriers for our emergency service workers who succumbed to post-traumatic stress disorder by becoming the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate a

presumptive provision for workers' compensation claims in the public service arising from diagnosed PTSD. We delivered on our commitment to remove step-down provisions that apply to police officers, ensuring police officers continue to receive 100 per cent of their pay while receiving workers' compensation, an issue that Labor and the Greens' government neglected to progress, despite being lobbied by the Police Association of Tasmania.

Another way you can support emergency service workers is to have more of them. That is why we have been recruiting more police, fire fighters and paramedics. This stands in stark contrast to the approach taken by Labor and the Greens. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government supports Tasmania's fantastic emergency responders, who do an incredible job in the face of extreme and challenging circumstances in the Tasmanian community. On behalf of that community, I thank each and every one of them for the work they do. I also commend all agency staff and leaders who have collaborated across governments to develop the MyPulse program.

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service - Meeting with Premier

Ms O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.37 a.m.]

In question time over a month ago, you committed to meeting with staff and the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service who were sitting in the gallery that day. You said, 'I welcome the opportunity, and would do so, to meet with members of the service'. Have you met with these staff or at least arranged a meeting date, as you promised?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I always work and meet with key stakeholder groups when we are able to advance issues of concern, to hear their issues of concern, and to put in place anything we can do to better support those who work in important areas, including in family violence counselling. I will explain for the member's benefit the context in which this Government is progressing with the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service and our ongoing commitment to continue to do so.

The Family Violence Counselling and Support Service has been in place for a number of years. It was part of the Safe at Home service, which is Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence. There have been a number of significant changes to family violence support services since that time and that includes the Government's \$26 million investment in 2015 into our state's first comprehensive Family Violence Action Plan and our \$26 million investment into family and sexual violence services more recently. The Family Violence and Counselling and Support Service is now one of a number of specialist counselling and support services made available -

Ms O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. You have said that one of the issues with far-ranging questions is that it allows the answer to be far ranging. My question simply was, did he meet with them, as promised? I cannot see how that could not be something that has either a yes or no answer.

Madam SPEAKER - As you know, I am not allowed to put words in the minister's mouth. I have to rule that out of order and ask the Premier to proceed.

Mr HODGMAN - I was hoping, for the member and other members' benefit, to provide the context in which the service operates the new context and a much stronger support for Tasmania's family violence response. In that context and in the implementation of Safe Homes, Families and Communities, work needs to be done to clarify the role of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service as part of a wider service network that now exists. This work will consider recommendations that have been presented to successive governments, your government included, following several reviews that have been undertaken in relation to this service.

Following that, we will be better able to determine the service delivery and resourcing requirements to inform funding decisions of our Department of Communities Tasmania to begin this work as a matter of priority. That work is underway. All relevant unions will be consulted as necessary. I continue to say that I will be available to meet with service providers when required. This is more important in determining what is the best way to improve our response and our effectiveness in reducing family violence in our community.

Mineral Exploration - Economic and Employment Opportunities

Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr BARNETT

[10.40 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the latest developments in mineral exploration that will provide further economic and employment opportunities for many in north-west Tasmania? Are you aware of any threats to our potential mining and mineral prosperity?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and his strong support for the mining and mineral processing sector. It is the Hodgman majority Liberal Government that is delivering the mining for Tasmania's future policy and that is encouraging investment. It is ensuring that the mining and mineral processing sector remains an economic cornerstone of our beautiful state of Tasmania. We know that this sector is responsible for more than half the exports from the great state of Tasmania, in addition to in excess of 5500 jobs, particularly the north-west and west coast, but across the state. It is the Government's \$2 million exploration drilling grant initiative which is helping to encourage local greenfields exploration in this highly competitive market.

The recent Australian Bureau of Statistics demonstrate that confidence is translating into new mineral exploration. Exploration expenditure in Tasmania increased 8.5 per cent in the June quarter compared to the previous quarter. That is good news.

State Treasury reported that this increase is greater than any recorded on mainland Australia for the same quarter. So far, \$960 000 has been committed to the exploration drilling grants and, importantly, this has leveraged an addition \$2 million in exploration expenditure. When fully implemented, this would see 10.5 kilometres of exploration drilling undertaken that otherwise would not have occurred.

We recognise that there is much more prospecting work to do, but I am excited by what this exploration and confidence can lead to. Take for example recent news, Venture Minerals. Venture Minerals is commencing its Riley Iron Ore Mine, providing up to 100 jobs, which is so much supported in the Braddon electorate by our members and the community, that is for sure. The search

is now on for people to fill those jobs. That development, as noted in today's *Advocate* by the mayor from the West Coast Council, is providing good opportunities for employment for people in the region. Venture has already over \$50 million in exploration and investment in development and is now ready to invest more to deliver jobs and another shot in the arm for the north-west coast economy.

Bluestone Mines Joint Venture has recently announced the discovery of new high-grade tin ore at the Renison Tin Mine. Nearby, at the Rosebery Mine, MMG has recently announced record production levels.

That is good news, outstanding news, except if you are a green. If you are a Greens or an anti-everything activist then you are anti those projects going ahead. The Bob Brown Foundation spokesperson claimed risks to Tasmania from mining. Bob Brown and his followers do not want to roll the dice on development that will help the north-west coast, or the west coast and these mining communities. They are prepared to gamble with the future of our workers and their families and who call the north-west coast and the west coast home. No wonder that these are the people who have made a career out of putting people out of work. We know the real reason is that those activists want to lock up to 10 per cent more of Tasmania with the Tarkine National Park, putting productive industries like mining and forestry industries in jeopardy. They have not given up.

Two short weeks ago, we heard the Labor Party changed tune; they focused on the economy and jobs. Yet, within seven days, they come in here and support a motion which says to return the Tasmanian forestry agreement and the job-destroying lockups. We know they cannot be believed; they cannot be trusted. We do not know where the Leader for the Opposition stands. Is she being told what to do by the Labor power brokers behind the scenes? They are in crisis, they are a rabble; factions fighting each other.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order please.

Mr BARNETT - They do not even know if they want Madeleine Ogilvie back. The left faction dominating. Some in the right faction want her back. The Leader of the Opposition cannot even answer that question.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. Please proceed.

Mr BARNETT - Madam Speaker, Labor is at war within themselves. The faceless men and women of the Labor Party are at war. Leader for the Opposition, do you or do you not support the return of Madeleine Ogilvie? We know they cannot be trusted. We know the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. We know that they voted nine out of 10 times with the Greens this very year.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, standing order 48. The minister has been on his feet for five minutes on a Dorothy Dix indulging in childish politics again at taxpayers' expense. Can I just ask you to draw your attention to the amount of time that has been spent on Dorothy Dix answers?

Madam SPEAKER - Mostly they have been three minutes; that one went a bit over time. It is out of order anyway. Thank you.

Hospital in the Home Service - Mental Health

Mrs RYLAH question to the MINISTER for MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.46 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the Hodgman Liberal Government's Mental Health Hospital in the Home service and how this initiative is helping Tasmanians to recover from or successfully manage their mental illness?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. As evidenced by the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, the priority that the Hodgman Liberal Government take is very clear when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. We have committed over \$104 million over six years to improve mental health with a focus on prevention, early intervention treatment and support services. While there will always be a need for acute hospital-based mental health facilities, increasingly our investment is focusing on community support options.

The Mental Health Hospital in the Home service commenced in March this year in southern Tasmania. This is an exciting development which is allowing people in an acute phase of mental illness who otherwise may have had to be admitted to hospital to now receive intensive evidence-based, short-term support in the familiar environment of their home. My advice is that feedback from clients, carers, families and friends during the first few months of the service has been very positive, with clients, in particular, expressing appreciation of their experience and the different approach to their care.

In the three months from March to June 2019, the Mental Health Hospital in the Home service had 36 admissions and 29 discharges, with the average length of admission of 21.5 days. This means that the new service has been able to reduce hospital admissions which otherwise may have been required and has had a positive impact on patient flow at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

Importantly, the new service is improving patient care. The model of care was developed in consultation with key stakeholders, such as consumers, families and carers, clinicians, community managed and primary health sectors and professional and industrial bodies.

There are three main referral pathways: the emergency department and the department of Psychiatry at the Royal Hobart Hospital and Community Mental Health Services, including the Mental Health Services Helpline. The service operates with extended hours seven days a week. The intensity of treatment will vary depending on individual need. However, at a minimum all clients receive daily contact.

Mental Health Hospital in the Home is currently operating eight beds in the individuals' homes. We are aiming to scale up to 12 beds as soon as we are able to. That is subject to a recruitment process which is currently underway and ongoing.

This important initiative represents our commitment to increasing access to community-based supports and improving outcomes and access to services for Tasmanians living with mental illness, and I am very pleased that the early indicators are that it is a very successful program.

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service - Review

Ms O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.50 a.m.]

You have admitted that you have broken your promise to meet with the hardworking staff at the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, who are under extreme pressure and have concerns with their service because it has had a 200 per cent increase in demand. Can I point out two things? Those people are your staff, not your stakeholders, as you referred to them in your answer, and the promise that you made in this House was not conditional. Instead, you now say that you have written to them advising that you will review their service. Can you guarantee that this review is not going to result in a downward restructure, dismantling or outsourcing of this service, or will the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service become yet another victim of your razor gang?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question, although I refute the claim that I have refused to meet with staff. As I have said, I will at a time when it is appropriate and opportune to advance positive outcomes not only in their workplace and the service they provide but also for our response to improving our policies, initiatives and programs to support the victims of family violence.

Ms White - How are you supposed to make good decisions if you don't listen to them?

Madam SPEAKER - Ms White, that is warning two.

Mr HODGMAN - I consider them more than staff, as the member says. They are important stakeholders. They are frontline workers in our effort to eliminate family and sexual violence in our community.

Our Government's record in this space cannot be questioned because we have added not only to our first action plan with \$26 million in additional funding, a second action plan has been extensively consulted with experts in that space; all those key stakeholders who have informed a number of new initiatives on how we can better reach out and touch those who are the victims of family and sexual violence; those other support agencies that work in our communities, as well as strengthen our laws, as we have done in this place this year, and improve the steady progress we are making as a priority of this Government to reduce and ultimately eliminate family violence.

I will, as I have said, at a time that is opportune, meet with members of the service. I have acknowledged the extraordinary work they do. I have also said that it is appropriate for the work to be undertaken by the department working together, not politicking but actually collaborating to improve outcomes. That is what we are focused on. I wish the spokesperson for family violence prevention from the Labor Party would have similar motivations.

Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Beds

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.53 a.m.]

Yesterday you were asked to recommit to the 50-bed drug and alcohol facility you promised in order to save your chaotic and dysfunctional Government. You categorically failed to do so. It is clear that you and the member for Clark have broken another promise to the people of Tasmania. It is also clear that you will say and do anything to maintain your thin veneer of majority government. What do you say to people fighting addiction, their families and service providers who were given false hope by your political game-playing?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader for the question on today, of all days, to get a question of that nature. It was a typical preamble from a leader in name who so often comes into this place and talks about chaos and dysfunction and division and lack of leadership. I say to the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party, take a good hard look in the mirror. What you are doing and what is happening in the Labor Party is, frankly, embarrassing. As I said, it is literally like something out of a reality television show. They cannot even decide whether they want to have a new member back into their tribe, into their team. They are still wondering whether they want Madeleine Ogilvie back. Talk about lack of leadership. As I have said, if you do not know who you want in your own party, how can you seriously lead it?

Also, as is often said, if you cannot run yourselves how can you seriously run the state? It shows the very juvenile nature of this Opposition that they are not even able to determine whether they want a Labor member back in their ranks. We know why - there are deep divisions. We have seen a concerted effort once to get Ms Ogilvie out of this place and now they cannot even welcome her back.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker, going to relevance. Premier, the question was clearly about what you are going to say to people who are struggling with addiction. I understand you might be embarrassed, but this a very serious issue. Drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds are needed. Are you going to maintain your commitment to them or break another promise?

Madam SPEAKER - I don't think that is a point of order, Ms White.

Mr HODGMAN - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to point to the hypocrisy of the Labor Party in all they do. All they are doing now is worrying about themselves and who may or may not be in their own party and it shows there is a lack of leadership. What leadership looks like is coming forward with ideas, as the member for Clark did in response to increasing demand in mental health and alcohol and drug services, and ideas about what we can do to improve and better support the people you refer to. I have seen not one solution, option or contribution by the Opposition in this place. All it is about is scaring people, causing concern within our community, talking our economy down and distracting themselves and attempting to distract us from our efforts.

We have budgeted an additional \$104 million to boost mental health over the next six years. In 2018-19 the Tasmanian Health Service committed base funding of \$9.2 million on alcohol and drug services and an additional \$5.1 million in grants managed by alcohol and drug services. We have a number of initiatives underway and we are working with the non-government sector and key

stakeholders to boost 31 new additional drug and alcohol residential beds and support programs in Tasmania.

We have programs all around the state. The Salvation Army's Bridge program in north-west Tasmania was opened in 2016, and \$2.4 million was provided in the 2018 budget for a further three years. We provide financial assistance to Pathways Tasmania for a case manager to work with clients of its 10-bed long-term residential rehabilitation program here in the south. We have work underway on the reform agenda for the alcohol and drug sector in Tasmania that will identify and describe a range of treatments and associated interventions that make up treatment services, including through specialist government and non-government services.

I can go on - \$870 000 over two years to the Australian Drug Foundation Good Sports and Healthy Minds programs, \$100 000 to Pathways Tasmania I have referred to, \$100 000 over two years for Holyoake's Gotta Wanna program, and a number of other initiatives this Government is undertaking. We are increasing services. We are increasing resources, despite what the member says. I can guarantee that we will continue to do more, as we have shown in this Budget, as we have shown in election commitments and as we have shown with the appointment of Tasmania's first dedicated Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Our focus on improving services to Tasmanians cannot be questioned. There is always more we can do and we will work with the non-government sector and the Australian Government and anyone else who is prepared to come forward with ideas. We welcome them from anywhere. When will we finally ever get one from the Labor Party?

Federal Religious Freedom Bill - Effect

Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.59 a.m.]

As you are aware, yesterday was Suicide Prevention Day. As you may also be aware, suicide rates and self-harm amongst LGBTI people, particularly young people and transgender people, is significantly higher than the average populations. As Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, do you support your federal colleagues' push for the so-called religious freedom bill, which will make it easier for bigots to humiliate, harass, harm and hurt the mental wellbeing of LGBTI Tasmanians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. Yesterday was a very important day for our community, World Suicide Prevention Day, and it was good to take part in a moving event yesterday morning. It highlighted the importance of mental health and wellbeing in our community.

Ms O'Connor - For everyone.

Mr ROCKLIFF - For everyone, absolutely.

Ms O'Connor - Condemn the religious freedom bill then.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, please Ms O'Connor, warning two.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This Government has demonstrated its absolute commitment to mental health and wellbeing and investing in the areas of priority, including suicide prevention. It is clear in our demonstrated leadership toward a state of kindness, as reflected in the anti-bullying forum we had only a month or so ago.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. The minister has been speaking for a minute and has not addressed the question, which relates specifically to LGBTI people and the harm that will be caused to them if your colleague's federal religious freedom bill is passed.

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you very much, Ms O'Connor. That is not a point of order and he had been speaking for two minutes and 15 seconds.

Ms O'Connor - Yes, without dealing with the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I was relating my answer to your question. It is important that we listen to all the views of the community. I am well aware of sections of the community and their views with relation to the federal Government's draft release of the Religious Discrimination Bill 2019 for consultation. The bill prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religious belief or activity and establishes a new office of freedom of religion commissioner. We have received a copy of the Commonwealth Government's draft bill and we are seeking advice on how it interacts with Tasmanian law and any constitutional issues that may arise.

Ms O'Connor - It overrides it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I understand the member's question.

Ms O'Connor - I have read the Constitution.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. Does anyone realise you must speak through the Chair? Please proceed, minister.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I understand the member's question and I understand where the question is coming from. This bill has to be very well consulted. As Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, I am taking a great interest of the views of all stakeholders within our community as to the impacts of this Commonwealth bill.

Time expired.

TABLED PAPER

Public Works Committee - Midland Highway - Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks

Mrs Rylah presented a report on Public Works Committee with the following reference; Midland Highway 10-year Action Plan - Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks, together with the evidence received and the transcript of evidence.

Report received and printed.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Community Safety

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: community safety.

This is an important issue for the Labor Party and should be for all of the Tasmanian Parliament and the Tasmanian community. During the Hodgman Liberal Government's time in office, there have been at least nine incorrect releases of prisoners. There have been gaps in the system. There have been miscommunications across the courts and the prison system with mismatches with information, which have led to disastrous results when people have been incorrectly released. We have seen victims of crime not adequately notified of the release of offenders, who have been incarcerated as a result of the result of the crime for which the victim was also registered. Last weekend, a prisoner escaped in transit to hospital and, as far as we are informed, has not yet been located. Just this week, a prisoner was released early due to human error. I acknowledge there are moves afoot to try to correct and improve on the systems in place right now. The system is broken right now.

The prison is overcrowded. It is a facility built for roughly 300 that now houses close to 600 prisoners. Cells designed for one now house two. Inmate cells designed for two now have up to three bunkbeds crammed into them, or even mattresses on the floor. Shifts at the prison are routinely understaffed and correctional officers are forced to operate in dangerous and understaffed conditions. It is unsafe for staff of the corrections system and for inmates as well. We have heard horror stories. Many of them were highlighted by the media during the year, of inmate on inmate incidents in which inmates have been horrifically injured on days when shifts were understaffed.

During the debate on yesterday's bill, we heard the member for Braddon, Mrs Rylah, say that the Government takes the issue of correct prisoner release extremely seriously and that any incorrect release is unacceptable. I agree with those sentiments but we need to know what will be happening in the meantime, while improvements are being made, when we see this time and time again; it is hard to look past the pages of the newspaper without seeing news of incorrect prisoner releases.

Ms Archer - How dare you attack the workers.

Ms HADDAD - The Attorney-General says that I am attacking workers. I am not attacking workers. I am highlighting the problems in this Government's approach to law and order.

Risdon Prison is a pressure cooker right now. There are lockdowns somewhere in the prison every single day. Education and training programs have been slashed. Support programs have been slashed. Drug rehabilitation programs are stretched to the limit, with only 26 places for drug replacement treatment and arguably over 500 people, following national statistics, likely be in need of this counselling service. There are only two alcohol and drug counsellors to work across the prison.

Prisoner numbers at Risdon have risen sharply under this Government. There has been a huge increase in every one of the five years we have had this Liberal Government. If you look at the graph you can see the shift from when the Liberal Party was elected, the stark increase in

incarceration rates. The Liberal Party is probably very proud of that. They are probably very proud that those prisoner numbers have increased because they have a law and order agenda they put forward, which is really a lock them up and throw away the key attitude. They have pursued those kinds of policies because they are popular in the community.

When they roll those policies out during the election period they can argue that they are tough on crime and Labor is soft on crime, that they fill the prisons and Labor is somehow arguing that prisoners should not be punished. That is absolutely not the case. We will always recognise that there is a case for incarceration and there will be times when people need to serve time in prison. That is not in argument here, but we know that while they are there they are starved of services. People are working in unsafe working positions and they are starved of funds that mean that shifts are often short, that lockdowns have to occur daily somewhere in the prison, often as a result of staff shortages, and correctional officers are forced to work in a system where they are constantly in danger. It is also dangerous for the inmates.

I go to these points to refute what the Attorney-General said by interjection that I am attacking workers. I am not attacking workers. I am criticising the Government for continuously cutting funds from public sector services which put workers and, in this case inmates, at risk. When it comes to incorrect prisoner releases, it puts the community at risk and it puts victims at risk. That is what I am highlighting here. I am not attacking workers who are working in a stressed system. I am defending those workers. I know how difficult it would be for them working in these systems where they know that things go wrong and they are powerless to correct them.

I will give an unidentified version of just one case where an offender was released early and a registered victim of crime, a victim of that offender, was not informed. The reason for that -

Time expired.

[11.11 a.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am surprised at this MPI today. The blatant hypocrisy from Labor on this issue is quite staggering.

Community safety is a core priority for this Government. I note that the MPI topic is community safety and that is what I would like to focus on. However, it is important to point out the hypocrisy of Labor in bringing this MPI before the parliament today. Our law and order policies, which we have taken to two elections now, held this value front and centre and they were strongly supported by the Tasmanian people at both elections. We continually put up our law reform agenda in this place, only to have it voted down by Labor. They are soft on crime. There is no disputing the facts or the statistics in this place.

While the Hodgman majority Liberal Government will always stand up for the safety of the community, for victims, for survivors of child sexual abuse, and for protecting our most vulnerable, we know that fundamentally Labor and the Greens do not share these values. I am becoming accustomed to this type of hypocrisy, unfortunately, from the member who moved this MPI today. Ms Haddad will show understanding during a debate and can be quite empathetic and sympathetic to the issues such as the discussions we held last night on the Magistrates Court (Criminal and General Division) Bill, where she stated -

Ms Haddad - You said I didn't scrutinise the bill. You said I provided no scrutiny.

Ms ARCHER - I am not going to respond to interjections. I sat mainly in silence for most of the last contribution.

Dr Broad - Oh.

Ms ARCHER - Dr Broad, you can make your contribution later.

On the bill yesterday, I want to take a quote from *Hansard*, which I am entitled to do. This is from Ms Haddad:

I acknowledge the amount of work that has been progressed by the Justice Connect team and the Department of Justice to ensure that courts, prisons and police will be able to work in an electronic way and to share data across agencies, which I acknowledge is a challenge in itself.

To another quote:

There is always going to be the potential for error when there are electronic systems in place for sharing information. In my personal view, there is a lot less room for error when things are shared electronically than when paper records are expected to make their way, for example, from the prison or perhaps from holding cells to the prison or back to police or to the hospital when inmates are transported from the prison to hospital for treatment.

However, Ms Haddad then brings on this MPI which is not only hypocritical, it is also an attack on our hardworking public servants who help protect our community and who hear these contributions. Human error is an unfortunate occurrence, but to attack a worker for an honest mistake just shows how warped Labor's priorities have become. They try to hide it behind the guise of attacking the Government but they are actually attacking the hardworking public servants in our system.

Labor is not committed to protecting the Tasmanian community. You only have to look at their policy platform agreed to at the recent Tasmanian Labor conference held only weeks ago. When you look at 2013, Labor's law and order platform contained 2281 words, but the 2019 version is barely a footnote at a mere 86 words. That is from their 2019 state conference agenda.

I might say, the prison to which Ms Haddad referred was built by a Labor government and there was not adequate forward planning in relation to future-proofing the needs of that system. It has taken our Government to put massive spending into infrastructure, which Labor did not do. Then they now have the cheek to oppose the early release of prisoners under remission, completely inconsistent with continuing to oppose mandatory sentencing for serious crimes, such as those who commit serious sexual offences against children and offenders who seriously assault frontline workers, which includes correctional officers.

Unlike those opposite, when it comes to our prison we know that there will always be a need for incarcerating serious offenders, which is why we are taking a strategic approach to actively manage the needs of Tasmania Prison Service. We are also providing alternative sentencing options. The home detention orders are a wonderful example of that where we are keeping less serious offenders out of prison to ensure that we have the balance right there. This no different

from any other jurisdiction around the nation when it comes to managing increasing prisoner numbers and that is through this strategic management.

Under our Government there has been considerable investment in both staff and infrastructure to Tasmania Prison Service. The fact is that over the past year alone we have increased correctional staff at an exponential rate. An additional 107 correctional officers have been recruited since 2016, an additional group of officers will begin in October following their graduation, and plans are underway to begin the next wave of recruitment for early next year.

While Labor backflipped on their promise to build a much-needed new prison for the north of the state and instead, inexplicably pledged to refurbish the horribly unsatisfactory Launceston remand facility, which is not fit for purpose, we have done what is needed and that is commit to building the new \$70 million remand facility in the south, which is underway, and a new fit-for-purpose \$270 million, 270-bed prison in the north, which provides incredible rehabilitation prospects as well for prisoners in a purpose-built facility.

Labor does not have credibility on corrections. They failed to promise even one single additional correctional officer during the last state election. They oppose our plans to build appropriate accommodation for prisoners as crime rates rise around the country. We are not immune here in Tasmania. Under Labor, not only would we see more serious offenders out on the street, but we would also have less police to protect the community.

Time expired.

[11.18 a.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, imagine what the crime rate would be like with Dr Broad as police minister, Ms Haddad as Attorney-General, and 207 fewer frontline police officers in our communities. Tasmanians deserve to live in safety, free from the impact of crime. We make no apology for being tough on crime and that is why we are investing in a first-class police service.

Tasmania Police continues to employ the following strategies, among others, to tackle offending: targeting prolific offenders through a dedicated taskforce; targeting crime hotspots through strategic deployment of covert and overt police resources; using social media to identify and locate prolific offenders and educating business and the community about security and target hardening; early youth intervention and implementation of the Police At-Risk Youth Strategy; and implementation of the Tasmanian Police Road Safety Strategy and the Road Patrol Strategy designed to reduce road trauma by delivering a diverse suite of projects, including the use of drones and unmarked police motor cycles.

We are recruiting an additional 125 police officers to boost frontline policing and make our community safer. This is in addition to the 113 additional police officers we recruited in our last term of government. The investment in police numbers by the Hodgman Liberal Government is in stark contrast to the 31 police officers that Labor promised to recruit at the last election, not even 30 per cent of the 108 police officers that they sacked last time they were in government.

Ms Butler - What about permanent police in New Norfolk? It is true, it was promised - permanent police there. It was an election pledge.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. Ms Butler, you will have the opportunity to make a contribution soon.

Mr TUCKER - As of 13 June 2019, total offences in the northern district increased by 23 per cent from the previous year. However, the Launceston division saw a 14 per cent drop in crime in 2017-18. The increases this year are not indicative of a long-term upwards trend. In late March 2019, the northern district crime plan was revised to focus on reducing total offences. This plan comprises a taskforce, targeting recidivistic offenders - recidivist -

Members interjecting.

Mr TUCKER - I do have a speech issue, I admit that. I know you guys like to be discriminatory. - who have committed high-volume crime and a whole-of-district crime focus.

Operation Raptor commenced on 1 April 2019. As of 31 July 2019, a total of 246 offenders have been apprehended and charged with 969 offences. Large quantities of stolen property, illicit drugs and firearms have been recovered. Since the revised focus on the crime strategy, there has been a significant downward trend in offences in the northern district. Northern district police have been working hard reducing crime. This has been a key focus of the district.

Unlike Labor, this Government has stood up for victims of crime more than any other. I would like to outline some of the reforms in this space:

- ensuring that the funeral expenses of a victim are paid separately from any compensation awarded to relatives by amending the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 1976.
- extending the rights of victims of family violence to provide details of the affected offences on them to all courts by amending the Sentencing Act 1997.
- funding a pilot program extending the Department of Public Prosecution's witness assistance service to vulnerable witnesses and victims involved in proceedings before the Magistrates Court.
- providing for a victims of crime representative on the Parole Board by amending the Corrections Act 1997, ensuring the voice of victims will be correctly represented.
- strengthening Tasmania's legislative response to family violence, ensuring that the protection and welfare of victims is of paramount importance by amending the Family Violence Act 2004.
- expanding the definition of family violence to include property damage.

We will -

- extend the time limit in which proceedings for offences of economic abuse or emotional abuse or intimidation can be commenced.
- extend the powers of police to deal with family violence offenders.

- provide the court the power to reprimand or impose conditions on a person pending the outcome of a family violence order.
- allow for a family violence offence to be recorded as such on a person's record of prior convictions so as to more easily identify patterns of family violence offending.
- enhance the detections and available supports for victims while they participate in court proceedings by amending the Evidence Children and Special Witnesses Act 2001.
- provide the victims of a family violence offence the right to be given information about an offender's release and progress through the prison system by amending the Corrections Act 1997.
- increase the maximum sentence for assaults on a pregnant woman dealt with in the Magistrates Court by introducing an express penalty provision into the Police Offences Act 1935.
- provide information about an offender's release and progress through the prison system by amending the Corrections Act 1997.
- enacted legislation to join the National Domestic Violence Order Scheme ensuring the protection of a family violence order issued in Tasmania continues if a victim moves interstate.
- limited the circumstances in which good character and lack of previous convictions can be used in mitigation by sexual offenders by amending the Sentencing Act 1997.
- included a statutory list of aggravating factors that a court must apply when sentencing serious sexual offenders by amending the Sentencing Act 1997.
- allocated an additional \$420 000 over two years to victim-support services to support the work they do assisting victims of crime in our community.

Time expired.

[11.25 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, this Government has a bit of a rap sheet of its own when it comes to law and order. Despite all the rhetoric about being tough on crime and having a massive law and order agenda, they cannot shy away from the facts. The facts are that crime rates are up. Armed and unarmed robberies are up 23 per cent. Imagine the victim impact of armed robberies when someone walks into a service station to rob it. There is an impact far greater than just from the theft of money and so on. Burglaries are up 14 per cent. Even crimes like fraud are up 9 per cent, so crime is up across the board.

What we heard on the radio this morning from Colin Riley, chair of the Tasmanian Police Association, was that if you get into the details of regions, it is even worse; particularly in Launceston, where crime rates are up by 23 per cent. It is no wonder. We hear time and again about gun violence in Launceston. We hear about police calling for extra resources in Launceston, yet we still do not have a capability review. We have police screaming out for resources to tackle

this crime wave, to be able to put in a police surge to deal with this spike in crime. Instead we have the police having to adopt tactics like lockdowns. They use a dragnet approach where they lockdown suburbs like Ravenswood to try to catch offenders and reduce the crime rates. These are the tactics the police are having to use, which are being ignored by the Government.

We still do not have a full-time Special Operations Group. As the member for Clark, Ms Haddad, highlighted, we have had at least nine incorrect releases from custody, people let out before their time. They are doing the crime and not doing the time. This stems way back to one of the very flawed decisions of this Government in the early days to cut the funding for the IT system. When you walk in and look at the budget, the Government may have thought, '\$23 million, let's axe that'. That has a significant impact on people, not only the prisoners who get released incorrectly but also on other people who are victims of crime.

We still have police on court duty in the north-west. We still have police transporting prisoners. We still have a government that has not adopted the coroner's recommendations when it comes to transport of prisoners. There is an accident waiting to happen.

We have all these issues in the law and order portfolio but this Government still has their heads in the sand. This decision they made about axing the IT system has real-world implications on people. Ms Haddad was about to give quite an emotional account of that impact. What we have is a de-identified issue where a victim of serious family violence -

Ms Archer - We put \$24.5 million in. You put \$5 million in.

Dr BROAD - You are not interested. You do not want to hear about this lady's journey and your own incompetence and the results of your actions. Instead of trying to have some empathy for this victim of family violence you are trying to shout me down and interject.

Ms Archer - We have not cut funding to Corrections. We have injected money.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Dr BROAD - You should be ashamed of yourself. What happened to this unfortunate victim of family violence was the perpetrator was imprisoned for various offences. She thought she and her family were safe because the perpetrator of this family violence was safely locked up in jail. Instead, she saw him in the street. Imagine what it would do to a victim of serious family violence when they see their perpetrator in the street. The perpetrator had been stalking her. She saw him in the street and had not been notified. Thankfully, he was taken back into custody. That was the first time it happened. This happened because he had been tracking and had a number of offences. He had appealed for one offence to be withdrawn and to be let out early, so there was no tracking because the upgrades to the IT system got axed. They cannot track these prisoner offences and they cannot link that he was a perpetrator of family violence, so he was let out.

That was the first time it happened. What happened the second time he was released? She found out from a family violence counsellor that he was on the loose, again after the fact. Imagine what that does to a victim of family violence who has serious concerns about not only her safety but the safety of her children, when you have a system that does not notify her that the perpetrator of serious family violence, where charges are still in play, is released? How can that victim feel safe? If he goes back into prison, how does she know now? How can she have confidence that he won't be walking down the street again?

How does the tracking system fail like this? Because the Government has not invested; in fact they slashed it. One of the first decisions they made was to slash the system. Instead, they have this cross-referencing system which means these family violence victims fall through the cracks.

She asked the prison service why this happened. The question was, 'Why did the prison not notify someone, anyone, so that the victim may have been alerted of his sudden release, given it was an appeal on a sentence and there was a family violence order in place?'. The response from the service was, 'I can't answer this question'.

On the inmate's prison record, a victim's tick identified there was a registered victim with VSS. In our mind, this should have prompted a telephone call or email to at least give us a heads up, but I am not sure which section of the department, or within the prison, this should come from. This is probably a systems issue which would need to be taken up with the TPS. There was no warning and this did not only happen once, it happened twice. This is how the state Government is letting down victims of family violence. How can she feel safe in her own environment? How can she be certain that she and her family are safe from a perpetrator of serious domestic violence when this sort of mistake happens twice?

Time expired.

[11.32 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Greens, I reject the whole basis of this conversation. It is utterly wrong on so many levels. Both the Labor and the Liberal parties have a narrow frame for this conversation. What we are really talking about here is two parties that support the building of a massive investment in prison infrastructure in the north of the state that would, by the early estimates, have cost \$137 million to build - that is an early estimate so one could only expect that would increase by 50 per cent before the project had been built - and \$39 million a year to run.

Anybody working in justice rehabilitation or working to successfully bring down rates of recidivism around the world in other jurisdictions could tell you that is a failed policy response. It is doomed to incarcerate more people, create more crime in the community and decrease community safety, not increase it.

There is no evidence or logic to spending public money on building prisons to lock people up. That is a legacy of this island that we do not want to go back to. It is not the place we want to be as a state. It is not the future for us. The future for us is building strong communities, reuniting families, giving people who leave prison a home, support with drug therapy, support to cope with highly addictive drugs that are now available far too plentifully in the state, support to find a job and investing. Imagine if we could invest \$100 million, let alone \$200 million: what would happen to those suburbs in northern Tasmania around Launceston where we know there is a very high level of crime? If we put that money into supporting those families and people to get off highly addictive drugs, who are struggling with galloping rates of addiction in those suburbs, families who have intergenerational unemployment or underemployment, imagine what \$100 million could do for the people living in those suburbs.

It is unbelievable, and yet we would choose to make a policy decision to build a prison to lock people up, the old punitive Port Arthur colonial Tasmanian style. Is that really the best we can do as a state? Is that really brave future thinking? Is that really what we want to give the children of those families, something that they can look forward to, being locked up for personal levels of illicit

drug use? Other successful jurisdictions around the world such as Texas used to take that approach but found it failed miserably.

Portugal and other countries have been on their knees because of endemic, astronomical rates of drug addiction, with terrible crimes that have occurred around narcotics and trafficking drugs in an environment that has criminalised people for every type of drug they put into their bodies on a personal level, and mistakenly put money into locking those people up and creating serial criminals of those people. Instead, we need to get rid of this ridiculous tough on drug use approach that has failed, put that money into drug therapy and put the focus on the trafficking of drugs and supporting police to do the work to catch those large and medium-sized imports, which are being funnelled purposefully to the poorest communities in Tasmania. What are we doing?

We should be supporting the families, wives, children, husbands, mothers and fathers who desperately want their son, daughter, husband or sister to be supported to get out of addiction, to be supported to get a house when they get out of jail so that they do not get stuck in a cycle of petty crime which leads them back into jail and into connection with other people. It is an all-too-easy way of looking at crime as a solution to poverty instead of being supported to find another solution. Let us not forget that these are also the communities that have the lowest levels of education and attendance at school. These are the things we need to put our money into.

It is terrible policy for both the Liberal and Labor parties to continue to flog this approach to punitive management of petty crime and fail to understand the structural things we can do to make a difference, such as Texas and Portugal have done. Why don't the members in this House from the Labor and Liberal Party go and read a few of the top-line reports from around the world about how those communities have changed for the better? Why not do that work? Why persist with this? Because it is lazy, that is why. It is lazy, it is easy and it is letting Tasmanians down.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

**CRIMINAL CODE AND RELATED LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
(CHILD ABUSE) BILL 2018 (No. 63)**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (HIGHWAYS) AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 17)
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REVIEW (INTERNATIONAL FREE TRADE
AGREEMENTS) BILL 2019 (No. 23)**

Bills agreed to by the Legislative Council without amendments.

ROADS AND JETTIES AMENDMENT (VALIDATION) BILL 2019 (No. 25)

Second Reading

Resumed from 10 September 2019 (page 92)

[11.41 p.m.]

Mrs RYLAH (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I support this important validation bill. Under section 52A of the Roads and Jetties Act 1935, the Governor of Tasmania has the power to,

by proclamation, declare any state highway or subsidiary road, or part thereof to be a 'limited access road'. In proclaiming a limited access road, compensation is usually payable to the owners of the adjacent properties. Several factors are taken into account in calculating the amount of compensation to be paid, including the proximity of the property to alternative access points to the limited access road, severance of the property, or loss of trade in the case of a business that relies on passing trade.

Part IVA of the Roads and Jetties Act was inserted into the act in 1957 to allow for certain roads to be declared limited access roads. It was introduced in an effort to reduce degradation of highways from multiple access points, which require the construction of new sections of highway to maintain safety and efficiency. It is an important tool in the protection and in keeping the value of new sections of road. There are 28 declared limited access roads in Tasmania, amounting to 750 kilometres in length. This represents one-fifth of the total state road network.

Some limited access roads are the Bass Highway and the Midland Highway, with more than 50 per cent of the transformation of this highway now complete; the East Tamar Highway, which is a critical heavy freight route, as well as the main access to George Town and heading off to Bridport; the Brooker Highway/Illawarra Main Road, which links the Bass Highway with the Midland Highway, and Bridport Main Road. Ridgely Highway, in my electorate, is another limited access road that serves as a critical link between the north-west and west coast communities and it carries much of Tasmania's mineral wealth, even more so now with the launch of Venture Minerals, as we heard today with jobs being advertised and the increased forestry production that is coming up from the west coast.

The effect of a declaration of a limited access road is twofold. First, it facilitates the road user's right to safe and reasonable unrestricted travel. Second, it acknowledges the abutting landowner's right to be given reasonable access to their property by providing compensation for any loss of the common law right of access. Any agreed private access to a declared limited access road is issued with a conditional licence. It is conditional in that the licence includes the land the access serves, the location and use of the access together with other applicable conditions. Such a licence may be issued as full or partial compensation. There are provisions in the act that allow for a variation to the conditions of the licence, providing that such a variation of use will not have an adverse effect on the declared limited access road.

The original 1957 provisions did not allow for a licence to be issued to a subsequent owner unless the licence specified that it could. However, this had the potential to effectively leave land without any legal access to the road. This does remind me about the similar issue of water rights for the Ouse River. This legislation appears to be correcting a similar problem.

Access control assists in protecting safety, functionality and the economic viability of the state's key roads. A proliferation of frontage access and their use to arterial roads can rapidly degrade road safety, service and efficiency. The very high cost of road construction requires that proper measures be taken to protect the community asset from premature obsolescence and protect the public from danger. This asset represents an enormous state investment. Access control assists in the reduction of road crashes, so this is a safety issue. The uncontrolled spread of direct access to any major arterial roads from abutting properties is a prime cause of crashes due to the turning movement conflicts that arise. In urban areas this relates to the high volumes of through traffic and the interference caused by access movements. On rural roads, the crashes occurring at access points are usually more severe due to the high speed of passing traffic.

A number have been realigned as a result of the lack of access control. Early examples are seen between Latrobe and Burnie, Claremont and Granton and in many other places. Later examples including the Midland Highway between Bridgewater and Pontville and the Tasman Highway between Hobart and Cambridge. These newer roads declared limited access have not suffered from these effects because of the statutory access controls. Therefore, they operate as efficient traffic routes, safer roads and protect the state's investment in these roads. Primarily, limited access was applied to the new alignment of roads. Some early examples are the Muddy Creek deviation on the West Tamar Highway and the East Tamar Highway from Mt Direction to Bell Bay. Later examples include the Bass Highway between Launceston and Deloraine, Penguin and Howth, et cetera.

With the advent of Commonwealth involvement with national highways, however, the situation changed dramatically with long stretches of the existing Midland Highway and Bass Highway being declared limited access roads in accordance with the issued guidelines for construction of those national highways. I mentioned the issue for the old farm we used to have on the Bass Highway near Wynyard.

The Hodgman Liberal Government 2019-20 Budget is delivering a record investment in job-creating infrastructure across the state. Therefore, this bill is particularly relevant as a large portion of that spend is on roads. We need to protect that investment and make roads safe. In the north, this Government is rolling out a \$51 million traffic vision for Launceston and the Tamar Valley over the next five years, which will see a reduction in congestion, improve safety on our roads and travel reliability. Construction of the \$7 million Mowbray connector intersection upgrades have started, improving safety and traffic flow on the East Tamar Highway. This work includes installing a roundabout without the need for traffic lights to replace the current outdated turning arrangement at the intersection of the East Tamar Highway and Mowbray Link. As the minister has said, this is much needed. The community feedback as part of the work in public works is significantly supportive of this project.

Protecting Tasmanians on our roads is a priority for the Hodgman Liberal Government and we are delivering on our commitment to make the West Tamar safer and more efficient. Tenders have opened for four new projects that will not only improve safety and reliability of commuting times to and from Launceston for road users but will also improve liveability for communities along the West Tamar. The proposed upgrades include road widening, shoulder sealing, road surfacing, new overtaking opportunities, new footpath, vegetation clearing to improve visibility and improvements to stormwater drainage.

Along the Midland Highway, a number of property accesses will be upgraded, relocated or closed as part of works being undertaken. Some of these are and will be designed as left-in, left-out accesses because of the installation of the flexible safety barrier in the central median. These will require additional turning facilities and are part of the works. Some property upgrades require slight relocation to cater for the widening of the roads. Safe public turning facilities are provided at these accesses as part of the works. We see examples up and down the Midland Highway of what I have now learnt are P-turns, G-turns, and the off-highway U-turn facilities. I have had feedback from truck drivers that they appreciate these opportunities.

Access controls assist in protecting safety and functionality and, hence, the economic viability of the state's key roads. A proliferation of frontage access and their use to arterial roads can rapidly degrade a road safety service and efficiency. The high cost of road construction requires that proper measures be taken to protect the community asset from premature obsolescence and the public from

danger. This asset represents an enormous state investment. Access controls assist in the reduction of road crashes. The uncontrolled spread of direct access to any major arterial road from abutting properties is a prime cause of crashes due to the movement conflicts. In urban areas, it relates to high volumes of through traffic passing down a particular road and interference caused by access movements. Sadly, on rural roads, crashes occurring at these access points are usually much more severe.

To ensure that there is a safe intersection sight distance achieved, crests in the highways will also be lowered on the Midland Highway Project, if located near property access. Property accesses will require a break in the median safety barrier to allow access like their current arrangement. This will be for access only and not for public turning facilities. It will be signed as a 'no U-turn' for general traffic except for emergency vehicles.

There are several minor property accesses reclassified as left-in and left-out located along sections of the Midland Highway. It is proposed that all currently licensed access points be left-in, left-out and utilise the turning facilities provided as required. All the existing licensed accesses will be modified to suit the new highway levels and turn movements.

The Department of State Growth has identified a number of unlicensed accesses along some sections of the highway, as I mentioned yesterday. Safety is improved when the number of accesses to the highway is limited. The primary aim of the Midland Highway Upgrade Program is to improve safety for all road users. It is the department's general policy to close unlicensed accesses in consultation with the affected landowners. All unlicensed accesses will be closed and new fencing installed to replace gates where required.

Additional overtaking opportunities will be achieved by having significantly more overtaking lanes in the north and the south as mentioned yesterday. The overall strategy of the Midland Highway is to provide regular turning facilities. We do that every three to five kilometres. Generally, all accesses are left-in, left-out, so therefore it is not going to be a break at every location where we have an access.

Major limited access roads and highways across Tasmania, such as the Midland Highway and the Bass Highway, are the arteries through which our communities connect for work, business, study, training and families and friends. For those who travel on these highways and for those who live adjacent to them, it is critical that access arrangements provide the certainty to ensure both safety and efficiency of the road and appropriate rights of access.

I recognise the recent Civil Contractors Federation Earth Awards. These awards are made to our Tasmanian civil contractors and reward excellence in civil construction. Our civil construction is critical to supporting the Hodgman Liberal Government's ability to deliver our record investment in infrastructure right across the state. This state's Budget sees record investment into the intergenerational job-creating infrastructure our growing state needs. Delivering on these commitments can only be achieved with a very strong civil construction sector. I particularly congratulate the winner, the Hazell Bros Group. I understand they will be going to the national awards and I wish them well. I congratulate other members like Shaw Contracting, Fulton-Hogan and Beck Engineering, Treloar Transport and the John Holland Group. There are so many Tasmanian businesses that are now working very hard in our excellent civil construction sector.

I support the bill.

[11.57 a.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, as a member for Lyons, I am well aware of the need for certain roads in this state to be declared as limited access roads. The ability to declare roads as limited access roads was introduced to reduce the number of access points to our important highways, to maintain the safety of motorists and property owners while ensuring their productivity and efficiency.

The power to declare a highway as a limited access road also plays an important part in the protection of new sections of road to prevent dangerous, often unmarked, informal accesses to private properties. At the same time, the declaration of a limited access road acknowledges the rights of affected landowners to be given reasonable access to their properties, while providing compensation for any loss of their common law right. These arrangements are well understood by many of my constituents in the electorate of Lyons, which is crisscrossed with a number of limited access roads.

Our state highway networks are critically important economic assets. They also usually have higher speed limits of up to 110 kilometres per hour. The potential severity of crashes occurring at this speed with vehicles coming into contact with merging vehicles at poorly designed private access points or informal access points cannot be overstated. It is also the main reason that limited access roads were created.

Unfortunately there have been a number of Tasmanian highways that required realignment due to lack of access control, and that is because the original 1957 provisions did not allow for a licence to be issued to a subsequent owner except under particular circumstances. The Midland Highway between Bridgewater and Pontville is a recent example, and the Tasman Highway between Hobart and Cambridge is another. With this history in mind, it is important that this House supports the bill before it which will amend the act to ensure that existing and future owners of property adjacent to limited access roads can receive a valid licence.

As a member for Lyons, I believe it is important that when debating this bill we do not overlook the most important program of roadworks ever to have been undertaken in this state - the \$500 million 10-year Midland Highway Action Plan. The Australian and Tasmanian governments are funding the plan, involving upgrading 146 kilometres of the Midland Highway. On a project of this scale there are many landowners who are potentially affected, with over 100 adjoining properties in the Bagdad and Mangalore projects alone. Given the objectives of this project and the broader community benefits, it is unrealistic to think there will not be impacts and some landowners seeking different outcomes.

At any one time, a small number of landowners may have unresolved issues or issues that may not be resolved to their satisfaction. Those cases are very much in the minority. The vast majority of issues or concerns are resolved, and the department continues to redefine its processes and preventing and addressing landowner concerns. On occasions, landowners are unhappy with the departmental policy positions and seek to have individual exemptions. The department is working proactively to resolve these concerns where possible.

Our businesses want certainty and they trust this majority Liberal Government to deliver it. They have the confidence to invest, to employ, to seek new export markets, and to think bigger and more innovatively than they ever have before. The latest Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook, NAB Monthly Business Survey, the most recent CommSec State of the States report, and the National Accounts state final demand figures have confirmed this. These assessments of the

Tasmanian economy have highlighted that our strong population and spending growth, coupled with our nation-leading growth in the building and construction sector and increasing exports, are key factors in Tasmania's growth spurt.

The Government's long-term plan is working, but we recognise that there is more to be done. This is why our growth strategy focuses on investing in the right infrastructure in the right areas with the right skills and education programs in place to make sure Tasmanians have the best chance to live and work in the place they call home. It is important that we keep investing for growth, supporting businesses and industry to create jobs and maintain that momentum. Our vision is for a stronger and more resilient Tasmania that continues to grow across all regions, improving the lives and opportunities for more Tasmanians.

Using the AusRAP methodology - which is the Australian road safety audit approach adopted by the combined national automobile associations - to underpin our investment strategy, the objective is to raise the standard of the strategic highway to a minimum three-star AusRAP rating. Fifteen projects have now been completed since works commenced on the Midland Highway 10-year action plan in 2014. Projects currently under construction include the St Peters Pass to south of Tunbridge, which commenced construction in March 2018 with a total cost of \$25 million. The Perth Links Project design and construct contract commenced in September 2018, at a cost of \$92 million. This project is the largest single investment to date for the Midland Highway program.

The St Peters Pass to the south of Tunbridge project will continue into the early summer of 2019. The large Perth links project will continue construction through to 2020. The remaining yet to be upgraded sections of the Midland Highway are being scoped for delivery as part of the second five-year agreement within the 10-year action plan. Two of these, Spring Hill and Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks, will be issued for tender in August and September 2019 respectively, with the remaining sections to follow from 2020 onwards.

As of August 2019, 82 kilometres or 56 per cent of the 146 kilometres of the Midland Highway 10-year action plan is complete, with nine kilometres currently under construction. St Peters Pass to south of Tunbridge, immediately north of the York Plains project, will continue construction to summer 2019-20.

The following Midland Highway projects have been completed: south of Kempton, road widening turning facilities and installation of central flexible safety barrier, \$6 million; north of Spring Hill, road widening, installation of central flexible safety barrier, \$8 million; south of Spring Hill, road widening and installation of central flexible safety barrier, \$4.8 million; Mud Walls Road junction upgrade, \$700 000; south of Tunbridge, stages 1 and 2, kerb improvement, southbound overtaking lane, central flexible safety barrier and safe turning facilities, \$5.8 million; Esk Main Road junction, Conara, slow vehicle turnout, \$2.3 million; Kings Meadows connector roundabout, \$1.3 million; Mangalore to Bagdad, stage 1, central turning lane, junction upgrades through Bagdad, \$10 million; Kempton to Melton Mowbray, stage 1, new overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities, \$13 million; Kempton to Melton Mowbray, stage 2, new overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities, \$12 million; White Lagoon at Tunbridge to Mona Vale, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, alignment improvements and central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities, \$23 million; Perth to Breadalbane duplication, \$43 million; Symmons Plains to south of Perth, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, alignment improvements, central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities, \$16 million; Epping Forest to Powranna, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, alignment improvements, central flexible safety barrier and turning

facilities, \$33 million; Mangalore to Bagdad, stage 2, central turn lane to allow safe access in and out of adjoining properties, widened and sealed junctions with right-turn lanes and sealed shoulders for vehicles to move out of traffic lanes before turning and installation of safety barriers, \$24 million; and finally, York Plains, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades and alignment improvements, central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities, \$18 million.

Major highways across Tasmania such as the Midland Highway and the Great Eastern Drive are very important not only to businesses, the freight industry and tourists but to farmers and other property owners, who rightly expect to go about their lives safely and efficiently. That is why the proper regulation of access points and an acknowledgement of the right of access for property owners is so important.

[12.09 p.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the Roads and Jetties Amendment (Validation) Bill 2019. I commend the recently promoted Minister for Infrastructure and Transport as well as the department for all the work they are doing in regard to making our roads and jetties and everything a lot safer and also for the huge amount of construction that is going on in this state right now.

I note that the concept of limited access was inserted into the Roads and Jetties Act in 1957 to reduce degradation of key Tasmanian highways for multiple access points, which required the construction of new sections of highways to maintain safety and efficiency. Limited access to our highways is an important tool in the protection of new sections of road to ensure they do remain at a high standard of efficiency and safety that is rightly expected from the Tasmanian motoring community.

As previous speakers have mentioned, the declaration of limited access also acknowledges the rights of affected landowners to be given reasonable access to their property by providing compensation for any loss of that common law right. It is important to note that the effect of this bill will be to ensure the validity of licences issued under the Roads and Jetties Act 1935 in respect of limited access roads. In doing so, it reduces the red tape associated with the issue of licences, the notification of amendments and revocations of proclamations of limited access.

I spent a lot of my childhood years and teen years on a farm at Deloraine. I have a lot of experience in regard to when a new major highway is proposed that is definitely going to have limited access. I lived at River Road before the Deloraine bypass went through. If you wanted to go to Devonport, you went up to where the train park is and right to Devonport. If you wanted to go to Launceston, you would turn left. It was then proposed that this huge bypass would go through that would have two lanes merging into four lanes. I remember my grandfather and my mum were outraged as to why our property would not have access to the highway at the time. I remember in the late 1980s I was commencing as a registered nurse at the Launceston General Hospital and I thought access would be great because it would save me 10 minutes going to work and getting home late at night.

When it was completed it was apparent as to why a limited access at that point was important. When you have two lanes becoming four lanes and everything else, when cars are coming down so fast from Devonport to the junction, we saw quite a few cars that had come off the highway and rolled down the bank. It was a steep bank, so steep that it did block out the view of the Western Tiers we had from the farmhouse. With cars going to Devonport, they were speeding up and it became readily apparent you cannot have an access at that point onto that road for safety reasons.

I did have to clamber up the bank to get in a car because the Meander River floods quite a lot. It seems to be that whenever you had major university exams or some other significant event, you had to put the gumboots on and clamber up through all that red mud - it was usually red mud because of the water coming up to the door of the farmhouse. If you could sit outside and catch a brown trout or a rainbow trout on a line you knew it was quite flooded. I had to clamber up, one time in a good outfit, and have my aunt or someone come from Elizabeth Town to try to pick me up to take me into Launceston. They were interesting times but that experience has shown me the importance of why we need limited access.

With all the major works that are going on around the state, limited access does come up quite a lot when you are talking to constituents. They need a bit more understanding as to why having an access at their property at the point they would like to consider an access or the point they need it is not good for safety reasons for themselves but also for other travellers.

A lot of work is going on around the state, as my colleagues have mentioned, especially with regard to the Midland Highway and significant projects in their own electorates. In order to further illustrate the importance of limited access roads in Tasmania and why they are needed, I would like to mention a few that are happening in my own electorate. We have committed to significant new road and bridge works in addition to the existing road and bridge infrastructure program.

First, I note the extensive planning work undertaken for the South East Traffic Solution election commitment in the second half of last year. I note that the Australian Government has committed \$130 million funding to SETS, which is a significant boost to the state's \$32.5 million commitment within a total investment of \$162.5 million. The SETS Program does consist of six road projects that would be upgraded between Sorell on the Sorell to Hobart corridor as well as a feasibility study. These projects are the Hobart Airport interchange project, the highway duplication near the Tasmanian Golf Club, the removal of the roundabout at Midway Point and duplication of the highway across Midway Point, a comprehensive feasibility study examining duplication of the Sorell causeways, the Sorell southern bypass and an overtaking lane on the Arthur Highway near Iron Creek.

Planning work is well advanced for the highway upgrades and construction of these projects is expected to start in the current term of the Government. I note that the Hobart Airport interchange project, which will provide a long-term solution of a grade separated interchange, was tendered on 6 April as a design and construct project contract and construction will begin in 2020, with completion scheduled for 2022.

I also note that the Arthur Highway overtaking lane works were tendered in July 2019, and further stakeholder and community consultation will be undertaken this year for the remainder of the projects with an expectation that individual project tendering processes will commence in 2020.

Work on the feasibility study for duplication of the causeway has also commenced. Further site investigations and concept development work for causeway duplication will be carried out this year. It is important to note the importance of these projects because the Sorell area, including the southern beaches communities of Dodges Ferry, Carlton, Lewisham and Primrose Sands, has one of the highest population growth rates in Tasmania. It is projected to increase by 40 per cent over the next 16 years, which is why those projects are all vitally important, especially as about 80 per cent use cars as their method of transport. These six projects will make a big difference to the many who travel in from this area.

In regard to Hobart transport initiatives, in 2018-19 the Tasmanian Government allocated \$30.8 million over four years as part of the full \$73.5 million commitment over the next six financial years to assist with managing the growing peak hour traffic demand in the Hobart CBD and beyond. Traffic flow around Hobart will be a key focus and the government is currently implementing the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution, which will help improve the efficiency of our road networks and public transport.

Last week, the minister outlined some of the initiatives there and the minister will be delighted to know that it seems to become better each and every week. I noticed it the last few mornings when dropping the kids to school. Each and every day it is quicker. I commend the minister and the department, especially with the clearways introduced recently. Having the tow trucks and everything else, it is becoming a dream. In the past, with the traffic signals, the speedometer used to sit at about 50 kph or 60 kph the whole way from Tunnel Hill, but it has been very good lately. Touch wood, it will be the same tomorrow morning. It has been brilliant and has made a difference.

The reason there has been such a lot of traffic on the roads is because there are more people in work because of this Government. There are more people in jobs and there are more people choosing to make Tasmania their home which is a great thing. We all love Tasmania and we all want to be a part of it. There has been a growth in our economy, our population and jobs, which has seen an increase in people using our roads. I am delighted that the minister has done so much work in the department to help with this situation. Under the Greater Hobart traffic solution, there is a long-term plan with short- and medium-term actions for dealing with the problems and addressing the concerns. It includes better infrastructure and better technology.

Last year the Government took over responsibility for the Davey and Macquarie streets couplets from the Hobart City Council. That was the missing link in the state road network that links the north, the east and the south. Since then the Government has been taking action on the roads that the state now controls and it is measurably improving the traffic flow.

The department has also begun rolling out our new fleet of rapid-response tow trucks to ensure that breakdowns and crashes on roads, which block and hold up traffic, can be dealt with more swiftly. They have extended the tow truck hours on the Tasman Bridge to be an all-day operation, not only during peaks, which is a wonderful initiative. Traffic is flowing quite well.

For those who commute on the Southern Outlet, last week the minister announced the commencement of the Government's new rapid-response tow service to operate on the outlet as well as on Davey and Macquarie streets between 7 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. and between 3.30 p.m. and 6 p.m. This has already been tested. As mentioned last week, a major clean-up was cleared up in 35 minutes, which is amazing.

For the Kingborough and Huon communities, I note there has also been a call for tenders for a consultancy to develop detailed design options for a fifth Southern Outlet transit lane to link with bus priority measures on Macquarie and Davey streets. This fifth lane will connect to bus clearways in the city and also the Kingborough park-and-ride facilities. It will be the first of the city commuter transit reforms planned for each of the three major arterial routes.

Through the City Deal, \$20 million has been allocated to address traffic issues affecting Kingborough, including the redevelopment of the Kingston bus interchange and park-and-ride facilities to provide for a high volume of passengers in the future. The Government recognises the role that park-and-ride facilities have in contributing towards several areas of our Greater Hobart

Traffic Solution program, namely improved passenger experience, efficient movement of people and infrastructure investment. Park-and-ride facilities also have the potential to provide the benefit of reducing congestion on the Southern Outlet and Hobart's arterial network more broadly and all the subsidiary benefits, as well as reducing pressure on parking in the Kingston and Hobart CBDs.

This announcement has been warmly welcomed by the Mayor of Kingborough Dean Winter, who described this project as -

... an opportunity to make it a big impact on traffic congestion. If we can use the project to promote public transport or even carpooling during peak periods, along with investment in park and ride infrastructure, I think we can make a real dent in congestion.

The first phase of planning for the Hobart Transit Centre is well underway, which will involve identifying the size of the area required and the functional needs, as well as examining the technical feasibility of an underground facility at Lower Elizabeth Street and Franklin Square. Expert consultants with experience in designing traffic transit centres and advising on operational requirements have been appointed to undertake the initial feasibility. Work is also underway in planning for the establishment of a cross-river ferry and improvements to Hobart's bus network.

Our other major capital investments include the West Tamar Highway traffic solution, which is upgrading the West Tamar Highway between Rosevears and Gravelly Beach as well as upgrades of other sections of the West Tamar Highway and the Batman Highway. There is also our Launceston and Tamar Valley Traffic Vision, which is to improve the congestion around Invermay and Inveresk and exploring a second Tamar River crossing. We also have our Tasmania's Visitors Roads Package to support the Tasmanian visitor economy, including upgrades to the iconic Great Eastern Drive, the Tarkine Road, Hastings Cave Road, the Glenora Road and Evandale Main Road.

The Visitor Economy Package is \$72 million to improve iconic Tasmanian tourism roads. This is the single biggest investment ever in visitor road infrastructure in Tasmania's history. I commend the Government on this initiative. It is part of our commitment to ensure that Tasmania's reputation as a premium destination is protected for locals and visitors alike. This investment will seal gravel roads, build more passing lanes and add new courtesy stopping bays, which are all critical for the thousands more driving visitors, campervans and caravans visiting the state. Tasmania's visitor economy is booming. Currently we are on track to not only reach but exceed our target of attracting 1.5 million visitors to our state every year by 2020. As we approach this target we must ensure that our infrastructure, particularly our roads, do meet the needs and expectations of visitors and locals.

It is great to see some of the initiatives in the Franklin electorate. There will be \$8 million over five years for further sealing of the Bruny Island Main Road and other road safety priority works. This funding will also be used to provide assistance to the Kingborough Council for new waste collection points and toilets in consultation with the community.

In the Huon Valley there is \$12.5 million to seal the popular Hastings Cave Road that leads to Hastings Cave and Thermal Springs experience, as well as \$2 million for priority widening and surface improvement on the Arve roads. These roads are key arterial roads to key attractions in the region. It will also support local jobs and community access, and enhance the visitor experience through safer and more efficient roads, especially over the upcoming seasons in this area.

We also have state road upgrades for the southern, northern, north-west and west coast regions, including projects such as Richmond Road, duplication of the East Derwent Highway, the Channel Highway diversion at Huonville, overtaking lanes at the Tasman Highway, Myrtle Park, Bass Highway leaf overpass, Deloraine to Latrobe and the West Coast Roads Package. We also have a program for cycling upgrades on the state network, specifically the West Tamar Highway between Riverside-Legana and the Hobart area.

In my electorate, again, there is \$22 million planned for the East Derwent Highway duplication at Geilston Bay. This \$22 million will be used for a planning study and design work to address safety concerns on the East Derwent Highway with a focus on a duplication of the highway to four lanes each way between Lindisfarne and the Grass Tree Hill roundabout. This major highway upgrade will provide better traffic flow, as well as provide safe and appropriate intersections along this section of this busy highway. There are also projects in planning for the Tasman Highway access ramps at Rosny and associated key access projects; and also Rokeby Stage 3 and the Bowen Bridge eastern connector.

In regards to Richmond Road, \$24.3 million for the Colebrook Main Road. A master plan has been developed for upgrading the Richmond Road between the Tasman Highway and Richmond, covering 10.6 kilometres. This project will improve safety by providing wider lanes, 1.5 metres of sealed shoulders for cyclists, junction upgrades, road alignment improvements and sealed layby areas to allow for slow-moving vehicles to pull over. Further, the long-awaited Cambridge bypass delivering the Richmond Road to the Acton roundabout will be constructed at a cost of \$12 million. It is proposed the construction work for the first two stages of work and development of the design for the bypass will occur over the next two financial years.

We also have the Channel Highway diversion at Huonville at \$7.5 million. I know this has been on the Huon Valley Council election wish list for many years. It definitely was there in 2009. Once this is done, this work is going to be wonderful for the Huon Valley area, especially for the public events and festivals. By diverting the Huon Highway away from the Channel Highway it will free up all of that land for public space. There has been \$1.5 million spent on the Huon Highway priority safety upgrades as well, and a Channel Highway intersection in Howden and a black spot area is being upgraded.

This bill is in the interests of our road users and property owners and it does reduce red tape around the administration of limited access roads. Southern Tasmania is a great place in which to live, work, raise a family and do business and we want to keep it that way by investing in infrastructure that better connects us to work, school and community, and allows us to sustainably grow the state. I commend the minister and the department for the work they are doing. It is a big program of works that is being done across this state. I support the bill.

[12.31 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) - Madam Deputy Speaker, thanks to each member of the House who has spoken on this legislation. I particularly note the interest of my colleagues, who have given an absolutely thorough set of statements about the legislation and the importance of investing in infrastructure in their electorates, putting some to shame. It has been a great debate. I thank the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, who is the shadow minister, for his endorsement and comments. I thank Ms O'Connor for her comments; they were brief and stationary as well, as I recall. I thank my colleagues, Mr Tucker, Mrs Rylah and Mrs Petrusma for their comments.

Comment was made so I did a quick bit of scanning as to who the ministers were at the various times when this legislation was brought into place. I can tell you that it was Mr Ian Braid. He is known as Braidy to his mates. In 1994, he introduced the legislation providing for a licence to be issued to subsequent owners. Although I was not asked, I can tell you that it was none other than Eric Reece who introduced the section into the act in 1957. This was after he had been premier and he was the minister for lands and works - I love the old language - and I have his clause notes here. The language of the time says it all -

A limited access road is one over the boundaries of which vehicles may pass and repass only at the defined places. Provision is made to prevent illegal entry and departure and the making of gates and crossings for the purpose. In effect, a limited access road is a highway only for the purpose of those who wish to pass between one end and the other or between one end and a defined place of access, or between two defined places of access. It is a general highway, however, for all persons on foot.

Mr O'Byrne - Hear, hear. He would regularly stop. If he saw a farmer he would stop to chat. That would be a defined stopping place -

Ms O'Connor - More of that, please.

Mr FERGUSON - I love the lyrical but formal style. I do not know if he said these words but these were his clause notes, which said also that -

Compensation is to be provided for any landowner whose land is injuriously affected by any loss of access caused by a proclamation. The Minister is to have power to give particular parcels of land special rights of access by agreement.

That was in 1957 before - and I think I am right in saying - all, if not most of us, were born, and, in this very Chamber, this debate had been had. I did not ever know the late Eric Reece who passed some 20 years ago but I would have loved to have met him or known him. I do know Braidy, an equally wonderful Tasmanian who continues, in his Kentish community, to serve his community in his own way. A wonderful generous human being. He made a huge contribution in this House. He had been a frontbencher for most of his time. He served throughout the period of the Gray government. He was the member for Wilmot. Today it is Lyons. Reece may have been Braddon, which must have been Darwin at the time. I want to finish what I was saying about Ian Braid. It was a wonderful commitment that he made, including through the Groom government as well, having been in opposition. What a generous and good man and I am sure that the same could be said of Eric Reece. I am quite comfortable regaling great people, in this case great men, who have served this parliament and have served our state.

When Ian Braid was debating his legislation, he cited advice from the Office of the Solicitor-General advising that the minister is empowered to issue licences in full or partial compensation only to existing owners at the time of proclamation of a limited access road. This restriction means that the minister is legally prevented from licensing a new owner and purchaser of abutting land. The recommendation by the solicitor-general was that the act required amendment to allow for normal legal ownership changes. He has clearly acted on the advice of the best minds in the state. Around 25 years later, we are aware of a deficiency that we seek to remedy.

He also makes a point earlier in his own contribution that the effect of the proclamation of limited access is twofold. First, it facilitates the road user's right to safe and reasonably unrestricted travel. Second, it acknowledges the abutting landowner's right to be given reasonable access to the property by providing compensation for any loss of that common law right of access. I totally endorse that, as I am sure was the case when Eric Reece brought the original legislation in for the new section of the act in 1957. I do not have access to his second reading speech and debate. I suspect that I would have to go across the road or to the parliamentary library to thumb through some pages. It is not digitally available to me. In Ian Braid's case, he asked the House to recognise that the asset of the highways represent a state investment of some \$2 billion to \$3 billion. Today, it is over \$7 billion. It speaks to the history of this and the importance of making sure this is fit for purpose.

The final comment I make about the 1957 legislation is that it would have been very disruptive legislation and no doubt quite challenging. Today, this generation of politicians has the advantage of taking as granted that these rights and responsibilities are enshrined in law and have been for all of our lifetimes. At the time, I suspect this would have been quite a difficult topic for a minister of the day to get through to a community because it does subtract in some cases some rights of people in exchange for reasonable compensation. That is always a difficult subject for any government to navigate.

I wish to respond to the comments raised in the debate. The concept of limited access enables the Crown to acquire a landowner's common law right of access to a public road through statutory mechanisms. That is under Part IVA of the Roads and Jetties Act 1935, thereby limiting the number and the use of accesses to that road. A landowner's access right converts to a 12-month right to claim compensation and this compensation may include a cash component, with any or all existing accesses generally being licensed for use as before. Permanent closure of existing accesses may result if the alternative access exists and if agreed with the landowner.

Limited access is as road safety measure, which is an important point to ensure is front of mind. It is also about protecting the significant community investment in the state road network, which I am saying and echoes the words of Ian Braid in 1994. The main purpose is to enhance road safety and efficiency to extend the highway's viability as functional traffic route. While in the past limited access has been declared on existing state roads, I would encourage members to know that it is generally only utilised these days on new road alignments, new investments, so no doubt for us, this generation of politicians and road managers in the department, it is far less challenging exercising this right or power than it might have been in previous times.

I am advised there are currently 28 declared limited access roads in this state, which amount to approximately 750 kilometres in length. These roads represent 20 per cent of the total length of the state road network. There are currently 93 declared state roads totalling around 3600 kilometres in length. The whole length of the road may be subject to limited access or only portions of that road.

Some examples of limited access roads are the Bass Highway, the Midland Highway, East Tamar Highway, Brooker Highway, Ridgley Highway, Illawarra Main Road and Bridport Main Road, Murchison Highway, West Tamar Highway, and a range of road network linkages in the south, including the Brooker Highway, Southern Outlet, Kingston Bypass, Huon Highway, East Derwent Highway and Lyell Highway. It is quite an extensive network and it is there for public safety and efficiency of transport roads so they can be not unreasonably interrupted by additional access points which would be a risk that needs to be managed in each case.

Once a state road has been declared a limited access road and the Crown has acquired a landowner's access rights, the Roads and Jetties Act 1935 requires that a licence be issued for any agreed existing accesses to authorise the crossing of the common boundary between the landowner's title and the limited access road. A licence is issued for a specific purpose such as residential, agricultural or business. While a licence is issued for a specific purpose, the Roads and Jetties Act 1935 provides for a variation to the purpose, providing that the variation will not have an adverse effect on the limited access road.

I was asked about why. Amendments are necessary to ensure the validity of licences issued prior to an earlier amendment of the Roads and Jetties Act 1935 and those licences issued subsequent to that earlier amendment. I refer here to the 1994 act which, on subsequent examination, there is a concern that there might be licences issued prior to that time with correct intent that might have a question mark over them as to their current validity today. The concern is that there is a legal uncertainty that licences may have been inadvertently invalidated in the 1994 action, despite no doubt correct intent and best advice at the time.

I was asked if any currently licence holders were likely to be affected by this legislation and the answer is absolutely not. There is no negative effect. There is a positive, though. No current licence holders would lose their licence or rights as a result of the legislation before us, Mr O'Byrne. I can also advise, as a sense of further reassurance but also value-adding, that all current and future licence holders will have greater confidence that they can sell their property if they need to, knowing that the limited access road licence will be able to travel with the title of their property to future owners. They will be able to use that to assist in the marketing of their property and future owners who are considering a purchase will be able to do so not having to wonder if they will have to apply as a new owner for a new licence to use it. They will be able to buy that property knowing that the licence will be a continuing right of a subsequent owner.

I am aware of an individual case where there was a property with a licence to access a limited access road for sale and an intending purchaser was wishing to buy the property with the intention of a housing development, and that transfer did not happen on the basis that they were not confident they would be able to get a licence. That was sufficient risk to throw them off the purchase. I do not know if that has changed in the meantime but that was certainly my advice. I can say to Mr O'Byrne and this House that if anything, it takes out the red tape component of that uncertainty, adds confidence that the seller will be able to sell to a wider pool of potential purchasers and adds confidence to potential purchasers that they will be able to take one thing off their list of having to manage a risk. It may potentially add to land or property values on the basis that it has been de-risked. I hope that is useful.

There are circumstances where licences can be revoked. That is already the case today and that will continue to be the case in the future. The section of the act that deals with this is section 52C(g) - Revocation of licence. It is possible for the minister to revoke a licence in two circumstances. One is if the owner of the licence fails to comply with or contravenes their licence, and the second could be for any other reason. In the case where it is for any other reason, compensation is payable under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act 1993. That relates to the role of the Valuer-General to settle that. However, it can also be done by agreement between the minister and the owner. Speaking as today's minister, that would be a delegated authority that would be vested with the department to manage.

That responds to all the issues raised. I appreciate the debate and thank all members for their contributions.

Bill read the second time.

Bill read the third time.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Honourable members, I welcome to the public gallery the participants in the Youth Speak Out event being hosted by Reconciliation Tasmania. Welcome to every one of you.

Members - Hear, hear.

LEGAL PROFESSION AMENDMENT (VALIDATION) BILL 2019 (No. 34)

Second Reading

[12.48 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice - 2R) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

This bill seeks to clarify the range and type of persons or organisations that the Minister for Justice can invite to make application for grants of money from the excess funds in the Solicitors' Guarantee Fund.

The bill is not intended to broaden the range of persons and organisations from those who are traditionally invited to apply, rather it seeks to amend the act to clarify that the persons and organisations who can make applications for grants are those that provide legal or legal-related assistance, services or advice, and includes instrumentalities of the Crown.

The bill also contains an amendment that validates certain past decisions to invite and/or approve grants from the excess funds in the Solicitors' Guarantee Fund. This validation is required for decisions dating from at least 2011.

The Solicitors' Guarantee Fund, commonly known as the SGF, is continued under section 358 of the Legal Profession Act 2007, having been previously established under the Legal Profession Act 1959. The SGF is comprised mainly of interest generated by the moneys standing to the credit of legal practitioners' trust funds; that is, client funds being held, usually temporarily, by law firms. The SGF does not hold government funds.

The SGF is administered and managed by the Solicitors' Trust, an independent statutory body comprised of two legal practitioners and an accountant. Under section 358 of the Legal Profession Act 2007, the SGF is to be applied by the trust for the purposes of compensating clients of legal practitioners who have defaulted on their fiduciary duties to cover the costs of the operation of the Legal Profession Board and Disciplinary Tribunal and for expenses incurred in the administration of the SGF. The SGF is also to be applied to other purposes approved by the Minister for Justice under section 361.

Section 361 of the act allows the Minister for Justice to approve grants of money from the SGF where the SGF exceeds the prescribed minimum threshold, which is currently \$8.7 million - as stated in the Legal Profession Regulations 2018, regulation 69 - taking into account ascertained and contingent liabilities. Under section 361, the trust must advise the minister that the SGF has exceeded the prescribed amount. On receipt of that advice, the minister may invite certain parties to make application for a grant of money from the SGF.

The act currently provides that the minister may invite the following parties to make an application:

- (a) the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania or such other legal assistance scheme as the minister may approve;
- (b) the Law Foundation of Tasmania; and
- (c) any other person.

Section 361(5) provides that the minister may approve a grant of money from the SGF and may specify conditions under which the grant is made.

Over a number of years, government bodies and related organisations such as the Magistrates Court, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Sentencing Advisory Council have received grants for the funding of research or legal services that substantially improve access to justice, on the understanding that they came within the scope of section 361(2)(c) of the act.

Applications for grants have always been invited and approved on the basis that these bodies came within the scope of the words 'any other person' in section 361(2)(c). It is a matter of public record that similar grants have been made on this basis in the past over a number of years by successive governments. For example, payments from the SGF were made by a previous government between 2011 and 2013 to:

- the Sentencing Advisory Council, for various projects, including data collection on sentencing of sexual assault offenders;
- the Office of the Antidiscrimination Commissioner, as it was then known, for various projects including skills development for alternative dispute resolution, schools diversity education and training and development;
- the Magistrates Court, for the Hobart Specialised Youth Justice Court pilot evaluation report; and
- the Department of Justice, including for a UTAS linkage project.

Concerns have recently been raised about whether the language in the act is clear in terms of the intended recipients of funds from the SGF. The amendments to the act made by this bill provide certainty as to the persons and organisations that can apply for and receive grants from the SGF.

The bill amends section 361 to provide that the Minister for Justice may invite applications from and/or approve grants to relevant persons. The term 'relevant person' is defined to include:

- a government agency;
- a court, tribunal or similar person or body acting judicially;
- a person or body, however constituted, that provides legal services or other law-related assistance or services and/or advice, or opinions, recommendations or reviews, on legal or law-related matters affecting the state; and
- such other persons or bodies as may be prescribed.

The term 'relevant person' also includes the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania and the Law Foundation of Tasmania.

As I have said, the bill is not intended to broaden the range of persons and organisations from those who are traditionally invited to apply, rather it seeks to amend the act to clarify the scope of the existing provision. The validating provision in the bill provides that past applications made in respect of, or approvals of, a grant of money are not invalid only because:

- they related to persons or bodies that provided legal services, or other law-related assistance or services, other than as part of a legal assistance scheme;
- the person or body was a relevant person; and/or
- the body was not a person.

The proposed amendments confirm and validate past practices in relation to grants. In effect, the amendments mean that any past applications or grants are not invalid so long as the relevant person or organisation would be eligible to apply for and receive a grant under the new amended version of section 361.

I commend the bill to the House.

[12.56 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, Labor will be supporting this bill and supporting the logical steps that the bill takes to formalise current practice when it comes to awarding grants from the Solicitors Guarantee Fund. As the Attorney-General noted in the second reading speech, the main purpose of the fund is to compensate clients who suffer losses due to misbehaviour of their lawyer. If the fund is in surplus, over \$8.6 million, the surplus is then able to be allocated by the Attorney-General by way of grants to organisations that provide legal services, undertake legal research, or raise community awareness of the law in Tasmania.

Grant recipients in the past have represented a broad range of projects to ensure that all Tasmanians have better access to justice. Project recipients have included community legal centres, the Law Foundation of Tasmania, the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania and the Refugee Legal Service.

Some examples of grants from past years include funding for a legal literacy volunteer program, updates to the Tasmanian Law Handbook, which is a very useful publication for members of the community to understand their rights and the legal system. It was also used in the past year for a scholarship for a female or Aboriginal lawyer to commence practice at the Tasmanian Bar. It

has also been used to run advisory clinics at Risdon Prison and to assist prisoners with parole applications. It has been used to pilot a witness assistance service project for vulnerable people in the Magistrates Court. It has also been used in the north and north-west of the state for a specific legal services provision project for tenants.

Governments of all persuasions have recognised not only the importance of maintaining the Solicitors Guarantee Fund as it is; an accumulation of interest on client monies that are held by law firms in trust on behalf of clients. There have been times when clients have had to be compensated out of that fund as a result of unlawful conduct by their lawyers who have been representing their needs.

Priority has been given in the past to applications that achieve an increase in the number of people receiving free or low cost legal services, or an improvement in the quality of legal services provided to the public, an improvement in the range of legal services provided to the public, and improvement in the operation of the justice system and an increase in community awareness of the law of legal services or the justice system, including the provision of education and training.

While there has been a range of grants provided that achieved those purposes, the wording in the act as it currently is, is arguably either far too broad, or far too narrow, or somehow both. That is, under the current wording of the Legal Profession Act, the minister may invite parties to make an application for grants from that excess they elicit in the act as -

- (a) the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania or such other legal assistance scheme as the Minister may approve; and
- (b) the Law Foundation of Tasmania; and
- (c) any other person -

As we heard from the Attorney-General in the second reading speech, that last point, 'any other person', has been used.

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

MOTION

Bushfire Resources - Motion Negatived

[2.31 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) acknowledges the bushfire season has started early and ferociously in eastern Australia, with large out of control bushfires in New South Wales and Queensland;

- (2) recognises these fires have caused devastating losses to families and businesses, with firefighters battling horrific high wind conditions with at least one critically injured;
- (3) further acknowledges with concern the bushfires that ravaged 3 per cent of the state last summer, and that these extreme bushfire seasons are going to become more common unless we reverse atmospheric overheating;
- (4) condemns the Liberals for their lack of action on the climate emergency;
- (5) notes the Hodgman Government did not agree to fully implement all of the recommendations of the 2016 Tony Press Report and ignored the recommendations of a Report prepared by Tasmania Fire Service union and authors Simon Pilkington and Alex Dean; and
- (6) as a hot, dry summer approaches, calls on the Government to table information detailing the changes that have been implemented leading up to the next fire season, including the number of employed and volunteer Remote Area Firefighters now, compared to early 2019, and any increase in resourcing to implement the 2019 Australian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council recommendations.

Fires are burning across the planet in places that they never used to burn and in times of the year that burning never occurred. Places outside of human memory are burning in vegetation and situations that appear incomprehensible. Right now, communities in Queensland and New South Wales are suffering through severe bushfires and there are still catastrophic bushfires burning in communities in the hinterland and coastal areas, subtropical parts of Queensland and in northern New South Wales. On behalf of the Greens and, I would say, everyone in this parliament, our hearts go out to the people in those communities. We are thinking of the people on the front line, people who are fighting those fires, doing the work that is so exhausting and frightening and that Tasmanian communities have experienced in too recent memories.

The world's lack of action on climate change and environmental protection, including the inaction of our own federal and state governments, is costing us all a very great deal. We are seeing an increase in human lives lost through bushfires, and in countries that have never before had fires, and there is also a massive escalation in fire problems in places like California and Greece where whole communities, thousands of houses, have burnt in a single day.

We are seeing the mass destruction of ecosystems on a scale that has profound consequences for human survival. We are seeing the Arctic countries burning and we are seeing the Amazon on fire. This poses grave threats to indigenous communities in the Amazon, who rely on their forest for survival. It places at threat the extinction of animals and plants and it is also a huge threat to the survival of the human species. If areas that have previously been sinks for carbon dioxide flip over and become sources of carbon dioxide, as the increasing drying of the planet and of those environments continues, it means that rainforests that were never burned are now drying and becoming very vulnerable to fire.

Unfortunately, what is happening in New South Wales is reflecting parts of that story and we are seeing subtropical rainforest areas in the Dorrigo Plateau, for example, high altitude rainforests in World Heritage listed places like the Mount Hyland Nature Reserve, on fire. These areas have

remained unchanged for millions of years. We have seen the historic Binna Burra Lodge in Queensland burned to the ground. There has never been fire in that area in living memory.

The number of days of very high fire danger are increasing and this is a clear long-term trend that is given by warming and drying effects of climate change. This is now a very well-established fact, verified by the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology and the Bushfire Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre, including by many other organisations at the global level.

Those communities in New South Wales and Queensland paying a very high price right now are following the experience we had too recently here in Tasmania. Last summer, 6 per cent of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area was lost through burning, including Gondwanaland vegetation, plants and animals in areas that have also never previously experienced burning. Extreme bushfires threatened communities in the Huon Valley, the Derwent Valley, Central Highlands and the north-west. People suffered through months of harsh conditions, high anxiety levels and smoke inhalation that caused far greater numbers of people to be admitted to hospital with anxiety and asthma. Following that, there has been a substantial spend of resources and effort by that community that could have been spent elsewhere. The honey industry is also on its knees. I personally know of two families, wine growers in the Huon Valley, who have gone out of business as result of the impact of fires on their crops last year.

We heard from Chris Arnol in the *Mercury* today about the extreme risk for the east coast this summer, with global heating causing warmer conditions and low rainfall in that beautiful part of Tasmania, which only recently had the bizarre fire that occurred at Dolphin Sands several months ago. That fire showed very starkly to local communities, volunteer and career firefighters that the east coast has tinderbox dry conditions and it has vegetation that is extremely vulnerable to unpredictable outbreaks of fire.

Greg Mullins wrote a piece in the *Sydney Morning Herald* yesterday. He points to these conditions no longer being exceptional. For people who do not know Greg Mullins, he is a very highly respected former fire and rescue commissioner from New South Wales. He is part of a group of firefighters, emergency service workers, who came out last summer and made a strong plea to the federal Government to take action on the climate emergency to recognise that we are in conditions that will increasingly become more threatening for human lives, and definitely more threatening for the natural ecosystems on which we depend. Greg Mullins said yesterday that the conditions we are experiencing are no longer exceptional. They are the new normal. We have to respond on a scale that is balanced with the increased risks we are facing.

There has been a lack of action taken by the federal Liberal Government on climate change. They are fundamentally driven by the interests of the coal and gas, fossil fuel, industry lobby. In the 1970s and 1980s, the documented evidence from the United States shows that Exxon, Chevron and all the other major oil companies colluded with each other to knowingly shut down openness and information about the impact of burning fossil fuels on increasing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing temperatures.

They knew that. It is well documented now and they did what the tobacco industry did. In fact, they employed tobacco industry lobbyists to sow seeds of doubt about the certainty around the science and to actively use language like 'uncertainty' to throttle the action that should have occurred three decades ago at least, which would have made such a difference to where we are today.

That did not happen, but still their patsies, the federal Liberal Party, with the active support of the federal Labor Party, patsies of those of the oil industry, coal and gas industry - these are the politicians who are putting the future wellbeing of all people who live in Australia at risk because of their worse than inaction, their purposeful supporting of the opening of new mines like the Adani Mine.

Ms O'Connor - Climate criminals.

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes, climate criminals, that is right Ms O'Connor. Former Liberal Leader John Hewson, as reported in the *Guardian Australia* a short time ago, has called on Scott Morrison to grant government MPs a conscience vote on a new parliamentary motion declaring a climate emergency. He wants MPs to champion the new parliamentary motion which is being pursued by the Australian Greens and is supported by most of the Lower House crossbench, and wants Scott Morrison to allow a conscience vote because he said Liberal backbenchers were feeling the pressure from their constituents about the coalition's lack of ambition on climate change.

So they should be. That indicates the effectiveness of the young people who have coordinated amongst themselves on our behalf, started the pressure on governments to recognise we are in a climate emergency. Those young people and the massive School Strike 4 Climate strikes which have occurred around the country have been a catalyst for change. Thank goodness they are forcing the adults in Australia to stand up and get out of our complacency and stop pretending incremental business-as-usual change is what is needed to respond to such an urgent crisis the whole of humanity faces, including Australians and every single person in Tasmania.

That momentum has shifted now as it ought to, from putting the responsibility on children to all of us adults. The next School Strike 4 Climate will be a global strike for climate. It will be adults and children. I hope Dr Broad, Ms Standen, Mr Tucker, Ms Courtney, Mrs Rylah, Mr Shelton, and all the other MPs who happen to be in the room today, will be there supporting children to show them it is not children who need to lead, but people in government need to lead and we need to declare a climate emergency.

Our brave firefighters will face off against the flames next summer or in the next few weeks, whenever that time will come; no matter what we do, they will be there. They need a lot more help in the form of deliberate action on climate emergency, to slow down the rate of heating. That is something the Greens will be returning to discuss in this parliament.

That is not why this motion has been brought before us today. It is essential, it is part of it but is not the principle subject of today's motion.

The purpose of today's motion is to identify what we need immediately for the upcoming summer bushfire season, or shall I say for the upcoming bushfire period because we have to understand despite the small amount of rain that occurred small or large in some parts of the state, it was not enough to get the east coast out of a high bushfire risk.

Chris Arnol has confirmed that in his piece in the *Mercury*. We are not out of the woods for east coast residents and cannot assume we will be out of the woods for people living in other parts of Tasmania either. We know all too well that rain at this time of the year can cause a flush of growth which can end up being a highly threatening form of vegetation when the summer gets hot.

We need more funding for support to develop community and individual fire protection plans. It is important that every person in Tasmania knows what to do when a bushfire comes; they know how to protect themselves, where to go, who to call on, what to do with their animals and whether to stay or leave their house, and what to do if the wind changes and they do not get out in time. These are essential things.

We need to have more funding for specialist equipment like large firefighting equipment at the federal level and at the state level. We have to stop the cuts affecting the firefighting capability of the Parks and Wildlife Service. The ongoing long-term cuts that have crippled our remote area team capacity have taken away the expertise we used to have in remote firefighting. We have to have the money available for proper fuel reduction burns so they can be done safely in a timely fashion and do what we can to protect Gondwana vegetation, communities, buildings and people.

There are three reports sitting on the emergency services minister's desk -

Ms O'Connor - Gathering dust.

Dr WOODRUFF - Gathering dust exactly - that have to be actioned and be resourced. It is deeply concerning that here we are, at the end of September, and despite the minister making a great statement to parliament a couple of months ago in response to the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authority Council report on the summer bushfires this year, we have not heard anything further and that is why we are here today.

We are here to shine a light on the minister's apparent inaction. I look forward to him getting up, correcting the record. Perhaps I am wrong. I hope I am wrong, because all the minister did when that report was tabled was accept the recommendations in-principle and I have not heard a peep out of him since. An in-principle support is not the same as doing something about it. I hope the minister is going to get up and say he is supporting all the recommendations.

We had this massive review of the management of the Tasmanian fires of December 2018 to March 2019 prepared by some awesome specialists and from that review are nine recommendations. That report confirmed the bushfires we suffered last summer were the second largest only to the 1967 bushfires and they occurred during the second warmest summer on record in Tasmania, including with massive fuel loads. The three main fires were started by lightning strikes at Gell River on 27 December at the Great Pine Tier in the Central Plateau and Riveaux Road in Huon Valley on 15 January. The fires burned through 210 000 hectares of Tasmanian land and 2300 hectares of threatened vegetation communities in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, as well as a total of 6 per cent of the TWWHA, including endemic conifers like King Billy pine and pencil pine, and 14 per cent of our tall forests were burned.

The review found that fire crews were not properly resourced and were without the aircraft needed to identify hotspots. That is a damning finding. The minister effectively tried to bury it in an immensely long ministerial statement that hid the truth that people knew, people who had been around for long enough but not very long, all in the term of this Government. There is no opportunity here for this minister and this Government to kick the can back into the past of previous governments because we have had now three important pieces of work on what needs to be done to properly respond to the threat of bushfires in Tasmania and prepare us for future threats.

Dr Tony Press wrote the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Bushfire and Climate Change Research Report in December 2016 and there are some outstanding recommendations from

that report. In July 2017, Simon Pilkington and Alex Dean wrote a very important briefing paper titled 'Fire Crews Involving the TFS Wildfire Capability for the Tasmania Fire Service'. We also have the AFAC review, as it has been called, which was produced this year.

We also have some important submissions from the United Firefighters Union of Australia, Tasmania branch. They have done a number of submissions to each of the reviews that have occurred. They made a submission to the Tony Press review and to the AFAC review. On the back of the submission they made, which had not been acted upon by previous emergency services minister, Michael Ferguson, they also wrote a clear letter signed by Leigh Hills, the vice-president and senior industrial officer of the UFUA. They wrote a letter about the Tasmanian wildfires on 8 January and pointed to a proposal they had provided to the Government in 2017 to deal with initial attacks of wildfire response capability in remote areas, the basis of that proposal being remote access teams that were to be pre-identified and that would hit fires early. They said in the letter:

In September 2018 the UFUA and our members desperately attempted to have a trial of this proposal in place for the 2018-19 fire seasons. They were offered compromises and an MOU to alleviate any concerns that TFS management might have had, but TFS failed to have the trial in place by the start of the fire season.

If only they had been listened to. If only we had that additional capacity, because that is exactly what the AFAC review found. The AFAC review found that crews in Tasmania were not properly resourced and did not have the aircraft they needed to identify hotspots and, as a consequence, the Gell River fire which started on 27 December was not picked up as continuing and was not acted on in a timely fashion. What we saw as a result of that was a massive spread of that fire and a huge separation of resource energy from the Riveaux Road fire and the Gell River area. That was an enormous stress for people involved in the splitting and sharing of resources.

We rise to a challenge and I thank all the people involved in working through that fire period. It was traumatic for some of the people involved, but hugely tiring for everyone involved. People did their best, but we need governments to provide people with the tools so they can do their best and do better. We had people on the front line who asked for the tools so they could do better and those tools were not provided; there were no resources forthcoming. That, frankly, is disgraceful.

It is deeply concerning that we have a summer coming where we know there is a much higher risk of fires than there has been. We know there is a risk on the east coast already.

We want to hear from the minister about his support, or not, for the recommendations from the AFAC report and the Tony Press report. We want to hear what resources he is going to put in this summer. The budget we scrutinised in Estimates was totally deficient in resources to respond to the AFAC review. The Treasurer is cutting 0.07 per cent from every government department and we have yet to hear where the cuts are to come from in the fire service. They are certainly coming from hospitals, from frontline nurses and from people who need elective surgeries. They are being cut. So where are the cuts coming from in the Police, Fire and Emergency Services area? I would like to hear from the minister about that. Is that why there is no money in the Budget? Where is the commitment to funding the recommendations from the AFAC review? They do not come for nothing.

There are some things in here that involve discussions. The first recommendation is that the Tasmania Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Tasmania initiate a discussion amongst their Australasian peers about good practice around managing new fire starts in remote

terrain. Can we please get an update from the minister about how that is going? The second recommendation from AFAC is that TFS should pursue the creation of a cadre of volunteer remote area firefighters. Will that be done by this summer? Have they been created? What resourcing has been put into that cadre of remote area firefighters? How many will there be and where will they be deployed?

The third recommendation is that the TFS should initiate a policy review to clearly identify what body or agency is responsible for planning, carrying out and enforcing fuel management on private property at a township level. That is crucial. This is exactly the issue we are confronting when people need to do fuel management on private properties. It is important that they get the support, not just at the start when they are getting a permit or a volunteer to come and look over their property, but there is no process, at least not that I am aware of, of having those fires checked at the end to make sure they have been properly extinguished. We see this time and again, through people doing their best and believing a fire to be out - and I have experienced this myself. We have a property outside of Cygnet and I have personally experienced getting the permit, lighting the fire, doing the burn-off using the blade on the tractor to make sure that the fire has not spread, it being extinguished and rained on for six days, light rain, the perfect conditions for burn-off and seeing it be rekindled in the night when a wind came up. I can see Mr Tucker smiling. Yes, it was very concerning. We were aware that was a risk, but how many other people are not aware of that risk? Support and training is needed, as well as resourcing for volunteers who come to check and conduct fuel management on private properties at a township level.

The fourth recommendation is that TFS, PWS and Forestry Tasmania work with Government and each other to continue to pursue a whole-of-state fuel management and burning program that encompasses all land tenures. I am interested to hear from the minister where that is up to.

Recommendation five is that TFS, PWS and Forestry Tasmania are to agree to an updated version of inter-agency fire management protocols. Has that been completed? Will that be conducted well in advance of November? What opportunity is there for volunteers involved in those organisations to be engaged in that process?

Recommendation six is that TFS, PWS and Forestry Tasmania are to establish a state air desk to be staffed by specialist staff, year-round.

Recommendation seven is that TFS, PWS and Forestry Tasmania are to jointly reach a decision on whether a winch-capable remote area firefighting capability should be maintained in Tasmania. Has that been decided upon? Where is the funding for it? If we are not going to have it in Tasmania, how are we going to have it available when we need it? That is something that was lacking in the 2018-19 summer fires; the ability to get people into remote areas in a timely fashion.

Recommendation eight is that the organisations should jointly carry out work to identify an acceptable shift length and patterns for all personnel working on emergency operations.

Recommendation nine is that TFS engage in discussions with the Government about the construction of a purpose-built, state-controlled centre facility for emergency management in Tasmania. That is because AFAC clearly named the woeful inadequacies of the current state control centre. That clearly has to be fixed before the next large bushfire.

It is crystal clear that the crews who attended the Gell River fire in the south-west last summer were not properly resourced; there was no aircraft available to identify the hotspots and frontline

fire crews withdrew too early as a consequence. Communication issues were identified between Parks and Wildlife and the fire service and resources were delayed from Parks.

I would like to hear the minister's response because it is important for all Tasmanians to understand that we have a Government and a minister who has listened to these successive reviews, who is taking it seriously, that is going to put the support in that our volunteer and paid firefighters need. With this commitment from the Government, we can be confident we have the best tools at hand possible, that we are as well prepared as we can be, and that people understand how to respond when the next bushfire comes.

There will be more dry lightning strikes. Even though we have not had these before in Tasmania, these are the weather patterns we must come to expect as being the new normal. Our landscapes are already exceptionally dry and there is another long, hot summer on the way. I would like to hear from the minister how he has reprioritised the budget and how he has found the money to resource these areas so that the welfare of Tasmanians is not at risk this summer and we keep our natural ecosystems intact.

[3.05 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, this is a very important subject. We have had a number of bushfires over many years since Tasmania was settled, which have at times had a devastating impact on the community and bring home that issue that Tasmania is a flammable state. It always has been flammable and always will be. We know that our environment, especially our eucalypt forests and grasslands, actively promote fire, so we need to have strategies in place to manage those fires.

Fires are caused by a combination of fuel, oxygen and temperature, along with an ignition source. As the member highlighted, we cannot necessarily control the ignition source from now on. We saw the huge number of dry lightning strikes across a large part of Tasmania, which got the bushfire emergency underway last year and earlier this year. It means that we are going to find it more and more difficult to control. We are not simply talking about having to manage power lines, arson, welders and grinders. We will have things that are out of our control like these dry lightning strikes. It is a very significant issue, as were the reports that have come out of the recent fires in the last 10 years. There have been a number of reports, more than three.

In the seriousness of this debate, the first 15 minutes of the contribution from the member for Franklin was all about issues that are beyond the control of the Tasmanian Parliament.

Dr Woodruff - In your dreams.

Ms O'Connor - You people are so gutless, honestly.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, please.

Dr BROAD - Madam Speaker, I highlight that the member was heard in complete silence. There was almost a pitch for a Greens motion that is coming up in the Senate. It seems like in some ways some of the policies of the Tasmanian Greens have been outsourced to the federal branch as an extension and we see those things being debated more and more here in Tasmania. We can only deal, as I have highlighted in this place, with issues that can be handled at the local level.

I understand where the member for Franklin was going with this motion. I will attempt to be helpful to clarify some of the issues and remove some of the hyperbole and outward barbs that are aimed at the Government, so that we can get the Government to agree to an amended motion and highlight the issues that really need to be discussed right now.

The current fire season is mere weeks away. In saying that, I propose the following amendment. Madam Speaker, I move -

That the motion be amended as follows -

By leaving out all words after paragraph (2) and inserting instead the following words:

- (3) acknowledges with concern the bushfires that ravaged 3 per cent of the state last summer and that these extreme bushfire seasons are going to become more common due to climate change.
- (4) notes the Hodgman Government did not agree to fully implement all of the recommendations of the 2016 Tony Press report and failed to implement recommendations and proposals prepared by United Firefighters Union and Tasmanian Career Firefighters.
- (5) acknowledges that the Government has not provided additional and/or sufficient funding in real terms in the 2019 Budget so that the TFS can be fully prepared to supply initial attack teams.
- (6) as a hot, dry summer approaches, calls on the Government to table information detailing the changes that have been implemented leading up to the next fire season, including the number of employed and volunteer Remote Area Firefighters now compared to early 2019, and any increase in resourcing to implement the 2019 AFAC recommendations.

There are a few issues that need clearing up to start with. First of all, in the unamended motion the member for Franklin actually got the name of the union wrong. I am not sure how that happened but it is not the Tasmanian fire service union. Also, they did not ask the authors of the UFU report whether they could be named up in a motion. I contacted the union and sought feedback from them in order to assist in correcting those drafting errors.

Dr Woodruff - What is incorrect about atmospheric overheating? What is incorrect? You are the scientist -

Dr BROAD - I am just trying to put things in more commonly understood terms.

Dr Woodruff - Scientific language?

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, warning number one.

Dr BROAD - That should not have required a massive over-reaction from the member who interjects. I am just trying to put things in a context that if somebody read this in the public, a

layperson, and not somebody who is deeply in bed with the Greens movement that they might actually understand what this motion is about because -

Ms O'Connor - Could you be any more patronising? You are only doing this so you do not have to vote for a commonsense Greens motion.

Dr BROAD - If you put up a motion you could at least get the union's name right. You could at least ask the authors of the report whether they wish to be named in a Greens motion. That would be a bare minimum.

There are significant issues to be addressed by the minister. We have recently heard about the career fire service raising these issues with the safety of their remote area teams. Hopefully the minister can update the House whether we have Tasmanian career firefighters who can be deployed as remote area teams. From what I understand, we know that there are safety issues which are currently preventing the use of remote area teams. Given that we have a fire season merely weeks away, and dry lightning strikes, we need to know that if there was a remote area fire would we have remote area firefighters who could get in there, hit it hard, and put it out. That is a very serious issue, as were the issues that were briefly raised at the end of the member for Franklin's discussion on this.

Regarding the issues of interdepartmental communication, have they been resolved? What processes are in place to resolve those issues? What about the issue of the fire crews not being able to communicate their needs to the Parks and Wildlife Service and to incident controllers? That was raised in the AFAC report. Has that been rectified?

What about aerial intelligence gathering? Are we going to have aerial intelligence gathering capability in Tasmania for the duration of the fire season? Is the Government going to commit to putting the casual Parks and Wildlife Service firefighters on all year around so that they can do controlled burns? We know that while we cannot necessarily control the ignition source nowadays with dry lightning strikes, we can put fuel reduction burns in place and get them going as soon as possible. If the Parks and Wildlife Service has full-time crews all year around, they can properly plan and implement those fuel reduction burns and reduce the fuel side of that fire equation so we can make our community safer. We have not really heard anything from the Government as yet, and it would be great if the minister could acknowledge that.

Points one and two remain, because we do acknowledge that a bushfire season has started early and ferociously in eastern Australia and is out of control. That is a significant issue. That is why we need to get these things done quickly because the fire season is only weeks away.

We also recognise that the current fires have devastating losses to families and businesses, with firefighters battling horrific high wind conditions and at least one person is critically injured. It goes to show that we have amazing firefighters all around the country but they need the tools and funding to be able to put these fires out.

This should not be about trying to conflate issues. It would have been much better if this motion was more narrowly defined and that the discussion was based around the call to action to the minister rather than the initial 15 minute contribution which was about issues in the Amazon, the Arctic, what John Hewson said, et cetera. It would have been far more helpful if this was more focused.

I look forward to hearing from the minister. Hopefully the minister will support this motion and clear up the issues that have been raised in it.

Ms O'Connor - You should say something kind of vaguely constructive about the Greens bringing it on.

[3.15 p.m.]

Mr SHELTON (Lyons - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Madam Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this debate on fires. As we can see from the Greens and Labor, they are trying to outdo themselves and trying to make themselves more important as far as fires go than anybody else.

I will commit to this House that I will take on board the issues raised in the community, and I will take expert advice from those who are involved in the industry when it comes to making the decisions. It is important to make sure that information is as good as it can be.

The Tasmanian Government recognises that climate change is a serious and urgent issue that requires local, national and international action. We are already taking action to address the issue. Political stunts using highly emotive language like declaring we are in a dire threat due to the climate emergency do not deliver any actions and do not help reduce any emissions. In contrast, our Government is completely focused on delivering our nation-leading Climate Action 21 plan and we were the first jurisdiction in Australia to reach zero net emissions.

I acknowledge that the latest state and territories gas inventory report shows that our 2017 net emissions were at 0.87 megatons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Ms O'Connor - Your people want to log carbon bank forests.

Mr SHELTON - We are no longer at zero emissions.

Ms O'Connor - We were never at zero emissions.

Mr SHELTON - The result is still a 95 per cent decrease on the 1990 baseline level.

Ms O'Connor - Thank you, Tasmanian Forest Agreement.

Mr SHELTON - We are well ahead of the current legislative reduction targets and 60 per cent below the 1990 levels.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor. That is warning number two.

Mr SHELTON - We still boast the lowest emissions per person of any Australian state or territory and significantly, the slight increase in emissions in 2017 occurred at the same time that the Tasmanian gross state product increased by around 74 per cent and the state's population increased by 14 per cent.

We have watched what the rest of the nation wants and needs: low cost, reliable, clean energy and much needed energy storage. Our commitment to renewable energy is unflinching and we are on track to achieve 100 per cent net self-sufficiency in renewable electricity by 2022. We have facilitated major wind farm developments at Cattle Hill in the Central Highlands and Granville

Harbour on the West Coast. Such is the Greens commitment to perpetual protest, that Bob Brown recently turned his sights to opposing renewables.

Member Suspended
Member for Clark - Ms O'Connor

Ms O'Connor - Mate, you are the minister for Emergency Services.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor, that is warning three. I am afraid you have to leave the room. Just to the end of this session, thank you.

Ms O'Connor withdrew.

Mr SHELTON - I will start that again, Madam Speaker. Such is the Greens commitment to perpetual protest that Bob Brown recently turned his sights to opposing renewables. For him to oppose this project, which is exactly in line with the Greens renewable mantra, is yet another display of breathtaking hypocrisy.

Even renewable energy is not safe from the Greens anti-everything agenda. We will invest up to \$30 million to take the first phase of the Battery of the Nation to investment stage by 2022 and with support from the federal government, \$56 million has been committed to the development of the second interconnector between Tasmania and the mainland.

Climate Action 21, the Tasmanian Climate Change Action Plan 2017-2021 sets the Tasmanian Government's agenda for action on climate change through to 2021. It reflects the Government's commitment to addressing the serious issues of climate change and outlines how Tasmania will play its role in the global response to climate change. Climate Action 21 contains 37 actions which are grouped into the following six priority areas: understanding Tasmania's future climate, advancing our renewable energy capability, reducing our transport emissions, growing a climate-ready economy, building climate resilience and supporting community actions.

The Tasmanian Government allocated \$3 million in the 2017-18 budget, \$750 000 per annum over four years, to deliver a number of new initiatives to response to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. An additional \$250 000 was provided in the 2018-19 budget to support the rollout of the statewide electric vehicle charging network.

Dr Woodruff - Are you going to talk about bushfires this year and resourcing?

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, that is warning two.

Mr SHELTON - Climate Action 21 focused on climate change research, improving energy efficiency, reducing transport emissions and supporting businesses, local government and communities to take action, including establishing a long-term emissions reduction target of zero net emissions by 2050; \$600 000 to support the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Tasmania; \$200 000 to undertake the business resource efficiency program to assist small and medium-sized businesses to reduce their emissions and operating costs through resource efficiency initiatives and building industry capacity; \$150 000 for the PowerSmart Businesses program for financial support over two years to conduct energy audits for small and medium businesses to

identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduce power bills and emissions; \$850 000 over three years for PowerSmart homes program to assist low-income households to save money on their power bills by reducing their energy use; and working with local government and regional bodies to embed climate change considerations into strategic and financial decision making.

Fires last summer were the largest in Tasmania since 1967. It is a credit to the Tasmanian fire agencies and their staff that during these unprecedented fires last summer there was no loss of life and a significant level of protection was afforded to both property and wilderness values. There is no doubt that the cause of the vast majority of the fires through the summer was the result of an extensive number of dry lightning strikes that occurred across the state. More than 2400 dry lightning strikes hit Tasmania in January 2019, starting more than 70 fires across much of the state. Some were detected over a number of days and weeks after the initial lightning, because lightning ignitions may not appear above ground until days or weeks after the strike.

During significant fire events like this, all fire agencies in Tasmania came together to work as one. Our multiagency response arrangements are held in high regard by other jurisdictions and in this particular event these arrangements allowed for a comprehensive and sustained attack on the fires.

It is important to also note the impact of the fires on our targeted fuel reduction program. In several instances the previous work completed in fuel reduction activities brought to a halt several fires on several fronts. This is pleasing evidence that the Hodgman Liberal Government's fuel reduction efforts are proving worthwhile.

Looking to the summer ahead and for the early part of Tasmania's fire season, most of the state has a normal fire potential. The eastern part of Tasmania has above-normal fire potential and without significant rain in the coming months this area will expand and, as in recent years, increased fire activity is likely in a dry strip in the east before December and will require considerable response efforts. The fire season in the remainder of the state will commence more normally in the late spring and early summer and provide good conditions for planned burns. These burns are a part of the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's \$55 million fuel reduction program which is recognised as nation-leading in helping to keep communities safe.

The Tasmania Fire Service is instigating a broad range of multiagency measures in preparedness for the 2019-20 fire season, including public education campaigns, a fuel reduction burning program, use of predictive modelling, exercising emergency management plans, as well as ensuring appropriate resource management and contracts are in place for the response to fires. The TFS leads a concept of operation of rapid weight of response, which aims to contain and extinguish newly detected or reported bushfires at the earliest opportunity on days of very high fire danger using a variety of techniques. The TFS is undertaking a summer bushfire public education campaign targeting high-risk areas encompassing bushfire-ready schools, bushfire-ready neighbourhoods and community bushfire protection planning.

The Hodgman Liberal Government's strategic fuel reduction program, while impacted by the extended summer fire season, still completed a significant number of burns during the autumn 2019 season. This includes 47 burns conducted across all agencies at Tasmania Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service and Sustainable Timber Tasmania to reduce bushfire risks to the communities and wilderness areas. This nation-leading program just entered its sixth year of operation. Over the first five years of the program, 608 fuel reduction burns were completed across the state,

encompassing over 86 294 hectares, of which 13 594 hectares were on private land. I need to repeat those numbers - 86 294 hectares of land have been burnt in a fuel reduction process.

Bushfire risk reanalysis work has shown that the statewide risk has reduced by 4 per cent over the last four years, a notable decrease at the whole-of-state scale. A future risk reanalysis was conducted after the 2018-19 bushfires, including fuel reduction burns conducted over the autumn of 2019. This showed the statewide relative risk has been further reduced to 83.3 per cent, the lowest it has been in 15 years, and well on track to meet the fuel reduction program's target of 2022-23 of 80 per cent.

Heading into spring, fuels are actively being monitored now. Burning will commence in early September and priority will be given to those burns planned on the east coast to ensure a strategic approach to mitigate bushfires. I need to inform the House that last week the first fuel reduction burn took place at Dolphin Sands, and that was spread over 75 hectares. Approximately half that area was burnt on the first day and the second half the next day. The TFS is out there already with their fuel reduction burns.

The TFS and partner fire agencies continue to utilise and improve bushfire predictive tools through the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperation Research Centre. National Aerial Firefighting Centre aircraft contracts are also in place. This provides two fixed-wing and five rotary assets, along with additional resources under the call-and-demand conditions.

Aircraft are used to slow the progress of the fire until it can be attacked with the ground crews. This improves the probability of first attack success by up to 50 per cent or more. The use of aircraft to firefighting suppression -

Time expired.

Amendment negatived.

The House divided -

AYES 2

Ms O'Connor
Dr Woodruff (Teller)

NOES 21

Ms Archer
Mr Barnett
Dr Broad
Ms Butler
Ms Courtney
Ms Dow
Mr Ferguson
Mr Gutwein
Ms Haddad
Mr Hodgman
Ms Houston
Mr Jaensch
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff

Mrs Rylah (Teller)
Mr Shelton
Ms Standen
Mr Tucker
Ms White

Motion negatived.

MOTION

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service - Funding and Staffing - Motion Negatived

[3.36 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House:-

- (1) Recognises family violence is Tasmania's greatest community safety and law and order issue.
- (2) Further recognises the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service sits within the Tasmanian Government Safe at Home service delivery framework.
- (3) Notes -
 - (a) that the FVCSS Adult Program was not acknowledged in the Safe Homes, Families, Community Action Plan 2019-2022. The omission fails to recognise that 6126 referrals of victims of family violence were assessed, contacted, supported and provided with counselling, information and support by the FVCSS;
 - (b) there has been no increased investment in the Adult Program of the FVCSS. The Tasmanian Government has not supported the FVCSS to meet current demand. Adding single worker services in the community and fragmenting the provision of service delivery has not created additional capacity in the sector.
 - (c) that the FVCSS has seen an increase in demand of 200 per cent and that 6126 clients were referred or accessing this service in the last year; and
 - (d) that in order to meet demand the FVCSS has identified a staffing shortfall of 11.54 FTW statewide.
- (4) Further notes -
 - (a) with concern the proposal to integrate sexual assault and family violence sectoral response; and

- (b) the federal government's decision to fund couples counselling for victims of family violence.
- (5) Calls on the State Government to recognise the FVCSS as an integral part of the Safe at Home service delivery model and fund the staffing shortfall immediately.

Madam Speaker, the motion before us deals with the significant issue of family violence in Tasmania. It is the greatest community safety law and order issue we face. It is also one of the most preventable causes of death and disability for particularly, women in our state.

Before I go to the motion I want to touch on the comments made by the Premier in question time today. I will refer to them a few times because they inform much of the debate we should be having today. The Premier said in his commentary that Labor was purely politicking by raising the issue of family violence and the resourcing of the family violence service. I take significant offence to that. The Premier stands very proudly on his record of investment in family violence, but I equally stand proudly in here as somebody who has been an active campaigner opposing violence against women and children for most of my life. We are raising these issues because the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service has asked us to. This group of people who are some of the most highly trained people in the country, who provide a specialist response, a response not met by other service providers, who provide a response showcased around the nation are desperately swamped with the demands they are now facing.

The Premier says it is not true to say they have fewer staff. We will go through the numbers a bit later on, but it is true to say they have fewer staff. Not only fewer staff but increased demand. These are significant issues.

I want to touch on a couple of the points. It is important to understand why the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service is different from other service providers. They provide a service not provided by other non-government bodies or any other providers in this area. They are the most timely and fast response after incidents. What they do when they go to work each morning is they get the police reports and are able to respond to those reports. This is not information other people have or able to respond to. They respond. They do cold calls. That is part of their work and expertise - to advise, support and wrap services around those people so they are able to take the necessary steps to keep them safe, to keep their families safe. This is a significant issue.

In a response to their concerns, the Premier has not met with them as he promised in this House. He stood in this House and said he was very happy to meet with them and in fact liked meeting with stakeholders so he could be better informed and respond. Clearly not these stakeholders - who are in fact, Government staff. Because he has not met with them it has initiated a review. A review as I understand is a desk top review of previous reviews that do have some questionable data. We have a Premier, who is the minister responsible, for this area not speaking with the staff, a review that will not speak to the staff, based on documents that did not speak to the staff. These I stress are some of the most highly trained people in the country. They are highly skilled staff, workers and responders to violence.

That they have been marginalised in the Government's conversations about its continued response is really disturbing. I can only assume it is because the Government is pursuing an agenda whereby this work is farmed out, this is pushed to the non-government sector and other service providers, that this will become a phone line, a referral line, rather than operating within the very

critical responsive nature that it has had since its establishment under the safe homes model. This is a model that every other step we have taken has been based on, a model that is still regarded as one of the best initiatives that has been seen in this area.

I take offence that the Premier thinks that we are raising this for politics only. I take offence on my own behalf but I particularly take offence on behalf of the staff who have been trying to arrange a conversation with their responsible minister, and they are not able to do so, to talk about their concerns and what matters to them. When the staff follow up on the meeting request the Premier has stood in this House and said that he would follow up on, they write a letter to say that they really want to talk to him about this. The Premier does not apologise to say he should have got back to them straight away and that he is really happy to meet, as their responsible minister. Instead, he writes a letter that effectively threatens their future -

Given the concerns that have been consistently raised about resourcing, staffing structure and profile of the FVCSS and in the context of the implementation of the Safe Homes, Families and Communities, it is my view that work needs to be done to clarify the ongoing role of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. This work will consider the recommendations that have been presented to successive governments by several reviews that have been undertaken in relation to FVCSS in recent years. The determination of service delivery and resourcing requirements can then inform any funding decisions.

If the Premier, as responsible minister, was not planning to cut this service, then I am sure he would sit down and meet with these people. The Premier has also said a couple of other things that strike me as being patently untrue. He talks about them being consulted, but when we go to the consultation as part of the last action plan, there was consultation with stakeholders but there was no consultation with the staff of this frontline and crucial service, which makes me think that there is no intention to maintain this service or to support these people. When we raised these issues on the 7 August, over a month ago, the Premier said -

I welcome the opportunity, and would do so, to meet with members of the service.
I acknowledge the extraordinary work they and others do.

Since then, he has said he is not meeting with them. He also went on to say, 'This service is not under threat as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has asserted'. Clearly, it is under threat. He also said, 'The Government has invested additional funding into the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, the extended hours service and the safe kids abuse and referral line'. When we raised they have lost staff during this term of Government but the staff that the Premier referred to were temporary, the Premier then said -

I am also advised, in relation to staffing and demand, that there has been no reduction in staff numbers for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. As I said, the Government provided for two extra staff ...

When we raised the fact that they were temporary positions, this responsible minister who used that as his defence said, 'I do not have advice to that effect.'. It is not okay to call yourself the minister responsible for the Prevention of Family Violence and not be aware of the funding changes you are making, of the short-term nature of the commitments you have made, or the things that are about headlines rather than services. It is not that there has not been additional investment, there

has been at a national level and a state level. The question is, are we adequately resourcing for services that already exist?

I will touch very briefly on a couple of points under further notes in the motion because that goes to some concerns that have been raised by people who work in the sector. The first was the proposal to integrate sexual assault and family violence sectoral response. It sometimes sounds like semantics when you discuss language but language shapes how people act. We can talk about family violence and sexual violence. Many jurisdictions use those discreet frameworks and still have a sectoral response.

By saying 'family and sexual violence', the staff who have not been consulted, who were not able to participate in this language change, have a concern that it frames what their purpose is and that someone who might avail themselves of those services might think they have been subjected to family violence but it was not sexual, therefore, maybe that is not where they are supposed to go. When we talk about a holistic sectoral response that is not the intention. Language does matter and it does shape the way that people engage. There are enough experts in this area saying that they would have liked to have had a conversation about that; people on the front line. They make those calls after the police report comes in, who hold the hand of someone as they navigate the system, who hold their hand and wrap the services around them as they seek to leave violent relationships and unsafe environments. They have those concerns.

The other point I will touch on is the federal government's decision to fund couples counselling for victims of family violence. This is a significantly concerning shift in policy and in the way that we respond. Those of us who know what the sector used to look like some time ago remember that women were often encouraged to return home to violent circumstances. They were made to feel guilty. They were made to feel that somehow they needed to behave in a different way to ensure their own safety. We know of the services in Tasmania and around Australia that worked heavily to encourage women and their children to return.

Safe at Home shifted all of that and it was a fundamental shift to say that women are not to be blamed. They do not have to change their behaviours to make themselves safer. It is the perpetrator who needs to change their behaviour. This new model that is being funded, and perhaps the Premier might resolve this for me very quickly when he does respond, talks about national funding for specialist family violence services that will go to a select list of family relationship services to provide a range of services, including couples counselling and mediation with a whole-of-family approach. All of the experts in this area agree that is fundamentally dangerous. It flies in the face of years of consultation with women's safety experts and survivors of domestic family and sexual violence. The guidelines for the sector for the reform have been clear. They had already drawn attention to the funding gaps, service gaps and the underfunding of existing services that really needed to have that targeted funding addressed to them. This is not it.

There is no suggestion in the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children that we should be going back to the days of recommending couples counselling or couples mediation in the context of family violence. There are circumstances in which you have highly specialised family dispute resolution, usually around family law matters that deal with specialist legal and domestic violence services. They exist. This is not what this funding will go to. This funding is going to go to a model that nobody is asking for.

It is really concerning that it appears that there is no requirement whatsoever for those relationship services that will be receiving some \$10 million - and it is unclear yet whether they

will be funded in our state and the Premier might be able to advise us on that - to have any experience to deliver specialist domestic violence services. That will put people at risk. The Premier might clear that up. He might say that he has written and spoken to the Prime Minister and said that this is not an appropriate response, it is inconsistent with everything we have done over many years and that he would not want to see funding directed to that kind of model in Tasmania, rather that it should go to those identified funding gaps.

Let us talk a little bit about those identified funding gaps. The Australian figures for violence are terrifying. I stand here almost every sitting fortnight and talk about the women who have died as a result of gendered violence. On average, and we are certainly seeing more than at the moment, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner. One in three women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One in five women have experienced sexual violence. One in six have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former partner. One in four have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

I can go on with the data but we are all too horribly familiar with it, and we need to be responsive to that. Anything that diminishes the ability of a highly qualified support service to be able to do their job is significantly concerning. That goes a bit to that definitional concern I have around calling it 'family and sexual violence' because we know that family violence does not have to be sexual violence. There are many circumstances where it is, but there are circumstances where it is not. We do not want people to feel they cannot go to this service because the language has shifted, or maybe we are undermining their ability to access that service. That is why the language matters. It probably could have been resolved with a conversation with the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service about what they feel is the best response. These people know more than me, they know more than the Premier, and they know more than most because they deal with it day to day.

The motion before us deals with a number of significant concerns in resourcing. It goes to the fact that there is significant concern that the action plan does not acknowledge the role of this service, which makes the staff feel that is because they are on the way out, that the Government already has a plan and that is what this desktop review will achieve. They feel the Government has a plan to turn them into a referral service and undermine the service they provide even further. That is a really significant concern.

It also talks about the fact that there has been no increased investment in the program and they have not been supported to meet current demand. The Premier in his answer in question time recently said that there had not been any reduction in staffing. Let us go through where we are. There were 10.3 FTE staff in 2012-13, 10.06 in 2013-14, it dropped in 2014-15 to 9.75, dropped to 9.04 in 2015-16, dropped to 9 in 2016-17, then went up to 9.4 in 2017-18, and we know that the additional staff the Premier spoke about in question time recently are temporary positions. We saw in question time earlier this week where the Premier said that ambulance ramping times had improved, but they had only improved under the terrible numbers that this Government had delivered in recent years overall and they are actually still trending in the wrong direction. When the Premier says it is okay, we have more staff, maybe he just means from one year rather than the fact that over his term of government the numbers of full-time equivalent staff capacity have actually substantially reduced in this area.

That is not the scariest bit. If you look at 10.3 staff dropping down to nine you might think that is not a massive shift, but let us look at what has happened in the nature of referrals during that time. When we had 10.3 FTE staff over 2011-12 and 2012-13 we had between 4365 to 4482

referrals, which meant that the average case allocation, and of course that varies depending on the severity of the matter that is being dealt with, was 423 to 435. Even I look back at that and think we really probably should have been supporting them a lot more because that is quite concerning. But when you go to 2017-18, there are 6126 referrals with four fewer staff, which means that the average case allocation per one FTE staff - and a lot of their staff work part time; many of them put extra hours in because they are just so passionate but that is the FTE allocation - is 651 case allocations. That is terrifying.

These are the people who are already on the books who are being supported. These are the people who make direct referrals. These are the people the police refer to as a result of the case sheet from the night before that they have to follow up with. These are not insignificant issues. These are not things that you can just look at a file and tick and move it on. These are really concerned vulnerable people who are having to be dealt with in this way.

Many of our services like this used to do other things in the community around family violence. They used to help and participate in things like Reclaim the Night and run community campaigns and volunteer their time. They cannot do that anymore because they are barely keeping it together to meet the needs of the people they are there to support. I say again, they support them in a way no other service has the capacity to. It is not just about saying we will give some money over here and somebody else can pick it up. The reality is that this is a very specialised, important service. We have had demand increase and workload increase and then, we have had the Premier say that has not been an issue, but a 200 per cent increase in a workload would normally, in anyone's framework, mean that you would additionally resource.

The Premier will get up and talk about the additional funding that has gone into the prevention of family violence broadly, and that is true; he can point to those figures, but one of the key things we keep hearing from the sector is that new things are announced and they always get to be called the first time or the only time in Australia, and they are not bad things, they are good things in the main. We could argue one of them probably has not delivered anything in terms of outcomes for people, but in the main they are not bad things. The issue is the underfunding of those services that are getting increased demand. Underfunding the base is the significant challenge in our response to prevention of family violence. We have said before, the most dangerous point is when someone identifies or somebody tries to leave. If we cannot wrap the right services around them, we increase the danger to those people because if they go back because the phone was not answered or the person was not able to support them, then we are culpable in putting them back into risk.

I want to touch on what it means in my own community. In the north of the state alone, in 2005-06 there were 954 referrals. In 2018-19, there were 1782 referrals. We have 2.76 adult program workers for those 1782 referrals. That equates to 646 referrals per worker in the north, in my community, in the last financial year. That means long-term counselling that has been a key component of the service cannot be offered in the way it is intended because there physically are not enough people to do it, and it devalues the support they are able to offer to clients and devalues the skills those workers have honed over many years.

The current staffing level reduces the scope of service delivery and the support offered to victims in our regional and remote communities. Other services around the state that are funded refer their people to the Family Violence Counselling Support Service for presenting family violence matters. The lack of recognition of the impact on those staffing levels on service delivery and worker wellbeing is evident to all the staff who are there because they are utterly committed.

These are not people who turn up only to get their pay. These are really dedicated, committed people.

The total lack of recognition of their service in the Safe Homes, Families, Communities action plan is offensive to those people and people who have been provided support over many years. I can only think it is one of those things where you do not fund a service to the point that it becomes hard to deliver so you can then kill it and wind it up. That is the only thing I can think is the intention. The Premier is shaking his head at this point and I hope he gets up and give commitments because you could not look at the increase in demand and not agree that we need a commensurate increase in staffing.

In the most conservative of assessments, they have identified a shortfall statewide of 11.54 simply to do the basics that they need to do. If you were genuinely wanting to grow what is an excellent service, you would do more than that.

One of the elements of the motion before us today is to say - and we want you to - that this House calls on the state Government to recognise what they do and fund the staffing shortfall immediately. You could choose to fund it at 11.54 statewide which is the absolute basic identified need, or you could choose to fund it so that we get the full scope and opportunity that this service provides.

When I look at the Tasmanian Liberals' plan, Investing in Tasmanians in Need, it talks about what a re-elected Hodgman Government would do. It talks about increase for the flagship Safe at Home coordination unit. That is something we need to have another conversation about, as to how effective that team is and what it has delivered. It does take quite a bit of funding. We need to be sure we are getting the value out of that. It talks about an additional Safe at Home police prosecutor. It talks about additional staff and extending hours for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service.

We know that has not been the case. There has been some physical presence in the south but it is still a phone-based referral opportunity for anyone outside of the south. That means that in those areas, where we know there are significant issues for rural and regional communities, we are not providing the full and holistic service. The further away you are from service providers, the harder it is to access, the less likely that you will get the support that you need and the less likely that you will be able to leave safely. These are not inconsequential matters simply about funding. These are significant and serious matters.

The motion before us calls on the House to recognise that family violence is one of the greatest community safety law and order issues. It is also one of the most preventable causes of death and disability in our country. The motion calls on us to recognise that the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service sits within the Tasmanian Government's Safe at Home service delivery framework, which seems to have been forgotten in the most recent work with the Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan of 2019-22.

The motion requests that we note that the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service adult program was not acknowledged in that report, that the motion fails to recognise that 6126 referrals of victims of family violence were assessed, contacted, supported and provided with counselling information and support by the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. There has been no increased investment in the adult program of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. The Tasmanian Government has not supported the Family Violence

Counselling and Support Service to meet current demand. Adding single worker services in the community and fragmenting the provision of service delivery has not created additional capacity in the sector. It may have been its intention but it has not done that.

The Family Violence Counselling and Support Service has seen an increase in demand of 200 per cent. As I said, 6126 clients were referred or accessing the service in the last year. In order to meet demand, let alone anything else they could be providing with incredibly skilled workers, the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service has identified a staffing shortfall of 11.54 full-time workers statewide.

I talked a little about the language, calling something sexual assault and family violence, that sort of sectorial response, and whilst that is a conversation that we could have in greater depth, there are concerns that people will simply not think that they can make that request if their matter of violence was not sexual. Violence is physical abuse, it is sexual abuse, it is emotional abuse, verbal abuse, social abuse, it is economic abuse and it is spiritual abuse. The levels of controlling and damaging behaviours are untold.

I would be very concerned that somebody would say, well, it was just me not being able to access my bank account, it was just me not being able to practice my religion, it was just me being humiliated, embarrassed in front of my family and friends, therefore it is not bad enough for me to make the report. These things are a continuum and not all disrespect ends in violence, but all violence commences with disrespect.

It notes the federal government's decision to fund couple's counselling for victims of family violence. I hope the Premier has an opportunity to talk about what response he may have to that kind of funding that we know puts people at risk. It calls on the state Government - this is the action point of the motion - to recognise the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service as an integral part of the Safe at Home service delivery model and to fund the staffing shortfall immediately.

The Premier says they are not underfunded, that they have not been cut. I remind the House again that in 2013-14, before they came into Government, there was a 10.06 staff capacity and an average case allocation of 469. Last year, it was 9.4 staff capacity and an average case allocation per 1 FTE of 651, so there is no way you can stand in this House and say that the numbers have not been reduced over time and that the workload has not increased.

I take these matters seriously. I do not stand here because of pure politics. Across all political parties in Tasmania we have had a concentrated engagement and response to family violence, recognising our role as legislators and community leaders and the need to fund services appropriately. If the staff who work in this sector say they cannot do it because they do not have enough resources, that is a very significant issue. When those staff do what anyone would do in that circumstance and go to their minister and say, 'Please let us tell you how we feel', and the minister will not meet with them, it is concerning. When the minister, who is the Premier, stands in this House and says, 'I will meet with them', when they are sitting in the gallery eyeballing him, and then when parliament is not sitting writes a letter and says, 'Actually I won't meet with you, I'll review your service independently', in what I understand is going to be yet another desktop review rather than a conversation with those staff, then members of this House have every right to raise how concerned they are about the future of this service.

It is incumbent upon the Premier, who is the minister, to commit to recognising the valuable role they play and commit to funding that staffing shortfall immediately. If they cannot provide that crucial wraparound service for those people who need it, and we recognise that no other service in Tasmania currently can provide that or would be able to do that if they were non-government related because of the nature of the way they access the police reports, then we have a significant issue that needs to be addressed.

If the Premier has not been aware and it has happened under someone else's watch, that is disturbing but there is an opportunity for the Premier to resolve that, to commit to the funding today and ensure that the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service workers who do so much to support vulnerable people in our community are recognised not only by the Premier and this House but are funded in order to do the job we need them to do.

[4.07 p.m.]

Mr HODGMAN (Franklin - Minister for Prevention of Family Violence) - Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to motion 173. I acknowledge that family violence is an important issue that this Government is tackling and without doubt a great community safety and law and order issue for all governments and the communities they represent to respond to as best they can. I am very proud to lead a government that has increased our efforts as a state in that regard and always welcome constructive input from any interested parties as to what we might do better because we get one shot at this. A lot of money is expended towards our efforts and a lot is riding on its success. We welcome the engagement of all interested parties in contributing to what is an evolving commitment in terms of the policies, initiatives and methods of response and an evolving challenge we have to address and one which we are becoming better informed on through work done here, in other jurisdictions and also at a national level.

The first point I want to make is to say that I express some disappointment that it focuses on just one part of that whole-of-government and whole-of-community response to addressing family violence. It points to one part of the support systems in place when there are around \$52 million worth of additional supports this Government has committed to, to a range of initiatives and programs contained not in one action plan but a successive one recently released and which we have delivered with strong support and engagement of non-government organisations, advocates, stakeholders, and indeed very brave victims. It is important to acknowledge this and for members to acknowledge those additional services put in place right around the state. I recall the comments of former premier Lara Giddings as shadow minister, who said that it ticks all the boxes in terms of approaching the issue of family violence from all angles.

The second observation I will make relates to paragraph (4)(a), noting with concern the proposal to integrate a sexual assault and family violence sectoral response. I acknowledge the observations of the Deputy Leader and the divergence perhaps in approaches that have been taken, including in Tasmania but also in other jurisdictions. It is something that has been the result of extensive consultation three months after the launch of the next phase of our action plan, the second of our comprehensive and very well and extensively consulted whole-of-government family and sexual violence plan. Is this Labor's first policy response to that, to not support the inclusion of family violence?

Ms O'Byrne - Sorry, Madam Speaker, I think he is asking me to respond to that.

Madam SPEAKER - Are you asking Ms O'Byrne to respond, Premier?

Ms O'Byrne - I don't want to interject but we talked about the fact that there hadn't been consultation with those people on the front line and they had concerns, and I think that is what hasn't been taken into consideration.

Mr HODGMAN - I urge all parties to consider whether it is appropriate support. As I say, it is something that has been specifically identified by key stakeholders. The new program for sexualised behaviours and sexually abusive behaviours programs for children and young people is action 9 in the plan. We are extending forensic services into the north-west. Our additional funding for sexual violence initiatives throughout the plan have very clearly been explained as to why it is appropriate. It was raised during our roundtable consultations in the lead-up to the release of the new plan. The intersection of family and sexual violence was clearly demonstrated through those consultations and also through the hearing lived experience survey which engaged 500 victim survivors.

It is also referenced within the Family Violence Service System Review report which has been publicly available on the DPAC website since May this year, some months before the release or the launch of our plan, and our approach to integrate family violence and sexual violence links directly to the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, which also takes an integrated approach to prevent response domestic family and sexual violence. The fourth action plan's agenda aims to achieve change by, amongst other things, providing a platform for future policy to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence.

Amongst those stakeholders, the Sexual Assault Support Service supports this integrated approach. The CEO, Jill Maxwell, said on 1 July this year:

The issue of sexual violence within our homes and communities can only be tackled by a collaborative, targeted and resourced approach that seeks to tackle the root causes of sexual violence. The Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS) commends the Tasmanian Government on the development of this action plan, and we look forward to working with the Government on this critical issue.

Sexual violence is increasingly reported, it often occurs in a domestic setting or a relationship and it is receiving additional focus and support through our second action plan.

In response to paragraph (4)(b), 'notes with concern the federal government's decision to fund couple's counselling for victims of family violence', the first point I want to make is that my Government worked very cooperatively with the Australian Government, as we always do, to implement the fourth National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. We are able to address those national priorities through implementation of our integrated family and sexual violence plan. However, in respect to couples' counselling, I understand that in March this year the Australian Government announced its commitment of \$328 million in funding towards the implementation of the fourth action plan. A component of that is dedicated to specialised family violence services amounting to \$10 million, a relatively small component of that, and will expand the delivery of those services in up to 16 additional sites, providing for up to 20 000 additional support sessions per year. I am advised these new services will include specialised support to children who have witnessed or experienced family violence. This is crucial in breaking the cycle of violence, because children who have witnessed parents, carers or other people in their home environment are two to four times more likely to experience it as adults.

I understand organisations invited to participate in a competitive process to deliver such services in Tasmania are highly specialised and experienced and would only enter into dispute resolution where it is absolutely safe to do so, after extensive screening processes.

I am also advised there are many people who have experienced family arguments who do want to work out their relationships together, because those arguments can so often escalate to family violence. It is an early intervention approach in organisations that provide family relationship services, including broad-based counselling and dispute resolution by professional and competent organisations.

I suggest to the member that it is worth talking to Relationships Australia or to Anglicare and those who may participate in this, because I am told there are -

Ms O'Byrne - Are you saying RA and Anglicare will do it?

Mr HODGMAN - Yes - many people who have FVOs in place who want to amend them, work on their relationship with specialist counselling services and RA, I am aware, has extensive screening processes in place and would only offer such services where it is safe to do so.

In response to the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service there has been some discussion on this in the House previously and as I said in response to further questioning this morning, this service, as members would be well aware, has been in place for a number of years. It was part of the integrated criminal justice response, first delivered as the Safe at Home service and as I noted in question time there have been a number of significant changes to family violence support services since that time. Notably, our Government's \$26 million investment into the state's first comprehensive Family Violence Action Plan and more recently our second action plan with another \$26 million invested into family and sexual violence.

In today's family violence service landscape, the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service is now one of a number of specialist counselling and support services available to Tasmanians impacted by family violence. We fund a number of non-government organisations to also provide counselling and support services, Engender Equality being one. Funding is provided to them and the Australian Childhood Foundation to deliver specialist counselling services to adults, children and young people respectively.

There have been reviews undertaken into the service in 2018-19, 2019-20. The Government did commit additional funding of \$405 000 towards the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service extended hours and provided \$433 000 for two additional full-time counsellors. I have acknowledged in this place and in my letter to the CPSU that concerns have been raised. I well understand that about resourcing, staffing structure and the profile of the service. That is why in the context of the implementation of our Safe Homes, Families, Communities plan it is my view that work needs to be done to clarify the role of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service as part of the wider integrated service network that now exists.

This work will consider the recommendations presented to successive governments, your government included, following several reviews undertaken in relation to the service and I will come to that in a moment. Following the review now underway, we will be better able to determine the service delivery and resourcing requirements to inform funding decisions. I have, as I advised the House this morning, asked the Department of Communities Tasmania to begin this work as a matter of priority. All relevant unions will be consulted as necessary. Our Government's view is

our response to family and sexual violence and the support we provide to those impacted can only be best achieved by an integrated approach. I suggest it appropriate the review run its course and best inform our support and response system to deliver in this state. I know the member who asked the question and brings the motion has put out more fake media news about a broken promise to meet the staff. When I was previously asked this question, I told the House clearly, I would be prepared -

Ms O'BYRNE - Madam Speaker, I take personal offence that the Premier says I have said something that is fake. The staff asked for a meeting and the Premier committed to it in this House and he has not met with them. I am sorry, there was no other reality than that. It is not okay to say I have lied.

Madam SPEAKER - It is not a point of order, but it is a request.

Mr HODGMAN - If she is offended, I will certainly withdraw it, but I know the member has falsely asserted I will not meet with the members of the service. I said I am prepared to do so. I have acknowledged the work they do. As I say, I have informed the House a meeting was to be appropriately held with the department first. You can look at the *Hansard* to check. It is what I said when I was first asked about it.

I then received further correspondence from the CPSU and advised them the work would be undertaken to clarify the role of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service as part of the wider service network that now exists. I again acknowledge concerns have been raised by the service about staff and resourcing. I know issues have also been raised about the scope of practice. It is sensible to clarify their role and in so doing, look carefully at their resources as part of our integrated approach to family and sexual violence.

In relation to staffing and demand, I again acknowledge their professionalism; the dedication of the service's staff cannot be questioned. It should certainly be recognised. I am advised there are currently 27 full-time equivalent positions in the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service and there has been no reduction in staff numbers by this Government. I am advised the overall trend in the number of calls to the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service since 2015-16 is downward. In 2015-16 there were 12 249 calls. This decreased to 10 890 in 2016-17, and decreased further to 10 027 in 2017-18, but it has increased in this past year again to 10 902.

In relation to the number of referrals to the adult program, there was an increase in referrals this past year, in line with calls. However, it is important to note not all calls result in a referral. Victims are sometimes already engaged with other family violence support services such as Engender Equality or Safe Choices. I am advised in 2018-19 there was a reduction to 58 in the actual number of active adult program clients. The daily average number of clients in the adult program, I am advised, has decreased from 266.5 in 2013-14, to 250.3 in 2018-19.

In summary, while there has been an increase in calls and referrals in this past year, the daily number of active clients in the adult program has remained relatively static, if a little down.

The Family Violence Counselling and Support Service also has an extended hours service, one of two after hours counselling services available to Tasmanians impacted by family violence. The other is the 1800RESPECT, the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Services. Those calls are certainly responded to, answered by qualified and experienced counsellors

based on the mainland, but callers may be provided with advice and information and then directly transferred to specialist counsellors, or directed to the most appropriate local support service.

In addition, the Tasmanian Government's Safe at Home response and referral line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. After business hours calls to the line are directed to the Tasmania police switchboard and the extended hours service is a centralised model run from the Hobart police station in Liverpool Street. It operates from 5 p.m. until midnight on weekdays, 4 p.m. until midnight on weekends and public holidays.

Importantly, risk assessment of the extended hours service was undertaken by the Department of Communities Tasmania to examine the operations of the service and identify current employee and organisational risks. The risk assessment identified a range of risks including physical, psychological, work, environment, facilities, organisational and strategic business continuity and emergency management. As a result, it was decided not to continue with face-to-face contact with clients during the extended-hours service shift. Instead, the extended-hours service has begun a process of transition back to the activities detailed in its practice guidelines, to ensure statewide consistency of the service.

The service was established in 2005 or thereabouts under the Safe at Home initiative. There have been successive reviews into this service by successive governments. At the time of its commencement, the service was acknowledged and said to be innovative and groundbreaking due to the integrated approach to the provision of services to adults and children affected by family violence. Its aim was to effectively coordinate cases with other members of the Safe at Home network - Tasmania Police, the Department of Education and the Department of Justice.

Now, in 2019, it continues to operate a statewide service for adults, children and young people, with offices in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. I am advised the number of approved and funded FTEs is 27. The service provides a range of features: supports, extended-hours telephone counselling and information line, counselling sessions and group work, intensive therapeutic interventions, and opportunities for adult victims to work with their children to address the impact of family violence on their lives.

I am advised that in 2011, under a previous government, there was a review done by 3P Consulting of the broader service, including the children and young persons program. It made a number of recommendations including outsourcing, which I understand was not supported by the government of the day. Instead, I am advised that the government and -

Ms O'Connor - Yes, the former minister.

Mr HODGMAN - Indeed, as the member for Clark interjects, for the want of a better word or comments, it was a Labor-Greens government. I am told that they put in place a change management program to realign the FVCSS with their original program models and to strongly integrate these services across the system that existed at the time. However, I am told also that there was not support for that change management process by staff, and there was a lack of resources to make sure that the model could be successfully implemented.

Then in 2012, I understand, the government undertook another review, this time into the FVCSS children's services. Again, it found that the model did not reflect the model originally intended and that there were concerns with service capacity, eligibility criteria, insufficient support

services, as well as ongoing difficulty with integration of the service within the broader service system.

Ms O'Connor - By interjection, minister, are you able to remind the House which consultancy undertook the review in 2012, or was it Dr Joe Tucci?

Mr HODGMAN - I will need to check. I understand that may be so, yes.

Ms O'Connor - It was Dr Tucci. That is what I thought. I was the minister. I am just getting you to refresh my brain.

Mr HODGMAN - Understood. The point being, I guess, two reviews under the previous government, both not acted upon, and the recommendations not pursued. Both said more resources were needed for family violence more generally. Despite that, no additional funding was provided by the former government for family violence.

I note as well that I am not aware of any family violence policy taken to either the 2014 or 2018 state elections by Labor. I make these points to identify the fact that the process we are undertaking now is not dissimilar to the one undertaken by that former government.

However, since 2015 our Government has invested \$52 million extra in family violence services.

Ms O'Byrne - Politely, by interjection, is the current review a desk-top review?

Mr HODGMAN - There will be an appropriate review. I make the point we have more services and more support. It is appropriate to again assess all that we do and the organisations that provide the support, including within the Government, where it sits in the wider service system in its role in providing valuable services and support to Tasmanians in need to ensure that all of our services are working well together collaboratively, and as effectively as possible.

I do accept responsibility for all the Government does. It is important for our state Government to have a minister responsible for the prevention of family violence and sexual violence. It is something I am firmly committed to. As often happens in government, we have a number of agencies and ministers that will have an intersection with the work being done in this area. That will only increase and enhance our response because with cross-agency, whole-of-government approaches, whole-of-community approaches to all we do, our efforts will be the better for it.

We have delivered a fully funded, whole-of-government action plan 2015. We followed up with the second stage of that plan in July of this year. Every minister in my Government not only has an interest and a role to play in our effort, but also a contribution to make on what is a very complex societal issue, one that requires and deserves a whole-of-government response and a whole-of-community response. I will certainly stand up as the minister responsible on any day of the week and respond to our Government's efforts.

I acknowledge as well our innovative cross-agency approach, this model that we implemented, and our first family violence policy recognition of the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management, which is a great endorsement of the work that is being done across government by breaking down the silos, working collaboratively across agencies and working with the non-government sector. There are many more government and non-government organisations

involved now than there have been in the past, which is good, because they know how well to respond to that community effort that is required to reduce and ultimately achieve our goal of eliminating family violence and sexual violence in our state.

[4.32 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, I rise in my capacity as the Greens spokesperson for women and also communities to make a contribution on notice of motion 173.

When a victim of family violence or sexual assault reaches out for help, makes that phone call, seeks that counselling service and support, as a parliament and as a society we need to make sure that support is there at that critical point in time for the victims of family violence and sexual assault. That requires of us the broadest possible, the most expert support service and counselling service that can be funded and resourced properly. I acknowledge the work of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service for over 14 years now in the Tasmanian community and the many thousands of women and children who have been supported and strengthened by their contact with the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service.

It is important that we remind ourselves of some of the causes of family violence and sexual assault. A foundational cause of violence against women is gender inequality - discrimination against women and girls that embeds itself through our society and culture. We also need to acknowledge that worsening inequality in our country creates enormous pressures in families: poverty, childhood trauma, homelessness and addiction, for example to drugs, alcohol or poker machines. The causes of family violence and sexual assault are many. There is no space in this place to excuse anyone who hurts a woman or a child, of course, but we need to be honest about some of those foundational causes. I argue the biggest contributor towards a culture that has not yet been able to deal with the scourge of family violence and sexual assault is a culture that still does not adequately respect women and girls as equals.

As the Premier mentioned, I have had a bit to do with the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service in my time as the minister for Human Services and I was part of the process of reviewing the service. That review process came about as a result of concerns that had been expressed to me as minister about some of the practices of the service, practices that were apparently inflexible to new models of providing counselling and support.

Of particular concern to me, as minister, was the fact that, at the time, the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service was not providing counselling services to children who were still living in the home of the perpetrator. I took the view then - and take the view now - that there is no place for ideological purity when it comes to children who are being harmed because they are in the home of a violent person who is invariably, statistically, a man. That is why we initiated the two reviews: the 3P consulting review and yes, it is true, Premier, one of the recommendations was to outsource the service. I took advice and I also recognised that you need to have that government service response. I took the view that you need to have a counselling and support service that is inside government and part of government's service delivery, as part of quite a broad and well-resourced counselling and support service system.

We put a change management process in place and I was under the understanding following that review, that the practice which had been not to provide counselling support to the children who were still in the homes of the perpetrators, had ended. Unfortunately, it later became clear to me, that it had not. I commissioned Dr Joe Tucci, who is the CEO of the Australian Childhood

Foundation, to provide further advice on best practice in responding to children who are the victims of family violence. As we know - and we passed legislation through this place - children are victims of vicarious trauma. While the perpetrator may not have physically harmed the child, in perpetrating violence on the child's parent, and invariably their mother, that is causing profound trauma to those children who are witnessing that violence.

It is a trauma that stays with children all their lives and into their adult lives. It can have the most profound and debilitating effect on children for the course of their lives. To be honest, I was furious when it became clear that the practice of not providing counselling to children who were still in the home of the perpetrators had continued.

Dr Joe Tucci's advice - and I do not have his report here in front of me at the moment - was that the service needed to include those children. It is not the child's fault that they are still in the home of the perpetrator. There are circumstances where a woman, as we all know, is afraid to or for a multitude of reasons including emotional and financial reasons, does not leave the home of the perpetrator.

That brings with it a whole level of increased risk to mothers and their children. I am not sure if the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service provides counselling services to children who are still trapped in the family home where the perpetrator is present. I certainly hope so because it is not the child's fault.

We have no issue supporting this notice of motion. There needs to be a properly resourced Family Violence Counselling and Support Service that is applying contemporary best practice to counselling and support for the victims of family violence and indeed sexual assault.

I have not heard arguments within the sector for not recognising that sexual assault is also a part of violence against women. I support the integration of sexual assault support services and family violence support and counselling services. I have not yet heard a solid argument backed by evidence that we should not recognise that they are two halves of the same grim coin.

I acknowledge the work not only of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service but the other outstanding community sector organisations which are also providing that support to victims, survivors of violence and sexual assault and Engender Equality. These include the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Sexual Assault Support Service. They are doing fantastic work in the community.

When you step back and have a look at the fabric of the community sector in Tasmania more broadly, we have one of the strongest community sectors in the country - not in terms of its resourcing, but in terms of its philosophy and its ethics. There is that sense of connection between community sector organisations which I believe is rare, nationally. Organisations that work alongside the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service to provide services, and in many ways complementary services, are a critical part of our society's response to women and children who experience family violence, sexual assault, and to men who, from time to time, can experience violence in an intimate relationship.

We are not uncomfortable supporting this motion in principle. I have noted what the Premier and minister for the Prevention of Family Violence said about staffing numbers for the past five years. I am not exactly sure what the number was in 2014 but I believe that the Premier said there had been no less staff in the service for the past five years.

The increase in demand for counselling and support services has had an impact on both the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service and those community sector organisations which are providing counselling and support. It is often a question in my mind when you see these soaring levels of violence against women at a time when we talk about it now much more openly as a society. I am often unsure whether or not the increased demand for counselling and support is as a result of our improved ability as a society to confront these issues or, if something much darker is happening, which is that we are becoming a more violent society toward women and children.

It would be helpful to policymakers everywhere to have a finer-grained understanding of why it is that we have laws and frameworks in place. Going back to 2004-05, former attorney-general, Judy Jackson, brought in Safe at Home and work has been done in the past five years by this Government. It would be helpful to know why we have a much better service response to family violence and sexual assault. We are much more capable as a society of recognising the extent of this problem. Women are more likely to understand how utterly wrong it is for the person they are in an intimate relationship with to violently or sexually assault them. There is a higher level of awareness in our community, yet the rates of family violence and sexual assault remain disturbingly high and are often increasing, when you look at the data. There is a sickness in our society. Apparently, we do not yet have that deep cultural change that is required for women and girls to be treated equally across our society.

We will support this motion. It is regrettable that we have debated this motion after the Greens brought on a debate that was also seeking to strengthen public services in Tasmania in relation to firefighters and people who work in Parks in remote-area firefighting. It is quite galling for Dr Woodruff and I to treat each motion that comes before us on its merits and vote accordingly, and to put up a motion that is in the interests of community safety as we move toward another scorcher of a summer, and have the Labor Party, the great defenders of the public service, vote against our motion, which would simply have required the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management to lay on the table details of resourcing that will be available to Tasmania Fire Service operators, Parks and Wildlife firefighters and people who work across our emergency services, including the SES and the volunteers who are there to defend community and the environment in times of bushfire.

I needed to mention that because I have seen the CPSU coming out in support on social media, and rightly so, of Ms O'Byrne's motion today calling for extra resourcing into family violence counselling and support. At the same time, not a word about the Labor Party not supporting a fact-laden motion aimed at securing as much support for community safety as we could get in this House. It was voted against by the Labor Party simply for politics. We are not going to play those games. We genuinely look at every private member's motion and the notice paper and go through motions line by line, talk it through and ask ourselves what the right thing is to do. That is why we will support this motion, despite concerns I have had about the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service going back a very long way. I acknowledge they are an important part of the service delivery system that is there to support women and children, particularly, who are victims of domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

We are voting for this motion because we recognise it is the right thing to do to look at this motion and agree that we need more resourcing and we need a strong Family Violence Counselling and Support Service. I simply implore Labor to try to remind yourselves each day that you are in here to do the right thing.

[4.50 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I agree with the points outlined in this motion. It would be hard to imagine anybody in our community who would not recognise that family violence is Tasmania's greatest community, safety and law and order issue. It is true that, as society develops and as our understanding of assault and of violence increases and develops over time, people are more aware of the reality of family violence and the range of types of assault that constitute abuse and instances of family violence. It is good that people now recognise what constitutes family violence and how seriously it needs to be taken, how seriously victims and survivors of family violence need to be taken, and that an integrated response is needed that puts the needs and rights of victims and survivors front of mind when dealing with instances of family violence.

The services provided by the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service are a vital component of that mix of services that are provided to people in Tasmania who find themselves in abusive relationships and who find themselves often at their most vulnerable and most likely to fall victim to family violence at the hands of someone they should have been able to trust and who should have done everything in their power to protect their loved one. Horribly, that is not what happens for many Tasmanian people, particularly women and children who find themselves in relationships that may once have been loving, supportive relationships, yet they turn around and become abusive relationships.

Our understanding of what constitutes abuse is always growing. Physical abuse, direct assaults on the body, strangulation and use of weapons have long been recognised as a pattern of abuse and of family violence. Sexual abuse has always been recognised as a form of assault but there was a horrible time where sexual abuse within marriage was not recognised. There was an expectation that if you alleged sexual abuse had occurred against you and the perpetrator was your husband or male partner, that was not taken seriously. I am pleased that society is slowly moving past that understanding and does understand that sexual abuse does happen within marriage and within intimate relationships.

People are still grappling with emotional abuse. People are still grappling with the fact that verbal, social and economic abuse can be inflicted upon a partner and a child over a long period of time and can diminish a person's power and strength and put that person into an emotional state that is akin to an emotional state that can be caused by physical violence. I am sad to hear that there are still instances in Tasmania of people describing situations of emotional abuse. I met with a constituent last month who was going through this and was not taken seriously. Even though she is very articulate and able to explain her case very clearly, she is not taken seriously by some as somebody who is being physically abused by her partner, and that is a real shame. As we have seen people's understanding of physical and sexual abuse within marriage and intimate relationships change. In time people will start to recognise a lot more clearly that emotional, verbal, social and economic abuse are all legitimate types of abuse that occur, sadly far too frequently, in marriages and intimate relationships.

We have been talking about the Premier's commitment to meet with FVCSS workers who visited parliament just a little while ago when the Premier said on the record that he welcomed the opportunity to meet members of that service and he would do so, but today in question time when the Premier was asked to confirm whether he had met with those staff members he skirted around that question and did not confirm whether he had met with them but did say he was still willing to meet with them and was always willing to work and meet people to discuss issues of concern and listen to the needs. It was not a clear answer. I believe that question could have been answered with just one word, yes or no - I have met with those service workers or I have not. Instead we

heard the kind of language we have also seen in the letter that went to those workers that said he recognises an increase in demand on the service and given those concerns that are being consistently raised about resourcing, staffing structure and profile of the FVCSS in the context of the implementation of Safe Homes, Families, Communities, it is the Premier's view that work needs to be done to clarify the ongoing role of the FVCSS.

If I were a staff member in the FVCSS who heard that work needs to be done to clarify the role and I heard those words in the context of a budget that is looking for \$450 million worth of cuts that comes hot on the heels of a budget just five years ago that was looking \$750 million worth of cuts, I would be extremely concerned. I would be worried for my own job security, but I would also be incredibly worried about the clients of that service continuing to receive the services they need.

The program data for the statewide adult program tells us that from 2011-12 to 2017-18 there has been a steady increase in referrals of cases and side by side with that we have seen a steady decrease in the FTE staff numbers across that service. The 2017-18 data shows there was a staff capacity of 9.4 FTE with an average case allocation per FTE of 651 cases compared to 2011-12 when there was a staff capacity of 10.3 FTE versus 9.4 FTE in 2017-18, but whereas in the 2017-18 year that 9.4 FTE were dealing with 651 case allocation each, back in 2011-12 the 10.3 FTE were dealing with 435 average case allocations per worker.

That is still a very high caseload but it is frightening to think that has increased by more than 200 per worker in that time and it is recognised that in order to adequately staff that unit on current increase of demand, 11.54 FTE statewide would be required and there has been an increase in demand of 200 per cent. That is huge. As I said at the outset, that is not to say that there is 200 per cent more family violence occurring in our community. It could be an indication, and I hope it is, that people are more alive to the realities of family violence, so there is 200 per cent more demand on that service because people are aware about referring the needs of family violence victims and survivors to services.

Time expired.

The House divided -

AYES 11

Dr Broad
Ms Butler
Ms Dow (Teller)
Ms Haddad
Ms Houston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms O'Connor
Ms Standen
Ms White
Dr Woodruff

NOES 12

Ms Archer
Mr Barnett
Ms Courtney
Mr Ferguson
Mr Gutwein
Mr Hodgman
Mr Jaensch
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mrs Rylah (Teller)
Mr Shelton
Mr Tucker

Motion negatived.

MOTION

Labor Party - Plans for Future

[5.05 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Notes the continued failure of the Tasmanian Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Rebecca White MP to develop a long-term Plan for Tasmania, after two and a half years in the role.
- (2) Further notes the inconsistency of the Opposition on whether former Labor candidates will be invited and accepted back into the Labor Party if they are successful in the recount for the seat of Clark.
- (3) Further notes that the chaos and dysfunction within the Opposition has resulted in the unprecedented intervention of former Labor senior figures including former Premiers Paul Lennon and David Bartlett, and former MPs Harry Quick and Julian Amos to restore policy consistency.
- (4) Agrees with the comments of former Labor MHR Harry Quick, who said the Tasmanian Opposition Leader was 'out of touch' and 'fixated on peripheral issues'.
- (5) Further agrees with the sentiment of the Derwent Valley Branch of the Labor Party expressed in its motion at the recent State Labor Council stating 'we cannot expect people to vote for us without greater clarity about what we stand for and present it in a manner that is specific to them and is easily identified'
- (6) Calls on the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Rebecca White MP, to develop a long-term Plan for Tasmania, to develop an alternative budget and be honest with the community on what her party can and cannot deliver for Tasmanians.

After five and a half years in Opposition, Labor still has no long-term plan for Tasmania's economic future, nor have they apologised for the 10 000 jobs lost under its last Labor-Greens government. Labor is in the throes of an embarrassing identity crisis. Rebecca White has lost control of her caucus circus. She is receiving public lectures from ex-Labor premiers and cannot decide on Ms Ogilvie. It is clear that Madeleine Ogilvie's re-election to parliament threw Labor into chaos this morning. The question is, where is Rebecca White in all of this? Where is the leadership?

Yesterday, in question time she resorted to deliberately misleading Tasmanians or admitting she simply does not understand how the state budget works. Rebecca White has been sidelined by Labor powerbrokers and the cracks are showing. Ms White does not have a shadow treasurer and her shadow health minister revealed yesterday that she does not even understand the Ambulance Tasmania budget. With Labor engulfed in an internal personality crisis they have dropped their

much-flaunted promise to put the economy front and centre. They have not asked a single question about it in the last two weeks of sitting. What more could we expect, considering we have a Tasmanian Labor Leader who suggested 12 months ago it might be worth considering a bonking ban for state parliamentarians?

Records from 2018 identify Labor's second-worst election result ever. Labor has voted with the Greens in 81 per cent of opportunities in parliament. Let us not forget the failure to congratulate the Premier in her ungracious election night speech. Who supported the industrial action that closed schools, cancelled surgeries and blocked police from assessing DNA results? Shall we continue? There were union fees, the job scandal, they were blasted by Anthony Albanese on pokies policy and Bill Shorten on birth certificate changes. They voted against legislation cracking down on outlaw criminal gangs.

While Labor is focused on factional fights and Rebecca White's leadership hangs by a thread, the Hodgman majority Liberal Government remains focused on delivering on our plan to grow the economy and create more jobs for Tasmanians. The Labor Party's internal woes and leadership tensions are boiling over, yet again. Rebecca White's ABC revealed she has no position on Ms Ogilvie's re-joining the Labor Party, has no view on the make-up of her own party room or shadow cabinet and no say on whether Ms Ogilvie will be allowed to rejoin her own party. Despite being asked numerous times, she refused to say whether she would support Ms Ogilvie rejoining the party. It is interesting that Tasmania Labor MP, David O'Byrne, said he would welcome Madeleine Ogilvie back into the party and revealed that Ms Ogilvie cut ties with the party over political differences with his own party leader, Ms White.

Shame on Ms White for avoiding saying whether she should welcome Ms Ogilvie back into the party. When Ms White was specifically asked, do you want Madeleine Ogilvie to be part of your party, it was no surprise to hear her say that it was ultimately a decision for Ms Ogilvie, avoiding the direct question. When asked again, she still could not answer with a simple yes or no, but provided a slap-in-the-face remark that she may not be successful. The Leader of the Opposition shows no loyalty when it comes to members or former members. It is clear that Ms White would not welcome Ms Ogilvie back as she has not voiced one word of acceptance. Rebecca White wants another Labor member in the parliament or she does not. It is that simple. It appears Ms White is now the leader in name only and has lost control of her party room and her leadership. Not surprisingly, David O'Byrne publicly disagreed with his own leader on the matter of Ms Ogilvie's party status.

Ms White needed to step-up and tell the Labor Party members she wanted Ms Ogilvie back. Her refusal to confirm she wants another Labor member on the parliament floor suggests she is terrified of Mr O'Byrne looking for a leadership spill. The parliament and the Labor Party membership are deeply divided, with Labor's leadership in chaos and its dysfunction laid bare for all to see. It shows that they have nothing to offer Tasmanians after five years in opposition. The state Opposition Leader has avoided saying whether she will welcome Madeline Ogilvie back into the Labor Party to replace Scott Bacon. Ms Ogilvie cut ties with the party over political differences and Labor does not have good working ethics. Labor is nothing but embarrassing, splashed in the media with Labor heavyweights forced to publicly defend Ms White and give her advice.

Previously, it was Harry Quick who publicly criticised Rebecca White and state Labor, saying they were out of touch and fixated on peripheral issues. Again, only last week, former Labor premier, Paul Lennon, and former Labor minister, Julian Amos, added their opinions, concerned that Labor cannot be trusted to manage the state's finances, to keep our economy strong and our

budget in surplus. Paul Lennon publicly lectured the Leader of the Opposition on radio for all to hear, confirming she has lost control of her policy agenda and has allowed Labor to drift too close to the Greens. Well, no surprises there.

The recent Labor state conference agenda, in a desperate attempt to bury the findings of Labor's secret 2018 state election review of Rebecca White's disastrous campaign, also confirmed Labor's confusion in identity crisis with motions from grassroots branches about Labor losing votes from its traditional supporters and not understanding regional Tasmania. In addition, former Labor minister, Julian Amos, wrote in his regular newsletter regarding Scott Bacon:

His departure will leave a gaping hole on Labor's lineup, and for them, and for the electorate he served, a regretted loss.

Labor will need to move swiftly to fill the position of shadow spokesman for Treasury matters, and be able to demonstrate to the wider community some competence in this area.

More embarrassing, former Labor MHR Harry Quick recently told ABC the Opposition was out of touch with the community and that Labor were fixated on peripheral issues. He stated that -

The Labor party here doesn't know (a) what the community wants, (b) never talks to them and (c) never develops policies that are going to benefit the ordinary average punter.

Mr Quick also said -

They should be out talking to people. Everywhere I go, I say to people have you seen any of the Labor politicians? And the only time they see them is on TV, or staged events.

Labor is so out of touch, leader Rebecca White had to make a desperate trip to New Zealand to try to find a plan, to pinch ideas from Jacinda Ardern. Labor does not know what they stand for, choofing off to New Zealand in search of an identity. You cannot trust Labor with your money. Labor was rejected at the federal election because Tasmanians were too worried about how much Labor would cost them. Labor means higher taxes, higher business costs and fewer jobs.

Earlier this year, shuffling off the deckchairs in the Labor shadow cabinet signalled the final death throes for Rebecca White's leadership. A panicked, under siege Opposition Leader moved to desperately try to secure her leadership by promoting her supporters, handing out prizes to everyone whilst simultaneously demoting the O'Byrnes. Just like the pokies backflip, this reshuffle was all about trying to save her own leadership by taking senior portfolios off David and Michelle O'Byrne while promoting others whose votes she needs to delay the inevitable.

Shuffling the deck chairs will not stop her leadership going down. Tasmanians know the problem for Labor is what they stand for, not who sits where in the shadow cabinet. It is nobody's fault but Ms White's that she stumped everything on a pokies policy she clearly did not believe in. She continued to insist Labor would stick with the policy and then ditched it to help out Bill Shorten.

It is Ms White's failure to deliver a coherent and consistent policy platform which has opened the door for David O'Byrne to undermine her leadership. This is now the fourth Labor reshuffle since Ms White took the leadership, yet they still retain policies such as opposing mandatory sentencing for serious child sex offenders.

The Hodgman majority Liberal Tasmanian Government has a long-term plan which is working. It is underpinned by a stable and consistent government that says what it is going to do and does it. It is a plan we took to the Tasmanian people, a plan backed by a solid budget with good disciplined budget management: a plan that lifted Tasmania to new levels with more opportunities, a nation leading economy and 13 000 more jobs. We are getting on with our plan building a more confident Tasmania and the proof is in our actions.

The contrast is between a stable united government getting on with the job with a clear plan, delivering on the promises we made versus a Labor Party in the throes of one of the most embarrassing identity crises we have ever seen. It is about certainty versus uncertainty. Stability and predictability versus chaos and confusion. Labor does not seem to know what it stands for or whose side they are on, which means you will not know what you get from one week to the next.

On the budget, on housing, on forestry, on pill testing, on strengthening mandatory sentencing laws Labor cannot tell you what they believe or whose side they are on. No certainty, no consistency, no plan. What does Labor stand for? It shows after five and a half years in Opposition they have nothing to offer Tasmanians other than dysfunction and disunity.

Harry Quick stated Labor is out of touch and fixated on peripheral issues. How correct considering, the Hodgman majority Liberal Government are delivering our long-term plans, strong economic management and a need to maintain the momentum. You cannot trust Labor, the Labor chaos, White is under siege internally versus O'Byrne, Labor fixated on peripheral issues; nothing but stunts. The Labor-Greens deal is still a huge risk. In five and a half years in opposition Labor still has not come up with a long-term plan.

Our long-term plan to keep Tasmania's economy strong is working. In contrast, after five and a half years in opposition Labor still has no long-term plan and is in the throes of an embarrassing identity crisis. Labor is in chaos. Rebecca White has lost control of her caucus circus. She is getting public lectures from ex-Labor Premiers. She cannot decide on Ogilvie. You cannot trust Rebecca White and Labor on the economy. After two and a half years as Opposition Leader White said they would change tack and focus on the economy. No questions on the economy last week, nothing but stunts. Labor has no credibility when it comes to economic management. They have no alternative budget, no shadow treasurer and Tasmania slumped into recession under a Labor-Greens government.

You cannot trust Labor on doing a deal with the Greens. Rebecca White said she would not do a deal with the Greens again, yet we saw last week they were still willing to vote with the Greens to support the lock up of 356 000 hectares of forest that would destroy Tasmanian jobs. Labor are weak and confused. They have no alternative budget. They are confused on housing; weak on support for forest industries; weak on laws that guarantee jail time for violent criminals who bash our ambos and a guaranteed jail time for serious child abusers.

A majority Liberal Government is providing stability and confidence. The evidence is in business confidence, building and construction, and consumer confidence and in delivering our housing deal in cooperation with the Morrison Government. How great is our Housing minister behind me here today? We have also seen the cooperation with the TFES extension, rail funding, irrigation funding and road funding. We are getting on with our plan that is building a more confident Tasmania.

Rebecca White's disorderly public comments about the Speaker, including the Carlton interview, show she is desperate to divert attention away from the chaos in her own caucus and her failure to demonstrate her leadership on Madeleine Ogilvie. The Bacon resignation and Rebecca White's lack of leadership over Ms Ogilvie clearly show that Ms White has lost control and is now a leader in name only. As recently as Monday 9 September, Ms White still could not say whether Madeleine Ogilvie would come back as a Labor member.

Dr Broad - You have said that four times already.

Mr TUCKER - I know, it is a good point. David O'Byrne contradicting Ms White publicly on Madeleine Ogilvie and then having to retract on air later bells the cat of the internal party room divisions. With Labor heavyweights forced to defend Ms White as leader as well as giving her public advice about focusing on the economy, confirms Labor's identity crisis. It has become too extreme left, too close to the Greens and out of touch.

Comments by Mr Lennon and Dr Amos also confirm Labor's biggest weakness -

Members interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, the Opposition will have its turn shortly.

Mr TUCKER - that Ms White is seen as lacking in economic management credibility and that Labor needs to focus on mainstreaming their image as they are too close to the Greens. Paul Lennon's comment that the best way to help working people is to have a very strong economy confirms that the Liberal Party's focus on keeping the economy strong is correct and that Labor is failing in this regard. The Labor State Conference agenda also shows that the only way Labor could bury the 2018 State Election review of Rebecca White's disastrous campaign, was by rewriting the whole platform.

Let us reflect: Rebecca White has lost control. Mr Bacon's resignation reflected badly on Ms White. She loses a key supporter in the party room. David O'Byrne's public welcoming of Madeleine Ogilvie means he is counting on her as a number for his leadership bid.

Ms Butler - Who are you voting for in your leadership spill?

Mr TUCKER - We have a great Premier. It appears Scott Bacon has ultimately abandoned Rebecca White and Labor, most likely because Ms White backflipped and abandoned the pokies policy that he had helped write and prosecute.

Members interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. I ask the Opposition members to keep it down please.

Mr TUCKER - Remember, it was Harry Quick who publicly criticised Rebecca White and state Labor, saying they were out of touch and fixated on peripheral issues. Only last week, former Labor premier Paul Lennon and former Labor minister Julian Amos added their voices to the concern that Labor cannot be trusted to manage the state's finances, to keep our economy strong and the budget in surplus. Paul Lennon publicly lectured the Leader of the Opposition on radio on economic matters, confirmed she had lost control of her policy agenda and had allowed Labor to drift too close to the Greens.

The public counselling of Labor on economic matters by Mr Lennon and Dr Amos confirms that Rebecca White and Labor cannot be trusted when it comes to keeping Tasmania's economy strong. The recent Labor State Conference agenda also confirms Labor's confusion and identity crisis, with motions from grassroot branches about Labor losing votes from its traditional supporters and not understanding regional Tasmania.

Ms BUTLER - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I cite Standing Order 151, continued irrelevance and tedious repetition, please. We have heard exactly the same thing over and again.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - That is not a point of order. The member will resume.

Mr TUCKER - Unlike Labor, the Liberal majority Government has key priorities and strong policies that have taken our state to new levels. Our economy is the fastest growing overall in the nation. Our disciplined economic management has delivered the best business conditions in the country which drives economic growth and helps to create new jobs. Our businesses want certainty and they trust this majority Liberal Government to deliver it. Businesses have the confidence to invest, employ, seek new export markets and think bigger and more innovatively than ever before. These assessments of the Tasmanian economy have highlighted that our strong population and spending growth, coupled with nation-leading growth in the building and construction sector and increasing exports, are key factors in Tasmania's growth story.

The Government's long-term plan is working but we recognise there is more to be done. This is why our growth strategy focuses on investing in the right infrastructure in the right areas with the right skills and education programs in place to make sure Tasmanians have the best chance to live and work in the place they call home. It is about ensuring that through growth there is more money being invested in and around Tasmanian communities, backing our supply chain and growing our value-added industries.

It is about standing taller and having more scope to invest in the essential services that matter most to Tasmanians, such as health and education. Our focus is on continuing to deliver our election policy commitments and making sure that all Tasmanians feel the benefits of a strong economy and a balanced budget. It is important that we keep investing for growth and supporting business and industry to create jobs and maintain that momentum. Our vision is for a stronger Tasmania, a resilient Tasmania that continues to grow across all regions, improving the lives and opportunities of more Tasmanians.

After five and a half years in opposition, Labor still has no long-term plan. They have a leadership crisis, a caucus circus, are internally divided, have no credibility on keeping the economy strong or the budget in surplus, have an identity crisis because they are too close to the Greens and are out of touch. They will deal with the Greens given half a chance. I wonder whether the Greens want to do a deal with them or they cannot shake them off. They continue to undermine business and investor confidence with scaremongering and stunts and still have nothing to offer Tasmanians.

Direct from the Derwent Valley branch of the Labor Party, they believe they cannot expect people to vote for them without greater clarity on what they stand for and present it in a manner that is specific to them and is easily identified. They also recognised the loss of support for Labor at state and federal elections over the past decade from traditional Labor voters and regional Tasmania. It is noted that the election of state and federal Liberal governments has had an adverse impact on traditional Labor supporters, for example, the crisis in our health system, cutting of penalty rates and a collapse in full-time work for Tasmanians. All party units, including the state parliamentary

Labor Party, the Tasmanian federal Labor Party, platform committees, policy action caucuses and other party units have been directed to ensure all actions, policies and any other decisions are directly relevant to traditional Labor supporters, with an emphasis on economic growth, jobs, health, education and housing. These policies and actions are essential to ensure Labor restores the trust of their traditional supporters. It must be an immediate priority for Labor across all party units.

Honestly, what can we say? You cannot trust Labor. The Labor-Greens government left the budget in ruins, with cumulative deficits of over \$1.1 billion. Ten thousand jobs disappeared and Tasmanians and businesses left the state in droves. Moody's cut Tasmania's credit rating under the Labor-Greens government in 2012, and the unemployment rate hit 8.6 per cent under Labor at one stage. Labor locked up Tasmania and locked people out of jobs. Labor's job-destroying forest peace deal with the Greens cost thousands of jobs and damaged hundreds of businesses and families across Tasmania, especially in rural and regional areas, and they would do it again given another chance. You cannot trust Labor with the Greens.

In March last year Tasmanians rejected the instability of another Labor-Greens deal. They listened to our message about the massive risk of a job-destroying, economic-crippling Labor-Greens government. Tasmanians do not want to go back to another Labor-Greens deal but that is where Bec White and Labor are heading. They previously joined with the Greens on the job-destroying pokies ban policy, removing gender from birth certificates, blocking guaranteed jail time for serious sexual offenders, and opposing important developments like the Mt Wellington cable car, just like the Greens do, and given half a chance, they would do another Labor-Greens deal.

In parliament, the bond is growing even closer. In 2015 Labor voted with the Greens 62.5 per cent of the time, in 2018, it was 81 per cent, and in the year to date, Labor have voted with the Greens in over 90 per cent of their total votes.

Ms Butler - That has changed recently. Do they change every day?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Ms Butler, the Opposition will have its turn shortly. Thank you.

Mr TUCKER - It has changed a little bit today but it is not far away from 90 per cent.

Support for majority Liberal Government policies amongst Tasmania's small and medium businesses remains the highest in the country, according to the Sensis Business Index. Under Labor, Tasmania was regularly stone cold last in these sorts of reports about business confidence in the strength of our economy. A strong economy helps people and is the key to more Tasmanians enjoying a better quality of life. It does not just happen by good luck. We opened the state for business from day one. We have created a more attractive business environment and improved business conditions. Our state is growing like never before, the fastest in the nation, and cannot afford the uncertainty and instability of another Labor-Greens deal. Business does not trust Labor or a Labor-Greens coalition to maintain the momentum we are experiencing.

After five and a half years in opposition, Labor still has not come up with a long-term plan for Tasmania. Labor has no credibility when it comes to economic management, the budget, or jobs. Tasmanians should be reminded that the economy went backwards and slumped into recession under a Labor-Greens government. State final demand shrank, 10 000 jobs disappeared and people left the state in droves. Labor failed to present an alternative budget again this year, proving they have no long-term plan, and now the shadow treasurer has quit. The Opposition Leader's budget

reply speech did not propose a change in a single thing in our budget. Ms White confirmed that Labor would show no discipline on wages or spending. Labor means higher taxes, higher business costs, fewer jobs, lower business confidence and cautious investors retreating.

Labor has no long-term plan. The best they can manage is scaremongering on issues like building cladding, undermining consumer and business confidence and embarrassing, failed stunts like doing a media conference in a private resident's driveway that they thought was a vacant public housing home. We have not forgotten that one.

Tasmanians know what Labor stands for- another Labor-Greens deal, higher tax, a weaker economy and business confidence down. In stark contrast to our strong record which includes record funding for Health, Labor cannot produce an alternative budget. They have no policies, they stand for nothing, and now they are trying to con north-west coasters into believing they finally care.

In contrast, our state Budget, which makes record investment into Infrastructure, Health and Education, was passed by parliament. It is a budget which is framed to maintain the momentum built up over the last five years and invest for continued growth. The Budget delivers new schools, new hospitals, more housing, better roads, more teachers, nurses, doctors, police officers, and supports the creation of around 10 000 new jobs for Tasmanians. It is a budget which delivers on our plan, takes actions on the cost of living and invests in apprenticeships and traineeships to ensure our state has a skilled workforce for the future.

Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, in this budget session we have again witnessed Rebecca White and Labor refusing to be honest with Tasmanians in delivering an alternative budget. Rebecca White and Labor have been completely obsessed with stunts, thought bubbles and whingeing. In contrast, the Hodgman Liberal Government is focused on getting on with the job of delivering on our plans so all Tasmanians can share in a growing, prosperous state. In a mood that was as predictable as it was pointless, Labor's stunts prove how far out of touch and obsessed with cheap politics they really are.

Is there anyone outside of the Labor Party that thinks the best way to solve challenges our state is facing is to spend more time in parliament talking and debating? If Labor seriously thinks a day's talkfest in parliament will help put people into homes, why have they wasted more hours on stunts trying to move censure and no-confidence motions?

The Liberal Government wants to get on with the job of building more houses and helping vulnerable Tasmanians find a home, with a budget which includes \$68 million in 2019-20 to boost the supply of new social and affordable homes. Labor's stunts prove another week of completely unconstructive time-wasting politics by them. It capped off a budget session in which they proved they are a lazy, policy-free, fence-sitting opposition.

Time and time again the Labor Party has demonstrated it is all stunts and no substance. Rebecca White has one trick in her playbook: time-wasting stunts. They help no-one, they waste parliamentary time and they show the Labor Party stands for nothing but relentless negativity. For Labor to suggest that its reheated and shallow stunts are of great urgency than the state budget which funds essential services at record levels clearly demonstrates its warped priorities.

The Liberal Government has a strong track record on investing in Health, which includes a record \$8.1 billion over the next four years - an increase of \$544 million. We are delivering our

125 investments into stage 2 of our Affordable Housing Strategy, taking our total investment to almost \$200 million over eight years - the largest ever investment into affordable housing in Tasmania's history. We are continuing to work with all our stakeholders to deliver our record funding for health and housing and provide more service for Tasmanians in need. Labor's constant time-wasting stunts in parliament do nothing to help Tasmanians.

Whilst the Government was focused on delivering the budget, which will deliver more services for Tasmanians, and the First Home Owner Grant legislation, which will support more people to get a home, Labor was again focused on political games. Their failed attempt to bring on a no-confidence motion was another way to disrupt parliament and draw attention away from the fact that they refuse to offer anything constructive like an alternative budget. This is off the back of seven previous failed no-confidence or censure motion attempts, which ultimately consumed more than 20 hours of the parliament's time.

In the past five years we have employed more than 1000 Tasmanian Health Service staff, opened new beds across the state and increased services. Over the next five years, we will finish the Royal Hobart Hospital, Launceston General Hospital and Mersey redevelopments, open nearly 300 more hospital beds, recruit almost 1000 new staff into our health system, open acute medical health facilities for adolescents for the first time in Tasmania, have 27 new community-based mental health beds in modern facilities, and recruit more than 50 new paramedics in our ambulance service. We know there is increase in demand on our health system and we have always acknowledged more needs to be done. That is why we are working with our health experts, stakeholder groups and clinicians to deliver a better health system.

Labor is clearly a fence-sitting, policy-free party. Labor's track record when budgets get tough is to sack a nurse a day for nine months. They have sacked over 100 police officers, shut entire hospital wards and tried to close schools. With the architects of those savage cuts still Labor's leaders, it is no wonder they run a mile from scrutiny. Labor's lacklustre efforts to respond to the budget has proven once again they are a lazy fence-sitting, policy-free opposition. What would they cut to find \$285 million to pay for their stated 3 per cent wages policy. If they do not support our record \$3.6 billion infrastructure investments, which projects would they scrap?

The Hodgman majority Liberal government handed down a budget in surplus across the forward Estimates which delivered record funding for Infrastructure, Health and Education. In contrast, Labor completely failed the test. Rebecca Wright refused to deliver an alternative budget yet again, leaving Labor unable to land a blow in budget Estimates because there was no alternative. In fact they accepted the settings in our Budget. Despite constantly attacking the Government over challenges in the health system, Labor's budget reply did not propose a single dollar more for hospitals. Despite their complaints about our infrastructure spending they did not propose changing a single project. Tasmanians are still none the wiser about what Labor policy platform is and how they would pay for it. What they do know is that despite Labor's constant complaints, they have no alternative plan and continue to sit on the fence and play both sides of the street on the hard issues.

The only thing Labor has excelled at in parliament is voting with the Greens. I will leave this one with you at the end: Rebecca White's Labor is on track to break their own record with Labor voting with the Greens a whopping nearly 90 per cent of the time.

[5.41 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that is 45 minutes I will never get back. Where do you start? We know that it is 'wedge Labor Wednesday' and they have given

Mr Tucker the graveyard shift. You can see from the support of all his friends in this place just how much credence they are giving him, really trying to back him in. I do not know where to start on this. Roger has gone now, he cannot stand anymore, he has had enough. Crikey, if only I could, if I only I had not put my hand up for this.

I honestly think that whoever has written this speech for the member is taking the mickey. I think they have gone through and done a character assessment and then they have slipped it all into this speech. We hear things about lack of credibility - these are the words you have used - being confused, nothing to offer, lacklustre efforts, failing to land a blow, time-wasting stunts, chaos and dysfunction, and so on. I think they have slipped that in there so they can put together a mixed tape at Christmas time and make up some sort of compilation of John criticising himself.

This motion says a lot about where Mr Tucker is at. The material is not new, let us be honest. I have heard all those points made by former members of this House who were also put in this shameful position of being pushed forward on a Wednesday afternoon and told to take up 40 minutes with some dithering criticism. What does this say about Mr Tucker? For a start this says pretty obviously that he will put his name to these sorts of rubbish motions. Fancy talking about time-wasting stunts when you look at this motion. We know that Mr Tucker will read whatever is put in front of him - and it does not look like he has done a read-through before he has done that.

He did not serve with Mr Brooks but he has the same character traits as him on 'wedge Labor Wednesday' in that he would come in with three or four things and would keep turning the page. I am not sure that he realised he turned the same page but we have seen that again today - Mr Tucker will keep turning the same page. It is obvious that if he has been put up to this and does not really understand the position he is in, he must not have any ambition. If you had ambition you would not be putting your name to rubbish like this because it will come back to you. When you guys make decisions down the track, these points will all come back to haunt you personally, Mr Tucker. You came in on a recount although you did not acknowledge that, and the reason you came in on a recount -

Mr Tucker - So did you.

Dr BROAD - So did I, but I was elected after that so it is a slightly different case. You talk about chaos and dysfunction in this motion. How many reshuffles have you had? How many recounts have you had?

Mr Tucker - You actually had less votes than me the first time and you didn't have anyone against you. I had three sitting members.

Dr BROAD - What you are forgetting is that you are actually in government. This is your one chance for the week to put an idea out there, something you are going to campaign on, something you believe in and stand for, that you can do for your community. This is your chance and you choose to use that chance by being given this graveyard shift. We can see from the audience here how much respect they are giving you.

We have seen this tedious repetition in this place before. In my previous parliament, I did get elected on a recount. I was in for a year and I saw Joan Rylah and Adam Brooks, the backbenchers at the time, being propped forward and made to do these sorts of rubbish stunts and it did not really help. What you are doing here is a career-limiting move.

You are very lucky that in this place we do not have a software program called Turn It In that is used by lecturers at universities and so on. When somebody hands in an assignment you put the document into Turn It In - you can ask your cousin, Richard, about this because he would use it all the time - and it basically picks up all the plagiarism. For the lecturer it will highlight in bold all the bits that someone else has said before.

Mr Tucker - They were actually quotes from Labor premiers.

Dr BROAD - I do not reckon there is any new material in there at all. There might be one or two different words.

Mr Tucker - They were quotes from them so you can't call that plagiarism.

Dr BROAD - I cannot believe you are trying to defend yourself.

Mr Tucker - I can't believe you're going down this line.

Dr BROAD - This wet bus ticket that I am getting beaten up with now at the moment is absolutely flooring me.

Mr Tucker - Cousin Richard will be disappointed in you.

Dr BROAD - We can talk about that at another time but that was dithering criticism and beating us up with a wet bus ticket and basically regurgitating speeches from other people. You run exactly the same lines. The same people who were writing this rubbish when I first started in this place two and a half years ago are still regurgitating the same rubbish. It is just that someone else is doing the actual vomiting, the upchucking, of it and trying to make sure they can get through 40 minutes.

This is really embarrassing. You should consider what you are doing next time and try to do something that is not a time-wasting stunt, does not lack credibility, that is not confused. It shows you have nothing to offer and results in a lacklustre effort and fails to land a blow.

You have had time in the role now. It is time to stand up for your community and not waste parliament's time with this complete rubbish, otherwise is this the peak of your career to be the so-called 5.00 p.m. Wednesday hitman? It is not edifying and you need to wake up to how you are being used by your parliamentary colleagues. They are making you say stuff that nobody in a sane mind would be saying once, let alone five or six times in the same speech.

We need to treat this motion, this time-wasting stunt, with the irrelevance it deserves. It is completely out of touch and fixated on peripheral issues. The language in your motion is in your own language. All you need to do is reread your own speech with a different pair of glasses on and you would understand that this is not a very good move for your career.

[5.49 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, like my colleague, Dr Broad, I am very disappointed at its overtly political tone. I wonder what good that can possibly do for the Tasmanian people. At the risk of disappointing the Liberal Government the Labor Party is doing what we do best at the moment and that is fighting. We are fighting against inequality in this state. I am a very proud member of the Australian Labor Party and I will always put that on the record. I am also well aware of the inner workings of the Labor family. We do have robust debate and often disagree

and sometimes some of our members make public comments, yes. That is part of our culture. That is part of us demonstrating robust debate about what is best for our community. We read, we listen, we learn and we have differing opinions and there is nothing wrong with that.

One thing we do well is come together to fight against inequality and unfairness. It is one of our core beliefs. That is also what binds us all as Labor Party members and I am very proud of that. I grew up in a house in which Labor Party meetings were held at my parent's kitchen table. I was raised with the knowledge that the Labor Party stands for the collective, the whole community, and we do not believe in growing inequality. We believe in growing equality, a place where nowhere is left behind. I believe this Government is leaving many Tasmanians behind in a desperate attempt to cling to power. I do not know a person who works any harder than our leader, Rebecca White. One day, she will make a brilliant and very progressive premier. We will not ever pull stunts like you have done today. It was disgraceful. It makes one embarrassed to see that this happens on the floor of the Tasmanian Parliament.

I believe that the greatest growth area the Government has managed to achieve is in growing inequality in this state. That is what you have managed to do in the last six years. There is no plan. I sat in the housing affordability committee with Mr Tucker and we learnt that Tasmania will have 160 000 extra people living here in the next 50 years. I can tell you that there is no comprehensive infrastructure or social service plan to invite those 160 000 people to be here in the next 50 years. If I have a get-together at my house, I write out a little plan about what I need to do and who I will invite. You have invited 160 000 people to our state and you have no plan. You cannot say in your silly motion that we have no plan. You have no plan. The only thing you are good at is growing inequality.

We have a population with a functional illiteracy rate of 50 per cent. We have the highest unemployment rate in Australia. There are now an estimated 120 000 Tasmanian people living in poverty. That is one in five. You are growing inequality. That is what you are doing and all you can do is stand up with silly motions and waste 40 minutes of parliament's time on ridiculous, futile attempts to try to land some strikes on our fabulous leader. It is not appropriate.

The social housing waiting list now has 3216 applications. They are not people; they are applications. Each application stands for a family. That list is of around 5000 people. There are about 2000 applicants on that waiting list that are priority one. They have poor health, there are children involved, they may have a disability; they are priority one. You will not ever provide the real statistic about how many people that is though, will you? You will not because you are too busy saying that we have this number of people on the waiting list. It is not, they are applications on the waiting list and that is how you work. You spin, spin, spin all the time. There is no honesty. All you are good at doing is growing inequality.

We have the highest unemployment statistics for young people in this country. Each industry group that we have been speaking to in our industry advisory councils indicate that there is a complete lack of supply. There is a great demand for building and construction, there is a great demand for people to work in the health sector, there is a great demand for people to work in disability services but you cannot supply them. There is a huge gap in the middle. We have the highest unemployment rates and some of the highest demand rates and your Government is so busy building inequality, with 100 000 Tasmanians in poverty, that you cannot bridge that gap.

There are clear trends that tell us that the Tasmanian housing crisis has only just begun. Sorry for the doom and gloom while you are busy wasting 40 minutes of the parliament's time. We have

a housing crisis that has not even peaked yet. This is only the start of it. You can call me scaremongering but that came from every single expert who provided information at the housing affordability committee. You were there, Mr Tucker. Shame on you. You should know better. You sat through five days of some of the greatest minds in this country, who came to give us that information. Now I am thinking, was that all supposed to be a talkfest? Will that all go to waste because this man was not listening or does not understand that we have a huge problem? We have a massive problem in our state and all you can do is rip shreds off Rebecca White or Labor. It is beyond that. It is bigger than this and you really must lift your game and do a better job.

[5.56 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a highly political and silly motion in the way it is drafted. We would have to agree with a number of things in it, however. It is clear that Labor has failed to develop a long-term plan for Tasmania and we have seen that time and again. There is never an alternative budget. There is no visionary work on climate change or the climate emergency. The level of petty politics that has been played by the Labor Party in the name of doing everything possible to avoid being in a vote with the Greens is depressing. It is shameful and it is reckless. They failed to support our motion today to require the fire and emergency services minister to provide information to parliament about resourcing for bushfire fighters and remote area teams for the upcoming summer firefighting season. They failed to support our call for the minister to respond on the recommendations that have been adopted and acted upon following the AFAC Review. This speaks volumes to the fact that Labor has lost itself in the wilderness.

In the *Mercury* today, David Killick has written a comment column to note that -

Labor's declaration of war on the Greens means the dynamic has changed. Gone is any prospect of reforms like pill testing, voluntary assisted dying, increasing the size of parliament or a Human Rights Act.

We hope he is wrong but all the signs are there that Labor would do anything, throw any good policy, any commitment to progressive values, any commitment even to its party's longstanding voting position on bills or issues is junked in the name of being a small target, saying nothing and standing for nothing. Even the long-time social justice campaigner, Rodney Croome, said today that -

Labor has been scared into veering right by the federal election result.

When Labor MPs say 'if you want progressive law reform you have to vote us in', I remind them that voters will not respect a party that is so easily spooked,"

This is the party whose leader went to their state conference a couple of weekends ago wanting to reconnect with those Tasmanians who like to go fishing, camp with a swag, and, 'go spotlighting for wallabies'. This is the party that is silent on native animal protection. It is not putting up any resistance to the Government on any single issue. Why are they here at all? Why do they turn up to work every day? It is essential for a democratic system to have a government that is scrutinised. Every single person sitting on the other side of the Chamber from the Government ought to be doing that job. The Greens are doing that job. It is the role of the Labor Party along with the Greens to be an opposition.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Sydney Contemporary Arts Fair - Tasmanian Galleries Exhibits

[6.00 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Arts) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise this evening to not only acknowledge our Government's strong support for the arts sector, specifically the cultural and creative industries in this state, but also our Tasmanian art galleries which from tomorrow will be exhibiting at Sydney Contemporary, Australia's largest arts fair. Last year I had an opportunity to attend, knowing that this year and beyond we would be assisting with funding for some of our galleries to display artworks by our artists. I was able to attend because it was on the way to one of my ministerial council meetings which happened to be for Arts ministers, so it was very timely.

Unfortunately this year, falling on a sitting week, I cannot go, but I would have loved to have seen the exhibitions by the Bett Gallery, Despard Gallery and Michael Bugelli Gallery which will present the works of some of Tasmania's leading contemporary artists and also emerging artists, I must stress, on an international stage, and that is thanks to our new Art Fair Industry Development Initiative through Arts Tasmania. Through the initiative we have committed \$80 000 per year for three years for a total of \$240 000 to help Tasmanian galleries represent artists in key national markets. It is very expensive to exhibit at the Sydney Contemporary in terms of getting these pieces there and the display as well so the enormity of that excludes some of our galleries from taking part.

This commitment of ours demonstrates our strong support for our arts and cultural sectors which, according to the ABS data, injected approximately \$179 million into the Tasmanian economy last year. It is worth noting that two assessments took place for the support we provided these galleries. The first was by Sydney Contemporary itself as part of its curatorial selection in accepting the galleries to the art fair, and the second was managed by Arts Tasmania in accordance with the Cultural and Creative Industries Act 2017 which is legislation brought in by our Government. In fact I think it was the first bill I brought into this place as a minister.

In the first stage, three Tasmanian galleries were accepted into Sydney Contemporary as part of its assessment process. In the second stage, applications were assessed by independent peers, drawn from the Cultural and Creative Industries Expert Register, again another initiative of our Government to have these decisions at arm's length from the minister. I approve recommendations from that expert peer register and that allows the process to remain independent.

The Bett, Despard and Michael Bugelli galleries are featuring work of some of Tasmania's most exciting established and emerging artists. Despard Gallery will be presenting work by Geoff Dyer, who is a very established artist, and Todd Jenkins, Sam Field and Patrick Hall. This will include a new major sculptural installation by Patrick Hall based on the nursery rhyme *Ten Green Bottles* called 'If they should accidentally fall'. Originally exhibited as part of Dark Mofo this year, this major presentation is made up of multiple sculptural works and could be considered Hall's most exciting and ambitious body of work to date.

Bett Gallery will present work by Tasmanian artists Amanda Davies, Julie Gough, David Keeling, Joan Ross, Richard Wastell, Belinda Winkler and Philip Wolfhagen. Julie Gough's research and art practice involves uncovering and representing historical events, often referring to

her own and her family's experiences as Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Her work is currently also featured in the major solo exhibition *Tense Past* at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, which I had the pleasure of opening. Michael Bugelli Gallery will present a solo installation by Henry Papin (Meijers and Walsh). This will be Michael Bugelli Gallery's first exhibition at Sydney Contemporary after recent noteworthy installations at Dark Mofo, The National 2019: New Australian Art and the Auckland Art Fair.

Henry Papin, a fictional character created by Mish Meijers and Tricky Walsh, is an obsessive collector of objects and experiences, with the resulting works culminating in large and complex installations. The work is also featured in Detached Cultural Organisation's collection in Hobart which I have recently had a tour of and it is truly a phenomenal art collection.

Through the Art Fair Industry Development Initiative, we are also showcasing Tasmanian work at Sydney Contemporary with a series of public events. This includes a spotlight on Tasmanian culture featuring Michael Bugelli, who is the gallerist, Annaliese Gregory, head chef at Franklin, artists Julie Gough, Fiona Hall and Patrick Hall, and moderated by Jarrod Rawlins, a curator at MONA. This panel will talk about Tasmania's cultural landscape, how it has shaped and informed their practice and how it has grown and changed over the years. There will also be a series of tours led by TMAG's principal curator, Jane Stewart, who will be highlighting all things Tasmanian to art fair attendees.

Sydney Contemporary is one of the most significant annual events in the Australian art scene, operating as an essential point of entry into the international art market and bringing together leading commercial galleries, public institutions, private museums and festivals from Australia and around the world. This year it will feature 90 galleries and showcase the work of over 450 leading and emerging artists from more than 30 countries. The event, which runs from Thursday to Sunday, 15 September, provides collectors, industry professionals and the art-loving public with access to cutting-edge art from some of the world's most respected artists and galleries, as well as the opportunity to discover new emerging talent, which I think is one of the most exciting parts of this opportunity. Last year's event attracted thousands of collectors and art lovers and the participating artists received around \$10 million in sales.

Time expired.

Seal Death - Bruny Island

[6.07 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I draw the House's attention to a photo which has been sent to the minister. It is a photo of a dead seal that was taken last Saturday afternoon at Dennes Point.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - I remind the member that props are not allowed to be used in parliament.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let the *Hansard* record that it is a photo of a whole dead seal lying on the sand that was taken at Dennes Point beach on North Bruny last Saturday afternoon. This seal had been there for a number of weeks. We have been contacted several times by different people who have also taken photos of this seal. That beach is directly opposite two fish farming operations. We know that members of the public have reported that dead

seal and sent photos of it to Parks and Wildlife - at least two people have done that - but it is clearly still there, which is why I am raising this as an issue. This seal should have been removed and an autopsy into the conditions of death ought to have been undertaken.

So what is going on here? Why has there been no action on this dead seal? There are reasons it is important to do autopsies on seals near fish farms because we know too well that the operations of fish farms have killed unknown numbers but probably thousands of seals, as well as forced relocations of seals from the south to the north of the state, as well as seals having suffered 39 000 crackers exploded near their heads, some of them causing deafness and blindness, over a three-year period, as reported by the ABC last year.

Seals have been exposed to all manner of different attempts to deter them from eating fish. What is this Government doing to make sure that the operations of fish farm workers, as well as keeping them safe, is ensuring the welfare of the seals? There are ways of deterring seals from fish farm operations that do not harm seals and do not put them into situations where they are caged with other male seals, sometimes for days or weeks, often left to starve as a form of punishment. We have had numbers of unverified reports alleging large numbers of penned seals. I have had people contact me in desperation, someone sent me a video and I forwarded that to Parks last year and no action was taken. It is always radio silence when it comes to seals. What is going on? I asked the minister last week why I have not had briefings on this issue and why we are refused any information about seals. There is a cone of silence as to how fish farm employees are managing seals in their operations.

All animal protections in Tasmania are effectively cancelled when they collide in any sense at all with the business interests of mining companies, fish farm companies, forestry industry work and, it seems, even for agricultural landowners. Exceptions are created, animal protections are put out of sight, out of mind. Monitoring, if it is done at all, is done by the companies, which put their own interests first. This is a totally outrageous situation. I call on the minister and I will write to him to find out why there has been no autopsy of this seal and demand that we are given some information, on behalf of Tasmanian's who are concerned about animal welfare.

Laurel House - 30th Anniversary

[6.13 p.m.]

Ms HOUSTON (Bass) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about the work of Laurel House. Laurel House, the north and north-west Tasmania's sexual assault support service will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year. Much has changed since 1989. As Laurel House celebrates 30 years of operation it is worth reflecting on the extensive changes that have occurred in society during that time. The progress and innovation, particularly in the technological and medical fields, is astonishing. If we were to tell someone in 1989 of the medical advancements such as 3D printed body parts or cancer treatments with a 95 per cent success rate, email, internet or social media, they likely would not have been able to fathom these things.

The world has literally been transformed through technological advancements and significant social change over the last 30 years. However, if we had looked for similarly dramatic changes in the reduction of sexual assaults over this time, we would be bitterly disappointed. Sexual assaults have increased by 40 per cent across Australia since 2010. Movements such as MeToo have been positive and revealed how widespread and non-discriminatory sexual violence is. That has also shone a light on the considerable stigma still associated with disclosure. While more people are

coming forward to report their experiences to counselling services, there are still extremely low rates of prosecution and conviction. Despite all the progress over 30 years, the facts remain. The most evasive form of violence experienced by women in Australia is still violence perpetrated by a male intimate partner. The statistics for men in same-sex relationships are also on the rise. There is still much to change.

The approaches used to address community attitudes towards gender roles sexuality domestic violence and sexual assault can strongly influence both the prevalence of this violence and the disclosure and reporting rates.

Laurel House's new CEO, Justine Brooks, has set about making the organisation more efficient in order to effectively meet the needs of a rapidly-growing client case load, while also transforming the organisation into a more prominent, vocal advocate for sexual assault support awareness and the compounding effects that sexual assault has on us as a society. Over the 30 years Laurel House has been in operation it has conservatively estimated that over 20 000 people in northern Tasmania have benefitted from the free counselling support and education services. Of this number, it is estimated based on current percentages that less than a third of these crimes have been reported to police and, of those, approximately 1 per cent will have resulted in a criminal conviction of the perpetrator. It is simply not good enough and there is much, much more to be done.

While much has changed in 30 years, not enough has changed. What has been consistent over that time is the quality of support Laurel House provides to the survivors of sexual assault. Laurel House has come from very modest beginnings. Its origins lay with a handful of passionate women who possessed a burning desire to address sexual violence and support victims across the north of the state. Laurel House first opened its doors in Launceston in March 1989 after much planning by a dedicated group of volunteers who recognised the desperate need for a community-based sexual assault support service.

In the very beginning, Laurel House had just two staff providing therapeutic services. Over the last 30 years Laurel House has grown in its mission, working across northern Tasmania to provide counselling, education, training and support within the community. They are committed to the provision of high-quality service and empower survivors of sexual assault while working toward a world free of violence. The staff work each and every day to empower survivors to address trauma and to lead lives not defined by the abuse they have experienced.

It is worth noting that Laurel House has always identified as a feminist service. From the very earliest days up until the early 2000s this meant that the service functioned as a collective, with a small number of women working together and taking equal responsibility for all areas of the work. Over time, with increasing demand for service and the introduction into Laurel House of services for children and for men who experienced sexual abuse, there was a growing recognition of the need for structural change. The service is constantly evolving and changing to reflect current needs of the community. While the structure has changed and not everyone can or should be involved in every decision or every area of service, what remains the same is the view of sexual violence. Laurel House continues to hold and work within a feminist understanding of violence itself. Laurel House's commitment to the rights of the victims to regain control of their own lives has always been the fundamental orientation of the service. Laurel House is where victims become survivors.

With all that has been achieved over the last 30 years what matters the most is what Laurel House does next. As Laurel House looks to the future, the mission continues to be the eradication of sexual violence and the trauma it causes and we should all work towards that change. Laurel

House will always advocate for the elimination of violence and for survivors of sexual violence to be afforded justice. Laurel House will continue to work collaboratively with other like organisations to strengthen communities, build capacity and share knowledge and to lobby for justice. As one of many proud past custodians of Laurel House, I know its future is in good hands and I look forward to the achievements of service over the next 30 years.

Bangor Farm and Dunbabin Family

[6.19 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to night to talk about Bangor. Bangor is the family farm managed by Matt and Vanessa Dunbabin. Matt and Vanessa have three children, who are part of the seventh generation of the Dunbabin family in Tasmania and the fourth generation of Dunbabins to be raised at Bangor. The Dunbabin family started managing Bangor in the late 1800s. The family had a rich Tasmanian history, with John Dunbabin arriving in Tasmania as a convict in December 1830. Bangor is a four-hectare vineyard on a 6000-hectare farming property located on the Forestier Peninsula, at Dunalley, in Tasmania's south-east, with over 35 kilometres of beautiful, breathtaking coastline.

Bangor and the Forestier Peninsula also have a long and proud cultural history, from Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage to the first European explorers visiting Bangor's shores in 1642. Hoisting the Dutch flag on Bangor's shores was Abel Tasman's carpenter, the first contact between Aborigines and Europeans, which occurred on Two Mile Beach in 1772.

Bangor was developed as a farm in the 1830s for supplying food to the penal settlement at Port Arthur. Whaling stations also operated in Lagoon Bay at that time. The development of Bangor began in the early 1800s, prior to the construction of the Denison Canal at Dunalley in 1904.

When the penal settlement at Port Arthur was established in 1830, it became vital that food be supplied to the settlement. Areas of land capable of being ploughed, including parts of Bangor, were quickly taken up and cleared up for sown grass and crops. John Spotswood was the first landowner on what is now Bangor. Having a gang of assigned convicts, he supplied beef to Port Arthur and was also involved in whaling.

In 1890, Thomas Dunbabin purchased 2000 acres of land at the western end of what is now known as Bangor. In 1899, he also acquired land at Lagoon Bay. Thomas' holdings were consolidated by his sons, William and Murdoch, who purchased adjoining land as it came up for sale in the early 1900s.

From running sheep in the bush to the sale of possum and wallaby furs, this was a profitable business at Bangor. A mill was established in the 1920s at the mouth of the Blackman Rivulet. Timber was sourced from state forests in the south and, to transport the logs, a light railway was built. Being a large mill, it employed up to 20 men. The business did not survive the 1930s depression and the mill was eventually burnt down. In the 1950s, the Dunbabins began to clear bush area, enabling an increase in the number of sheep and cattle. The forest areas provided timber for building and fencing logs were harvested and milled, using small bush mills.

In 1968, Thomas Dunbabin purchased his brother's interest in Bangor and also the adjoining property known as Colaba. He improved the quality of Bangor's wool, selecting superfine Saxon

Merino sheep. Hereford beef cattle were also introduced as a major enterprise. Pasture improvement continued in the 1970s and 1980s, and Thomas' sons helped to run the property.

Bangor is a home to a range of native plants species and native Tasmanian animals, including threatened species such as the Tasmanian devil, swift parrots, sea eagles and wedge-tailed eagles. The protection and sustainability of this special environment forms the core of the management values and practices at Bangor.

The Dunbabin family run an extensive grading operation for superfine Merino sheep, prime beef and prime lambs. Their superfine Merino stud utilises the best available breeding techniques aimed to produce the very best, most profitable lambs. Running a flock of 5000 superfine Merino sheep which produces some of the world's finest, softest and brightest wool, this fibre eventually ends up in high-quality fabric used for premium clothing, suiting next-to-skin wear, and outdoor wear.

The extensive areas of native pastures at Bangor are ideal for growing this type of wool. They provide balanced nutrition year around which in turn allows the wool fibre to grow evenly and strongly. Native plants covering the soil also reduce dust and dirt contamination of the fleece, ensuring the wool remains at a very high standard.

Farming at Bangor today is based around wool, beef and lamb production. Current developments include irrigation to grow crops and fatten livestock as well as Bangor's vineyard, which produces premium cool-climate wine.

Ida Bay Railway - Government Support

[6.24 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to talk about a much-loved tourism facility that is not receiving love from the state Government, and that is the Ida Bay Railway. The Ida Bay Railway has for many years provided a tourism option for people in the deep south and I have been on the trip and visited the place a number of times, as have many Tasmanians and tourists. It has had a bit of an up and down decade in terms of issues with infrastructure and the ability to get the rail up and going to perform the tourist trips. It has been a real challenge and there has been a change in ownership.

One of the questions that the local community is asking is what is the state Government's intention. The minister for Parks, Mr Gutwein, is the responsible minister and a number of people in the local community are asking questions about the Premier as the Minister for Tourism, the minister for Infrastructure, Mr Ferguson, and the Parks minister, Mr Gutwein, in terms of their commitment to this tourism asset for the south of the state, a region that relies heavily on tourists and because it is so far south, a number of other communities on the way south feel the benefit of that activity. They go through Huonville, Franklin, Geeveston, Dover, et cetera, so there are a number of communities who feel the benefit of tourism expenditure in their community.

There is an organisation called The Friends of Ida Bay who have a strong interest in the future of the railway, but we are hearing crickets and frogs from the state Government. There has been no word from the Premier, the minister for Parks, Mr Gutwein, or from the minister for Infrastructure, Mr Ferguson, about what they are doing to support that community.

The Morrison Government virtually abandoned that community after the fires. They made a whole range of promises and commitments. The Labor Party was down there extensively working with local communities and at the last federal election there was a significant package put forward for the local community to build and protect jobs and to support that community, but we are hearing absolutely nothing. I raise it on adjournment to shine a light on the lack of action and lack of information given to the local community by this Government for what is and could be an important tourism asset.

2019 Tasmanian State Training Awards

[6.27 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate all the finalists and winners of the 2019 Tasmanian State Training Awards held last Friday. I mentioned it briefly in question time yesterday. It was a great evening, celebrating education and learning that, as we know, is so important to Tasmania. There were over 560 people in attendance last Friday evening and it made for a very special night for not only the trainees and the finalists but their families, many of whom were present as well.

For those shortlisted, it is an exceptional achievement and highlights their hard work, dedication and skills as being truly recognised and the businesses they work for as well. The individual winners I would like to congratulate were Marek Porter, Apprentice of the Year; Stephen Witkowski, Trainee of the Year; Djuker Willis-Hart, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year; Benjamin Ling, Vocational Student of the Year; Daniel Ragg, School-Based Apprentice of the Year; Georgia Elias, VET in School Student of the Year; Anna Daniel, Equity Vocational Student of the Year; Debra Blake, Equity Apprentice and Trainee of the Year; Darren Scott, VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year; and Lyndene Bowen, who won the Trevor Leo Medal.

The organisation winners were St Vincent's Industries, Equity Employer of the Year; St Luke's Health, with TasTAFE and MEGT, Industry Collaboration Award; Crusader Homes, Small Employer of the Year; Fairbrother, Employer of the Year; and Tasmanian Secondary Colleges RTO, Training Provider of the Year, and they were very excited at their success. It is a great list of winners for Tasmania, some of whom I hope to see in Brisbane at the National Training Awards later this year.

I am also very proud of Tasmania's vocational education and training system. We are leading the nation, outperforming the Australian average across most key indicators, and I am very pleased again that in the trades, apprentice and trainee commencements, while they declined nationally by 0.6 per cent, in Tasmania they have increased by almost 10.5 per cent. We also have the highest completion rates for apprentices and trainees in the country and that is a tremendous achievement. I acknowledge TasTAFE CEO Jenny Dodd, and recognise the efforts made by Ms Dodd and her team, and Lyndene Bowen, who won the Trevor Leo Medal, as they work to strengthen our public training provider. Their commitment is reflected in the seven-year accreditation of TasTAFE of a national vocational education and training regulator, ASQA. That is the maximum re-registration term and an amazing result.

I am also very proud of the high standard of trainees and apprentices we are producing in Tasmania. It is time to mention local cabinetmaker once again, Joshua Boon, who recently returned from Russia as part of Australia's Skilleroos team at WorldSkills 2019 International Championships. Josh's national selection came from his gold medal win at the national WorldSkills

finals in June 2018. Tasmania's team of apprentices and trainees took out the overall award as best-performing region in Australia, picking up six gold medals, a silver and two bronze. I am happy to advise that Josh came in at sixth place against competitors from more than 37 countries, which is a great achievement in the international stage. Perhaps his greatest celebration, as I mentioned on Friday night at the training awards, was at the airport upon his return from Russia where he was greeted by his new baby daughter, Willow Grace Boon, and I congratulate Josh and his family.

My thanks go to everyone involved with the awards, including Skills Tasmania. Jacqui MacLaine was singled out for a special mention from Skills Tasmania, who has been coordinating the event for many years now. It was a fantastic event for the industries, the businesses and the finalists, et cetera, friends and teachers of our finalists. I thank them for their support and congratulate all of the shortlisted finalists and winners.

Fortescue Bay Shop and Kiosk - Closure

[6.32 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight on an issue in my electorate of Lyons. I am very disappointed to learn that the Fortescue Bay shop and kiosk will cease to exist on 28 September this year. The kiosk has been run by the caretakers, Matt and Kristy Stapenell, who have been doing it for a number of years now, making sure that campers and visitors to Fortescue Bay can have a very supported experience and use the kiosk and the shop to supply them with anything they might have forgotten when packing for their camping trip.

Unfortunately, the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service have decided that the Fortescue Bay site no longer requires a contract caretaker and will instead staff the site with employees. I first became aware that this might be occurring in August. I wrote to the Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage, Peter Gutwein, on 1 August, raising concerns that had been brought to my attention from the community that the contract for the caretaker for the area was not going to be renewed and that would mean there would be no caretaker managing this area in the future.

I have it on good authority, and I can see from the comments in response to a Facebook post put up by the Fortescue Bay shop and the Tasman Peninsula, that this is a well-loved service and incredible messages of support demonstrate that this has been a well-utilised service as well. Given that understanding, I wrote asking why the minister had made a decision to cease the contract for the caretaker, particularly given the increasing number of tourists visiting the peninsula and Fortescue Bay and understanding that this is a very popular area. There is a wonderful campground there for families and it does also form part of the beginning of the Cape Hauy walk that is part of the very popular Three Capes Track.

I received a response to my correspondence on 22 August from the Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage, who confirmed that the contract for services at Fortescue Bay campground was due to expire on 28 September. In this letter, the minister also advised that an additional one-year extension was approved and granted, which was the maximum extension permitted under the Tasmanian Government procurement principles, but that the caretakers, Matt and Kristy Stapenell, would not be re-engaged to run that service and the Parks and Wildlife Service will run that service instead.

However, they will not be running the shop and the kiosk. They will continue to run the office for the next year and it will be staffed with visitor service officers to manage bookings and provide information. Campers at Fortescue Bay will no longer have access to the shop or the kiosk. That is a concern because it has been a staple of the visitor experience there and a lot of people will be returning to camp at Fortescue Bay this coming summer and will probably be unaware at this stage that those services will no longer exist and they will not have the opportunity to buy their local supplies from the Fortescue Bay shop. The closest supply store is the Port Arthur General Store and that is approximately 20 kilometres away or a 40-minute return trip.

I am concerned the Government has chosen not to continue providing this caretaker service. I am unaware of any complaints that have been made about the caretakers. I am looking at the messages on their Facebook page - Fortescue Bay Shop, Tasman Peninsula. It is very clear it was a well-utilised and well-appreciated service and both Matt and Kristy have received a lot of comments from the public, saying that they will be very deeply missed.

I am puzzled about the decision made by the Government. I am thankful that they have extended the contract for a year, so that there is at least some provision of service for people wanting to book on that site and to find out information about visiting the Tasman Peninsula, which is a very popular tourist destination.

There will be lots of regular campers who will return this year and find fewer services there as a direct result of the Hodgman Government's decision to cease the contract caretakers' role. There will no longer be a shop or a kiosk. That is a great loss for the Tasman Peninsula and for all the campers who enjoy that site. I do raise a concern that this could be, again, one of the victims of the Hodgman razor gang and the \$450 million in cuts that are being felt by all agencies, including recreational campers and some of our regional tourism destinations, like Fortescue Bay.

2019 Tasmanian Timber Awards

[6.37 p.m.]

Mrs RYLAH (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I stand here proudly tonight to recognise people in our wonderful timber industry. Tasmanian timber is some of the best in the world but we also now know that some of the people who work in the industry are amazingly innovative and clever. I suspect that in time we will find that some of the people working in our industry are the best in the world also.

On the 9 August 2019, I had the privilege of representing the Minister for Resources at the 2019 Tasmanian Timber Awards. This inaugural event brought together more than 300 people from all sectors across the forest, fine timber and wood fibre industry to celebrate excellence and best practice in the Tasmanian timber industry. The award night saw 50 finalists across 13 categories specialising in the forestry, timber and wood-processing sectors of the industry. Individuals and organisations were awarded for excellence in timber processing, environmental management, forest growing and management, harvesting, skill development and creating a unique innovation in any area of the Tasmanian timber industry. The judges ranged from environmental scientists to millers and policymakers. The event was organised and incredibly well-run by the Tasmanian Forest and Forest Products Network, which was established in 2017 through the Strategic Growth Plan for the Tasmanian Forest, Fine Timber and Wood Fibre Industry. The network was launched in May 2018 with a \$100 000 seed grant from the Government and in October 2018, this Government provided

the network with another \$100 000 to assist with ongoing projects as part of the 2018-19 Budget, but that was not the purpose of the night.

The purpose of the night was to recognise the amazing sense and achievements of the industry. This sector remains vital to our economy, contributing \$1.2 billion and supporting 5700 Tasmanians and their families. It is my pleasure tonight to congratulate the recipients of the awards and they are as follows - distribution and logistics excellence, Neville Smith Forest Products; environmental excellence, Forico; forest growing and management excellence, Forico; harvesting excellence, Mechanised Logging, Scottsdale; innovation, the Warren French Architect and Valley Workshop; regional community development, Neville Smith Forest Products; skill development and training excellence, Mechanised Logging; timber processing excellence, Timberlink; workplace health and safety excellence, Mechanised Logging; trainee of the year, Mechanised Logging, who had a fabulous night and were a really enthusiastic group; tree farmer of the year, Sue and Owen Smith; outstanding contribution to the Tasmanian timber industry, Penny Wells from Private Forest Tasmania for her years of outstanding work to the forest industry; and outstanding contribution to the Tasmanian Timber Industry, Craig Patmore from Sustainable Timber Tasmania.

I acknowledge the significant hard work done by the network working group members, in particular Therese Taylor, and the 14 judges who contributed to this outstanding event. It was great fun and I am so proud of them.

Homelessness

[6.41 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to update the House on the plight of some constituents. I have two offices, an electorate office in Longford and an electorate office in Bridgewater and these particular cases are from my Bridgewater office where Christina works. I have one full-time staff member split across two offices, so two part-time people, and they put in a tremendous amount of effort and also contribute quite a significant amount of their own time.

I am not going to name people but I am going to continue to do this on the adjournment because it is important for the record that the House is aware and the *Hansard* has a record of some of the plight of Tasmanian families at the moment and how long it is, just so people out there know what is going on because it can be very much a bit of a bubble in here.

This is a case of a family of five - mum, dad and three children, a 14-year-old boy and twin 11-year-old daughters, and they have been homeless now for over 12 months. They spent last summer living in a tent in Bothwell on a site there and in March they had to move on due to tourist bookings. Mum and the children got a short stay at the Hobart Women's Shelter whilst the father slept in the car, and mum and the girls were then moved on six weeks after they had been in the shelter.

Through the help of different services we have been able to get them in touch with, and also Christina from my office, who is just fantastic, they found a refuge base camp in Glenfern but they had to leave there as well because that place had prior bookings. The mum and girls were then taken back into the women's shelter and at the moment they have until 25 September before they are moved on again. Through all of this, these resilient amazing people, this amazing family, have managed to stay together and get their kids to school every day. They are actively engaging with

all the service providers and are still making absolutely no progress with getting a home. That is one story.

Another one which the minister, Mr Jaensch's office is assisting with at the moment is a 69-year-old grandfather and grandmother who have kinship care of their eight-year-old granddaughter. She has been with them since she was about three months old. They will be homeless on Sunday. The lease on the private rental they have had for the last five years was not renewed. They are good tenants; it is just that the lease was not renewed. They have not been able to find anything else. They cannot obtain social housing so they will be homeless as of Sunday, but there is a real concern about the kinship care arrangement and whether they will be separated from their granddaughter because of that. I am hoping we can find some kind of positive outcome on that level but there is nothing there for them. They have been told by Housing that it will be six months at least until they will be able to find something.

There is another story about a lady. She and her son were living in a tent at the back of the Dunalley pub for quite a long time and there are people who often use that place for seeking shelter because it is a safe place. We were able to transition them in the middle of winter through to some crisis accommodation. That was with some amazing help from Jordan River Services and also Christina from my office. They are now living in shelter accommodation but there is nowhere permanent for them yet. It is going to take some time. The little lad has already been to three different schools. He is in primary school and Child Services were very concerned as well as to whether she was able to adequately look after her son. He was waking up in the middle of the night to go to the toilet when they were in the tent in Dunalley and she was having to pop him in the car and drive him to the toilet block and then drive him back. They were also using gas heating in the tents, or gas cooking, and people can fall asleep when there is not adequate ventilation in the tents.

Mrs Rylah - Isn't it in a bottle when you are camping?

Ms BUTLER - How on earth can you interrupt? I do not understand that. It is so out of touch.

It is important that I constantly place these things on the record. It is important that we have a record at this time in Tasmania's history of how difficult it is for many people. We have 120 000 people in Tasmania living in poverty and there is no room for any kind of interjection when it comes to this. It is an accurate account of what is happening across our community. We have an obligation to make sure that we never ever fall into this trap again. We must not let this situation we are in happen again.

Country Football

[6.47 p.m.]

Mr SHELTON (Lyons - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a quick contribution in my role as the patron for the Oatlands Football District Association. Football finals are happening right at the moment and last weekend was the final in the OFDA where Mt Pleasant defeated Campania. I offer my commiserations to Campania. Mt Pleasant were the victors and no doubt they had some celebrations over the weekend.

Country football is so important to our regions and as patron of the association, I want to say congratulations not only to the football clubs and the winners and so forth but to every single

volunteer out there, from the presidents down to the people who on the gates, the canteen ladies and anybody who works for a country football team or any football team.

Our heritage is AFL here in Tasmania. In order to keep these clubs going, there needs to be significant effort put in every year to raise the finances, to manage the club, organise all the players and everything that goes into it, and it is a fantastic effort.

As the season finishes for clubs, the volunteers can heave a sigh of relief knowing it is over for a few weeks, but in order to get their club back on the field next year, that relief does not last long. There is a fantastic effort that goes into that.

There are some clubs around the place that struggled this season for players, funds and volunteers. To everybody who is involved in football, congratulations for the time you put into it. The community needs you to keep doing what you are doing because football clubs in these regions are critical to the fabric of the social atmosphere of these little towns, so it is fundamental.

Looking forward, summer is coming, the season will warm up and we are into bowls and cricket from now on in. I look forward to making a similar contribution to the House at end of the summer season. For now, well done to every volunteer, every football club and every effort that goes into managing that for the season. Thank you from my point of view for the ODFA and thank you on behalf of your communities for doing what you do.

The House adjourned at 6.50 p.m.