

**Tuesday 22 May 2018**

The President, **Mr Wilkinson**, took the Chair at 2.30 p.m. and read Prayers

### **NEW MEMBERS**

The Clerk laid on the Table writs for the return of the new members of the Legislative Council:

Mr Robert Henry Francis Valentine (Hobart)

Ms Jane Colleen Howlett (Prosser)

### **MEMBERS SWORN**

The members for Hobart and Prosser, Mr Rob Valentine and Ms Jane Howlett took and subscribed the oath of allegiance.

### **CHAIR OF COMMITTEES**

#### **Appointment - Member for Murchison**

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

That the member for Murchison be appointed Chair of Committees of this Council.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEES**

#### **Appointment**

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

That the members for McIntyre, Mersey and Launceston be the Deputy Chair, second Deputy Chair and third Deputy Chair of Committees respectively in this Council.

**Motion agreed to.**

## QUESTIONS

### Roadworks - Mowbray-East Tamar Highway and Newnham Connector Intersections

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

[2.47 p.m.]

Regarding the Mowbray-East Tamar Highway and Newnham Connector intersections, about 12 months ago, the then minister, Rene Hidding, made a public statement to the effect that funding was available to make safe the Mowbray-East Tamar intersection. Will the Leader please advise -

- (1) As nothing has yet happened, is this money still available?
- (2) If so, at what stage in the planning will any changes occur there?
- (3) More importantly, when are we likely to see work commence on the site?
- (4) What will the work encompass?
- (5) What is the future situation with the Newnham Connector? That is, will the restricted use of the intersection remain a permanent fixture or will it also be upgraded to meet appropriate safety standards? That intersection has been cut off to stop traffic turning north coming out of Alanvale.

### ANSWER

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

- (1) Funding was committed over two years in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 financial years. The 2017-18 funds have been allocated to planning and design work, with the balance allocated for project construction in 2018-19.
- (2) The Department of State Growth has been consulting with the two key stakeholders, the Launceston City Council and Launceston Church Grammar School as owners and operators of the adjacent rowing facility. The project is in the final stages of design and a communications plan has been prepared to communicate project details to the wider community. This is anticipated to happen within the next four weeks.
- (3) It is expected the project will be tendered this year, with construction likely to commence in late 2018 or early 2019.
- (4) The project will involve upgrade of the existing junction and installation of traffic signals.
- (5) There are no immediate plans for further works at the East Tamar Highway-University Way junction near the Newnham Connector. The department advises the turn restrictions will remain for traffic safety reasons. It is noted the junction arrangements will need to be reassessed once planning commences on the new Tamar Bridge, consistent with the Hodgman Liberal Government's election commitment.

## **Tasmanian Cat Management Plan**

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

[2.50 p.m.]

My question is probably the first of many I will be asking on this issue over the next weeks and months. With feral cats causing significant harm in the environment and a long-term commitment from governments to address this escalating problem, my questions are -

- (1) What action has been taken by this Government to address the feral cat issue on mainland Tasmania, post the eradication of cats from Tasman and Macquarie islands?
- (2) What is the current status of the much anticipated feral cat legislation?

### **ANSWER**

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

- (1) The Tasmanian Cat Management Plan was released in mid-2017. The plan represents the first comprehensive and collaborative approach to managing cats in Tasmania. It is recognised feral cats are widespread in Tasmania and that eradication of feral cats from mainland Tasmania is not feasible at this time. Therefore the focus for controlling feral cats is around targeted areas where priority assets are under threat, such as threatened species. The other key focus is improving our knowledge of the impact and behaviour of feral cats to be able to better target control activities.

The Government has provided \$1.44 million to facilitate a greater level of involvement in cat management by local government and the broader community. Three cat management coordinators have been appointed, one in each region. The coordinators will work alongside councils to implement the Tasmanian Cat Management Plan, improve levels of responsible cat ownership, and train and assist councils to undertake compliance work under the Cat Management Act 2009.

In addition, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment has partnered with the Australian Government and Kingborough Council to deliver a feral cat management project on Bruny Island. The project includes tracking and trapping feral cats on Bruny Island, as well as working with the island community to improve levels of responsible cat ownership. This project will contribute to our knowledge on the exact impact of feral cats and how best to manage the feral cat problem.

- (2) Proposed amendments to the Tasmanian Cat Management Act 2009 are outlined in the Tasmanian Cat Management Plan and include compulsory desexing and microchipping, limits to the number of cats allowed at a property and improvements to the protection of private land provisions. Amendments will be introduced into parliament as soon as practicable.

## **Tasmanian Cat Management Plan**

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

[2.53 p.m.]

Supplementary question, Mr President: I know I have to put this through the appropriate channels at a later time, but I am interested in what 'as soon as practicable' might look like in a time frame.

### **Pain Management Services - Lack - North and North-West Tasmania**

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

[2.54 p.m.]

Persistent or chronic pain is seen in every age group, from paediatric to geriatric, and across all medical and surgical disciplines. Because of the complexity of persistent pain problems, multidisciplinary pain clinics and centres have been developed throughout Australia and New Zealand. The North West Regional Hospital and Launceston General Hospital do not currently offer any level of persistent pain management services. Private providers do exist. The Royal Hobart Hospital is a level 6 service but is not currently resourced to provide a statewide service.

There are no pain management specialists in the north or north-west regions of Tasmania, which can lead to the excessive use of opioids by patients. My questions, honourable Leader, are -

- (1) Do you acknowledge the Royal Hobart Hospital's pain service cannot cover the state and that the lack of persistent pain services for north and north-west Tasmania is a problem?
- (2) A Tasmanian Health Service - THS - business case submitted in October 2016 proposes models to improve statewide pain services in line with the One Health System white paper and the Tasmanian Role Delineation Framework as a 'high priority', which was Appendix 2A. Why has there been no progress on implementing these improvements and when is it likely to occur?

### **ANSWER**

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

- (1) Increasing access to specialist treatments for people in north and north-west Tasmania with pain conditions is a priority of this Government. The Royal Hobart Hospital Persistent Pain Service provides an important role in providing services for Tasmanians with complex pain needs that are unable to be addressed in the community.

It is acknowledged that there are some service gaps in north and north-west Tasmania and the THS is working to address these.

- (2) The THS is currently working to address identified service gaps by changing the way pain services are provided in Tasmania. The focus is on developing a statewide model of care that

increases persistent pain services to the people of north and north-west Tasmania in a safe and sustainable way.

This is a complex service change which will take time and will involve many services and stakeholders. The business case authored by the Musculoskeletal Clinical Advisory Group in 2016 proposed a number of recommendations that are being considered as part of designing and implementing the service change.

A steering committee led by THS Executive Director, Allied Health Services has been established to lead this work.

### **Pain Management Services - Lack - North and North-West Tasmania**

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

[2.57 p.m.]

I will put this supplementary question in writing, but with respect, Leader, you have not answered the question by saying that it is actually happening: when is it likely to occur? Could you give me a time frame?

### **Poker Machine Licences - Gift to Pubs and Clubs - Prospective Legislation**

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

[2.57 p.m.]

The Liberals' 100 day plan is noticeably silent on how the Government plans to gift poker machine licences to pubs and clubs. The current gaming deed comes up for renewal on 30 June, just under two months from now.

When will the Government introduce legislation to the parliament to give effect to the Government's policy?

**ANSWER**

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

The Government announced its comprehensive policy on the future of gaming in Tasmania prior to the election and work is underway to implement the policy.

The deed of agreement between the Federal Group and the Crown provides for a 15-year licence term followed by a series of five-year rolling terms that will commence on 1 July 2018 and will be renewed annually at the minister's discretion.

In accordance with the deed, the earliest the exclusivity arrangements for casino, electronic gaming machines and Keno operation in Tasmania can come to an end is therefore 30 June 2023.

The minister, who is currently the Treasurer, may determine not to renew the rolling term at any time prior to its renewal.

Accordingly, if notice of a determination by the minister not to renew is given before 1 July 2019, the current arrangements will cease on 30 June 2023. If notice is not given before 1 July 2019, the rolling term will automatically renew until 30 June 2024.

A number of key tasks are to be completed before 30 June 2023 to implement the Government's gaming reforms and the Government has ensured that appropriate resources are available to Treasury to complete the work in a timely manner.

### **Poker Machine Licences - Gift to Pubs and Clubs - Prospective Legislation**

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

[2.59 p.m.]

I will put this supplementary question in writing. The very specific part of my question was: when will the Government introduce legislation to the parliament to give effect to the government's policy?

### **Drivers Evading Police**

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

[3.00 p.m.]

My question is on the offence of drivers evading police, which is a big problem. Will the honourable Leader please advise -

- (1) The number of reported - that is, logged - offences of evading police for the financial years 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17?
- (2) An indication of the types of offences, crimes and reasons leading to the evasions?
- (3) Where there any serious outcomes or events from those evasions - in other words, crashes, accidents or injuries?
- (4) If so, what were they?

### **ANSWER**

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

- (1) The number of evading police incidents for the 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 financial years are: 2014-15 financial year - 693; 2015-17 financial year - 1211; 2016-17 financial year - 1630.

- (2) Due to the nature of the offence of evading police, it is not possible for the types of offences, crimes nor reasons to be easily determined. Drivers may evade or attempt to evade police for reasons unrelated to why the police are seeking to intercept them. When drivers are not intercepted, these reasons may never be known. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that most drivers who evade police do so because of traffic-related offences or because they are wanted for other reasons or offences.

There is also a small subset of usually young offenders who intentionally attempt to initiate police pursuits simply for the excitement.

- (3) There have been several serious outcomes relating to drivers seeking to evade police.
- (4) The highest profile incident was on 22 January 2016, when 24-year-old Sarah Paino died when the car she was driving was crashed into by a stolen vehicle driven by a 15-year-old boy.

At the time of her death, Ms Paino was 32 weeks pregnant. Her baby survived the impact and was delivered a short time later. There was public outcry over the crash and a petition containing 25 000 signatures calling for tougher laws was presented to the Tasmanian government.

Also in 2018, a 26-year-old male was convicted of causing death by dangerous driving following a crash in Roope Street, New Town. The unlicensed driver had failed to stop at an intersection and collided with a vehicle being driven by 42-year-old Vanessa Hayward. While the driver was not considered to be committing an offence of evading police, he stated that he had seen a police vehicle nearby and had taken action to avoid being seen by police.

### **SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS**

#### **Young Tasmanians' Inadequate Understanding of Laws**

[3.03 p.m.]

**Mr FINCH** (Rosevears) - Mr President, many young Tasmanians, especially young males, are becoming embittered and disillusioned because they have little understanding of laws and how they are administered. I will get to how that might be remedied shortly.

Few young Tasmanians have any understanding of the reasons for some laws when they see them being administered in an arbitrary way with a lack of transparency. Driving licence and gun licence laws are a case in point. Take driving licences for young Tasmanians. The process for a young person to obtain a full licence is so bureaucratic, lengthy and time-consuming, it encourages people to circumvent the system by gaining a licence in another state that has a more efficient licensing system and then converting it here. There seems to be no attempt to coordinate Tasmania's driving licence laws with, say, Victoria, where the system is more straightforward and logical.

Any minor breach by a probationary licence holder is harshly penalised and often threatens employment, especially if that licence applicant lives outside our major cities with no public transport. A minor breach can put a would-be driver right back at the beginning. Often young people do not understand why they have been treated so harshly. Breaches by probationary licence holders often happen because of deficient driver education. What should happen, instead of the harsh penalty, is obligatory advanced driver education.

There is a major problem with the way gun licences are administered. Gun licences for farmers' sons and others is a vague concept where morals and good character determine where a license is granted. Reasons for granting and rescinding should be clear, objective, transparent and attainable, or authority loses respect.

In one case a young person's gun licence have been suspended with no reason given. The young male on a rural property had his gun licence suspended after holding it for more than 12 months. He had committed no offence and no reason was given. Even the two police officers who delivered the suspension notice were at a loss. I am reticent to use the name of the officer and I will quote just from the beginning of the notification document -

- (1) ... being a delegate of the Commissioner of Police under section 156 of the Firearms Act 1996 am satisfied you may no longer be a fit and proper person to hold a firearms licence.

Gun licences are expensive and there was no mention of any refund. This young person had invested more than \$2000, with his rifle, scope and gun safe now useless. In effect, the suspension was the equivalent of a \$2000 fine, with no offence committed. His rifle, undergoing voluntary repairs at a Launceston gun shop, was impounded there at a rental of \$20 a month.

I point out this young man was not embittered by the suspension but remains puzzled and believes he has been unjustly treated.

Young people have other problems with laws in Tasmania, in particular the Community Service Order Scheme. This scheme is not working; it is alienating young people and hampering their job prospects. Offenders can be stuck on probation in the system for years. They are unable to go to another state or take full-time jobs because the system is so underfunded community service hours cannot be worked out in a reasonable period of time. The community service work is often meaningless instead of an opportunity to genuinely repay society by undertaking work of real value to the community.

Inadequate systems are alienating young Tasmanians and pushing some of them into positions where they are more likely to offend and break the law. These need addressing. The big problem is young Tasmanians have an inadequate understanding of laws and how they are applied. Often those expected to assist young people interpret the rules and laws, like parents, teachers, social and young workers, struggle to understand the laws themselves. Young people miss another opportunity to know when their rights should be upheld.

One large secondary school in Victoria employs a full-time lawyer who lectures, holds workshops and gives legal advice to both students and parents. He explains laws and their context and the reasons for them. Helping students to understand their rights means they are more likely to obey laws and not try to circumvent them because they do not respect them.

Tasmanian high schools and colleges cannot employ full-time lawyers, but why not have regular lectures and workshops held by a lawyer who moves from school to school? Something has to be done to make decisions on laws that affect young Tasmanians more transparent and understandable. A legal education program would reduce the number of offences committed by young people.

## Barbara Millie Sattler - Death

[3.09 p.m.]

**Ms RATTRAY** (McIntyre) - Mr President, today I share with members a little of the life of Barbara Millie Sattler, who passed away in Hobart on 30 January 2018, aged 91 years young. First, I thank the Sattler family, Barbara's sons, Richard and Peter, and her daughters, Cate and Di, and their families for their blessing to share a little of what could only be described as a fulfilling, rewarding and truly amazing life. Members may be wondering what I am doing in the member for Hobart's patch - it is fine, I have sought his permission, so thank you, honourable member.

The Sattler name is well known and respected in the north-east as prominent farmers and for the links golf courses, Barnbougale and Lost Farm. I have known Peter and Richard and their families for many years through my work in the community and my family. Richard's daughter and my daughter travelled overseas and shared some accommodation and work experiences in London a few years ago so we waved them off at the airport together and know what it is like to let your children go.

To the star of today: Barb was born in Hobart, grew up in, attended school in, New Norfolk and later St Mary's College in Hobart, and married Peter Sattler senior and raised a family.

While Barb helped to supplement the family income by raising chooks, she also worked at the University of Tasmania until 1986, assisting students.

Words shared by her granddaughter Elizabeth Sattler describing her adored nanny Barb are especially lovely -

To her family she was a master pikelet maker, tea drinker, amateur photographer, self-appointed honorary president of the gin and tonic appreciation society. Nan had a way of making everyone feel at ease and that they were valuable.

I am sure members will all agree that these are wonderful attributes for which Barb Sattler was well known by her family.

Barb's interests and involvements were wide and varied. They included being a Friend of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; a member of the committee of the University of Tasmanian Retirees, and being involved with the Soldiers Walk, Queens Domain. She was also a courier for the State Library and a member of its advisory board. She was also a member of the advisory boards of the Royal Hobart and the St John's Park hospitals.

From these interests, it can be seen that Barb had a passion for helping others. In 1972 Barb created Hear A Book, a library-based service dedicated to Tasmanians living with disabilities preventing them from being able to enjoy books. Her interest in helping others stemmed from a member of her own family who suffered from an eye disease. The Hear A Book service was the first of its kind in Australia, and in 2006, when Barb was inducted into the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women for service to the community, the service had a catalogue of more than 11 700 books recorded by volunteers.

Barbara's contribution and commitment to the Hear A Book service spanned many decades and was recognised with many awards. These included being made a Member of the British Empire in 1979; she also received the Centenary Award, the David Blyth Award from the National Federation

of Blind Citizens of Australia, the Redmond Barry Award from the Library Association of Australia, and the prestigious Rotary International Paul Harris Fellowship Award. In 2006 she was included in the *Who's Who of Australian Women*.

In 2016 the ABC's Jane Longhurst encapsulated the character of Barb Sattler in a wonderful, inspiring wartime story in a play at the Soldiers Walk. The play, called *The Three Widows*, was written about Barb and her family, and she enjoyed watching the performance in style from a buggy complete with a loud speaker. Sounds delightful, doesn't it?

**Mr Valentine** - It was. I was there.

**Ms RATTRAY** - There we are. Someone was there, thank you member for Hobart. Mr President, the list of awards are alone a fine testament to the wonderful and generous woman Barbara Sattler was and how she lived her life among the Tasmanian community. These are just some of this remarkable woman's achievements, who was described at her farewell celebration by her dear friend Gae Williams as colourful, sparkling, fun, majestic and loyal, someone who loved to travel and truly understood the magic of words. I trust this tribute today has given members some insight into the life of Barbara Sattler, a life well lived. We thank Barbara Sattler for all you have contributed and achieved.

### **Stephanie Rigby - Tribute**

**Mr DEAN** (Windermere) - Mr President, I will give you an insight into the life of Stephanie Rigby. Stephanie and her husband, Gary, are both here today. It is wonderful they were able to join us from Rocherlea in the north of the state.

I draw members' attention to a participant of the Rocherlea community, who, despite life's complexities, is going out of her way to help others. Stephanie is what I would call a fighter. Life has thrown many obstacles in her way, but Stephanie keeps meeting those head-on. She keeps overcoming obstacles and continues to support others in the community. Stephanie is a cancer survivor. She has lived with the illness for over seven years. Stephanie is the mother of a son and a daughter. Stephanie and her husband also care for their daughter, who has intellectual difficulties.

When Stephanie was first diagnosed, she and her husband managed to raise enough money to buy an ex-commission home. Not long after, her husband who worked for Gunns lost his job. During this financially difficult time all money went to try and keep afloat and paying for extremely expensive cancer treatment.

During treatment Stephanie and her husband had no additional family support and did everything. She sought help from Red Cross and Breast Cancer Network Australia. BCNA proved to be a turning point for Stephanie. Before her association with the organisation, Stephanie was a very shy person. You would not think so now. Through her contact with BCNA, Stephanie has become empowered and confident and focusing on improving both her own and lives of others. Stephanie has become a Community Liaison Officer for BCNA and has completed many courses including community services, first aid, customer service and business. She is a member of Rebekah Lodge, an organisation raising funds for a number of other charities.

Stephanie continues to raise funds for BCNA and in August 2018 is attending a survivorship forum in Melbourne. Those who watch the AFL game on August 12 this year will see a field of

pink women during the game. Stephanie will be one of those raising awareness for women. She has told me about that today and what will be happening. It is going to be a great day.

Stephanie is a member of the Northern Suburbs Community Centre board of management and has held the role of treasurer and is now vice-president. Stephanie organised with the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, from community consultation, the 'coffee and chat' morning which is a program of Northern Suburbs Community Centre's Blackwood Drive site in Rocherlea. This group is also supported by the Northern Suburbs Community Centre's staff. The group gets together every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and gives the participants an opportunity to connect with others to discuss life and its challenges.

Stephanie is a resilient woman who is a lovely lady and an inspiration to others. For the sake of our community I hope she continues doing what she does, supporting and motivating others. Our world can do with more people like Stephanie. People like Stephanie should be recognised, as a part of the Queen's Birthday and Australia Day Honours awards. These are the people who should be recognised. They are the real dinky-di, hard-working community-involved people who themselves are severely challenged, but live to make life better for others.

It is amazing, I take my hat off to people like Stephanie. I have known Stephanie for quite some time working with the Northern Suburbs Community Centre and she is admired there. I wish her well with her own personal issues having suffered with cancer. Thank you very much, Stephanie, for what you are doing.

### **Barratts Music**

[3.19 p.m.]

**Ms ARMITAGE** (Launceston) - Today I pay tribute to a shop that has been a favourite for many in Launceston, Barratts Music.

**Ms Rattray** - They are all my favourites.

**Ms ARMITAGE** - The Barratt family started in retail when James Barratt senior opened the clothing store Barratt's Corner in Rooke Street, Devonport in 1894. He would later sell pianos and organs. In 1904 his son, James, bought the business and in 1924 he turned it into a dedicated music store called Barratt and Joscelyne. The business was moved to its current site in George Street, Launceston, in 1937. Pianos were the main item sold, but accordions and mouth organs were also very popular. The shop also sold second-hand books and music boxes.

One of James' sons, Cyril, returned from World War II in 1945 and went to work with his dad. Cyril bought the business from him in 1949. Music was always quite a family affair, as Cyril also worked with his older brother, Dave, who was an accomplished piano repairer, tuner and polisher. Both had trained as piano technicians in Europe. Dave had a workshop upstairs, where he worked with technicians for many years. As well as musical instruments, the store was selling all manner of things at this time, including audio equipment, fridges and stoves. Dave was in charge of the workshop and Cyril ran the sales division.

A big part of the business at this time was purchasing and restoring old pianos. Today, you can still find old piano parts and tools inside the building, including the hand winch they used to lift the pianos from the adjacent laneway to the top storey of Barratts. That area is used today as a

piano showroom, where you can test-drive pianos and electric pianos. In 1954 Cyril's son, Rob, finished boarding school and joined the family business.

Some time later, Barratts was sold to Allans Music. During this time, Rob was appointed store manager. The business would return to Barratt family ownership in 1966. Around this time, Barratts became a Yamaha organ dealership, and since that period the business has established itself as one of Australia's most successful Yamaha dealers.

Mark joined the business in 1991 and he bought Barratts Music from his father Rob in 2001. When asked about what advice his dad gave him when he took the business over, Mark says -

Dad and I were very different and much of the advice he gave worked for the way he ran things. He could be quite a stickler, and I am more laid back. The main thing we agreed upon and practised was that winning a customer is about making a friend and then maintaining that relationship. It's good business and it makes the work environment a fun place to work.

Clearly, it is a fun place and a great place to work. One employee, Cheryl Masters, has worked for Barratts Music for more than 40 years. Cheryl has worked for Cyril, Rob and Mark, and she is the business's administrative and print manager.

One of the Barratt family's philosophies has been to show strong support for music in the community. They do that by sponsoring many music prizes, including an Australian Music Examinations Board prize in Tasmania, and others for the St Cecilia Performance Challenge. They encourage local music making and run clinics for members of the public, where well-known musicians come to play and speak about what they do. These clinics regularly get at least 100 people in attendance.

A major event held to celebrate the store's 80th birthday in 2017 was a rare and vintage guitar and amplifier show. It is estimated 1000 people came to see this vast array of spectacular rare music equipment. Mark says many of the drums, guitars and amps on display are the type that the Beatles used in their heyday. He says -

The George Harrison Telecaster we bought in for the show is a limited release made by Fender USA. It is unusual in that it has a Rosewood body. George Harrison played one like it at the Beatles final concert. It is one of only 19 that came to Australia, and is destined to become quite a collectable.

As regards brushes with fame, Barratts Music has organised numerous clinics where musicians from around the north come to see top musicians perform and talk about their musical experiences and approaches. These include Mark Lizotte from Diesel, James Morrison, Michael Barker, a former drummer for John Butler, George Lynch, and many lesser known but fantastic musicians.

In an online interview with ABC Northern Tasmania in November 2017, Mark spoke of what the family business has come to mean to him: 'I love it more every year. Every day is more fun than the day before.'

Mr President, I pay tribute to the Barratt family and their staff for the rich contribution they have made to Launceston over more than 80 years. I wish them continued success for the future.

## Australian Futures Project

[3.24 p.m.]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison) - Mr President, I believe lifelong learning and personal and professional development are important in all professions and workplaces. We all come to parliament with our own life experience, background and knowledge from prior professions and community involvement. None of us comes with a complete set of skills and knowledge of all the areas we are called on to consider in our roles here. Furthermore, trust in and respect for our profession or our roles as members of parliament is not high. We need to work to build trust and respect through honesty, integrity and a willingness to listen and learn.

This learning includes an openness to change when new learnings create new understandings. If we wish to have a positive impact on our state and country, we need to enhance our learning and build our capability to be strong and effective leaders who are well regarded, trustworthy and respected.

The Australian Futures Project is a non-profit company whose mission is to fix 'short-termism' in Australia through building government capability and accountability. They acknowledge this is a big task, but they also state their concern that short-termism is blocking a flourishing future for Australia.

I recently attended an event celebrating five years of the Australian Futures Project at which the plan for the next five years was outlined. From extensive research the Australian Futures Project team has concluded that until short-termism is fixed, Australia will not be able to seize the opportunities and address the challenges that will ensure a flourishing future and create the future Australians actually want.

On its website, the Australian Futures Project states -

Until short-termism is fixed ... We won't have meaningful tax reform, address Indigenous disadvantage, or prepare for our ageing population. We won't have affordable housing, affordable childcare, or the skills for jobs of the future. We won't address climate change and the energy crisis, increase our engagement with Asia, or achieve equality for women. We won't build adequate infrastructure, address the mental health crisis, or kick-start our stagnant productivity. The list goes on.

But we are optimists. We deeply believe Australia has the determination and know-how to address these issues. We know that powerful levers exist to fix short-termism. We know there is widespread hunger to act.

To fix short-termism Australian democracy needs three things:

1. **Vision:** Politicians who offer relevant and compelling visions for the future of the nation
2. **Capability:** Governments that solve Australia's big challenges
3. **Accountability:** A simple way for the public to hold government leaders (politicians and public servants) to account for the future they are creating on behalf of all Australians

The focus of the company is on capability and accountability; its website says -

It is the job of politicians to offer the vision. The Australian Futures Project therefore focusses on capability and accountability. We do this by finding and building catalytic initiatives that:

- Equip governments (politicians and public servants) to solve Australia's biggest challenges
- ...
- Empower Australians to hold government to account for creating the future Australians want

Mr President, the Australian Futures Project runs programs and projects seeking to achieve this. The twenty-first century public service offers customised courses and solutions for building its culture and capability to solve complex challenges for Australia's future.

The other, the Parliamentary Leaders Program, is a specialised program for parliamentarians. I undertook this program last year and found it extremely beneficial. I encourage all members to consider undertaking the program.

Over the next five years the Australian Futures Project team plans to continue improving government capability and accountability. It has a number of strategies to identify catalytic fixes for systems and cultures that surround government and build accountability to address the ongoing disconnect between government promises and public expectations.

I intend to remain engaged and informed of the work of the Australian Futures Project because I believe that learnings from its work are relevant and will benefit me in my role. Change is constant and we too need to adapt and change as we increase our knowledge, capability and accountability.

All decisions we make in our communities, particularly as members of the Legislative Council, need to be made with an acute awareness of the need to bring long-term benefit to fellow Tasmanians. I strongly believe we must avoid short-termism if we are to solve the big challenges in health, education, housing, planning and infrastructure - just to name a few - and to see our state flourish.

I offer the same challenge the Australian Futures Project put to the organisation and their supporters. They ask -

Is this audacious journey for you?

We're on an audacious, mission-focussed journey. We commit to being big-picture, catalytic, bold, agile, constructive and honest. ... to create the future Australians want, there is no room for cynicism or waiting. And every bold journey begins with a single courageous step. It is not for everyone.

...

**Will you join us as we fix short-termism in Australia?**

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER**  
**Intervening Business**

[3.30 p.m.]

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

That so much of standing order 10(1) be suspended to enable Council to proceed to consider other business prior to the resuming of the Address-in-Reply debate.

**Motion agreed to.**

**MOTION**  
**Appointment of a Select Committee - Short-Stay Accommodation**

[3.31 p.m.]

**Ms ARMITAGE** (Launceston) - Mr President, I move -

That a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the Council and with leave to adjourn from place to place to inquire into and report upon the short stay accommodation industry in Tasmania with particular reference to -

- (1) The growth of short stay accommodation in Tasmania and the changing character of the market including recent trends in online letting of short stay accommodation;
- (2) The impact of short stay accommodation on the residential housing sector;
- (3) The impact of short stay accommodation on the tourism sector;
- (4) Regulatory issues including customer safety, land use planning, neighbourhood amenity and licensing conditions compared to other jurisdictions in Australia and worldwide; and
- (5) Any other matter incidental thereto.

And that Mr Armstrong, Ms Rattray, Mr Valentine, Mr Willie and the Mover be of the Committee.

Mr President, tourism is one of the major industries in our state, if not the largest. Thousands of Tasmanians rely upon tourism to earn their living. It is an ever-expanding industry where competition is fierce, all reaching for the ever-important tourist dollar. I was told recently that several years ago there were four short-stay accommodation places in one small east coast town but now close to 40 are listed on various sites. With today's changing world of unlimited access to information, the world is growing smaller every day.

We now have the ability to go online and book accommodation in even the remotest regions of the world. Our options are abundant - we can be as choosy as we like and we will still likely find a venue that ticks all our boxes. Tasmania is a beautiful state with hundreds of accommodation options to select from. We have modern multistorey strata accommodation right in the heart of our cities, as well as remote bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation hidden in faraway valleys and everything in between.

Last year, the government reformed the legislation for some short-stay accommodation providers - the mum-and-dad providers who rent out a room within their homes for visitors to stay a day, a week or a month. The purpose of the reforms was to reduce red tape, which we all support, but reducing the red tape can also come with its own issues and problems - inequality, statutory requirements, legalities and questions around etiquette, to name a few.

We need to know who is operating short-stay accommodation or Airbnbs; how many there are, and in what areas; and whether safety and liability are covered, both for providers and guests. I was concerned to read that earlier this year the Hobart City Council Deputy Mayor called on residents to dob in their neighbours if they suspect they were running an unregistered Airbnb. Surely there must be a better way to do this?

Within this growth industry, accommodation types are varied. As politicians we need to ensure every accommodation type and every person involved has been considered and that legislative reform is fair and equitable for everyone. Since the planning reform was announced last July, many media articles have questioned the fairness of the reform and the logistics of the regulatory issues. A select committee would provide the perfect platform for this state to ensure this growth industry is sufficiently, but not overly regulated to guarantee fairness. It would provide accommodation providers with the opportunity to have their say and discuss issues not considered previously.

Short-stay or visitor accommodation, as it is referred to under the planning reform, relates to accommodation provided in a private dwelling on a short-term basis for things such as holidays. Websites such as Airbnb and Stayz are examples of accommodation sites where individuals can advertise rooms in their private homes for short-term rentals. In July 2017, the Tasmanian Planning Commission released its Interim Planning Directive No. 2 – Exemption and Standards for Visitor Accommodation in Planning Schemes. This interim directive makes visitor accommodation in the person's main residence exempt from requiring a planning permit under certain conditions. In all current interim planning schemes under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993, including the Flinders Planning Scheme 2000 and the Sullivans Cove Planning Scheme 1997, the directive has been active from 1 July 2017 for 12 months. This allows all local planning schemes to be amended to include the revisions. Under section 3.1(b) of this directive, owners of private residences do not require a planning permit to rent out rooms for visitor accommodation if the following criteria are met -

- (i) the dwelling is used by the owner or occupier as their main place of residence, and only let while the owner or occupier is on vacation or temporarily absent; or
- (ii) the dwelling is used by the owner or occupier as their main place of residence and visitors are accommodated in not more than 4 bedrooms.

The planning zones that have been amended to reflect the change in policy on visitor accommodation or zones are - 8.0, the General Residential Zone; 9.0, Inner residential Zone; 10.0, Low Density Residential Zone, and 11.0, Rural Living Zone.

What does this mean for the layperson? Basically, under the current planning directive, if you are renting out fewer than four bedrooms and if you are renting out rooms in your primary place of residence that are already built and require no additional construction, you do not require a permit from any local council to operate an Airbnb or Stayz, et cetera.

If you are not exempt because you are renting out more than four bedrooms or renting out a holiday home or shack, you need a planning permit from local council. However, this process has also been revised to be simpler because it now requires filling out of one form, which should be approved almost instantly if it meets certain criteria. Now this reform, as with any reform, has benefits and disadvantages. A perceived benefit could be that the exemption classification removes any permit process for residences that meet the required criteria. For those that are not exempt, it appears to be a simple process to apply for a permit.

This reform allows individuals who have spare rooms in their homes to make some money. In Hobart in 2017, an average weekly income for home owners listed on Airbnb was \$247, or \$12 850 per year. It brings additional revenue to areas that may not have other types of accommodation, such as regional areas of the state. It allows tourists to stay in out-of-the-way places, off the regular tourist path, and promotes a different type of Tassie tourism that brings more tourist dollars into the state. For example, Airbnb brought in an additional \$55 million to Tasmania's gross state product and 600 jobs in 2015-16. Stayz contributed up to \$22.1 million and 185 jobs in the Launceston region in 2016.

Some of the disadvantages of the reform, or questions that need clarifying, could include: With no regulation, do these properties adhere to the minimum standards in the Residential Tenancy Act? Are all requirements dealing with fire hazards met? Do the home owners have appropriate levels of insurance should they need public liability? Will hotels and motels that have many staff be disadvantaged because they have legislation and standards to adhere to and higher overhead costs? Is there a difference between short-stay accommodation providers and established B&Bs? If so, should the regulations for B&Bs also be loosened? Do short-stay accommodation rentals result in fewer properties being offered for long-term rental, or should there be upper cap for how many nights per year short-stay accommodation can be rented out? Many of these and similar questions have been investigated in other Australian states.

In 2016, the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales inquired into the adequacy of the regulation of short-term holiday letting in that state. That inquiry's terms of reference included comparing traditional accommodation and online platforms, the economic impacts on local and state economies and the regulatory issues surrounding short-term letting. The resulting report included seven findings and 12 recommendations. In April 2017, the New South Wales government gave the green light to many of these recommendations, and in July it released an options paper suggesting different ways to execute these recommendations.

In 2017, the Legislative Council of Victoria held a similar inquiry through its Environment and Planning Committee into the Owners Corporations Amendment (Short-Stay Accommodation) Bill 2016. A main focus of this inquiry was the impact of short-stay lettings in apartment buildings where common property is shared and whether the regulatory framework was in place to support such cases. The Victorian inquiry also looked at honing a better regulatory balance between short-stay and traditional accommodation providers.

Importantly, one aspect excluded from this committee's current terms of reference is the Commonwealth requirement around taxes and declaration of income. The Australian Taxation Office makes its requirements very clear, and they are out of our jurisdiction as state members. I recommend the Legislative Council follows the other Australian parliaments in this respect and reviews the short-stay accommodation industry in this state. I therefore seek the in-principle support of members to refer this matter to a select committee for its consideration and recommendations. I seek the support of the House.

[3.39 p.m.]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison) - Mr President, access to housing and the rise of the sharing economy in short-term accommodation through Airbnb, Stayz and other platforms has been raised many times with me as a member of this place. People are facing some serious challenges with this. It is not only their competing with other accommodation providers about which I have had much representation; it is also about people not being able to get rental accommodation in some of our smaller communities because these houses are not available for long-term rentals.

I am constantly reminded by many of my constituents that Tasmania has the most relaxed and lenient approach to this, and the member for Launceston referred to some of those things. There is no doubt in my mind this is an area of significant concern to tourism operators and also those looking for rental accommodation around our state. It certainly is not limited to Hobart or Launceston or anywhere, it is right around our state. I have spoken to people on the east coast, the west coast, down here and in the north-west and they are the same concerns. The lack of a level playing field, which is the whole regulatory framework that it exists under, is one of the key matters being raised.

I believe there needs to be a review of the framework in which Airbnb and other accommodation-sharing platforms are existing. We cannot wind back the clock and I do not think we should try to - progress is there. There are many forms of the sharing economy, if you want to call it that, that have many benefits. If you are trying to say that you do not like it and you do not want it to happen then you may as well just stand still. It just does not happen.

We have to look at how we make it an effective and competitive process in which for everyone - if they are competing for a space in either rental accommodation or in holiday accommodation letting - it is an even playing field where similar requirements, if not the same requirements, exist across accommodation providers. Personally, I do not have a direct interest in this area at all; I may have in the future. I do not think many of us may have now but could have in the future because as these kinds of platforms become available, it is one of those things that we all tend to get involved in, in one way or another.

Many of my constituents are very unhappy with what is going on at the moment. It needs a good look at. Is it our role to do it? Should the Government be doing this? These are questions I ask myself. It is an appropriate thing for the Legislative Council to look at but the Government should be doing some work on it too. Hopefully it will listen to the outcomes of the committee if this inquiry is supported. It is a fairly big body of work to be done because it covers a whole range of areas.

I looked at the motion carefully when it was tabled by the member for Launceston. My view is that most of these things should be able to be dealt with under our Government Administration Committees which, I accept, are not set up again yet. However, this one does fit more into a select committee approach because it goes across Committee A and Committee B: you have tourism,

planning and housing, potentially. When there is that crossover, it probably fits better with a select committee.

Those things said, I intend to support the motion. It is a serious concern for many around the state. I hope the Government participates in this and supports it, in many ways. Change needs to be made but it needs to be made in a well-considered way, not just following what other jurisdictions have done because the challenges can be different in different places.

Assuming the committee is established, I wish the committee members well because it is an important area. I hope that the committee visits all parts of the state because I have had significant representation from the west coast and Circular Head on this. It is important that it is not seen to be merely Hobart-based or Launceston-based because it is not.

[3.44 p.m.]

**Mr VALENTINE** (Hobart) - Mr President, I do not have a direct interest in this either because I do not rent out any part of my house or indeed my shack.

**Mr Willie** - Is your house in Elwick?

**Mr VALENTINE** - No, it is not in Elwick. For the record, it is 30 houses inside the northern boundary of the seat of Hobart as per the discussion on the ABC the other day.

The point is, in Hobart there is a 0.3 per cent vacancy rate. That is very low in terms of available housing and causes issues and concerns. A place like Bicheno, where there are many shacks and a transient population - it may well be the Glamorgan/Spring Bay municipality - would see a benefit in whole houses given over to the share economy.

The name 'share economy' is interesting. Usually one shares one's residence, as opposed to a whole house being committed. The point here is the municipalities themselves should have the power to control and manage. It is not a one size fits all. We have heard from the member for Launceston and the member for Murchison that the west coast experiences some problems and issues and no doubt Launceston.

There is significant benefit in having a good close look to give the Government information that might inform how it approaches this from a policy perspective. I raised this with the Treasurer during Estimates. I said would you see the Government changing their policy so it had to be where the people occupied the residence, or at least a chalet at the back of a residence was occupied by an owner. They said no, they would not interfere with the economy.

To be able to have a good look at what the problems and issues are across the state it is important it is a statewide inquiry. We would want to delve into exactly how it is affecting and impacting on different municipalities. We will be very surprised to see what the impact will be. In Bicheno it may be that renting out whole houses for Airbnb has a very positive effect on the community because of the shops getting custom during winter rather than less visitation from those who own the shacks during that time. It might boost their productivity in this area. Let us have a look at that.

I will support the motion. I was rung by Luke Martin from the Tourism Industry Council. We had a quick discussion. I put him on to the member for Launceston, because I did not know whether I was going to be here.

**Ms Forrest** - Not a vote of confidence in yourself.

**Mr VALENTINE** - Well, you never know. I will talk about my election in my Address-in-Reply contribution. I will certainly be supporting this.

[3.48 p.m.]

**Mr GAFFNEY** (Mersey) - Mr President, I take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Hobart on your return, and the member for Prosser for your start. It is a good decision by the community.

I will be supporting this going to a committee. There needs to be some work done on this. I take note of the member for Murchison's call that the Government needs to be very involved with this committee. It is to help many people who are suffering or having some angst with what has happened and is occurring. I received three paragraphs from a person who said he lives in a residential apartment complex comprising about 40 apartments. It is not a serviced apartment building. As at February 2018, there are in excess of 18 apartments in the building being used as Airbnb. There have been a number of security issues in the building resulting in all the locks in the entire building being replaced, together with the need to install monitored security cameras. That cost is now going to the owners of the apartments. Adding another Airbnb to this building will be extremely detrimental to the security and ambience of the building. For these reasons I strongly object to another apartment coming online as an Airbnb.

This is important because they are able to comment to the local council about the application. In his opinion the number of apartments in the building being used for Airbnb should be limited, say to 10 per cent.

He believes the original idea of Airbnb was to rent out a bedroom or two in your home to give people a more personalised visitor experience, not rent out a residential apartment building for short-term rentals. This is where the problem is arising - the pressure within communities about affordable rental accommodation - and that is one of the things which fits into the jigsaw.

I will make comment about a humorous experience of my own. Well, it is humorous now, but it was not at the time. I was in Coffs Harbour and I thought I would try this Airbnb experience. I went online - I am not that great at that sort of thing - and I actually hooked a bedroom in this flat with some students from the university. I turned up and they said, 'This is your room'. I thought, 'Great, it would have been good had you cleaned it before I got there.' It was fine - a really good experience after I spent two hours doing the kitchen, two hours cleaning the bathroom, asking whether I could have some clean sheets to change the bedding. They had rented the room out because they were behind on their rent; they needed to rent out their rooms, so three of them were sharing two bedrooms while I was in one room and a New Zealand couple were sharing another room. So in all, that gave me a good understanding -

**Mr Valentine** - Did you give them a good review?

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I gave them a good review because I had a good time after I did the cleaning. In saying that, I support a review. I think it is a good idea and would help set some guidelines.

**Ms Forrest** - You know they rate you as a guest.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, I am not even going to look. I did draw the line when they said we could share the food in the fridge and I said, 'No, that is all right.' But a review is a good idea, and one I support. I agree that while the problems in Hobart and Launceston may be seen as different,

there are still other problems and concerns. Luke Martin from the tourism industry and the Government are wise to say, 'Yes, let us support this and put some meat into it', because it will give some good direction.

[3.52 p.m.]

**Ms RATTRAY** (McIntyre) - Mr President, I will leave my thank you to the Address-in-Reply and my welcomes a little bit later, thank you.

I support the motion and thank the member for Launceston for inviting me to be a part of it. I certainly agree with comments made by other members - the issues are quite widespread. During the weekend, I drove past our local caravan park, and some people are living there because there is nothing to rent in the Scottsdale area.

A couple of weeks ago only one rental property was available in the entire Scottsdale area, which is almost unheard of. There are some real issues around rental properties because so many people are putting them into short-stay accommodation like Airbnb. They are looking to generate fast turnover and higher income from their properties, and they have the time and the energy to do that.

People are actually building short-stay and Airbnb accommodation now. Derby is just thriving - the buildings going up in Derby -

**Mr Farrell** - The decline in the permanent population is a bit of a concern.

**Ms RATTRAY** - It has halved in the last couple of years. A couple of years ago mail was delivered to 120 premises in Derby; now it is down to 60 - it has halved. The sense of community is being lost with the sharing economy; Airbnbs and the like are taking over and are creating some issues. Obviously the Government will make some sort of contribution. I am not quite sure how else it will be involved in the inquiry, should it be established. The Leader may have some thoughts and a contribution on that. Also, there are some issues around the land use planning and the neighbourhood amenity. The member for Mersey talked about the amenities in the short-stay accommodation he stayed in. That will be interesting if we get any of that. The licensing conditions will be interesting compared to other jurisdictions in Australia. I do not know how much worldwide information we will be able to gather as a committee. That will be something the committee will address if this motion is successful, and it appears that it may well be.

Congratulations to the member for Launceston. I believe the member for Elwick has had this in his bailiwick as well.

**Mr Willie** - I worked with the member for Launceston.

**Ms RATTRAY** - There you are, cooperative approach - what more can you get? Here we are, we have a motion and we are dealing with it today. I look forward to the opportunity. Whatever comes out of the committee, I trust that the government of the day will take it on board and we will be able to generate some solutions for the very trying issues around the state. I heard a couple of days ago that the Government had called for tenders for containers to be made into accommodation. I went to Agfest, as a lot of us do -

**Mrs Hiscutt** - Weren't they wonderful? Those containers were wonderful.

**Ms RATTRAY** - The 40-foot one was \$55 000. One bedroom, living space, bathroom, kitchen. I thought it was a bit overpriced for the décor, but if you had nowhere to live and that was what you could muster up, I think you would be pretty happy with that.

**Mr Armstrong** - I think they were being built in your electorate.

**Ms RATTRAY** - We have had transportables being built in Scottsdale for many years, but they were not shipping containers. They were little prefab type of arrangements. You could get an office or small living quarters, that type of thing, for many years. I am not sure about the shipping containers.

**Mr Willie** - I think they are in St Helens, actually.

**Ms RATTRAY** - There are obviously some very astute people out there. If, in the short term, refurbishing shipping containers, which you see in abundance -

**Mr PRESIDENT** - We saw them at the airport with the Flying Doctors Service a couple of years ago.

**Ms RATTRAY** - If that is what it takes to house people and get them out of caravan parks and showgrounds, in temporary tent accommodation, then I will support it. Let us not wait for a committee to do that, let us get on with it.

[3.58 p.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I too will save my congratulations until the reply speech; it is very good to see you though.

From the outset, I note that the Government will not oppose this motion. Should the select committee be established to look into the matters referred to in the motion, the Government will work constructively with the Legislative Council. However, given the recent exposure of this issue in the media and in the parliament, and discussion of the issue, often accompanied with a misrepresentation of facts, I find it incumbent upon me as the Leader of the Government to clarify certain aspects pertaining to the motion.

The first of these is the allegation that the use of residential dwellings for short-term visitor accommodation is currently unregulated. This is certainly not true, and use of properties for this purpose has been regulated through the interim planning scheme for each municipal area since at least mid-2015. Moreover, as part of the Government's commitment to grow the tourism and hospitality sectors, regulatory changes were made in mid-2017 to support the sharing economy. When we introduced our sharing economy regulation, it was hailed as nation-leading. The *Mercury* even called it 'a sophisticated response to a rapidly changing policy challenge'. The Government firmly believes that this still is the case and our position is clear. As part of the Government's commitment to grow the tourism and hospitality sectors, regulatory changes were made in mid-2017 through the use of an interim planning directive to support the sharing economy.

We believe these regulations deliver a pragmatic and balanced approach. The interim planning directive that came into effect on 1 July 2017 encourages the sharing economy by establishing new arrangements and exemptions, supported by simpler processes for renting a home, shack or investment property through Airbnb or Stayz. The Interim Planning Directive ostensibly changed

the description of visitor accommodation in each council's planning scheme to bring it into conformity with the State Planning Provisions. These have been through a comprehensive assessment process conducted by the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission.

With regard to the Interim Planning Directive, planning and building requirements vary depending which of the following categories the property falls into:

- (1) your own home with up to four bookable rooms;
- (2) your own home with more than four bookable rooms, and investment properties or shacks up to 300 square metres; or
- (3) an investment property or shack greater than 300 square metres.

In practice this operates as follows. If you live in an area zoned for residential use and you wish to rent your home as visitor accommodation for up to four bookable rooms to others while you are present or away on holiday, then you are able to do so without planning restriction. This is an exception from requiring a planning permit as it is a genuine homesharing.

If you wish to rent your home as visitor accommodation for more than four bookable rooms, or a property that is not your primary place of residence, such as an investment property or shack, with a floor area of less than 300 square metres in these zones, then it is appropriate for this type of use to be permitted and assessed through a permitted pathway, just as was the case prior to the Interim Planning Directive. A permit is still required to be issued from the local planning authority for this use.

If you wish to rent out your investment property of over 300 square metres, then this requires discretionary planning approval by the local planning authority. The threshold of 300 square metres was selected to reflect the size of an average four-bedroom dwelling. Therefore, the Government's primary reform through the Interim Planning Directive 2017 was to exempt genuine homesharing arrangements from requiring a planning permit.

Tasmanians have long been able to rent out their shacks and secondary residences as short-stay accommodation. New regulations did not change this other than increasing the permitted floor to be better reflective of a typical four-bedroom house and making its use available in Battery Point. Just as was the case prior to our regulatory changes, owners still require a council permit for this to occur. Moreover, these later changes were simply to bring the planning controls into alignment with those in the State Planning Provisions, which had been through an extensive consultation and assessment process with the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission.

Clearly then, it is erroneous to say that the short-term accommodation industry, including Airbnb and Stayz, is not regulated. We believe it is a pragmatic and balanced approach to supporting the sharing economy - unlike our opponents, whose hypocrisy has been next level. Labor's own policy said that there would be no restrictions on short-stay accommodation for a primary place of residence, but now it is all about red tape and more regulations.

The other issue, propagated through the media and in particular in the other place, is the direct causal link between the short-term accommodation industry and the current housing shortage that Tasmania is experiencing. It has been alleged that some Tasmanian housing stock is being removed from the long-term rental market to provide for more lucrative short-term visitor accommodation

use. Tasmania's growing population, economy and employment have resulted in greater competition for housing. The Government knows there are real challenges for Tasmanians on low income seeking to buy or rent a house, which is why we convened the housing summit in March to bring together key stakeholders to identify solutions. We are currently processing all the agreed outcomes from the summit with a range of short-, medium- and long-term solutions to ensure every Tasmanian has access to housing they can afford. Included in the agreed actions was to develop new data sharing arrangements with Airbnb and Stayz to give us a clearer picture of the sharing economy and any impact it may or may not be having on Tasmania's rentals and housing market. We expect the first data from Stayz and Airbnb to be shared by the end of July.

The simple fact remains that assertions around short-stay accommodation and the sharing economy are largely anecdotal and the reasons behind Tasmania's current housing shortage are far more complex than this. It is rather simplistic to suggest that there is only one factor at play here. The agreed outcomes of the housing summit are also in addition to our first Affordable Housing Action Plan that is providing real relief for Tasmanians in need. So far it has helped more than 500 new households into affordable, secure and safe homes and is on track to assist another 1600 households into affordable housing by June 2019.

The Government is of the view that the current regulation of the short-term accommodation industry is both pragmatic and balanced and provides an avenue for the sharing economy to succeed. We acknowledge the need to garner more information on the operations of short-term accommodation businesses, such as Airbnb and Stayz, and we believe the data sharing agreement is the most appropriate way to achieve this.

The Government will certainly not be opposing this motion and will work constructively with that committee.

[4.07 p.m.]

**Mr WILLIE** (Elwick) - Mr President, I congratulate the member for Hobart and the member for Prosser on their recent election wins. I look forward to working with them both over the next few years.

Like the member for Hobart, this is an issue I have been raising for some time. During Estimates last year I raised concerns with the then minister for housing, Mrs Petrusma, about the impact that short-stay accommodation could be having on the rental market and whether the government was monitoring that impact. They had gone through a policy change and it was incumbent on the government at the time to monitor how that was playing out.

It is now May 2018 and the Government is still saying there is no data available. It would have been responsible at the time to set up the data collection needed to understand this issue and then look at some of the anecdotal evidence and see if that was also informed by the data. We know anecdotally that there are many organisations and peak bodies - there is a chorus of them actually - that are saying that this is having an impact on the private rental market. Shelter Tasmania and the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania are not only saying it is having an impact on the private rental market, they are saying that it has become a lightning rod issue for the community and it could affect the tourism industry's reputation.

TasCOSS and the UTAS Institute for the Study of Social Change, which also did some research, have found that there are 876 short-stay accommodation properties just in the Hobart

municipality and estimated around 70 per cent of those may have come from the private rental market. That is a significant number of properties out of the private rental market in one year.

Short-stay accommodation has economic benefits and other members have talked extensively about that in regional areas where local towns may be benefiting. It is money that can stay in the local economy, particularly if it is an operation by Tasmanians and not interstate investors. We are saying that this is a good thing. There are economic benefits but we need to get the balance right. We need to ensure that the social cost is not extreme, that working people are not pushed out of the rental market or forced to live in tents at the showgrounds. I have met people in that situation.

I wonder with the establishment of this inquiry how effective it will be. We have the Government saying that they are going to rule out any changes; they are happy to work with the inquiry but there will be no changes. I question the Government's motives there and why they would bother supporting an inquiry if it is not going to amount to anything.

Let us look at the evidence; let us allow stakeholders to put all their thoughts on the public record; let us make some findings and make some recommendations and be open to those recommendations rather than having a closed mind about it.

I call on the Government to not only work with the committee, but to reconsider their position to rule out changes. We know the Government has been all at sea just on that point. The new Housing minister, in the days following his appointment, said he was open to information and he was open to possible changes. Later that day he had to put out a statement saying that the Government was not going to consider any changes so he must have been pulled into line by some of his colleagues.

We also know that some of his colleagues in the Cabinet have Airbnb properties and they have not clarified whether they stepped out of the room when that decision was made, so we have some real question marks there. One of those colleagues, the Minister for Housing, Mr Jaensch, in the *Mercury*, yesterday, 21 May, did not understand the Government's position on this inquiry and the support for the inquiry. He said he needed to seek further advice, but then also ruled out any changes and that it was a matter for the Legislative Council. Is this a good use of parliamentary time? Is it a good use of parliamentary resources when the Government has that attitude? I seriously question that.

That said, the Labor Party is open to looking at the evidence and considering what stakeholders have to say, listening to the stories. We should go one step further - and I said this in the media - that there should be a pause on new approvals for investor short-stay accommodation. We know there are high attrition rates; we know that they are really high stress areas. That would just take the heat out of it a bit while the inquiry takes place. It would not affect any existing operator; they could continue their business.

I know that Tasmanians are concerned that the housing crisis will get worse and if we look at the growth in short-stay accommodation, there is the potential for that to happen. If we continue with this sort of growth into another year - I do not know how long the inquiry will take - but we could be looking at some more dire circumstances in a year's time if the inquiry takes that long.

We are supportive of the inquiry but I will continue to call on the Government to keep an open mind with the inquiry; keep an open mind, look at the evidence, make some good findings, some recommendations and ensure that the economic benefits are shared across Tasmania, that the social

cost is not too high and that we find a model that is best fit for Tasmania. There are many different models and we need something that applies to our challenges in Tasmania and works for more than just a select few.

We will be supporting the inquiry. I commend the member for Launceston for her interest in this area and for progressing it. I am sure she will do an excellent job as the chair and I look forward to working with the committee members.

**Motion agreed to.**

**MOTION**  
**Appointment of a Select Committee - Proposed Firearms Law Reform**

[4.14 p.m.]

**Mr DEAN** (Windermere) - Mr President, I move -

That a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the Council, and with leave to adjourn from place to place to inquire into and report upon the impact of the Government's proposed firearms law reforms as outlined in the policy document of 9 February 2018 with particular reference to -

- (1) Current and future firearms licensing regimes, including training and testing, licence renewal, licence infringements and licence categories;
- (2) Compliance with the provisions of the National Firearms Agreement;
- (3) The roles of Tasmania Police, Firearms Services (FAS) and the proposed Tasmanian Firearms Owners Council (TFOC);
- (4) The role of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Government, Tasmania Police and the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA);
- (5) The ownership and use of sound suppressors by Category C licence holders; and
- (6) Any other matters incidental thereto.

And that Mr Armstrong, Mr Gaffney, Mrs Hiscutt, Ms Rattray, Ms Siejka and the Mover be of the Committee.

I will address this under a number of headings and the first is a select committee. Why a select committee for the firearms issue? I move the motion for a select committee inquiry as opposed to leaving it with one of the sessional committees, because it would still fit within A when they are approved through this place because, first, if it is the same as it was last year, I will not be in Sessional Committee A - probably not; I am not sure exactly where things will go here. This is a case where we should have a representation from around the state and I have tried to do that with the selection of the committee members or as close as we can get without having all members. I did consider asking all members be a part of this committee

Previously we had the forestry issue where all members were part of the committee because of the importance and significance of the matter. The firearms issue is up there with that. Some might say probably not quite as serious, but it is. It matters to a lot of people, so I did seriously consider a full House committee.

**Ms Rattray** - Probably not as time-imperative as forestry, would that be fair?

**Mr DEAN** - That would be a fair comment.

Before I proceed further I also congratulate the member for Hobart on his re-election to this place. I was not really concerned I would miss out on another four cartons had he not been here, but now I am looking forward to those extra four cartons that will come my way.

**Mr Valentine** - You better explain it is something to do with football and nothing to do with bribery.

**Mr DEAN** - No. I do not think they will come my way looking at how they played on the weekend.

I congratulate the member for Prosser, Jane Howlett, on her election and the good result she received, the hard work she obviously put in, standing on a number of occasions and coming back stronger each time. I congratulate Jane and look forward to working with the member for Prosser. Well done.

This firearms inquiry is going to have an emotional impact on many members of the public and on some members of the committee. I have had already many people make contact with me. It has just gone on and on. Many people believe because of statements made in the media the inquiry is already under way. The Liberal Party has not handled this well and created a lot of concern and angst. We need to have this inquiry.

We need to be careful to have balance in selecting the committee. We have Independents and a Labor member on the committee. It was appropriate I should ask a Liberal member in this place, whether or not it happens to be the Leader, if she would like to be on this committee to bring balance. At that time of putting and giving notice of this motion the Leader was the only member of that party in this place. That has now changed and of course it is a matter for the Leader as to how she see this, but I would welcome her onto the committee. It is not unusual for a Leader be on the committee. To be fair to all and to get findings and recommendations we need to have a good balance. It is all about equity and fairness.

Why should there be an inquiry? This matter, a review of the firearms legislation, unfortunately was released to the general public on the eve of the election. I understand it was known by some interested parties previously. I will talk about that more in a moment. It has created significant interest and emotions have been running high. To counter this statement, it has been said that the public should have known this was coming because on 20 February this year, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party had raised the issue with all media outlets that it was going to happen. I do not recall much about that, but this is the information I was provided: that they were involved, that they knew what was going to happen, that they knew pretty much what was in the policy position of the Liberal Party, and probably the Labor Party as well.

The fact is, to my knowledge, the release on the eve of the election was the first release on the matter during the campaign period. The period when the public really stands up and takes notice is when a campaign is heavily underway. This was most unfortunate indeed. It was not a good position for the Liberal Party to adopt.

There are two specific groups here: those supporting change, that is, not supporting a weakening of the current legislation. That has been made very clear with all of the contact I have had from the parties, from the groups, the organisations, from the TFGA. Never once have they mentioned anything about weakening this legislation. Then we have the other side, those who are opposed, and quite vigorously in many cases. Many of these, rightly or wrongly, see any meddling with the firearms legislation as a weakening of gun ownership control.

I have had a lot of difficulty in explaining to them about the policy, as I understand it, the policy document released by the Liberal Party and the position released by the Labor Party, that there was never any intention by either to weaken these laws. It is a unique situation inasmuch as its roots remain with the Port Arthur massacre, the greatest tragedy to be experienced in this state and country in our lifetime. It remains raw, and for all of us in existence at this time it will continue to harm and haunt us for the rest of our lives. This is a very emotional issue. I have had people already on the phone and in person being emotional and dissolving into tears in talking to me about this. That is the impact it is having. That is why it should be dealt with quickly. I will talk a little more on that in a moment.

Any change that is likely to be considered and made in relation to firearms control, ownership, type, use, carriage, licensing and anything else needs to be dealt with expeditiously. The people need to be relieved of their concerns without the necessity to endure them for an extended period. We know now the areas the Government will be addressing. The Government's policy position has been released publicly and members have had a chance to consider that policy. I asked my staff to ensure that members are made aware of that policy and that they had a copy of that policy document. We also know the position of the Labor Party and the Greens members.

The Liberal Party policy document was released on 9 February 2018 and is quite expansive in detail, as is the Labor Party's policy to some degree. The Liberal Party document outlines eight areas to be considered, of which two are broken down into three and 13 further points respectively. I will go through the main headings of that policy document - and I hope that members have it, and committee members in particular -

- Establish the Tasmanian Firearms Owners Council;
- Improve the interaction between Firearms Services (FAS) and firearms owners - and higher service levels;
- Establishing a new Tasmanian competition shooting range;
- Broader firearms training and testing provisions;
- Extend periods of licences;
- Infringement notices for minor storage offences;
- Finalise an MOU between the Government, Tasmania Police and the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) -

That point is broken down into several other points, but I am not going to read through those points.

Then we have 'Clarifying requirements for responsible firearms owners', which is broken down into 13 different areas. The Government has outlined specifically the areas which it would be looking at and targeting.

The Labor Party does not have quite as much detail, but its policy position on this is not that different to that of the Liberal Party.

I am not defending the Government; it is a matter for the Government to defend its position. But it has made it clear to me. I have spoken to the Government and the minister -

**Mr Willie** - It is not right to assert our policy is the same as the Government's; it is not.

**Mr DEAN** - I am just trying to be fair here. The minister made it perfectly clear to me that the Liberal Party had no intention whatsoever of interfering with the national policy in relation to firearms.

**Mr Willie** - As it reads, its policy does.

**Mr DEAN** - This is what they have said: it is not its intention at all to impact on that policy. It is up to the Government to defend itself.

**Mr Willie** - I am just saying it is not right to assert that our policy is the same.

**Mr DEAN** - No, it has similarities. I can go through some of those points. When in government, Labor's were similar. This document was released - I am not quite sure of the date it was released, but one of the Labor members in this place might be able to assist me on that.

**Mr Valentine** - It might be wise to wait until the inquiry is over, then it will all be documented.

**Mr Willie** - You are right. The Labor Party has identified also some of the areas it would want to be looked at. That is why I have been very particular with the terms of reference to pick up on those issues raised by both sides, and to some extent the Greens as well, in the inquiry, should it get up.

**Mrs Hiscutt** - Is the document you are talking about the one that reads 'In Government Labor will', followed by dot points?

**Mr DEAN** - Yes, that is it.

**Mrs Hiscutt** - That is dated 27 February 2018.

**Mr DEAN** - Right, thank you very much for that. It would seem that was put out on 27 February 2018. I do not want to quote the whole document but only some parts of it to identify that it is somewhat consistent with the other side's -

- examine the feasibility of replacing sworn officers with Tasmania Police Firearm Services (FAS) with a civilian based administration of suitably qualified personnel able to deal in a timely way with the specific administrative requirements of the service ...

- consult with firearm organisations and clubs to establish an agreed, formal expert based structure that is able to provide timely advice to Government on firearm policy and issues;
- acknowledge the submission by farmer groups, particularly the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) regarding regulatory issues encountered by farmers and others which frustrate and impede legitimate day to date use of firearms ...
- move to introduce the use of infringement notices in lieu of a summons for very minor breaches of firearm storage regulations ...

Again, the Liberal Party identified that as well -

- recognise the genuine specialist use of reloaded ammunition for competitive target shooting and the special storage and transport issues that arise ...
- recognise and support improved protocols for the safe keeping of antique firearms and their display;
- support the use of firearms on registered ranges and will, where appropriate, assist clubs and organisations to develop secure, safe and appropriate facilities.

So we know fairly clearly what they want to do in reviewing the firearms legislation. I am satisfied it is the right time for a committee to consider the matter, and that the process commence as a priority. We could wait for that - that will be towards the end of the year, then an inquiry and into next year. This would extend the agony, frustrations and disappointment of many people. I could put members in contact if anybody wants to talk to them. I did ask some of these people to contact other members of this and the other place.

If the inquiry goes ahead and if unforeseen issues arise from the draft legislation, we could have another short and sharp inquiry to address those points. I cannot see that happening. The terms of reference have been drafted not only to address the issues raised, but also to provide further scope on some points of real interest if required.

Should the terms not now be considered satisfactory for the inquiry, I welcome suggestions for any change. If members think the terms are not right, please identify them because I am very happy to consider changes that would satisfy you.

I have another heading here - 'Government's job'. It has been raised with me that this inquiry could be considered as doing the Government's work. No doubt that will be raised by members here, and justifiably, but I am not saying there is no reason it should not be. It would be crass of me to try to convince members that this inquiry, if supported, will not assist the Government. Of course it will.

I hope, as is has been the case with almost every other inquiry, whether select or sessional committee, we have undertaken, that this inquiry assists the Government. The member for Elwick was right - a government should have an open mind and wait until an inquiry makes findings and recommendations before taking a position. All inquiries assist a government in some way or another. Why would we have them if that were not the case?

However, in this case we are aware of the areas to be considered and with some detail, as I have said a number of times. If this inquiry is supported, the Government will welcome it. One can reasonably assume the inquiry's findings and recommendations will be considered seriously in any legislation presented.

This inquiry will have to be well controlled because there is so much interest in it now. People from the mainland have been talking to me about it, and I suspect an avalanche of submissions will be made to the inquiry. It is one of those inquiries that will create much interest.

It is a case of putting the cart in front of the horse. In this case it will be the horse, the inquiry, pushing the cart - legislative change - in the right direction. The reins in this case will be held by the members of the public who provide submissions and guide the committee in its recommendations and findings. That is how I see it when told it is like sticking the horse in front of the cart.

I reiterate: this process will assist in expediting a matter of considerable public concern in a case that has caused frustration and angst, and has caused some people to relive the Port Arthur tragedy. I was a part of that myself. I see it as an apt case to be involved in doing the Government's work. In the circumstances it is an inquiry that would have occurred in any event. No doubt, if this inquiry did not take place, when the legislation came forward, inquiries would be talked about then. This will hopefully expedite the whole process.

Should the inquiry be supported, and I urge members to support it in the circumstances we are confronting, I envisage it getting underway without delay and going to advertisements within a week or so. It needs to be given priority status.

I have already received much written material. Some people obviously believe the inquiry is underway and others have sought to influence an inquiry. A number of people have said there has to be an inquiry, and I have told them that it is a matter for the Council to make the decision at the appropriate time. This comment is not intended as criticism of those people who have tried to influence me. I will make it available for the committee to support, and I have documentation that will come into this committee. I have advised people contacting me in writing, by phone, in person and electronically that they will need to provide the committee with a submission and or request an audience in due course, and that what they have given me would not satisfy a submission for the committee, unless the committee determines that is the case.

Having regard to all the circumstances, this is a unique case and should be finalised expeditiously, not to say that it would be rushed and or dealt with in a trivial manner. I am confident no committee sitting on this matter would ever see this happen. It is my intention it be finalised this year.

Stephen Bendle might be known to some of you. Some of you might have spoken to Stephen Bendle, the Advocacy and Campaign Advisor (Gun Control) of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation. I have spoken to him on a number of occasions. He has urged that this matter be moved ahead as a high priority because it is causing much angst and concern. As he said, 'We just want to see it over and done with'; very clearly their position is no weakening of the laws. Stephen was saying that we need to be very careful with this matter.

The member for Rosevears in his public interest speech today raised the firearm laws issue. In fact there are lots of firearms issues. I could relate two or three issues almost to the same degree that the member did, of the nonsense occurring of the police giving wrong information. I will refer to that when I move the police motion rather than refer to it today - of police giving a person the wrong information, taking their firearms, and then returning them. These issues need sorting out and identifying. An inquiry with the terms and references we have here will help satisfy a lot of these issues. I urge all members to support the motion.

[4.38 p.m]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison) - Mr President, my contribution will be brief. I will ask a number of questions of the member moving the motion.

I start with the same questions I asked during debate on the motion previously put by the member for Launceston. Is this an area of significant concern? Absolutely, yes it is. One reason there is so much concern is the way the policy was released during the recent election period. The letter sent out by the Liberal Party was dated 9 February, in their planning for the election. It was sent out to a number of stakeholders, but not all. If it had been sent to all stakeholders, it would have been sent to every Tasmanian because every Tasmanian is a stakeholder in this issue. The letter was not even sent to every stakeholder with an interest in firearms. A number of people contacted me who did not receive it, including firearms owners and retailers. So the manner in which the policy was released created the most community interest and concern. It is a significant area of concern. Does it need review?

Many of the proposals in that letter are similarly reflected in the Labor Party policy - which I did not actually read, but the member for Windermere has read sections of it. They are sensible and I think most people agree with that. The government should have done it last term when the regulations were debated and the Subordinate Legislation Committee looked at that. There were all manner of reasons why the regulations were accepted as they were, even though they were fundamentally flawed in some aspects in my mind, and in the minds of most. The government stuffed up in that process.

A lot of the proposed changes, or proposed policy positions, reflect what should have happened last term of government. The Labor Party also apparently recognised that. I did not look at what the Greens were saying. They were all sensible changes. Only a few were not perhaps sensible or definitely needed consultation broader than just the few people who were sent the letter.

The letter that fell out of the cupboard, conveniently or inconveniently, a few days before the election is what really annoyed people. It was a really odd thing for the member for Windermere to say that it was 'unfortunate' it was released. Unfortunate it was released? The letter was out there on 9 February 2018. Some people would have received it on that date, maybe a few days later. I do not think it was unfortunate it was released; I think it was important it was released so the people knew what they were voting for, but many people had already voted by the time it hit the media. I had a lot of people raising really serious concerns about that process.

Yes, it needs review and it needs to be looked at properly. The changes that are perhaps more significant are not just commonsense changes, which I would argue should have happened in the last term of government.

Is this our role or is it the role of government? The member for Windermere posed that question, and he said no doubt someone will mention it - and too right because I do not believe it is our role to be scrutinising the whole of the areas of firearms and gun laws basically in the state

when the Government probably only has a number of defined areas that it actually really needs to consider and consult on. The Government should be doing that. It should have done it.

We do not know what the Government is actually going to bring in now in terms of the legislation. We do not know what regulatory change it is going to propose. There is a process for that and I believe that the Government should be doing that.

I am happy to be convinced by other members that I am wrong on this and that is fine, but this is the way I see it after the conversations I have had with members of my community. I do not know how many are gun owners, particularly in my electorate, but I am sure the Leader would know that a lot of them are, because they are mostly farmers, shooters and hunters. Far and away the majority of them do not live in the middle of Burnie and would have a firearm. Some of them perhaps should not. You meet the odd one like that now and then.

If this House should have an inquiry, I do not agree that there is a real urgency. The Government has not put a bill on the Table. It has not even talked about introducing a bill into the other place, so there is not the urgency in my mind. I know that people want this sorted out and they want a light shone on it, but let us look at what we are shining the light on: what does the Government actually want to do and how does it want to do it?

**Mr Dean** - Is that not clear in the policy on it?

**Ms FORREST** - That was the letter sent to a number of stakeholders so we still do not know in what form they are going to bring forward some of the changes so let the Government work that out. Let it consult and decide the changes that need to be made and how they are best reflected. A lot of them are sensible changes, and there are only a small number of contentious ones. If there is to be an inquiry, it should be with Government Administration Committee A. It clearly sits within Police, Fire and Emergency Management and that is Committee A. If the member for Windermere is not on that, he can substitute in - we have done that before - and generally chair the inquiry.

We set up these committees for a reason. I know it is not set up yet. Hopefully it will be next time we are back because there will be many opportunities to inquire into a whole range of matters relating to these portfolio areas, but that is what those committees are for and it clearly fits within one of them.

**Mr Dean** - What about the previous one?

**Ms FORREST** - If you listened to my contribution in that, you would have heard that it crossed planning, tourism and housing which crossed committees A and B. They are not all in the same committee. I made that point at the time. I also have concerns, not about the Leader personally, but about the Leader being on a select committee like this. I know she was the only Liberal Party member at the time it was proposed, but I do not believe it is right. I do not know if anyone intends to move an amendment to that. It could be a baptism of fire for the member for Prosser perhaps. I think it is wrong. We had a joint House committee a number of years ago on the review of the GMO moratorium. We then had the minister on the committee. Not only was he on the committee, he was chairing it.

**Mrs Hiscutt** - Was that GMOs?

**Ms FORREST** - Yes. The minister had made his position very clear before the commencement of the inquiry and he was not going to change. I know you are not a minister, Leader, but you have the same standing in this place. You are the Leader of Government Business in this place.

**Mr Valentine** - She gets to speak on behalf of the minister.

**Ms FORREST** - That is right. The Leader has an enormous workload, carrying all of that. She does a really good job. As it stands, that is also a problem and there is an option now, in my mind on that, if it is supported. I would like to see that changed. If the committee is to be supported, that should change.

As far as needing to expedite the process, I do not believe there needs to be a rush. The Government has not been overly vocal about gun law reform except to say it supports an inquiry. It should be doing it itself. It should be undertaking the consultation. It should be putting its policy position formally, saying 'This is what we are going to do and this is how we are going to do it.' Some of it requires regulatory change. Some of it would require legislation. Some of it is just a policy decision to establish a new committee. I do not believe you need legislation for that.

A range of things in that policy document, or letter, require a range of approaches. Let the Government get about its business. I am surprised the member for Windermere has been very vocal in the media saying the Government should be able to get on with its business. What are we doing here? Interfering and getting in their way? You could argue that. My view is let the Government do it. I am happy to listen to the debate, as always, but at this stage I will not support the motion for all the reasons I have outlined. I will listen to other members' contributions.

[4.48 p.m.]

**Mr FARRELL** (Derwent) - Mr President, I, too, have a few concerns. I do not doubt that this is a very serious and emotional issue. As the member for Windermere stated, it is something that stirs up a lot of feeling within the community, and needs to be sorted out. It was most unfortunate that it all came to light so publicly a couple of days prior to the election. I think that really affects the people who are responsible with their firearms and do the right thing. I completely understand their concerns with this.

I take note of the member for Murchison's comments, it is interesting that sometimes a government will say 'Well, this is what we are proposing and we have a mandate to implement it. That is what we will do.' But that was not the case with this issue. It was kept pretty quiet apart from the member for Windermere and some of his media appearances. I understand his intentions are all proper and decent. I can see what he aims to do with the forming of a committee. I also note that this is very back to front. With the TFA, that was certainly legislation before us. There was a considerable body of work that we had to reference, to work through, to come out with findings. We are not actually sure, apart from what has been released in what is basically a policy letter, and we do not have any detailed understanding of what the legislation will be like.

Being a new member on the Subordinate Legislation Committee with the member for McIntyre there, we did go through the whole regulations debacle and storage issues. It was certainly done, it would seem, improperly and in a bit of a hurry and created all sorts of concerns with both shooters and people opposed to guns. There should be a lesson learned from that. There is no doubt it is an urgent issue but it needs to be properly controlled like any complex issue. The community has to have an extra level of communication about why certain things are done. It is very easy to have the

three word slogan to put out, but it does not do us any good and people get on the bandwagon. The media will pick it up if it is not done properly and this is where these laws are set back.

When it was on the media earlier this year, a couple of the stakeholder groups said, 'We are happy with that. If that is what is proposed, then we will work with it.' There was some understanding there from stakeholder groups there were issues they would have to deal with.

I, too, do not understand why it does not go under a sessional committee. Certainly the committee structure is there. Many of us would have an interest in this issue. Many of us have electorates - Derwent now goes right up through the Great Lakes area, through the Central Highlands - where there are a number of gun owners. I have also been on the Subordinate Legislation Committee and thought I might have received a phone call asking my interest. But we have had discussion about select committees before. I am not sure why the particular makeup was the makeup that the member has proposed, but there have also been changes now.

Welcome to the new member for Prosser, and congratulations to Rob Valentine on your re-election. We now have a new member for Prosser, an area that has a lot of hunting, gun owners and gun sports. It may be something that would suit the formation of the new committee.

Maybe this has been proposed a little early. Maybe we should have our committee structure worked out to see who sits where and how we can best do that. That will be the right way to structure because, with an issue as sensitive as the gun issue, it is very important it is beyond any question about frequency of ideas or people's opinions on firearms. If we do have a committee, then the right time to have a committee would be after the legislation has come to us, so we know what we are actually looking at.

I do not know if the Government has given a cast-iron guarantee to the member it will support the findings or the recommendations of this committee. If that is the case, it will certainly be most unusual.

I am of a mind to have a look at this in a proper, orderly process so it cannot be seen as trying to put a foregone conclusion or to get the process wrong. This is really important. This has come through with our Subordinate Legislation Committee and with sensitive issues it has to be done properly and ticked off all the way along so people have a full understanding.

I am a bit compromised by this, and while I support what the member is trying to do, there would be a better way to do it. To get to step one, the Government has the resources and the time to put a proposal forward. If it went through this procedure, through the lower House and came to the Legislative Council in due time, this Chamber would willingly look at it. It would give more time to settle in with our new members.

When I was in the leaders' role, I was very careful not to be involved in committees because this can be seen as you pushing the government's agenda. It was different with the TFA as this was a committee of the whole Chamber and was a good way to look at it. That might be a way to look at this because whilst there are regions where gun use is more evident, there would more use of hunting rifles in my electorate than the member for Hobart's. This is an electorate-based issue that does affect us all as Tasmanians. I would like to see the member have a think about that. If it had gone through the proper process and we were here saying we have this bill before us, we need to speak with stakeholders, at least we would have a solid foundation to work through. At the moment

it seems like trying to build a house on sand. I will listen to contributions of others and see how I feel at the end.

**Mr VALENTINE** (Hobart) - Madam Deputy President, when I heard about this through the media, I thought why would we be doing this because this is indeed something the Government should have done in the first instance. If we do not do this, the question then is, if the Government brings it through and we say we have not had time to fully examine it and take it to a committee, are we not achieving the same thing? The only difference would be there would be an opportunity for some not currently slated to undertake or be on the inquiry to have input. It is true my electorate is not likely to be an electorate with a great deal of gun ownership, but you might be surprised and interested to see the figures. There are many people in the electorate who hunt kangaroo on farmers' properties, and have done for many years. Some do live in my electorate and indeed there would be an interest there.

I can tell you on the doorsteps during the election campaign, it was a very significant issue on people's minds. I will talk about this when we get to debate the bill itself.

I am of two minds here. I am of one mind that says this is a government trying to find a way forward through a process or an issue that may have been of their own making in the way it has been released. Why should the Legislative Council be in the process of policymaking? That is in effect what this is doing. The other part of me says if we do not do it, will it get the scrutiny it deserves? Obviously those who support a policy to change the law are going to be naturally persuaded towards their own policy when they do an inquiry into it - that is, if it were something that was to be further examined by the Government and for them to come forward with a different policy position or reaffirm the policy position they put out prior to the election.

Bringing it out a few days before the election was not the right thing to do. Some people would say that at least they brought it out before and the fact that they got back in again is testament that people are not too unhappy about it. Well, they did lose two seats and you could say it was not an overwhelming victory.

There are all of these things that come into play. I am inclined to not see this House be the policymaker for the Government. When a bill comes before us, we are constrained by the Government's willingness to move, left or right, of whatever the policy position might be as we propose amendments to bills. This is defining the boundaries and that gives me a little bit of concern.

I will listen to the debate but I am inclined not to support this going to an inquiry because of that fact that we are really defining the boundaries.

[5.01 p.m.]

**Ms RATTRAY** (McIntyre) - Madam Deputy President, on the public record, I congratulate you on your role as Chair of Committees and Deputy President.

I see this a little bit differently to other speakers that we have had before because I do not see this proposed select committee as trying to make policy. I say that because the consultation and the interaction with the community through the committee inquiry process I see as something very different. I see it as a way for the community to engage with their elected members. I say that with no disrespect to the other consultation processes that occur around various areas that the government brings forward through legislation and through other matters.

In regard to guns and firearms, their ownership and storage, through the Subordinate Legislation Committee I saw a consultation process that did not work. We ended up at the eleventh hour with some storage requirements that we had to pass through this House or there would have been nothing in place. I felt pressured about that at the time because you do not want people not having their guns properly stored. You want the best possible security arrangements that you can and -

**Mr Valentine** - We could not change them.

**Ms RATTRAY** - We could not change them, that is exactly right. It got to that eleventh hour and there was a deadline and we were waiting and waiting for weeks. I know the member for Murchison would ask me constantly, 'I have not seen these regulations yet, what is happening with them. Has the committee got them yet?' The member will say 'yes' to that, that is exactly what happened because we waited, and we waited, and we waited for them. There were drafts and then the drafts went back to be redrafted. The consultation process around the storage of firearms did not work. That is my view.

When the member for Windermere contacted me about this, I said, 'I am of a mind to support it and I would like the opportunity to be a part of the committee'. A number of the issues that had been brought forward were brought up through the firearms storage process that the Subordinate Legislation Committee undertook, but it was not within the terms of the inquiry. We could not deal with it. We could not deal with those issues and I said to those people that presented at the time this is for another day. This is not part of the committee's terms of reference at this point in time, but there will be opportunity in the future. Whether the opportunity comes through the government consultation process or whether it comes through a committee of this parliament I suggest - and no disrespect to some of the other committees - that the Legislative Council do it very well. They seem to be able to engage with all aspects of the community and take very comprehensive evidence and my experience is that we have very good reports to back up the committees that we undertake and complete.

I do not see it as telling the government what the policy is. I see it as giving them enough information that they do not bring a bill to this House that could not possibly pass and, yes, you might say we are doing the work of the Government, but are we not doing the work of the parliament? We are working for the parliament which is to make sure that the community gets the best outcome possible. That is how I see it.

As for the timing of the release by the then minister around what is proposed, I do not know whether it was good, bad or indifferent, and whether people did make their choice and not elect people to the parliament because of the gun laws. It is often said that not one issue defines who gets elected to this place. I pretty much agree with that. People have a multitude of issues in their mind about what they might support and what they might not and in the end they have to pick the person they think might best represent them.

I have thought long and hard and I have listened to the contributions, but I see no real reason not to support the inquiry if members are willing to give up their time. It is part of our role to make time in our busy diaries, to be part of an inquiry where it can possibly inform the government about what the community generally feels about those areas put forward - and there are a number. It is quite extensive - current and future firearms, licensing regimes, training, testing, renewal, infringement, categories, compliance and the roles of Tasmania Police and Firearms Services, and

also the Firearms Owners Council and we know that has been a moveable feast. We heard there was an advisory committee to the minister and some of those members, from what I have been told, had different views so one lot out, another lot in. Perhaps they have a different view. I would like to explore that particular aspect of the ownership of firearms as well. This is an opportunity to do that.

I have also been challenged in regard to the fact that we are doing the work of the government and again I do not believe we are. I believe we are doing the work of the parliament and we are providing a forum for people who have an interest in this issue. It is quite a big issue. I have already started receiving representations to my office and I suggested to one gentleman that he make some dot points for me. He said, 'I will make an appointment and I will tell you what I want you to write down on my computer'. I handed it to him and I said you go away and have a think about it, if that is what you want to present to me at a later time. So already people in the community are being proactive. I reiterate that a number of these issues that would be addressed and dealt with through this select committee process were raised through the Subordinate Legislation Committee's very brief inquiry into storage requirements. I told them 'another day, for another forum' and I believe it could be appropriate for this forum.

[5.10 p.m.]

**Ms ARMITAGE** (Launceston) - Madam Deputy President, I also take the opportunity to congratulate you on your new role.

The issue of firearms and firearm control is a complex one, one that almost everyone you speak to in the street has an opinion on. Of course, the Port Arthur tragedy increases the emotional response of many when discussing firearms.

The firearm laws were updated nationally in 1996 under the National Firearms Agreement, which restricted the types of firearms available, installed a nationwide registration system, imposed stricter licensing conditions and introduced a uniform standard for storing firearms. We have been advised that many of the changes the current Government is proposing do not contradict the National Firearms Agreement, though I still believe there needs to be a thorough and pragmatic review into what these changes are and what the results of these changes would mean.

We need to provide all sectors of the community the opportunity to have input into this important issue if we are to make informed decisions over legislative change. I believe the Legislative Council would probably do a better job of such independent inquiries than the other place does. I agree with the member for McIntyre that we are here to do the work of the parliament; some may argue that it probably should have been done downstairs.

However, I would go back to the TasWater inquiry which we had last year, before the legislation came to us. I moved for that inquiry to be held and it was important that we had the facts before us. Sometimes it does not hurt to get the facts so that you have the opportunity to ask the questions when the legislation comes before you.

I will support the motion before us; it is opportune to get as much information as we can and give the community as much opportunity as possible to provide evidence.

[5.12 p.m.]

**Mr GAFFNEY** (Mersey) - Madam Deputy President, congratulations on your election.

My notes are all over the place; as people have been weighing in on the issue it has brought different things into the equation. I apologise if my contribution is a bit disjointed.

Regardless of where we live in Tasmania, gun regulation and ownership is everyone's concern - not because you may or may not own a gun. While people say the Port Arthur experience is one that resonates with a lot of the older generation - we can all remember where we were when we heard about Port Arthur - those of the younger generation are not so much impacted by what happened at Port Arthur as they are with what is happening in the United States in the schools. That is where their focus is and what they get their media reports on, what is happening in other states. I am not saying the Port Arthur incident is not important, but where our younger generation has its concerns is when the Government releases - whether it was in February or, as we all know, the media release that came out the day before the election. That is when everybody thought, 'What is this all about? Are they trying to get this through the day before an election so they can then say they have a mandate for their policy?'

Those are some of the concerns people have, and they are legitimate concerns because nobody wants to get gun regulations and gun laws wrong. Everyone wants to improve it, everyone wants to do the right thing.

I thank the member for Windermere for, first, setting it up so we can have this discussion and, second, asking me to be on it because who would not want to be on it. It is an important piece of work.

Should we be the ones driving this or should it be a joint select committee with three members from downstairs and three from upstairs? If the Government is really serious about the policy and the Labor Party has its policy framework as well and this is a big issue, why is it not a select committee? Why is it not something like we had for gaming or forestry? Why is it not done in the same way as the dying with dignity bill where we are involved together to come out with the best solution? We are not here, as the member for Murchison mentioned, to speak about different parts of this policy. Some of it is to do with regulations; some of it is to do with perhaps legislation that we have not seen and some of it is to do with policy. The policies between the parties can be different and we know that, but we want the legislation and the regulations to have some synergy and be accepted by the people of Tasmania.

As far as I am concerned, there are two issues. The discussion has to be had. I am just not sure if it should be led by this place, or we should say to the Government, 'What are you going to do if we say no to having an inquiry? What is your next move?' If they came back and said we will have a joint select committee of three members from downstairs and three members from upstairs, that would be a more robust way of doing it. Having been on joint select committees and Legislative Council select committees, I worry that sometimes the Government takes on board the recommendations and sometimes it does not. It will see the recommendations; it will see the findings and then choose anyway. Why do we not get members invested into the discussion and let them form the joint select committee, let them choose three from downstairs, let us choose three from this place, and have a robust discussion with the community without any expectations that we have to agree with or disagree with any policy position? Let us get the issues on the table and get them out.

I understand what the member for Windermere was saying about emotion. Yes, emotion will come into the presentations, but in an inquiry the emotions should not come into what we are there for. We are there to do a report. Whatever committee is there, it is to do a report with findings and

recommendations. Once they are done, that is a sound basis for legislation to go ahead. I am concerned that if we do this, the Government will pick and choose - we did not write it, we did not have that much involvement with it so I am not sure if it is a valuable exercise.

Going back to the horse and cart analogy - I never understand those things - I am not sure whether we need one horse here, or whether we need both horses from downstairs and upstairs working together. We are saying to the people of Tasmania that this is very important and we believe it needs a cross-parliament focus, not just that crusty old upper House that is going to block everything anyway. That is not what we need. What we need here is combined effort. From that point of view, and that point of view only, even though I would really like to be on the committee, I am going to vote against it and suggest to send it back to the Government to say 'come back to us with a better proposal'. The community wants to have a say in this and it needs to be invested by both Houses for it to be a good response from the parliament.

At this stage, even though I would like to be on the committee, I am going to vote against this process.

[5.18 p.m.]

**Mr ARMSTRONG** (Huon) - Mr President, I will be supporting the committee. People have come to me after they had read in the daily papers what might happen with the gun laws and they are not really sure. They do not know what is actually happening. They have said to me they will be able to make representations to this committee. It is putting it out there and letting people make representations to us and the committee can then come up with recommendations.

I can remember when the fallow deer committee was put up to us, people in this place said that there probably would not be much interest in it. That was far from the truth because in both Hobart and Ross the rooms were -

**Ms Rattray** - Standing room only at Campbell Town in the new member for Prosser's electorate.

**Mr ARMSTRONG** - Campbell Town, not Ross, sorry. They were packed out, that is right. Many of those people from that fallow deer inquiry are going to be affected by gun laws so it is a good idea to have this committee. We will be able to thrash out many issues and I will be supporting it.

[5.20 p.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, it is a very interesting debate

I thank the member for bringing on this motion. There is no doubt in Tasmania our firearms laws hold a particular importance. Ask almost any Tasmanian where they were on 28 April 1996 and they will tell you exactly, those who remember, and who they were with and what they were doing. The Port Arthur massacre is etched in our memories. The only good thing to come from the tragedy was firearms law reform. The nation's concept of firearm ownership and firearm control was challenged like never before. Australia answered with tough firearms laws through the National Firearms Agreement, arguably the world's toughest. Our firearms laws are amongst the toughest in the world and that is how they should remain. I can assure members that the Government will never do anything to compromise the integrity of our laws, nor the public safety our laws provide.

The Government is as committed to the NFA today as we were in 1996. The agreement continues to serve us and protect us and our way of life, but to suggest practical changes for the effective operation of the Firearms Act cannot be considered, even in the face of change in Tasmania, is not sensible, nor practicable.

Our firearms laws have been changed several times with 14 amendments to the act since 1996. Very recently the Government made changes to tighten storage restrictions which received widespread support as mentioned by the member for McIntyre.

The policy we took to the election likes to reflect strong input from farmers and other primary producers as well as sporting shooters, hunters and collectors. So like it or not, firearms are legal. They are tools of the trade for farmers and hunters and equipment for sporting shooters like those who competed recently at the Commonwealth Games. Our policy is about practical improvements to the law to support the work of legitimate firearm users including farmers who produce the food we eat. Our proposals were never secret, as claimed. They were circulated to key stakeholders more than three weeks before the election and were the response to issues they had raised with the clear instructions they could share them as they wished, and they did.

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party of Tasmania even issued a press release on 20 February commenting on the policy.

Labor did essentially the same thing, the only difference being they very quietly posted their policy, which is almost identical to ours, on their website just five days before the election.

Since the announcement of the policy, the Government has received strong input from diverse stakeholders and all quarters of the community. The Government remains committed to ensuring community safety whilst also acknowledging the legitimate needs of various sporting, hunting and farming uses of firearms in Tasmania.

I recognise this is an important and emotive issue which is why the Government supports the Legislative Council inquiry. The inquiry will provide an opportunity to put all the facts on the table and allow all Tasmanians to have their say. The Government looks forward to working constructively with the Legislative Council and assisting, as needed, during the inquiry.

There are a few comments I would like to make to the member for Murchison and the member for Derwent about the Leader's role on this committee. As mentioned by the member for Murchison, the GMO committee did have a leader on there, and also I have here a joint select committee brought up by the former Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, the honourable Michael Aird MLC, who also made himself the Chair of that committee, so there is definitely a precedent.

In defence of myself, although 'defence' might not be the right word, I would be honoured to serve on this committee. I am a 'tradie' and I have done my trade in agriculture specialising in cropping so I feel well qualified to look out for the best interests of farmers. I understand the situation. I understand the points of view of farmers. If the member for Derwent was concerned about the Government pushing their legislation or their points of view through me, maybe the member for Derwent could sub-in for the member for Pembroke just to keep an eye on me.

Having said that, I would like to serve on this committee. It is something I understand and I want to push. However, if the Council deems it appropriate to sub-in my new colleague that would be acceptable too. Having said that the Government is very supportive of this committee.

[5.25 p.m.]

**Ms LOVELL** (Rumney) - Mr President, I wanted to clarify a couple of points made in the Leader's contribution. To be clear the Labor Party is supportive of a committee. We are not opposing a review of the legislation. We are not opposing even some of the changes being proposed. The issue is with the construct of the committee and which committee is more appropriate to deal with this matter.

We support a committee, but we believe this should be a sessional committee. It should not be conducted in this manner. To make the point, if the consultations had been done appropriately in the first place and the work that will be done by this committee had been done by the government, we most likely would not be in this position. While we will not be supporting this motion, we do support a review of the legislation and as I have said we do support some of the changes.

**Mr PRESIDENT** - I must add that you cannot sub-in and out as a matter of course. This is a case where it is not like a footy field where you can bring them on and take them off again. You have to do that now if you require to do so. I make that point.

[5.26 p.m.]

**Mr DEAN** (Windermere) - Mr President, I can count. I know where it is going to go and it is going to happen a lot.

A couple of points to make. That is that, and the member for Murchison will correct me here if I am wrong. On the ABC Radio where she was asked by Leon Compton about this inquiry and where it should go and should there be an inquiry, the member answered words to the effect that there should be an inquiry. I just raise that issue. If I am wrong the member will tell me where I am wrong, but I am having the transcripts checked. I find it difficult to accept you come into this environment when the matters are being debated and discussed and the member changes. You can change your position of course, but perhaps there could have been some explanation as to why that position change is occurring. I find that to be irregular to say the least. The member also said words to the effect that we do not have a strong idea and a position to bring forward.

It was in my second reading moving the motion on this that the policy document of the Liberal Party is very clear. It identifies eight major headings. Two of those headings then are cut down and refined by sub-points and the last one, point eight, identified 13 different areas the Liberal Party is wanting to review and consider for some change in the legislation.

The Labor Party has been reasonably specific in what they want to do. They have made it fairly clear in their document. We know where the Greens stand on certain issues when they raise them, but I do not have any policy documents from them.

The Leader, I do not think I need to say a lot more there. I thought it was fair and put forward an equitable position to balance the committee to have somebody representative of all parties.

You cannot sub-on and -off - I agree with what the President has said - but we can move for an amendment to the motion to do that. I would not want to do that if the members and leaders have been on previous committees. I would not be trying to sway the Leader in any way to stand aside

for an amendment to be made to this inquiry or to this committee. I leave that and understand further changes could occur at a later stage. It would be a matter of bringing it back to this House, and the President will correct me if I am wrong, for other changes to be made if we deem them necessary moving down the path so we could do that at a later stage. It has not got to occur today.

If that was a concern, it is certainly a concern for the member for Murchison, that the Leader has that position.

**Ms Forrest** - Mr President, I also argued at the time when David Llewellyn was chairing that GMO committee that was fundamentally wrong too. I have been consistent in my approach and on the point of my comments with Leon Compton, I said I would support an inquiry but the point was that I wanted to support an inquiry when we knew what we were looking at.

**Mr DEAN** - The member for Derwent seems to be a little frustrated or annoyed that maybe he had not been asked to be a part of this inquiry. When I spoke to the member for Pembroke I was not set on who it should be from the Labor Party at all. I was of the view that we needed a Labor Party member on it and I said words to the effect to the member, 'I would like you to consider a position on it, as long as we get a Labor member on it'. I was not set on identifying the member for Pembroke but I saw reason to ring her. She has not been on one of these committees and I thought it would be a great opportunity for her to be the representative of the Labor Party on this committee. That was the reason for that. I would hope no-one can read into that some decision on my part not to include the member for Derwent in it. I am aware he would be a very good member on this committee, I am aware of that and he certainly covers a large rural area.

The member for Hobart is right. There are many firearm owners in the built-up areas. In the Launceston area, for instance, I know large numbers of people who have firearms. Firearm ownership does not just relate to the rural areas. Probably across the state there might be more in the rural areas perhaps.

The member for Derwent referred to the TFA. The only reference I wanted to make to the TFA was to set it up as an example of where we used a whole House as a committee. That was the only reason I referred to that; I was not referring to what stage the legislation was at and the fact that it was already presented before us at the time. I was not making any reference to that part at all, other than fact where we had the whole House as the committee.

The member for Derwent was also saying, correct me if I am wrong, that he supports what I want to do but believes there is a better way. You can say that about anything that you are doing, that there is a better way; nobody can say there is not. The fact is there comes a time when you need to move forward and you need to get some action. I have no doubt with the member's better way, others would sit here and say, 'well, I think there is a better way than that as well'.

There are a number of ways it could happen: the Government could take it on and do it themselves with whatever inquiry they want to undertake, going out to all stakeholders and calling people and do it that way. There could be a joint House committee; there can be a number of ways of doing it. In this case, we know what the situation is, we know the matters that are going to be referred to. This is creating a lot of angst in the community, like it or not, and the delay in getting this inquiry up will simply mean further concerns for all those people who are wanting something to happen.

I do not know how far away the Liberal Party would be in bringing forward a draft document but I suspect they would be quite some time away, inasmuch as they were supportive of this process as well. I am not too sure how far they have advanced this matter. I am of the view that we should not unduly frustrate the people who are very much aware of what is going on and were very much involved in the Port Arthur issue.

As I said it was a matter I was involved in myself. I have real concerns about the position put forward by some members as to why this inquiry should not proceed. It would be a fairly short inquiry and identify very clearly to the Government how the public - how the people who are out there - are seeing this moving forward. They would be very naive and very silly if they did not accept the findings and any recommendations that might come out of this committee in relation to the matters which they have raised.

The member for Mersey raises the joint House committee stage - well, I am not sure when that would ever conclude because it is very difficult to get joint House committees together and get the time to move forward with anything, with the greatest respect. It is not easy to bring all the members together and move forward. Why go down that path when we know what is going to happen? This committee can call all those interested parties in and they will come forward.

I can count at least to 14 and I know where this is going and, for me, that is a sad situation. If you talk to people like Mr Bendle who represents the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, they have a very strong interest in this matter and a strong interest in it proceeding as quickly as possible. I cannot do any more than that, I have put it forward, I can see what is going on and it is a sad situation.

**The Council divided -**

AYES 10

NOES 4

Ms Armitage  
Mr Armstrong  
Mr Dean  
Mr Farrell  
Ms Howlett (Teller)  
Mrs Hiscutt  
Ms Lovell  
Ms Rattray  
Ms Siejka  
Mr Willie

Mr Finch  
Ms Forrest  
Mr Gaffney  
Mr Valentine (Teller)

**Motion agreed to.**

**MOTION**

**Appointment of a Select Committee - Tasmanian Irrigation**

[5.41 p.m.]

**Mr FARRELL** (Derwent) - Mr President, I move -

- (1) That a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the Council, and with leave to adjourn from place to place to inquire into and report upon the future management of water rights and associated assets that are currently administered by Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd; and
- (2) That -  
  
Mr Dean, Mrs Hiscutt, Ms Rattray, and the Mover be of the Committee; and
- (3) That the minutes of proceedings of and evidence taken by the Select Committee appointed for this purpose on 14 November 2017 be referred to the Committee.

This motion is to re-establish the Select Committee on Tasmanian Irrigation formed by Mr Hall during the last session of parliament. The committee is now at the stage of going through with its final report. Rather than waste all the work that we did compiling the evidence, this is a procedural motion to re-establish that committee as a select committee of this Chamber.

I ask honourable members to support this motion.

[5.42 p.m.]

**Mr DEAN** (Windermere) - Mr President, I support this motion. I was a member of that earlier committee. A number of people have contacted me about this committee - 'Is it going to keep going? Will it start up again? Will we see a report coming from it?' There are many people with a lot of interest in this matter. They are waiting for a position to come from the committee to determine some courses of action that they are considering to move forward with. I support this motion.

**Ms Rattray** - We were almost at the draft report stage when we had to adjourn. It is ready to go.

**Mr DEAN** - That is so. I thank the previous member for McIntyre, Mr Hall, for what he did on that committee. He commenced the committee. He had a strong position on wanting irrigation matters dealt with and perhaps some changes to be made to it to make it better. I congratulate him on everything he did on this committee to date.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Motion agreed to.**

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

That the Council do now adjourn.

**The Council adjourned at 5.44 p.m.**