**INTERNET**


**SITTING DAYS—2015**

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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—SEVENTH PERIOD

Governor-General
His Excellency General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK, MC (Retd)

House of Representatives Office holders
Speaker—Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn Smith
Deputy Speaker—Hon. Bruce Craig Scott MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP
Members of the Speaker’s Panel—Mr Russell Evan Broadbent MP,
Ms Anna Elizabeth Burke MP, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP,
Hon John Kenneth Cobb MP, Mr Patrick Martin Conroy MP,
Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mrs Natasha Louise Griggs MP,
Ms Sarah Moya Henderson MP, Mr Stephen James Irons MP,
Mr Craig Kelly MP, Ms Michelle Leanne Landry MP, Ms Clare Ellen O’Neil, MP,
Mrs Jane Prentice MP, Ms Melissa Lee Price MP,
Dr Andrew John Southcott MP, Mr Michael Sukkar MP,
Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth Wicks MP

Leader of the House—Hon. Christopher Pyne MP
Deputy Leader of the House—Hon. Luke Hartsuyker MP
Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Anthony Stephen Burke MP
Deputy Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC MP

Party Leaders and Whips
Liberal Party of Australia
Leader—Hon. Malcolm Bligh Turnbull MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Julie Isabel Bishop MP
Chief Government Whip—Ms Nola Bethwyn Marino MP
Government Whips—Mr Ewen Thomas Jones MP and Mr Brett David Whiteley MP

The Nationals
Leader—Hon. Warren Errol Truss MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard Joyce MP
Chief Whip—Mr Mark Maclean Coulton MP
Deputy Whip—Mr George Robert Christensen MP

Australian Labor Party
Leader—Hon. William Richard Shorten MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Tanya Joan Plibersek MP
Chief Opposition Whip—Mr Christopher Patrick Hayes MP
Opposition Whips—Ms Jill Griffiths Hall MP and Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP

Printed by authority of the House of Representatives
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<tr>
<td>Williams, Mr Matthew</td>
<td>Hindmarsh, SA</td>
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<td>Wilson, Mr Richard James</td>
<td>O'Connor, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood, Mr Jason Peter</td>
<td>La Trobe, VIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt, Mr Kenneth George AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS
ALP—Australian Labor Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia; NATS—The Nationals;
IND—Independent; NATSWA—The Nationals WA; CLP—Country Liberal Party;
AUS—Katter's Australia Party; AG—Australian Greens; PUP—Palmer United Party

Heads of Parliamentary Departments
Clerk of the Senate—R Laing
Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
Acting Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—D Heriot
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
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<tr>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prime Minister</strong></td>
<td>Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Senator Hon Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Women</strong></td>
<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cabinet Secretary</strong></td>
<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</em></td>
<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Digital Government</em></td>
<td>Senator Hon Mitch Fifield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter Terrorism</em></td>
<td>Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Hon Alan Tudge MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator Hon James McGrath</td>
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<td>Hon Dr Peter Hendy MP</td>
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<td>Senator Hon Scott Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development</strong></td>
<td>Hon Warren Truss MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Prime Minister)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia</strong></td>
<td>Hon Josh Frydenberg MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects</strong></td>
<td>Hon Paul Fletcher MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Trade and Investment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</strong></td>
<td>Hon Andrew Robb AO MP</td>
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<td>Hon Steven Ciobo MP</td>
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<td>Senator Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attorney-General</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
<td>Senator Hon George Brandis QC</td>
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<td><strong>Minister for Justice</strong></td>
<td>Hon Michael Keenan MP</td>
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<td><strong>Treasurer</strong></td>
<td>Hon Scott Morrison MP</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Small Business</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hon Jamie Briggs MP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hon Stuart Robert MP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Minister for Education and Training</strong></td>
<td><strong>Senator Hon Simon Birmingham</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Vocational Education and Skills</strong> (Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
<td><strong>Hon Luke Hartsuyker MP</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Senator Hon Richard Colbeck</strong></td>
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Each box represents a portfolio. Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type. As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. However, there is a Department of Human Services in the Social Services portfolio and a Department of Veterans’ Affairs in the Defence portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases. Assistant Ministers in italics are designated as Parliamentary Secretaries under the Ministers of State Act 1952.
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<td>Hon Bill Shorten MP</td>
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<td>Senator the Hon Kim Carr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader on State and Territory Relations</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</td>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Ed Husic MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Assisting with Digital Innovation and Startups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Senator Sam Dastyari</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
<td>Terri Butler M</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Northern Australia</td>
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<td>Shadow Minister for Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Industry</td>
<td>Senor the Hon Lisa Singh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Vocational Education</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>Hon Catherine King MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Ageing</td>
<td>Hon Shayne Neumann MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Mental Health</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Aged Care</td>
<td>Senor Helen Polley</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Jenny Macklin MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Disability Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Brendan O’Connor MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Julie Collins MP</td>
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Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.

* Senator Katy Gallagher’s appointment to the Shadow Ministry is effective from 1 November 2015. Senator the Hon Jan McLucas will serve as Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness and Shadow Minister for Mental Health, and represent the Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, the Shadow Minister for Health, the Shadow Assistant Minister for Health, the Shadow Minister for Sport and the Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs in the Senate until 31 October 2015.
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Wednesday, 25 November 2015

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 09:00, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

COMMITTEES

Selection Committee

Report

The SPEAKER (09:01): I present report No. 37 of the Selection Committee relating to the consideration of private members' business on Monday, 30 November 2015. The report will be printed in the Hansard for today and the committee's determinations will appear on tomorrow's Notice Paper. Copies of the report have been placed on the table.

The report read as follows—

Report relating to the consideration of private Members' business.
1. The committee met in private session on Tuesday, 24 November 2015.
2. The committee determined the order of precedence and times to be allotted for consideration of private Members' business on Monday, 30 November 2015, as follows:

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Notices

1 MR KATTER: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1975, and for related purposes. (Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Amendment (Strategic Assets) Bill 2015). (Notice given 24 November 2015.)

Time allotted—10 minutes.
Speech time limits—
   Mr Katter—10 minutes.
   [Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 1 x 10 mins]

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41.

2 MRS WICKS: To move:

That this House recognises:
(1) the importance of the events that took place on 3 December 1854 on Eureka Hill at Ballarat;
(2) the significance of these events in Australia's history;
(3) the impact of Eureka on our discussions surrounding free market, individual enterprise and representative democracy; and
(4) that Australians have interpreted the events in numerous ways that impact and inspire our economic and social frameworks.

(Notice given 24 November 2015.)

Speech time limits—
   Mrs Wicks—5 minutes.
   Other Members—5 minutes each.
   [Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

3 MR CHRISTENSEN: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes the threat of violent extremism to Australian society;

(2) further notes the:

(a) acts of terrorism committed by violent extremists within Australia against Australians;

(b) specific terrorism incidents:

(i) the attack on police officers at Endeavour Hills Police Station in 2014;

(ii) the siege at Sydney’s Martin Place which resulted in the death of two Australians; and

(iii) most recently the murder of Mr Curtis Cheng at Parramatta Police Station; and

(c) significant number of ISIL recruits coming from Australia;

(3) commends the Australian police forces for their efforts in countering terrorism;

(4) notes the numerous acts of terror which have been prevented because of police efforts, in particular:

(a) attempt by the ‘Sydney Five’ to commit acts of terrorism in the city of Sydney in 2005;

(b) Benbrika Group’s planned bombing of various sporting events in 2005 and 2006 as well as a plot to assassinate former Prime Minister the Hon. John Howard; and

(c) 2009 plot to storm the Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney;

(5) praises the Prime Minister for his statement in response to the recent terrorism incident in Parramatta, that it is not compulsory to live in Australia and if one finds Australian values unpalatable then ‘there’s a big wide world out there and people have got freedom of movement’; and

(6) calls for continued action in countering violent extremism and in particular, radical Islam within Australia in order to prevent further acts of terrorism within our borders.

(Notice given 9 November 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Christensen—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

4 MS BUTLER: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) 1 December marks World AIDS Day, which is held every year to raise awareness about the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS, and is a day for people to show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died; and

(b) the theme for World AIDS Day this year is ‘Getting to zero: Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths’;

(2) acknowledges the roles played by people living with HIV and their friends, family, supporters, AIDS activists and researchers, past and present, in making HIV a disease people can live with; and

(3) affirms its commitment to support actions which will reduce stigma, prevent new HIV transmissions, and work towards a cure.
(Notice given 24 November 2015.)
Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—
Ms T. M. Butler—5 minutes.
Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

5 MS RYAN: To move:
That this House acknowledges the work of:
(1) community legal centres in tackling domestic violence;
(2) the United Nations and its 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign to end domestic violence;
(3) journalist Ms Sarah Ferguson for her ongoing efforts to educate the public on the key driver behind domestic violence—control;
(4) the Leader of the Opposition for appointing a Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Child Safety and Prevention of Family Violence; and
(5) the Victorian Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, for her work on Victoria’s Royal Commission into Family Violence.

(Notice given 24 November 2015.)
Time allotted—remaining private Members’ business time prior to 12 noon.

Speech time limits—
Ms Ryan—5 minutes.
Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]
The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

Items for Federation Chamber (11 am to 1.30 pm)

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS

Notices

1 MS VAMVAKINOU: To move:
That this House:
(1) acknowledges that:
   (a) 29 November is International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People as observed by the United Nations (resolution 23/40 B);
   (b) following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established to carry out direct relief and works programs for Palestinian refugees who had fled to West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria;
   (c) UNRWA services are available to all those living in its areas of operations—West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria—who are registered and who need assistance;
   (d) Palestinians registered with the UNRWA are unable to register with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and additionally cannot be referred for resettlement by the UNHCR;
(e) Palestinian refugees from Syria are a vulnerable minority, who are currently fleeing for the same reasons as other genuine refugees and persecuted minorities; and

(f) whilst not a legislative requirement, the UNHCR registration is a determining factor in the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection’s consideration of refugee and humanitarian visa applications; and

(2) calls on the Government to:

(a) recognise that the Palestinian refugees from Syria who are registered with the UNWRA are unable to register with the UNHCR irrespective of meeting the criteria for refugee status in the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention; and

(b) work with the UNHCR to consider Palestinians fleeing Syria and registered with the UNWRA as eligible to apply for the Government’s recently announced intake of 12,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict.

(Notice given 23 November 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Ms Vamvakou—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

2 MR BUCHHOLZ: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that National Adoption Awareness Week was recently celebrated, a week dedicated to raising awareness around the challenges faced by families and children navigating complex inter country and domestic adoption processes in Australia;

(2) is made aware of the fact that the rate of adoption in Australia is the lowest in the developed world, with only 317 children adopted in 2013-14;

(3) recognises that 15,000 children in Australia have been in out of home care for over two years and over 12 million children are officially registered overseas awaiting adoption;

(4) acknowledges the need for continued adoption reform, especially in the area of local adoption;

(5) notes that:

(a) children who experience abuse and neglect in the home, followed by instability in out of home care, are much more likely to experience poor life outcomes;

(b) in adolescence, out of home carers are unable to maintain the necessary level of care for children with complex needs and they are often placed in residential care; and

(c) on an average day in 2013-14 there were 1,157 children in residential care and on 30 June 2014 there were 2,258 children in residential care; and

(6) calls on the Government to present this issue to the COAG in order to create a national strategy that will dramatically increase the rate of local adoption in Australia.

(Notice given 24 November 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Mr Buchholz—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.
3 MS CLAYDON: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) three diseases—HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria—still account for the deaths of more than 2.7 million people each year;

(b) since 2000, increased action by national governments and international donors on prevention and detection of and treatment for these diseases has led to significant reductions in cases of and deaths from each disease;

(c) the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) has played a significant role in this progress, and has supported programs with the following outcomes:

(i) increasing the number of people with HIV with access to antiretroviral therapy to 8.1 million;

(ii) making available testing and treatment for tuberculosis to 13.2 million people; and

(iii) supporting the distribution of 548 million insecticide treated bed nets to prevent malaria; and

(d) the Global Fund contributes more than $US4 billion to combat the three diseases each year, and accounts for more than 20 per cent of international funding for HIV, half of international funding for malaria and three quarters of funding for tuberculosis;

(2) recognises:

(a) the proposed Sustainable Development Goals include a target to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria by 2030;

(b) achieving this target will require increased investment by national governments, national aid agencies and multilateral agencies such as the Global Fund; and

(c) increased investment in addressing these diseases now will reduce the risk of much greater costs, especially from drug resistance, in the future; and

(3) calls on the Government to continue and consider increasing its support for the Global Fund for the next replenishment period, 2017 to 2019.

(Notice given 10 November 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Ms Claydon—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

4 MRS MCNAMARA: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that the drug Ice is at epidemic proportions and having a huge impact on our communities;

(2) acknowledges the Government has:

(a) identified the ferocity of the Ice epidemic across Australia;

(b) put in place the National Ice Taskforce (NIT) to begin implementing positive programs and changes to help stop the scourge of Ice; and

(c) announced $1 million in funding has been made available to Crime Stoppers to roll out a national Dob in a Dealer campaign to help combat Australia's Ice scourge; and
(3) notes that the NIT final report was recently delivered to the Government with identified actions on how local, state and federal governments can work with communities to take a systematic, comprehensive and coordinated approach to Australia’s Ice scourge.

(Notice given 11 November 2015.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Mrs McNamara—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

5 MR PERRETT: To move:

That this House:

(1) recognises that 14 November is World Diabetes Day;

(2) acknowledges that:

(a) there are 1.1 million diagnosed cases of diabetes in Australia and they are rising by 100,000 a year;

(b) Diabetes Australia estimates that:

(i) diabetes currently costs the Australian economy around $14.6 billion per annum; and

(ii) the cost of diabetes to the Australian economy is forecast to increase to $30 billion by 2025;

(c) Australia needs a stronger response to the challenge of diabetes;

(d) there is evidence that:

(i) the onset of type 2 diabetes can be successfully prevented; and

(ii) serious complications and hospitalisations from diabetes can be prevented; and

(3) commits to working towards reducing the impact of diabetes on the lives of Australians.

(Notice given 12 November 2015.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Mr Perrett—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

6 SYRIA AND IRAQ CRISIS: Resumption of debate (from 23 November 2015) on the motion of Ms Plibersek—That this House calls on the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support a parliamentary debate during the current sitting on the Australian Government’s strategy in response to the crisis in Syria and Iraq.:

Time allotted—remaining private Members’ business time prior to 1.30 pm.

All Members speaking—5 minutes.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 2 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

THE HON A. D. H. SMITH MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives
25 November 2015
STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Marriage

The SPEAKER (09:01): I inform the House that I have received a copy of a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia on 23 September 2015 relating to marriage equality. The text of the resolution will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings and Hansard.

The resolution read as follows—

That this Western Australian Legislative Assembly calls on the Federal Government to abandon the proposed plebiscite on marriage equality and urgently calls on all members of the Federal Parliament to have a free vote on a bill to amend the Marriage Act 1961, regarding marriage equality.

BILLS

Aged Care Amendment (Red Tape Reduction in Places Management) Bill 2015

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Ms Ley.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (09:02): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Aged Care Amendment (Red Tape Reduction in Places Management) Bill is a key component of the government's deregulation agenda. It makes the business of delivering aged care easier for service providers and removes unnecessary administrative process so that the focus of care delivery can be at the forefront of a service provider's attention.

Australia has an ageing population with the life expectancy of older people increasing with advances in technology. With this demographic comes the need for governments to support older people with their increasing care needs and make the process of delivering aged care less administratively burdensome than it currently is. This bill reduces red tape for aged-care providers in regard to the management of provisionally allocated residential aged-care places and the transfer of residential, home-care and flexible-care places.

It shifts the focus of the business of aged care back to its roots in care delivery while still enabling the government to uphold consumer protections around quality of care, as well as appropriate management of financial and prudential risk on behalf of the consumer. This bill is a positive step forward to reducing red tape for aged-care providers.

The two measures in this bill are part of the election commitment made by this government to review the administration of aged-care places management. They represent the achievement of item 11 of the Red Tape Reduction Action Plan. This plan was co-developed by the government and the Aged Care Sector Committee, and it was approved by the former Prime Minister in 2014. In the plan, the government committed to a review of aged-care places management, including the streamlining of the transfer of residential, home-care and flexible-care places and to revise the service provider obligations associated with managing provisionally allocated residential aged-care places.
The commitment to reduce red tape for the aged-care sector in these two areas was initially achieved by streamlining the information required to be provided in managing aged-care places with new forms released earlier this year. These revised forms reduce the duplication of information sought by the department in regulating aged care while still meeting legislative requirements. This initial reduction in red tape was the first step in this deregulation agenda of aged-care places management, however more can be done to support the aged-care sector. This red-tape reduction achievement has been built upon and it is the foundation of this bill.

This bill contains two distinct measures: the transfer of aged-care places measure and the amendments relating to provisionally allocated residential aged-care places. Both measures are the necessary next step in aligning business realities with the legislative platform in the Aged Care Act and contribute to a more efficient and effective administration of aged-care places.

The transfer of aged-care places occurs where approved providers of residential aged care make a business decision that they no longer have capacity to deliver care to older people who reside at their service and seek out another aged-care business to continue this service delivery. At present, both transferee and transferor are required to submit an application form that is then considered by the Department of Health. In approximately 80 per cent of cases, this application form is routinely approved by the department. Historically, this requirement to submit a form has ensured that the new provider of the residential aged care commits to meeting their quality of care and other obligations.

The Aged Care Act, however, has a number of different regulatory tools to ensure that quality of care is delivered to a high standard, including strict accreditation requirements, compliance mechanisms and oversight by the Aged Care Complaints Scheme. The approval of this form to transfer aged-care places is an unnecessary and administratively burdensome component of the act that this bill seeks to rectify.

In proposing a new model for the transfer of aged-care places, three key concepts have been central to the new approach: firstly, only seeking additional information from the aged-care sector that is necessary to provide an informed risk managed perspective of the proposed transfer; secondly, where the transfer of aged-care places is a business decision between two already approved providers of residential care, that there is limited involvement in that business transaction; and, thirdly and most importantly, the government retains capacity to review and where necessary veto the transfer arrangement to ensure that a high-standard and quality aged-care service can be delivered and other consumer protections can be maintained.

The new approach to the transfer of aged-care places is to replace the application form with a simplified Notice of Transfer that is signed by the transferring parties. It removes the need for approved providers to seek approval to transfer their places to another provider. They simply notify the department of the transfer and wait for the transfer to be processed. The government retains the capacity to review the proposed transfer and, where quality of care, prudential, financial or other significant concerns exist, has the right to issue a Notice of Veto to prevent the transfer from proceeding. If additional information is required in reviewing the proposed transfer, a Notice to Resolve can also be issued. As part of the Notice to Veto, the location and special needs associated with the places remains a consideration for government and, as such, the requirements to continue to support to older people with special needs, including those who live in rural or remote areas, will be maintained by this amendment.
The proposed legislative reforms are a part of a package of changes that will remove 20 out of a total of 93 provisions (in both primary and subordinate legislation) that relate to the material that must be provided to or considered by the Department of Health when approved providers wish to transfer places. A further 17 of the 93 are being merged and/or simplified, and 10 of those 17 provisions will only apply where places are transferring to a new approved provider.

In developing this new approach, important aged-care sector input and consultation has occurred, with support provided by peak bodies and others consulted. The new approach to the transfer of aged-care places was provided to the Aged Care Sector Committee in May this year, with a selection of other providers also asked for input and feedback on the model. The response to this measure from the aged-care sector was positive and reflective of the business transaction that this component of the act regulates. This new approach aligns to the fundamental concepts of red-tape reduction and meets the objectives of the Red Tape Reduction Action Plan by ensuring regulation within the aged-care sector is fit for purpose.

The second measure within the bill aligns the period of provisionally allocated residential aged-care places with the current business realities of approved providers of residential aged care. In reviewing current practice and assessing the case for a change in the policy setting towards a reduced administrative arrangement, advice from the aged-care sector was that the current legislative arrangements did not adequately support providers of aged care.

A provisionally allocated place is a place that an approved provider has not delivered and is not delivering care through. It is a place that an approved provider has been advised will be subsidised by the Australian government but is not currently operational and has not 'taken effect'.

Following successful receipt of a provisionally allocated place through the Aged Care Approvals Round, approved providers of residential aged care must then seek planning approval through local governments to construct their new aged-care service. Advice from the sector is that sometimes this process alone can take up to two years. The current provisionally allocated period of two years sometimes only permits planning approval to be received before applications for extension commence.

Departmental data indicates that the median time it takes approved providers to operationalise their places is approximately four years, and that 80 per cent are operational within six years. It is reasonable to amend this provision to reflect how this component of the act is used by providers of aged care. Under the current approach, a rolling cycle of extensions and quarterly reports is required to be undertaken. This is time consuming and includes unnecessary reporting of information that rarely changes.

The new approach to managing provisionally allocated residential aged-care places extends the initial period from two years to four years and permits two twelve-month extensions before care is required to become operational. After six years, an extension to the provisionally allocated residential aged-care place will only be made in exceptional circumstances. If care does not start being delivered, the aged-care place will lapse and be re-allocated through the Aged Care Approvals Round to another provider that has capacity to deliver the care.
This model aligns the legislative platform for regulation with the current business realities of approved providers of residential aged care. It also reduces the red tape for the sector by preventing the unnecessary reporting burden on approved providers of residential aged care by 75 per cent.

This new approach is an important change in the way that we consider aged care as it shifts the focus back to care delivery. This bill indicates the government's intention that provisionally allocated residential aged-care places cannot be held by service providers indefinitely, but rather it provides more definitive time frames for providers to start delivering care for older people who require it and where this cannot be achieved, allows those places to lapse and be returned for reallocation to a service provider that does have capacity to deliver additional care.

The Aged Care Amendment (Red Tape Reduction in Places Management) Bill demonstrates that the government is taking the pressure off the aged-care sector by aligning the legislative platform with current practice, pursuing the reduction in red tape agenda to reduce unnecessary reporting and shifting the focus back to the business of delivering care for older people. This bill also implements models that protect the high standard and quality of care provided while enabling business transactions between approved providers of aged care.

I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill 2015**

*Second Reading*

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

**Mr ALBANESE** (Grayndler) (09:13): Few things are more important than ensuring that the legislative framework for protecting our environment is as effective as it can be. This is especially so in the area of shipping. When accidents occur on the high seas they can have devastating consequences. For instance, in June 2007 the *Pasha Bulker* ran aground off Nobbys Beach at Newcastle during a storm. This required a dramatic helicopter rescue of the crew, made up of Korean and Filipino mariners. The subsequent investigation raised concern about the failure of the ship's master to take on ballast, or to weigh anchor and move offshore before the winds associated with the storm reached gale force. In March 2009, the *Pacific Adventurer* lost 30 containers overboard in heavy seas, with one or more piercing the hull as they tumbled overboard. The result was a 60 kilometre long oil slick that hit the beaches of the Sunshine Coast and the northern part of Moreton Island. The clean-up bill reached $34 million and led the then Labor government to successfully seek to increase the liability limit under the 1996 Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims.

A year after that accident, the Chinese bulk carrier *Shen Neng 1* ran aground on the Great Barrier Reef east of Rockhampton. The vessel was 10 kilometres away from normal shipping lanes. I flew over that incident on one of the AMSA Dornier aircraft and could see for myself where the channel was and where the ship simply forgot to turn and keep going in a straight line to hit that reef with catastrophic damage. It tore a hole in the reef that was three kilometres long and 250 metres wide—the equivalent of about 58 football fields. Not long after that, the Liberian flagged vessel *Rena* hit the Astrolabe Reef off Tauranga in North...
Island, spilling 350 tonnes of oil into the Bay of Plenty. The accident shut down New Zealand’s export sector. The captain and the navigator of the vessel were later jailed for seven months for incompetence. At that time, I, along with the New Zealand minister, flew over the site while it was there off the coast of New Zealand's most significant export port and there Australian safety experts from AMSA and other organisations provided vital assistance to our Kiwi neighbours at a time of extraordinary stress.

In an island nation like Australia, which relies very heavily on tourism to generate income, on the beauty of our pristine natural environment, we need to ensure that the strictest possible controls are placed by this parliament. We are coastal people. We love water. So do the more than 6.6 million tourists who visit our nation each year supporting an industry that employs more than one million people. But it is not just the waters around the Australian coast that we should be concerned about. Consider the consequences if there was a major shipping accident in Antarctica, one of the few pristine environments left on the globe. It hardly bears imagining and that is why Labor will support the bill that is before the parliament today. As much as we value and want to encourage the maintenance of a vibrant shipping industry, we regard environmental protection as a key role of government. We will always take a conservative view when it comes to balancing economic activity and the environment.

This bill seeks to amend Australian maritime legislation to better align it with our obligations under the new International Maritime Organisation conventions. It also amends the definition of 'dangerous goods' in the Navigation Act. The bill changes four acts. Critically, it closes a loophole that potentially allows heavy grade oil to be used as ballast in Antarctic waters and it ensures that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority can take appropriate enforcement action against vessel operators who do not carry appropriate insurance certificates. It is completely appropriate that the parliament support these changes. More than 25,000 international vessels visit our waters each year. More than 99 per cent of our exports are moved by sea. The potential for accidents is real and it must never be underestimated, so we must always take the precautionary approach. That is why at every turn we should ensure our legislative protections are as strong as they can be and are kept up to date. While accidents will always happen, there is nothing accidental about making sure our legislative regime is up to date and fully in accordance with international conventions. Labor will support this legislation because it is in the national interest. But I note that other proposals before this parliament relating to shipping run against the national interest and are counter to the principles and philosophy which support this legislation.

I speak specifically of the Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, which passed through the House of Representatives on 14 October and which the government seems very reluctant to bring on to a vote in the Senate. This is ideologically driven legislation which should be rejected by the Senate because it is completely at odds with the legislation that is before us today. That is because it increases the risk of shipping accidents. It does this by opening the way for foreign flagged vessels paying Third World wages to undercut Australian flagged vessels. The government is engaged in this extraordinary proposition because it wants to destroy the Australian shipping industry. It sees no preference in the regulation and legislation being provided for and indeed removes the very definition of what an Australian ship is. Why does it do that? It does that because the legislation provides for no preference at all between an Australian ship and a foreign flagged ship. So, if there is no distinction drawn,
there is no need to define what an Australian ship is. It removes any reference to there being a national interest in revitalising Australian shipping. It is bad legislation. Indeed, the legislation itself explicitly says that it will result in a loss of Australian jobs. It says this in the explanatory memorandum itself:

Many of the operators currently operating under the Australian General Register would likely re-flag their vessels in order to compete with the foreign operators who enjoy the benefit of comparatively lower wage rates. Australian seafarer jobs would be adversely affected as Australian operators re-flag from the Australian General Register.

Ship operators are likely to replace Australian seafarers (paid under EA rates) with foreign seafarers (paid under ITF rates).

There it is. An extraordinary thing has happened. Before this parliament legislation is brought forward that says very explicitly, in the explanatory memorandum that a majority of the House of Representatives members voted for, that this will result in a reflagging—that is, the Australian flag taken off the back of ships and replaced by the flag of Liberia or the flag of Panama or another flag of convenience. It says it there in the legislation. It also says that Australian seafarers will be replaced by foreign seafarers being paid foreign wage rates. Extraordinary. The regulatory impact statement that is also a part of the legislation says this:

… Australian reliance on foreign shipping services is likely to grow in the coming years as ships continue to leave the Australian fleet due to retirement or reflagging overseas to pursue more favourable taxation and employment environments.

It continues:

Should a less regulated coastal shipping regulatory system be implemented, it is likely that some operators of Australian ships will seek to move to the lower cost model and flag their ships overseas. This would allow operators to offer all workers on the now foreign flagged ships internationally competitive wages and conditions.

At the moment, if you have a foreign ship being used around the Australia coast on the domestic freight task it has to pay Australian wages, just like if you are a foreign company in Australia involved in trucking or involved in the rail sector or involved in any other task you have to pay Australian-level wages. That is what we do as a nation because if you do not do that of course the Australian based industry cannot compete, and that is what the legislation says very explicitly. Therefore, the Australia based industry will be replaced by a foreign based industry paying foreign wages. There is nothing clearer, no clearer example, than a race to the bottom—in this case, a race to the bottom of our seas. That is what this legislation represents. This is Work Choices on water. This is unilateral economic disarmament, because there is no other advanced nation in the world that allows for a free-for-all with regard to domestic shipping tasks.

Indeed, in the United States under the Jones Act, in the land of the free market, not only does every ship that is engaged in coastal trade around the US coast have to have a US flag and US seafarers on it but it has to be built in the United States as well. Because the United States has understood for decades, since the First World War when the Jones Act was a response to that war, the very real national security connection between its merchant fleet and its naval fleet, the skills transfer and the practical benefit of having the presence of its national flag around its coastline. Yet here in this chamber, the majority of members voted to remove the Australian flag and replace it with a foreign flag around our coast. Indeed, while the
government has advanced this legislation as an attack on red tape, the regulatory impact statement states very clearly that 88 per cent of the perceived benefit of the legislation is attributable directly to the difference between Australian wages and foreign wages—that is, almost all—and that is the very purpose of this legislation.

In the section of the regulatory impact statement discussing non-bulk trade across Bass Strait, the advice could not be clearer. It says, ‘We assume four vessels will register under a foreign register to reduce operating costs’—that is, four out of six ships that are engaged in that activity. So there can be no doubt the legislation will put people out of work because it is designed to put people out of work. Already Alcoa, which made a submission to the Senate committee that examined this legislation supporting it, has made a pre-emptive decision to replace its ship that undertakes trade movement, the MV Portland, from Victoria round to Western Australia and return journeys. The department, in a clear breach of its own legislation and its responsibilities to implement the legislation that is in place today, has granted temporary licences for an activity that is anything but temporary, that is a part of the very operation that Alcoa undertakes between Western Australia and Victoria. And those loyal employees of Alcoa have been asked to staff that ship, take it to Singapore where it will be sold and they will be made redundant. That is a decision which flies in the face of the legislation that the department and the government have a responsibility to actually follow.

Attempts by the minister for transport to deny what the effect of the legislation would be have collapsed at the first hurdle, at the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport. Perth businessman Bill Milby of North Star Cruises told the committee’s hearings last month that on 20 May he attended the minister’s formal announcement of the shipping reforms. During the question-and-answer session following the minister’s speech, Mr Milby asked the minister whether he was aware that these changes would damage his coastal cruising business. The minister asked Mr Milby to speak to the department. Indeed he did speak to the department official Judith Zielke and asked what he could do to prevent the changes putting him out of business. According to Mr Milby, Ms Zielke told him he should deregister his vessel, reflag it, sack his Australian crew, re-register the vessel overseas and hire a cheap foreign crew. On June 16, Mr Milby came to Canberra to speak to Ms Zielke and Mr Michael Sutton, where received identical advice. The department in the evidence confirmed that this was given. They said they did not tell him that he should do that. Of course they did not; they gave him options—the option was reflag your vessel or go out of business. They were the options, and they are the options that are there. I do not blame the department on this occasion for that advice, because that advice is consistent with what the legislation says very clearly and very explicitly. The intent of the act is to put Australians out of work. If this legislation becomes law it will lead to an increase in foreign flagged vessels working our domestic trade routes in defiance of Australia's economic and national security interests.

The proposals also defy our environmental interests. What do the Pacific Adventurer, the Pasha Bulker, the Shen Neng and, in New Zealand, the Rena all have in common? None of them had the Australian flag, or in the Rena's case the New Zealand flag, on the back of those vessels. All of them were foreign flagged ships. All of them resulted in considerable damage being caused to the Australian environment, something that this legislation before us today quite rightly seeks to avoid.
Logic tells you that Australian mariners will be far more familiar with our coasts than will the crews of foreign vessels. Australian vessels also observe our shipping laws with regard to workplace health and safety. You do not have circumstances, as occurred under the *Shen Neng*, where the captain says he has not slept for more than a day. You do not have those circumstances. The cost of that flouting of occupational health and safety rules and regulations was washed up when that incident occurred on the Great Barrier Reef. We can have less confidence if we have a system whereby it is just a free-for-all around our coasts—let alone the national security interest whereby Australian mariners are subject to the maritime security identification card and to very strict security protocols and checks. The truth is that foreign seafarers do not have MSIC cards and are not subject to those same checks. At a time of international insecurity it is extraordinary that we would say that there is no distinction at all there. At the beginning of the speech, those four incidents were all there.

I spoke last night to the Maritime Industry Australian Ltd dinner, along with assistant minister McCormack, representing the government. Industry is on the same page as the workforce, as anyone who examines this other legislation. I again reiterate to the government our preparedness to look at changes to existing legislation that will boost productivity and that will make a difference without ensuring that the Australian flag is removed from around our coasts. We want to reduce business costs. We also want to employ Australians. It should not be beyond the wit of the government to support that also. Industry supports that. It was a very successful function last night. The Norwegian ambassador gave an articulate and extraordinarily detailed contribution about the importance that the maritime sector plays in the Norwegian economy. Norway is a maritime nation that has a very small portion of the world population but represents five per cent of the global shipping industry. It has a high-wage economy and has worked on innovation, on maritime clusters and with its workforce in a cooperative way, with the support of the government, to achieve good outcomes for Norway. That is the way forward for Australia—not a low-wage race to the bottom but using our innovation, our skills and our capacity to grow our maritime sector.

We will be supporting this legislation because we believe that protection of our marine environment is absolutely critical, but we will also be consistent about it and will support propositions across the maritime legislative framework that also seek to protect our environment. I commend this bill to the House.

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (09:35): I am pleased to rise in support of the Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, which amends maritime legislation and enacts a number of provisions relating to maritime safety and the environment. The legislation before the House today implements measures to amend and correct errors in Australia’s maritime legislation. Importantly, it also ensures our domestic obligations are aligned with various international conventions in accordance with the International Maritime Organisation, the IMO. As a government it is our duty to ensure that our laws for the prevention of maritime pollution are adequate, up to date and consistent with international law.

This bill will amend four principal acts: the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983, the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage) Act 2008, the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability) Act 1981 and the Navigation Act 2012. This bill ensures that the definition of ‘dangerous goods’ in this act is amended to align with the current definition as found in the International Convention for the Safety of
Life at Sea. I am advised that there are also some drafting errors that have been identified by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development which are rectified by this legislation. It makes amendments to the protection of the sea act to replace the definition of 'sea near a state', which was amended as an unintended consequence of a drafting error in the Maritime Legislation Amendment Act 2012. It also corrects errors in the current legislation to allow action to be taken by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority against non-compliant vehicle operators. Currently the acts limit the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's ability to take enforcement action against operators who do not carry appropriate insurance certificates. This bill amends the relevant acts to ensure it accurately specifies the appropriate certificate that the vessel operators have to maintain.

Importantly, for environmental protection this bill will also include an additional measure to close a loophole related to heavy grade oil, or HGO, in Antarctic waters. The context behind this is that last year the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the IMO was made aware that a fishing vessel had sunk in the Antarctic while carrying HGO in its ballast tank. I understand that the heavy grade oil was slated for use as fuel once the ship had left the Antarctic area. But, Mr Deputy Speaker—and I must admit I am speaking on advice rather than on experience on this one—a ballast tank is designed to assist with a ship's stability and would ordinarily hold water. The flag state of this vessel, the state under whose law the vessel is registered or licensed, did not take action, as they interpreted the regulation as not extending to banning HGO carried as ballast. Essentially, this interpretation exposes a loophole that the government believes is inconsistent with the original intent to minimise the presence of HGO in Antarctic waters. The serious incident also highlighted the real risk to the Antarctic area. This amendment will close that loophole, ensuring that Australia's domestic legislation is consistent with our obligations at an international level.

The need to protect the environment and the waters of the Antarctic also extends to the need to educate our young people on the value of environmental leadership. I was quite struck when reading through this legislation by how often matters that happen at a national level can actually have direct and local relevant impact in places like the Central Coast. Earlier this month, at the Marie Byles lookout at Bouddi National Park in Killcare Heights, I was able to join with some of the local Landcare groups and the Greater Sydney Local Land Services to announce a number of grants in our electorate. There were over $100,000 worth of grants through the National Landcare Program to fund three separate projects. The first was for $30,000 to assist with the preservation of the wagstaff spotted gum. The second was for Cockle Bay reserve at Empire Bay, with $20,000 to help clean up the area there, preserve native vegetation and also help protect threatened species.

The third grant that I wanted to speak about actually goes to the importance of preserving our marine environment and acting against marine pollution. This was a grant of $54,000 to provide a series of workshops to educate around 20 primary schools on the Central Coast. The funding goes to an organisation called Take 3, which promotes student participation and leadership through its green sea turtle project. The Take 3 organisation aims to stop the impact of marine pollution through education and participation. During the program slated for the first two terms of next year, primary school leaders will become experts and advocates for marine creatures and our marine environment. They will do this through an increased awareness of the impact of litter, of threats to marine life and of how to be able to express this
in the local community. I do believe this will be an outstanding program for young students on the Central Coast. I must say I do look forward to joining the students in their endeavours when this program commences next year.

As I said on the day during the launch, I remember when I first got involved with what has shaped up to be one of our Green Army programs, which was all about helping our young people, our future generations, get involved in green environmental initiatives to help protect and preserve our environment. I went out with a local group thinking, 'I am pretty committed to our environment. I love our environment because we live in one of the most beautiful environments in the best country in the world on the Central Coast.' I participated in one of these activities with Johno Johnson from Clean 4 Shore, who said to me, 'Lucy, I've got to get you out in a wetsuit; come and join us and clean up the mangroves.' I really started to learn what it was all about. I spent over four hours with a number of young students from Brisbane Water Secondary College. We did indeed go out to the mangroves at Pelican Island at Woy Woy and I did think they look beautiful, absolutely pristine when you drive by them. But we spent four hours out there that day and that was something like the second or third time in as many months that Clean 4 Shore had been out to that very area. We picked up nearly four tonnes of rubbish that day in just four hours. I had never learnt so much about the importance of environmental awareness and initiatives as I did that day. I do commend these sorts of environmental and education programs because I think they do help change our understanding of the impact on the marine environment that our actions can have.

I note that the president of the Organisation for the Rescue and Research of Cetaceans in Australia, Ronnie Ling, a guy from Springfield in my electorate, is down here today meeting with the Minister for the Environment. In speaking with him about this legislation and about its impact, he said to me that all marine life is dependent on actions of all people. People can have such a devastating effect through their own habits. As marine species are decreasing, people's use of the marine area can cause an increase in pollution. People need to take control of their actions to ensure the protection of marine areas and the species that inhabit them. This legislation, by removing the loophole relating to using heavy grade oil as ballast to ensure that HGO cannot be carried as fuel or as ballast on vessels in the Antarctic region is an important measure to help provide greater protection for our marine environment.

While the legislation before the House today deals with a number of provisions relating to maritime safety and the environment, it is also part of a wider narrative linked to the Central Coast that I would like to be a touch on in my remaining time here. One of the facts within the minister's second reading speech on this legislation actually caught my eye and that was the fact that nearly all or 99 per cent of our imports and exports are carried by ships. This ranks Australia as the fifth-largest shipping task in the world. On the Central Coast of New South Wales, where my electorate is, there were $619 million worth of international exports from our region in 2013 to 2014 according to the most recent to data provided by the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation. Manufacturing had the largest total exports by industry on the coast, generating $292 million in one financial year. There were $2.9 billion of international imports to the Central Coast in that same year, so shipping in the maritime industry is in fact quite relevant to our local economy.

In fact, the thriving import and export industries that help boost the Central Coast economy have a link to our own illustrious history of shipbuilders. And this Sunday, I am excited to be
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joining the Rotary Club of Kincumber, in conjunction with our local council, at the official opening of the shipbuilders memorial. I am advised that the event this weekend will be at 1 pm on Sunday at Carrack Road in Kincumber. The mayor of Gosford, Lawrie McKinna, the state Minister for Planning, Rob Stokes, and the president of Kincumber Rotary, Dave Richardson, will join us. Constructed on the foreshore of Brisbane Water, and in the works for the last five years, this is a project of which our community can be truly proud. Gosford council and Kincumber Rotary have done an extraordinary job not only raising funds for this memorial but also ensuring that it is done in a way that reflects the distinguished history of this industry in my local community. I am pleased to say the federal government has contributed with a maritime heritage grant of just under $10,000. This will help build, care for and promote this piece of local history for future generations.

Shipbuilding was a bustling industry on the Central Coast. Between 1829 and 1953, more than 500 vessels are known to have been built in and around my area. In the early days of the New South Wales colony, coastal shipping was essential in transporting the valuable hardwood timber down to Sydney. Great pride was taken in constructing timber vessels in many of the villages that surround Brisbane Water, like Kincumber, Davistown, Blackwall, Empire Bay and Terrigal. Two of the most influential boat builders in this period were Jonathan Piper and James Woodward. Mr Piper is particularly well known as a shipwright, having built 24 vessels and been a father to 14 children. This project honours these men with permanent memorials on the waterfront and, where possible, in locations close to where they carried out their work.

While the size of this shipbuilding activity declined with the introduction of steel vessels, some level of shipbuilding continued almost through to the present day. The concept of a shipbuilders memorial is based around a large main memorial to the overall industry and its members, and a series of smaller memorials dedicated to the memory of key individual shipbuilders. Renowned local marine architect John Woulfe has designed these structures—sandstone pillars connected to a stainless steel rib that looks like a partly built ship. They are quite brilliant, and the vision of Kincumber Rotary Club is to be congratulated. It is not just a memorial to a faded past but also a reminder of what we are capable of as innovators and successful businesspeople on the Central Coast. I commend this bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): I thank the member for Robertson for her contribution, and her description of 24 boats and 14 children!

Ms MacTIERNAN (Perth) (09:47): I too was interested in the contribution of the member for Robertson, and her focus on marine and maritime heritage. Unfortunately, that is what is going to be left of the Australian shipping industry at the end of this government. We will have an industry that has been mothballed, and will be just remembered with nostalgia in museum exhibitions because the government are doing their level best to destroy anything that could possibly resemble an Australian shipping industry.

As a nation that is a trader, as a nation that exports most of what we produce, we should be a shipping nation. Part of our workforce and skills should be centred on the maritime industry. Unfortunately, and there has been a whole series of reasons why this has been so, we are seeing the demise of the shipping industry. There was a great effort in the 1980s and 1990s to modernise the Australian industry, to get rid of most of the restrictive work practices and put this on a proper modern industrial footing. Unfortunately, I believe the strategies that are
being taken by the government today are very much designed to put an end to that. Although the legislation that we are dealing with at the moment focuses on important but small amendments to legislation in order to improve environmental outcomes from shipping activities—and we strongly support those—I think it is important that we take this opportunity again to put on the record our concern about that which is happening.

Of course, most recently we have seen the dispute that arose when the federal department issued a temporary permit to the vessel MV Portland to engage foreign crews for shipping of Alcoa's products between Portland and Bunbury. We see that it will be the workers who are currently, as I understand it, mostly based out of Western Australia—the 19-odd crew that crewed this vessel—who will be lost. They will be sacked and they will be replaced by foreign workers to do that Australian trade. So we are talking about intra-Australian trade, moving from Portland in Victoria to Bunbury in Western Australia. And as from next week, unless a legal action in relation to the validity of that permit is successful in the Federal Court, these maritime workers will be sacked and they will be replaced by foreign workers.

This is at a time where we are seeing job losses in Western Australia increasing quite dramatically as the mining boom goes down. I will just quote some of a note that I got from a seafarer, Dale Eaton, who is just absolutely in a state of shock and disbelief about the actions that have been taken by the Turnbull-Truss government and by Alcoa. He says:

The MV Portland has operated for 28 successful years between Portland VIC and Kwinana/Bunbury WA, in that time the Portland has trained a number of Deck and Engineering Officers as well as countless TIR/PIR Trainees to become professional seafaring IR's as it was the first purpose build ship for the MIDC concept, Which de manned vessels to keep trade routes open so Australian seafaring could be cost effective for the longevity of our industry. So it was part of a project that allowed manning levels to be significantly reduced and to make Australian shipping a more cost-effective and internationally competitive industry. He says:

Now that we have been given notice we are battling each day with the hardships of families, uncertain futures and financial commitments. After 28 years of operating, the crews moral on board is at an all time low with each crew member is dealing not only with their personal hardships and struggles but also worried for the Australian seafaring future in this industry.

In what other industry would we find that acceptable? Would we find it acceptable for a manufacturing operation in Portland to lay off 19 people and to import labour from elsewhere to take their jobs? I think it really is a very difficult position that the government is now moving us into. There has been no adequate explanation of the decision by the department to allow this vessel to de-crew its Australian crew and replace it with a foreign crew. This is—

Mr Truss: That is happening under your legislation.

Ms MacTIERNAN: It was a permit that you authorised.

Mr Truss: It was your legislation!

Ms MacTIERNAN: We believe it was the department acting in anticipation of the bill that you are attempting to get through the parliament, and the validity of this will be challenged. Of course, it is open for you to direct that this not happen. Indeed, it has happened on your watch and you need to take responsibility for it.
It is not simply this vessel. We are being constantly contacted by seafarers who are concerned by what is going on in their industry. Another Western Australian gentleman has contacted me. His name is Norm Potter. Norm comes from Geraldton. He is a master mariner and has worked in offshore oil and gas since 1989. For about 12 years, he has been sailing as a master aboard a variety of vessels in the offshore industry, and he is a permanent employee of a particular company. He has not worked since July this year, and he is using up his long service leave in the hope that work may become available. I am told he says there is a good chance he will be made redundant in 2016. This cannot be explained away just by the change in the offshore oil and gas. There is still plenty of work out there, but the problem is that so much of this work is now being done by foreign workers on visa classes 400 and 988. Norm says that he totally understood and supported overseas workers coming into the industry during the boom construction phases in WA, when Australian workforce could not cover the positions required, but that has changed, and now we are seeing, nevertheless, a failure to respond in clawing back the availability of those visas. This is why we are starting to see the unemployment level in Western Australia clawing up. We all accept that there is a change—that the mining construction boom is over. But it is absolutely appropriate that we now take steps to very severely wind back these temporary visa classes so that those Australians who are currently sitting on unemployment queues with incredible skills to do these jobs are given an opportunity to do them.

It is certainly important to understand that during that massive boom there was broad bipartisan support and support from the union movement for the use of temporary migration visas to allow us to take full advantage of the investment opportunities that were being generated by the high iron ore and gas prices, but we now have to be prepared to look at a very different set of circumstances. We need to ensure that we are providing adequate jobs for Australians.

There are two things we are seeing happening here. Firstly, these visa classes are still being issued even though there are quite clearly Australian workers with the skills able to do this task. Secondly, we are allowing the coastal trade to be taken over by foreign crewed vessels. We have to be protective of our industry. We have quite rightly made the requirements that they get efficient, that we do not have vessels overstaffed and that we have modern technology and work practices on our vessels. But we have that. We have the unions in the shipping industry working together to achieve that. It is simply unacceptable for us to allow those skilled workers to be denied jobs and to deny jobs to young people who are currently going through programs at Challenger TAFE and various other maritime training centres along the coast of Western Australia. They really have vastly diminished job opportunities.

At the end of the day, it is the generation of employment, the generation of well-paid jobs, that is going to in fact create the Australian dream. They will create a society where we have a sense of opportunity, a society that has the drive and the confidence to go out there and innovate. Look at the sort of remuneration received by the CEO. While his base salary in 2014 was only $1.4 million, he received total compensation of $18.2 million, including $8.7 million in shares, awards and stocks. It says something, doesn't it? They will be skimping on the wages for 19 skilled, experienced, long-serving Australian crew on the MV Portland, to save probably a couple of hundred thousand dollars by putting on foreign seafarers, whilst the CEO feels it is appropriate that his total remuneration package is $18.2 million. It goes to a
very significant problem that we are seeing in our society, where we have this incredible gap opening up between the ordinary working person and those with the top salaries that CEOs are awarding themselves.

We want to have an Australian shipping industry. It is not an unrealistic aspiration. It is not an impossible aspiration. But what we have seen here with the government’s conduct—it’s preparedness to keep issuing those temporary visas and, indeed, encouraging those temporary visas and its actions in granting permits for coastal shipping to be taken over by foreign crewed vessels—is completely and utterly unacceptable. I think Australians will understand that we need to be providing good-quality Australian jobs for our people as our first priority.

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (10:02): I thank those members who have contributed to the debate, although I notice that members opposite have spent very little time actually talking about this bill, the Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. They have, in fact, been talking about legislation which is going to be debated in the Senate later this day. Therefore, I will not take a lot of time in the House to respond to those issues; it will be more appropriate for that to happen in the Senate later this day. I say to the member who has just resumed her seat and to the shadow minister, who spoke earlier, that we share a concern about the fate of the Australian shipping industry. The government wants there to be a strong and profitable Australian shipping industry, employing Australians and providing services around the Australian coastline. We want to create jobs, not just in shipping but also, in particular, on the land. We do not want jobs to be lost in the manufacturing sector in Australia because the cost of our shipping is so high that it is cheaper to bring things in from overseas than to move them around the Australian coast. That is the situation at the present time. Those issues clearly have to be addressed. That is the reason the government has been brave enough to try to tackle reform in the shipping industry and to deliver an environment which may enable it, therefore, to be an industry that is progressive and that achieves its potential into the future.

I say two other things in response to the honourable member. All of the problems she is talking about are occurring under the existing legislation. If there are problems with the laws, they are problems with Labor’s laws.

Ms MacTiernan: The issuing of visas is within your control.

Mr TRUSS: I will get to visas in a moment, but let’s talk firstly about the shipping legislation. Everything that is happening now is happening under the laws that were introduced by the previous Labor government. The decline from 30 to 15 in the number of ships registered to operate on the Australian coastline has occurred under those laws. The reductions for the transitional register from 16 to eight have all happened under those laws. Those arrangements are, therefore, entirely of the making of the previous government. We agree with the comments that that legislation has not worked and has not delivered a prosperous shipping industry. What I find incredible is that Labor clearly recognises that its legislation is not perfect in every detail and yet is not prepared to countenance any change. It is not prepared to accept the legislation. It is not proposing amendments to the bill. I have made it quite clear that, if there are amendments around, we are prepared to consider them. We are prepared to consider them, but nothing is being proposed.

Opposition members interjecting—
Mr TRUSS: Rushing the legislation? It has been around for six months, so that is just complete nonsense. Do you want the current situation to continue? If Labor wants the current rules to remain in place, that will mean a continuing decline in the number of Australian ships, it will mean a continuing loss of Australian manufacturing jobs and it will mean imports will be more competitive than Australian goods way into the future. But Labor does not want to make any changes.

I also refer to the issue of temporary visas. There have been far fewer temporary visas issued under this government than under the previous government.

Ms MacTiernan interjecting—

Mr TRUSS: We have issued fewer. If the honourable member wants to make criticisms about this, she should look internally. She should look at what happened under her party's administration, and she will find that, under Labor, there were more of these visas issued than there have been under this government.

As I said earlier, all of this debate has nothing whatsoever to do with the legislation that is before the House of Representatives at the present time. The only thing that links them together is the word 'maritime'. I therefore move on to more constructively address the issues.

I acknowledge that the opposition in this instance is supporting the bill. This legislation is important in helping to secure a safe and environmentally sustainable maritime sector. The purpose of the bill is to amend four principal acts, namely, the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983, the Navigation Act 2012, the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage) Act 2008 and the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability) Act 1981. The bill will implement measures to amend and correct a range of Australia's maritime legislation, ensuring our domestic requirements give effect to our international obligations. Of particular importance is the amendment to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, commonly known as MARPOL, that will ban the carriage of heavy grade oil as ballast in Antarctic waters. The ban will enter into force internationally on 1 March 2016. To ensure Australia remains compliant with its international obligations, an amendment to the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983 is required prior to that date, and that requires passage through parliament in the 2015 spring sittings.

The bill includes an amendment to the definition of 'dangerous goods' in the Navigation Act 2012 to include goods which are not just listed but also characterised as dangerous goods under the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code. In addition to the amendments already mentioned, the Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 will amend the definition of 'sea near a state' in the Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983 to ensure full implementation of MARPOL. It will correct technical drafting errors in the Navigation Act 2012 and amend the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage) Act 2008 and the Protection of the Sea (Civil Liability) Act 1981 to restore the ability to take regulatory action against noncompliant vessel operators.

I thank those members who have spoken in support of the bill, and I commend it to the House.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.
Third Reading

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (10:10): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (10:10): I will respond just briefly to the summing up by the minister with regard to the Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill, which is supported by both sides of the House and has just passed its second reading with the unanimous support of the House of Representatives. The minister in his summing up referred to the legislation that is currently before the Senate that would decimate the Australian shipping industry and suggested that it was the case that Labor did not support any changes. The minister knows that I have said to him in private what I now say to him again in public, in his presence, which is that Labor stands willing to participate with industry, with the unions and with the sector on any practical measures that could be made to improve productivity. What we do not stand in support of is legislation that says in the explanatory memorandum itself will lead to the refflagging of Australian vessels and the replacing of Australian seafarers with foreign seafarers on foreign wage rates. That is why the legislation is not the subject of amendments by Labor; it is fundamentally flawed.

The legislation seeks to replace the legislation that was carried by the previous government in 2012. That legislation amended the Navigation Act 1912—that is, it replaced legislation that was literally one century old. It was the most significant and transformative legislation with regard to the maritime sector in the history of this parliament. What we do know is that when you have such a significant legislative change, amending more than 100 years of practice, then inevitably, as is occurring with this very legislation that is the subject of the third reading at the moment, you come in and you move amendments to the existing legislation. The legislation before the parliament amends four separate bills. It makes changes which are minor but which are important, which is why the opposition, Labor, is supporting these changes.

We would have the same approach towards a practical and genuinely consultative approach to the reform of shipping if there were some changes to the way that permits are granted or if other changes were to be made. I again reiterate to the Deputy Prime Minister that I do not believe that you should have a circumstance whereby the government wants to see the Australian flag disappear from around our coast, but that is precisely what the legislation says, that is precisely what departmental officials have told Australian businesses, including Mr Bill Milby of North Star Cruises, and that is the consequence of the legislation that is currently before the Senate. So, I again take the opportunity to reiterate that the minister is not right when he suggests that Labor is not willing to consider changes; we are. What we are not prepared to do is not so much throw the baby out with the bathwater but throw the Australian flag under water, which is what would occur with the legislation that is before the Senate. I support this proposed legislation, the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015, that is before the House. This legislation, which is about to receive unanimous support for the third reading, is the sort of legislation that should come before this House with regard to the maritime sector.

I will conclude with this: if the minister's legislation were to get through the Senate, it would be the subject of massive changes, should Labor be elected to government.
Governments come and go in this place. What the maritime sector needs is some long-term investment certainty, which is why I offer again to try to work through a position which can provide that investment certainty. That is what the sector requires. The minister knows full well that, from the time the legislation was carried in mid-2012—and most of it only came into practice therefore in 2013, just shortly before the federal election, with a then coalition that was likely to be elected to government—of course it impacted on investment decisions. Still, we saw companies like SeaRoad invest in two new vessels. There were companies like Wellard in WA, and others, who indicated that they wanted to reflag their ships—not from the Australian flag to the flag of Panama or Liberia, but to reflag their ships from countries like Singapore—to put the Australian flag on the back of those vessels and, indeed, to have specific, purpose-built vessels made in Australia, therefore benefiting the manufacturing sector with regard to the maritime industry as well.

I commend the existing bill to the House. I suggest to the minister and to the government that they actually get serious about supporting the maritime sector, because it is so important for us as an island continent. It is in our economic, national security and environmental interests that we have an Australian presence around our coast and a strong maritime sector.

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (10:17): Deputy Speaker, if I may—

Mr Brough: This is the third reading.

Mr HUTCHINSON: I understand that, and I will be brief. I acknowledge the support of the member for Grayndler for this bill, the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015, that is now before the House in this third reading debate. But much of his contribution related to a bill that is being debated in the Senate in the coming hours and the coming days.

I will be terribly disappointed if those Tasmanian senators from all sides do not contemplate supporting the changes. The changes that are before the Senate in respect of the bill which the member opposite referred to—and the changes in 2012, the changes in 2009; and the damage that they did to the island state in the island nation—that have been moved by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure deserve to be considered in all seriousness, because it is about growing the coastal shipping fleet around Australia again. It is about making sure that there are opportunities for employment for people, many of whom will no doubt be members of the MUA. And I would point to what was announced only a couple of weeks ago—the plans and the opportunities that can exist to see the sector grow once more. Since 2012, deadweight tonnage of the coastal fleet around Australia has fallen by 63 per cent. It is dying on the vine, as we sit here. We as a government do not have any choice. 

I say to the member opposite: I have never said in this place that the changes that were made by the previous government were anything other than well intentioned. Some of my colleagues on this side have been less magnanimous in that regard. I have never said that they were not well intentioned, but the fact of the matter is that they have failed. They have not delivered the outcomes that were promised. The opportunity is there to once again look at growing the coastal shipping fleet, through the changes that have been proposed. I feel sure that it will provide the opportunity for local businesses to continue to invest in the sector with confidence. It will bring competition. As has been highlighted by DP World, it will reduce the cost of moving a container from the Port of Burnie in north-west Tasmania to Shanghai by
more than half. The figures quoted were these: that the cost will go from $2,800 currently, or thereabouts—by virtue of the requirement to go through the Port of Melbourne—to somewhere between $1,300 and $1,400 a container. And the jobs that will come through that investment—that is $30 million in the Port of Burnie. It will mean new jobs. It will mean more jobs—most likely for members of the MUA.

I would ask Tasmanian Labor senators, and particularly Senator Whish-Wilson—I have a lot of respect for Senator Whish-Wilson; I think somewhere down inside him there is a pragmatic bone that exists, and I know it is fighting to come out—and I know that he is often driven into the ground by some of his colleagues—I implore Senator Whish-Wilson to look at this and at the opportunity this provides for our state; not just for jobs offshore on vessels but also for jobs onshore in the expanded port facilities that we will see.

Secondly, I implore them to contemplate other unionised workplaces onshore in my state but also around the country that are being jeopardised by opposing these changes to the legislation that will be before the Senate in due course, whether it be Nyrstar in the member for Denison's electorate, whether it be Norske Skog in my electorate at Boyer in southern Tasmania or whether it be Bell Bay Aluminium. Everybody in this place knows very well the very forthright contributions that were made by Ross Mostogl, the CEO of Bell Bay Aluminium, and the impact the changes in 2012, albeit well intentioned, had on that business.

So I implore those Tasmanian senators. This is the opportunity once again for the coastal shipping fleet to see renewed investment. We are already seeing the possibilities that can occur with the commitments that have been made in recent weeks by DP World. It is not just about those jobs that they are fighting for. I understand why they are fighting for them. It is about what it could cost. For every job that is being suggested will be lost you may well be putting at risk five jobs or 10 jobs in similar unionised workplaces in other parts of the country. That, for me, is unacceptable.

I thank the Deputy Prime Minister in particular for the opportunity to make a contribution in response to the shadow minister but also welcome the fact that the shadow minister is, indeed, supporting the legislation before the House.

Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (10:24): It is a sign of our times that security looms large on the agenda of governments around the world. Increased terrorist activity requires increased vigilance. It demands that we take no chances. That is why, right around the world, governments have focused over the last 15 years on tightening security provisions of parliaments, government offices, places where people congregate and, of course, our ports and airports. It is a real balancing act. On the one hand, we need to make sure that we protect ourselves from those who would seek to do us harm. On the other, we need to make sure our
security arrangements do not curtail our normal activities or place unnecessary burdens on the commercial activities that drive economic growth.

It is that balancing act that sits at the heart of the piece of legislation before us today. It seeks to exclude Australian flagged vessels involved in interstate trade from the regulatory regime with regard to security. Under current circumstances, all Australian vessels of 500 gross tonnes or more or those carrying 13 or more passengers on international and interstate vessels must have a ship security plan. That plan must include a security assessment of the vessel’s operations that provides information on the security measures the ship has put in place to prevent unlawful interference. It must also include details of the actions that will be taken in the event of a security incident. These provisions do not apply to vessels that move goods within an Australian state, say, on a voyage from Brisbane to Townsville. The government argues that there is no increased security risk simply because a vessel crosses state borders. It also advises that removing these security obligations from vessels engaged in interstate trade will save the shipping industry up to $1 million a year.

The opposition will support this bill. We agree that, while it is critical that we take all steps we can to keep our nation safe, this provision can be dispensed with without any substantial effect on security. We also agree with the government’s intention to continue to require that vessels that carry passengers or vehicles interstate should continue to be subject to the existing security regime. That is a common-sense provision. I note that the minister has said that the government proposes to amend the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Regulations to this end, and we will support those changes.

This legislation relates in particular to Australian flagged vessels, not those from overseas. As much as I am pleased to support the changes to exclude Australian flagged vessels from the security regulations, I note that this change is likely to be rendered irrelevant before very long. That is because this government is trying to remove Australian flagged vessels from our interstate trade. That will be the result of the legislation that is before the Senate—that is, the Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill. I note that the member for Lyons just defended that legislation that is currently before the Senate. But the fact is that the explanatory memorandum, there in black and white in the legislation that he voted for, says that four of the six vessels currently operating from Tasmania will reflag. That is, they will take the Australian flag off the back of their ships and put on a foreign flag or get a new ship altogether and employ foreign workers being paid foreign wages. That is what the legislation itself says.

The fact is that if you remove any preference and remove all cabotage effectively from the Australian shipping industry then, if you have two ships side by side, one of them Australian flagged and paying Australian wages and the other foreign flagged with foreign conditions and paying foreign wages, the Australian industry simply will not be able to compete. That is just like if on the Hume Highway we allowed trucks to be Filipino registered with Filipino conditions and standards and with Filipino workers driving those tracks being paid Filipino wages then Linfox, Toll and the Australian trucking industry would not be able to compete with them either. This, like a lot of matters that come before the parliament, is not a complex issue. The legislation itself says that this will occur. No other G20 nation—not one—has this type of arrangement for coastal trade. That is why I have characterised this legislation, quite rightly, as unilateral economic disarmament.
The United States, for example, the bastion of the free market, requires that all coastal trade be undertaken by US seafarers on US flagged vessels that have been built in the United States. That is the position it takes. Yet, here in Australia, the intent of this bill is very clearly laid out in the explanatory memorandum, where it says:

Many of the operators currently operating under the Australian General Register would likely re-flag their vessels in order to compete with the foreign operators who enjoy the benefit of comparatively lower wage rates. Australian seafarer jobs would be adversely affected as Australian operators re-flag from the Australian General Register.

Ship operators are likely to replace Australian seafarers (paid under EA rates) with foreign seafarers (paid under ITF rates).

This is not a position paper or a critique of the legislation by the Maritime Union of Australia, *The Sydney Morning Herald* or the *Guardian Australia* website; this is in the legislation itself. The regulatory impact statement which is part of the legislation says:

… Australian reliance on foreign shipping services is likely to grow in the coming years as ships continue to leave the Australian fleet due to retirement or reflagging overseas to more favourable taxation and employment environments.

It goes on:

Should a less regulated coastal shipping regulatory system be implemented, it is likely that some operators of Australian ships will seek to move to the lower cost model and flag their ships overseas. This will allow operators to pay all workers on the now foreign flagged ships internationally competitive wages and conditions.

It is right there. I refer the member for Lyons to the regulatory impact statement—noting, again, that it is not a statement by the Australian Labor Party, the Australian Greens, crossbench senators or the Maritime Union of Australia—which says, regarding non-bulk trade across Bass Strait:

We assume four vessels will register under a foreign register to reduce operating costs.

That is, the Australian flag will be gone and foreign workers will be paid foreign wages. That is what it says. It also says that 88 per cent—88c in every dollar—of the claimed economic benefits for business will be from savings in labour costs through replacing Australian jobs with foreign jobs.

If the salmon industry in Tasmania were allowed to establish a facility next to the very successful industries in Tasmania—

**Mr Hutchinson:** Very little exports, Albo!

**Mr ALBANESE:** We are not talking about exports. The member talks about exports. What we are talking about here is domestic freight. That is what he does not understand and, in the short time that he will be here, I doubt whether he will ever get it, frankly.

If the salmon industry was prepared to be opened up to the same principles and allow a foreign operator to come in and set up under much lower foreign conditions—rather than Australian conditions, which ensure that we have the top-quality product that we do—not have to pay tax, because they are a foreign company, and be able to employ foreign, rather than Tasmanian, workers, who would be paid $2 an hour, next door to the successful Australian industry, guess what would happen? The Australian industry would disappear. No
Australian industry could survive the principles set out in the legislation that is before the Senate. It is as simple as that.

That is why, here in Australia, we say that people should be paid Australian wage rates. That is why the legislation is opposed not just by the shipping industry but, for example, by the rail industry, including the Australian Rail Track Corporation, which produces remits to the government and is a fully government owned entity. The proposed legislation not only distorts the market by making the Australian shipping industry unable to compete; it also distorts the market by ensuring that other modes of transport are at a competitive disadvantage. The ARTC cannot pay foreign wages if goods go from Sydney to Melbourne. It does not operate under foreign regulations but must ensure safe, well-maintained trains et cetera. But, if cargo goes on the blue highway, that will be permissible under the legislation.

Bill Milby’s evidence before the Senate inquiry was clear and consistent with the approach that is in the legislation. The witnesses from the department confirmed that Mr Milby was told that one of his options was to sack his Australian crew, register his vessel overseas and hire cheap foreign labour. The other option, of course, was just to go out of business. It was as simple as that. Mr Milby was told that, yet he was denigrated by the former Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, who said that that incident had not occurred. Of course, it did; he was referred to the department by the minister when he went along to the launch of this flawed legislation.

The fact is that the legislation before us seeks to enhance security but to do so in a way which improves productivity by reducing costs. We are prepared to support this legislation because we think that it has been properly considered by the government but, at the same time, our national security interests are certainly not served by the removal of the Australian flag from around our coastline. The government speaks about stopping the boats; no-one suggested that that meant stopping the Australian flag on the back of boats around our coastline, but that is precisely what the Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 would do. It is in our strong national security interest to have a strong Australian presence on our coasts to keep an eye out for suspicious activity that might not be recognised or considered important by crews that simply do not have the Australian national interest at their core. So we will work very hard in the Senate with the crossbenchers to ensure that we do not have that legislation, which I think is correctly characterised as Work Choices on water.

It is against that background that today we have the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015, which genuinely seeks to reduce red-tape costs for Australian flagged vessels, and we are supporting this legislation; we will support any practical measures that come before this parliament to do that. But if those opposite get their way and the Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 passes the Senate, then this legislation will be rendered as an academic exercise because there will not be Australian ships involved in interstate or intrastate trade, and there will not be the Australian flag around our coasts—the legislation before the Senate says that very strongly.

I hope that people in the Senate actually do read the legislation, unlike people in the House, who clearly have not read the legislation that is before the Senate. It is opposed by the Maritime Industry Australia Ltd, by the people who attended the function that I was at last night, held here in Parliament House with the sector, and by the workforce and people who have knowledge of national security interests, environmental interests and economic interests.
I believe that the Maritime Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 will be defeated. On that basis, it is therefore important that this current legislation before the House is supported. Labor will be doing just that.

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (10:40): I like the member for Grayndler. He is indeed a long-serving member. It may or may not be the case that I become a long-serving member of this place, but what I will do in the time that I am given here, whatever that is, is make sure that I stand up for the interests of my home state of Tasmania. Those that are listening in the gallery and elsewhere could be forgiven if it passed their notice with the contribution that the member for Grayndler made on this debate that the opposition is indeed supporting this Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015, which is essentially about red-tape reduction. This bill is essentially about security measures that are absolutely necessary and important for international vessels that are coming into Australian ports but are less required or not at all required for those domestic intrastate and interstate voyages that are occurring. As a Tasmanian I felt that it was appropriate for me to make a contribution to this debate.

The red-tape savings from this bill are not huge, but they will amount to almost $1 million. This is further evidence that the government is absolutely committed to our transport systems, whatever they might be. With road transport, I note the record amount of funding that has been provided to programs in local councils all around Australia and the record amount of funding that has been provided by this government to programs like the Roads to Recovery program. I say again to anybody listening that if you have pothole in your local road now is the time to be knocking on the door of your local council and telling them to fix that pothole, because never before have the councils had so much money coming from the Commonwealth government for those roads. That funding is at the discretion, absolutely, of the local councils. There is also the road black spot funding, which has been substantially increased for last year and also for this coming financial year.

With rail transport, I had the pleasure last week, along with the Minister for Infrastructure in Tasmania, the Hon. Rene Hidding, of announcing the largest tender that applied to the Tasmanian Rail Freight Revitalisation Project—a total commitment thus far of $119.8 million, of which the Commonwealth has gladly committed, I believe, half. So $58.9 million has been contributed by the Commonwealth to the revitalisation of the rail infrastructure within the state of Tasmania. The key points about that are: safety, reliability, making sure that those goods that rightly should on rail and not on road are able to be on rail, and making sure that those industries that depend on rail have the confidence to use that service. It was a pleasure to be at the announcement of the largest tender, which was awarded to VEC Civil Engineering, a business up on the north-west coast, for their contribution to a $38 million tender that will upgrade the Western Line and the Melba Line to deliver safety and reliability and provide the sectors that depend on rail in my state with the confidence to rely on TasRail.

Regarding aviation, I spoke yesterday on a bill related to the screening of freight that is leaving Australia by air to go to the United States. That is an obligation now that the United States has imposed on all countries that wish to export goods into the US. Again, this government has invested in infrastructure, particularly aviation infrastructure. I note in particular the $38 million that was committed to upgrade the Hobart airport and effectively put the 'international' back into the Hobart International Airport. This was primarily driven by
the need to be able to move heavy equipment and to take large payloads down to the Antarctic, which is increasingly seeing Hobart's capability in this area.

We hope this will continue to be the case and will continue to grow as other countries see the absolute commitment that this government has shown, whether it be through the commitments of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development around such projects as the Hobart airport upgrade or whether it be through the Department of the Environment and Greg Hunt's very significant commitment to replace the *Aurora Australis*. The number is unknown, but the unveiling took place in Hobart the other day at the Antarctic Division in the presence of the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Environment.

It is an extraordinarily large investment. It again highlights the commitment that this country has, and the capacity that Hobart has in terms of being the hub. We are competing with other locations, be they in South America or New Zealand, and we want to see partners, whether they be Chinese partners, European partners or others, utilising the increasing facilities and capacity that Australia has in Hobart for marine and Antarctic research.

But the bill before us today relates to maritime issues. I must apologise to the member for Grayndler, because he once again digressed off the subject. For those who are listening, I must remind you that the opposition are indeed supporting the legislation before the House. But the member for Grayndler digressed onto a bill that is before the Senate at the moment and made a couple of points that I should have highlighted in my contribution in the third reading of the previous legislation. They related to perhaps the most definitive document highlighting the challenges that the island state in the island nation faces with Bass Strait, the Productivity Commission's report on Bass Strait.

It highlighted the issues as clearly as anybody. If there are any senators, particularly Tasmanian senators, who have not taken the time to read the view of Productivity Commission—an independent organisation of the highest quality academics that this country has—I can tell you that it was damming. It was absolutely damming of the changes, however well intentioned, that were made when the member for Grayndler was the responsible minister. I know this is very personal for him. I understand that and I respect that, but, frankly, the decisions that were made in 2009 and 2012 were absolutely condemned in the Productivity Commission's report into Bass Strait. It highlighted that the changes that were made hurt, understandably, the state in our country that depends most on a viable coastal shipping fleet.

I remind those listening that since 2012 the deadweight tonnage on Australian flagged vessels on Australian coastal services has fallen by 63 per cent. The Australian coastal shipping fleet is dying on the vine. This country depends so much on products such as cement, zinc, aluminium and bulk ores; we have an absolute obligation as a government to make the changes that are being proposed before the Senate.

So I call on my fellow Tasmanians, both members of the Liberal Party and others. Again, I call on Senator Whish-Wilson. I have so much time for Senator Whish-Wilson. He has so much potential. He is a pragmatic man, and I dearly hope that he is able to see the sense and the necessity of this, and the benefits and the jobs that will flow. We have already been able to see the investment that will flow by the commitment from one of the largest stevedoring companies in the world, DP World, who have said they will invest $30 million of their own
money to upgrade the Port of Burnie to be able to bring in vessels that will serve, particularly, China and will reduce the costs of shipping a container from the island state in the island nation from $2,800 a container to between $1,300 and $1,400 a container. How any of the Tasmanian senators could see that as a bad thing is beyond me. They have said publicly that, initially, there will be at least 20 new jobs on the Burnie port, with this expansion, rising to 40 new jobs. My assessment would be that many of those will ultimately be members of the Maritime Union of Australia.

Again I say that I have not been malicious; I have not done anything other than acknowledge that the changes made by the previous government were well intentioned—but they simply have not worked. It is beholden on us to see the Australian shipping fleet and the coastal trade that my state particularly depends on so much is given a chance to thrive once again. This bill will reduce red tape and will save almost $1 million in terms of compliance—not a huge amount of money, but it is important.

One of those services that are not subject to this piece of legislation is the TT-Line, which plies the Bass Strait between Devonport and the Port of Melbourne. It carries passengers from the mainland to Tasmania and vice versa. Refurbishment of the two Spirit of Tasmania ships has just been undertaken by the Tasmanian state government under the watchful eye of Minister Hidding and is very much part of the Tasmanian government’s plan to grow visitation to Tasmania to 1½ million people by 2020. Industry tells us that, if we are successful in that, it will create upwards of 8,000 jobs. All the evidence suggests that they are on track to deliver that. We wholeheartedly support them in growing their passenger numbers.

It would be of interest to many here to note that in 2014-15 passenger numbers on the Spirit of Tasmania increased by eight per cent to more than 384,000, which is 16 per cent higher than was the case two years earlier. Indeed, the investment, planning, administration, oversight and commitment of the state government make the TT-Line very much part of the matrix of services that bring people to our state and move freight, particularly perishables. The member for Grayndler talked about salmon, which I suspect is an area that he does not know very much about, although I am sure he enjoys Tasmanian salmon. He would be very interested to know that perishables, such as lettuces from Houston's Farm in the south of my electorate and in the member for Franklin's electorate, very much depend on the reliability of the overnight service that runs between Tasmania and Melbourne to get product to the markets on the mainland in as good a condition as possible.

It is also encouraging to see that bookings on the TT-Line for the first quarter of this financial year are up nearly 16 per cent, and through the summer period, the peak period, they are increasing by another 17 per cent. It is a very important service for the state of Tasmania. With the good work of the state government, supported by the Commonwealth, passenger numbers are up, freight volume is up, the business of the TT-Line is improving financially, the visitor spend in Tasmania is up—and that is very important for jobs—and fare prices are decreasing.

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (10:56): I thank members who have contributed to this relatively short debate on the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Amendment (Inter-State Voyages) Bill 2015. As the member for Lyons just said, the bill is supported by both sides of parliament, as it should be. Again, the debate deteriorated into discussions about
legislation which will go before the upper house later today. I will not go through a rebuttal of the comments of the shadow minister, but I acknowledge that the member who just spoke provided that rebuttal brilliantly, particularly with a Tasmanian focus, recognising just how important it is for us to have shipping reform in this country if indeed our shipping industry is to survive.

Tasmania is one of the many states that will benefit from the positive elements of this particular legislation, reducing some of the red tape associated interstate voyages. The Australian government is committed to fostering Australia's economic prosperity through effective transport security regulation to deliver a safe, secure and efficient maritime transport system. The amendments to the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003 support the government's efforts to boost productivity by reducing red tape that does not provide any security benefit.

A joint industry Australian government review confirmed that there is no ongoing benefit to security in regulating Australian ships used solely on interstate voyages, except for passenger and vehicle ferries. This bill will remove Australian regulated ships that are used exclusively for interstate voyages from the marine transport security framework established by the act. Separate amendments to the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003 are proposed in order to continue security regulation of interstate passenger and vehicle ferries under a proportionate framework commensurate with their risk. There is no impact on our international maritime obligations resulting from this amendment. The International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, on which our legislation is based, does not require security regulation of ships on domestic voyages. This amendment will result in cost savings to a significant proportion of the security regulated shipping sector, and I commend the bill to the House.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (10:59): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Tax Laws Amendment (Gifts) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (11:00): The opposition supports this piece of government legislation, the Tax Laws Amendment (Gifts) Bill 2015. It is an important piece of legislation for a number of reasons. It provides deductible gift recipient status to two organisations, the International Jewish Relief Fund Limited and the National Apology Foundation Ltd. I will speak briefly about the International Jewish Relief Fund, which is a good organisation that was established to help impoverished Jewish people struggling in communities around the
world—wherever they might be—and strengthening the Jewish community's response to humanitarian crises and disasters. It has been registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission since 2013; it is currently up to date with all that is required in reporting to that agency. Its admission to the status of deductible gift recipient should be supported by the House and in the other place. It is a good organisation doing good work, and it does so with the best wishes of the opposition and the House.

I want to focus today on the National Apology Foundation Ltd, which is also receiving deductible gift recipient status in this bill. The National Apology Foundation is an organisation founded by former Prime Minister Rudd in order to further the work that was begun on the day of the national apology to the stolen generations. That, of course, was one of the most important days in the history of this chamber. Prime Minister Rudd stood at that dispatch box and righted a wrong by apologising the activities of the past which had so egregiously affected so many worthy Australians. It was an important moment. First Australians, First Fleeters and all of us who followed are writing the next chapter in our nation's story together. Former Prime Minister Rudd said in his final address to the House—when he announced his retirement from the House—that he hoped that the apology had achieved 'some healing of the soul'. It was clearly not only very important to Kevin Rudd but also very important to the House and to the nation—a very important moment in our history.

I remember sitting at my then ministerial place at the end of the first row for the national apology. It was a very moving moment and a very important moment as Indigenous people filled the galleries and then rose as one. There were thousands of Indigenous people on the lawns in front of Parliament House and others who gathered throughout the country to watch the first time a prime minister had stood on behalf of the nation to apologise for the wrongs of the past.

It was said at the time by some that it was an entirely symbolic gesture. I do acknowledge that there was a risk that it could have been a symbolic day where no concrete steps were taken to deal with Indigenous disadvantage. That was something that the then Prime Minister and the government were acutely aware of; and I am pleased and proud to say that it was not a symbolic day. It was a day in which an important apology was delivered but also a day on which the House, the government and the nation committed themselves to do much more. It was the first time that the government had committed, in a formal sense and a coherent and strategic sense, to closing the gap.

It was the first time in many senses that those words, 'closing the gap', had been uttered on behalf a government: a commitment to close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. We would not accept the premise that the apology was a one-day event to be forgotten; rather it would be used as an opportunity to focus government and national attention on the scourge of Indigenous disadvantage, which continues and which must be dealt with. The former government was committed, and former Prime Minister Rudd announced a strategy to be developed and implemented through COAG, with our state and territory colleagues, and with an annual report from the Prime Minister to the parliament on progress. To their great credit, all of Prime Minister Rudd's successors, Prime Minister Gillard and Prime Minister Abbott, have fulfilled that mandate and that task and have reported to the House on progress. I am sure Prime Minister Turnbull will continue in the same vein.
Since leaving parliament, former Prime Minister Rudd has formed the National Apology Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation with five core purposes. The first is to perpetuate the spirit and substance of the national apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for future generations once the events of 2008 fade from national memory. The second is to sustain the bipartisan support the apology has so far received into the future—and it has received bipartisan support; I clearly remember then Leader of the Opposition Brendan Nelson standing at the dispatch box and outlining his strong support for the apology. A third purpose is to monitor progress in closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, as outlined in the 2008 statement. This, to my way of thinking, is the most important element of the foundation’s work, and I will return to that point. Another purpose is to support closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in education by raising funds and contributing those funds to existing non-government institutions engaged in this mission; and the final purpose is to support where possible and appropriate, Indigenous peoples internationally in their efforts to achieve reconciliation in their own countries—which is a worthy goal as well.

Of course, Kevin Rudd and Therese Rein have donated $100,000 to start the foundation. I am sure every member of the House will want to join me in acknowledging that and thanking them for their generosity and their contribution. They are not simply engaging in words; $100,000 is a very substantial contribution—they are putting their money where their mouth is, as the old saying goes—and it is a very good start for the foundation. The foundation has important work to do because it is fair to say that progress on closing the gap has been patchy. There has been some very good work, but there is a long way to go. For example, it is a very good thing that between 2007 and 2012 the life expectancy of the average Indigenous male increased by 1.6 years and for the average Indigenous female by 0.6 years or just over six months. That is a good thing, but there is still a long way to go. It is unacceptable to all of us that the gap in life expectancy for Indigenous Australians is 10 years less than for non-Indigenous Australians. If your crime is to be born Indigenous, you will live for 10 years less. That is not acceptable to this House; that is not acceptable to this parliament or this nation. It must be dealt with.

There has been some progress, and we cannot expect overnight progress on what is a generational challenge. The Closing the Gap strategy has concentrated on practical measures like reducing smoking rates—there has been some modest progress there—and improvements to maternal health and to childhood health, making a difference in the early years which will have such an impact on life expectancy. I am not going to make partisan political points in this address, but the Indigenous smoking strategy of the previous government which has been abolished by the current government needs to be reinstated. I simply make that point, and of course we will have more to say about that in the very near future. Smoking rates are above 40 per cent for Indigenous Australians when the average rate for non-Indigenous Australians is less than half that, in the teens, and we have an aim to get it to 10 per cent. To have Indigenous smoking rates of more than 40 per cent is a huge factor in the lesser life expectancy of Indigenous Australians.

The last Closing the gap report brought down by former Prime Minister Abbott was sobering reading. He said, and they are worthy words:
… in many areas progress has been far too slow. It is profoundly disappointing that most Closing the Gap targets are not on track to be met.

Former Prime Minister Abbott was right about that. It is appropriate, therefore, that the foundation will commit itself, in addition to what the government of the day is doing, to better monitoring progress on those targets. Closing the gap in life expectancy within a generation is not on track to be met under current trends. It was hoped that the gap would be closed by 2031, but progress has been too limited to say that that target will be met. Halving the gap of mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade is on track to be met by 2018, and that is something that should be acknowledged and celebrated. Ensuring access for all Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities to early childhood education was not met. The target was to have that occurring by 2013. In 2013, 85 per cent of Indigenous four-year-olds were enrolled, compared to a target of 95 per cent—so there is more work to do. Closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance rates within five years is not yet being met. Halving the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for Indigenous students is not on track to be met by 2018. There has been no improvement in Indigenous reading and numeracy rates since 2008. That is not acceptable. Halving the gap of Indigenous Australians aged 20 to 24 in year 12 attainment for equivalent attainment rates is on track and that is, again, a very good thing. Halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is not on track—there was a decline in employment outcomes and since 2008 we have been going backwards.

It is clear that the focus of this House, this government and future governments must remain on closing the gap of Indigenous disadvantage. I note that the Leader of the Opposition made a very significant speech last week on this matter. We have indicated the addition of another goal for closing the gap which goes to incarceration rates. That is an important element of Indigenous disadvantage and something a future Shorten Labor government would embrace and implement. There is a vital need for more than just symbolism, as important as that is—it was a necessary first step to have the apology; it was a cleansing moment for the Indigenous community and the broader Australian community and a vital moment in our history but it was not enough. Kevin Rudd knew that at the time, and he is to be commended these years later for standing at the dispatch box opposite and committing his government and future governments to closing the gap, and subsequent governments and prime ministers are to be congratulated for continuing that work. We do have areas of disagreement—there is no point in gilding the lily about those. There are cuts to Indigenous funding which we on this side do not support—we strongly oppose them—but this is not the occasion on which to go through those matters. It is the occasion, however, to welcome the establishment of the National Apology Foundation and support its admission as a deductible gift recipient. That provides tax deductibility for Australians who donate to the foundation, and I encourage many Australians to follow the lead of Kevin and Therese and make substantial donations to it. Prime Minister Rudd said at the Australian National University just a couple of weeks ago, when he formally launched the foundation:

To be blunt, whoever the future government of Australia happens to be, we want to keep the bastards honest. We want to ensure the necessary data is collected to measure our success or failure in bridging the intergenerational gap of entrenched Indigenous disadvantage. This mission must continue beyond the passing seasons that we call politics.
As the alternative government and the future government of Australia we welcome that scrutiny from former Prime Minister Rudd. It is right of him to say that; I know him well enough to know that he means it. I know him well enough to know that he would provide scrutiny to future governments of any political persuasion if they were not pulling their weight in getting the gap closed. He would hold us to account as he would hold those opposite to account, as he should. It is one of the defining achievements of his prime ministership that such progress was made in the cause of reconciliation. It will continue to be one of the defining elements of his contribution to public life in the different capacities he has now embraced. The work so far is to be acknowledged and celebrated but, most of all, we must acknowledge that we have a long way to go as a nation before we wipe the stain of Indigenous disadvantage from us, that the scourge of Indigenous disadvantage is dealt with and that we can truly say we are proud of how we have dealt with our valued and cherished Indigenous communities, the custodians of the land for 40,000 years who are now properly acknowledged as such but are not properly made equal to us in every respect until the gap of Indigenous disadvantage is dealt with, eliminated and consigned to history.

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (11:14): As the shadow Treasurer has outlined, the Tax Laws Amendment (Gifts) Bill 2015 provides statutory listing for two organisations which will receive deductible gift recipient status. This is necessary for the International Jewish Relief Limited organisation because that organisation operates in both developed and developing countries and, therefore, does not meet the criteria of a charity that operates purely in developing countries. It is also necessary for the National Apology Foundation Ltd because that organisation aims to further both program goals and policy goals and, therefore, does not fall within the outlined categories for tax deductible gift recipient status. Tax deductibility will be a boon to these two important organisations, and I am pleased to say that bill enjoys bipartisan support.

Tax deductibility is not the only factor that drives giving. Over recent years we have seen Australians becoming more disconnected. It is a trend that runs from the 1960s through to be mid-2000s, and we have also seen it since the mid-2000s. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics finds that the share of Australians with no involvement in social and community groups has risen from 30 per cent in 2006 to 32 per cent in 2010. A report from 2014 by JBWere, titled Australian giving trends—stuck on the plateau, documents the fact that the share of Australian taxpayers giving to charity has failed to rise in recent years. Indeed, it points out that, if you go back to the early 1980s, around 40 per cent of taxpayers were giving to charity, and now that figure is around 35 per cent.

It is important that we encourage charitable giving. I acknowledge the work of megadonors such as Paul Ramsay, Brian Trudinger and Westpac, and also the important work done as Western Australian governor by Malcolm McCusker in making charitable donation a part of Western Australia's social fabric. We should acknowledge too the work of organisations such as Pro Bono Australia, which has brought giving to the fore. But if we are to boost philanthropy then we need a full-court press. We need all organisations encouraging social capital, encouraging engagement with organisations and encouraging charitable donations.

A recent Philanthropy Australia meeting here in parliament, the inaugural Philanthropy Meets Parliament Summit, focused on a number of ways in which that can be done. Many of the attendees there recognised the value of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits
Commission. The commission opened its doors in December 2012, ably headed by Susan Pascoe, and I am pleased to say that the government's bill to scrap the charities commission continues to languish on the House Notice Paper. States and territories such as South Australia and the ACT are now working with the charities commission to make it more effective, and I hope that is a path that other states and territories will go down also to make use of the red-tape reduction potential of the charities commission.

But it would be terrific too if the charities commission were able to more strongly advocate for a culture of charitable giving to organisations such as those we are debating in this bill today—the International Jewish Relief Limited and the National Apology Foundation Ltd—but also to the tens of thousands of worthy charities across Australia. A charities commission that was strongly backed by the government is one which could play a more active role in building social capital in Australia.

I urge the government to formally put in the bin their proposal for scrapping the charities commission, an idea which goes back to the former minister, Kevin Andrews, the member for Menzies. Now that the member for Menzies has stepped out of the social services portfolio, the idea of scrapping the charities commission ought to be similarly scrapped. That would give the charities commission a greater sense of confidence and it would ensure that there was less staff turnover in the charities commission, which continues to suffer turnover somewhere in the order of 25 per cent per year as a result of the uncertainty that hangs over its head.

The charities commission enjoys very strong support from the sector. Surveys by Pro Bono Australia put support at around four in five charities. An open letter to the Prime Minister supporting the charities commission reads like a who's who of the sector. Many charities have formally called for the charities commission to be maintained. Indeed, it should not just be maintained; it should be strengthened and it should be allowed to play a vital role in rebuilding social capital in an Australia that is increasingly becoming disconnected.

The religious traditions of giving are those which we remember at this time of year: the Christian tradition of tithing, the Jewish tradition of tzedakah, the Muslim notion of zakat. Many Australians will be, at this time of the year, thinking of those less fortunate than themselves. As patron of this year's Kippax Uniting Church gift drive I am very proud of the work that the Kippax Uniting Church community do in providing food hampers and gifts to the vulnerable in the Canberra community. These are efforts that are being replicated in different contexts by different organisations across Australia.

Australia's charities do extraordinary work but they need a charities commission backed by the government and empowered to advocate charitable giving and make us a more connected community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (11:21): I thank the members who have contributed to this debate. The Tax Laws Amendment (Gifts) Bill 2015 adds two entities to the deductible gift recipient specific listings in division 30 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, from 1 January 2015.

The first organisation is the National Apology Foundation Ltd, which works to sustain the spirit and the substance of the national apology delivered to Indigenous Australians and to ensure this message is carried on to future generations. The second organisation is International Jewish Relief Limited, which helps impoverished and struggling Jews and
strengthens the Jewish response to worldwide humanitarian crises and disasters to communities, regardless of religion and geography.

Obtaining deductible gift recipient status will help these listed entities to attract vital public financial support for their activities, as taxpayers can claim an income tax deduction for certain gifts to deductible gift recipients. I commend this bill to the House.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (11:22): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Tax and Superannuation Laws Amendment (2015 Measures No. 5) Bill 2015

Returned from Senate

Message received from the Senate returning the bill without amendment or request.

Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.

to which the following amendment was moved:

That all words after "That" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

"the House declines to give the bill a second reading because the bill will have significant and adverse consequences for hundreds of thousands of patients, especially those who need frequent sessions with psychiatrists, those accessing Assisted Reproductive Technology services, those receiving radiation oncology and notes that this is yet another component of the Government's ongoing attack on Medicare as part of a plan to privatisate Australia's healthcare system."

(Quorum formed)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough) (11:26): The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this the honourable member for Ballarat has moved as an amendment that all words after 'that' be omitted with a view to substituting other words. The question now is that the amendment be agreed to.

Mr MITCHELL (McEwen—Second Deputy Speaker) (11:26): The Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015 represents cuts of some $270 million to the Medicare safety net. So much for the promise of no cuts to health that this lot opposite promised before the last election. I am here today to tell those opposite that the Australian people are not the bottom line on an accounting spreadsheet.

The caps in the bill are not supported by independent reports or input from health professionals. These are blanket caps across a multitude of MBS items or services. The Minister for Health will tell you that the new safety net simplifies the arrangements—but that comes at a cost. It abolishes the existing, original Medicare safety net and the extended
Medicare safety net. If you were walking a tightrope and relying on a safety net in case you fell, you would not use a safety net offered by the Abbott-Turnbull government, because you could guarantee it would not be there when you needed it.

The Liberals' record on universal health care speaks for itself. In 1974 the Liberals, under Snedden, voted against Medibank—Australia's first universal healthcare scheme, introduced by one of our most progressive prime ministers, Mr Gough Whitlam. Between 1975 and 1981, the Liberals proceeded to rip Medibank apart until a Labor government, led by Prime Minister Bob Hawke, came back in and reintroduced the Medicare framework in 1985. In 1987 the then Liberal opposition leader, John Howard, told Australians that bulk-billing would be scrapped, and in 1993 John Hewson took that policy to an election.

In 2004, before the election, now ex-prime minister Tony Abbott made a 'rock-solid, ironclad' guarantee he would not raise the Medicare safety net threshold. But what did he do straight after the election, in his usual fashion? With a quick backflip, he did exactly the opposite, because the costings that he had put in place blew out. So much for the theory of great Liberal financial management and control. We know that that, like everything else they told Australians before the last election, has turned out to be nothing but a pure lie.

The Howard government oversaw $1 billion of cuts to the public healthcare system across the board. Under the Abbott-Turnbull government now, we see further cuts being proposed to the healthcare system. These cuts make way for a much greater role for private health insurers and the realisation of that great Liberal dream, the thing that they have embroidered on their pillows—that is, to privatisate the health system and take us down the American route. While the Americans are looking at going into universal health care through President Obama's 'ObamaCare', this lot over here in Australia want to go back to the Dark Ages. They do not think that Australians deserve universal health care. They do not think that people should be entitled to go to a doctor or to hospital and get the treatment they need for their illness, knowing that wherever they go they will get the best quality health care.

You have to wonder what those opposite think at night-time, when they lie on their 'Let's get rid of universal health care' pillows, dreaming and fantasising about bringing back a GP tax, which they tried once, twice, three times, four times—and they are now sitting there waiting, ready to go for the fifth time. It is in their DNA. It is there every day. They desperately want to make sure that Australians do not get the support of universal health care because their long-term vision is to privatisate it. They love privatising things. We saw that with John Howard. The government come in here and say, 'Look at the great work that Howard and Costello did.' It is pretty easy to build your bank account when you sell off every single profit-producing government entity that we have. Then they sit there and say, 'Look, we've got lots of money!' Of course, that is only in the short term. In the long term, because of the work that they did in government during those Howard years that they liked to keep really quiet about until recently, we have structural deficit problems caused by a government that could not manage itself or the Australian economy. If we look at the recent history of health policy, it becomes absolutely clear. The coalition hate universal health care. As I said, if you were walking a tightrope, you would not want to rely on this government to supply one. The safety net is there, and it exists to ensure that patients facing significant out-of-pocket costs in one year are protected. This is consistent with the principle of Medicare: every Australian should have access to the highest quality of care, regardless of their capacity to pay. One of
the important things is to make sure that people on fixed and low incomes are protected and
given the support that they need and deserve in our healthcare system.

Labor is standing up for the thousands of patients who will be impacted by this poorly
developed policy. I am standing up for my communities in McEwen who will be impacted by
this poorly developed policy. As we have seen with every independent report, and every piece
of information and input from healthcare professionals, we should oppose this bill. It is not
right, it is not fair and it is typical of this government, which has no idea what it is doing but
likes to talk at people and tell them how it feels. But when it comes to action, it is missing! It
is gone. Nothing happens. You have the Turnbull mouthpiece but the Abbott policies. It is
time that this government stops talking at people and starts actually listening to them.

On that note, I oppose this bill.

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (11:33): It is always a pleasure to stand in this place, having
listened to a terrific contribution from the member for McEwen! But I have a little bit of
history for the member for McEwen. The first major privatisation in this country, which was
the first tranche of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, was actually done under a Labor
government in 1991. I say to those opposite: your party was the one that started the
privatisations in this country. As usual, we see that those opposite are supremely adept at
rewriting history for their own benefit but never for the benefit of the Australian people. That
is why this bill is so important.

I rise today to support the Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015 because it
is an important structural reform to the Medicare arrangements and will address a number of
known issues that, surprisingly—and this might assist the member for McEwen—were
identified in independent reviews of the Medicare safety net in 2009 and 2011. I wonder who
was in government in 2009 and 2011? It was those opposite. But, as usual, they failed to deal
with the issues that were identified six and four years ago respectively, and now it is left up to
this government to fix another of the issues that they failed to deal with.

The 2009 review identified the extended Medicare safety net to be structurally flawed with
rapid fee inflation in some areas of the Medicare Benefits Schedule. It also highlighted that
around 55 per cent of these benefits were going to the top 20 per cent of Australia's most
socioeconomically advantaged, with the least advantaged 20 per cent receiving less than 3.5
per cent of the benefits. We hear those opposite talk ad nauseam about the fact that they are
supposedly there for the battler. Well, they are standing in this place speaking against this
proposed legislation, which is designed to actually help those at the bottom end get a better
range of cover and benefits through these amendments and to put people at the top end, who
can afford to pay, in a position where they are possibly going to pay more. So, yes, the top
end of town will pay more, and the bottom end will be better covered. We hear them parrot on
about equity all the time. I think this proposed legislation is well designed to actually deliver
the equity they so frequently talk about. I find it amazing that we frequently sit in this place
and see that the rhetoric of those opposite very rarely measures up to what they profess to
believe in.

The 2011 review showed that the capping led to a reduction in safety net expenditure, and
that this was relatively greater in wealthier areas and major cities. The extended Medicare
safety net is extensively flawed and many residents in my electorate of Forde have suffered as
a result. It has perverse incentives for medical fee inflation, rigid rules which disadvantage
families, as well as poor access for non-concessional single people on low incomes. The current safety nets, with the three overlapping arrangements and inconsistent benefit caps, are complex and confusing for patients and practitioners, and leave many people out of pocket, stressed and frustrated. Existing Medicare safety net arrangements include the flawed extended Medicare safety net, the original Medicare safety net and the ‘greatest permissible gap’. No wonder it is almost impossible for patients to calculate rebates. The existing arrangements are complex, regressive and inflationary.

The Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015 seeks to replace all of the existing Medicare safety net arrangements with a new Medicare safety net. In the past, a number of changes to the extended Medicare safety net have been made to address some of these concerns, but they have made it complex for both the medical profession and patients to understand. Unfortunately, these changes have failed to completely address problems with the program—some people reach the threshold almost immediately each year due to the unlimited amount of out-of-pocket expenses that accumulates to the threshold. This provides no further signals to the provider with respect to fee restraint.

The new Medicare safety net has been carefully designed to respond to the issues raised by the two independent reviews that I referred to earlier. In stark contrast to those opposite, we have taken the time to consult with stakeholders and the public and to consider its impact on provider charging behaviour and out-of-pocket costs faced by singles and families. While the new Medicare safety net will continue to provide an additional benefit to families and singles for out-of-hospital Medicare services, once the annual threshold has been reached it will also be more progressive. Thresholds for people without concession cards are reducing from $2,000 to $700 for singles and $1,000 for families, and for concession card holders from $638 to $400. It is expected that more than 53,000 additional people will receive a safety net benefit under the new arrangements, and for concession card holders, in particular, an additional 80,500 people will receive benefits.

As I mentioned earlier, we talk often in this place about equity, and I think this is a clear example of equity being extended to a far broader range of people in our community through their ability to access these benefits. Unlike the extended Medicare safety net, the amount of out-of-pocket costs per service that counts towards the threshold will have a limit, and the amount of safety net benefits paid per service, after the singles or families threshold has been reached, will also have a universal limit. This will restrict medical inflation and limit the Commonwealth’s exposure, while ensuring more Australians can access safety net benefits.

Most importantly, the thresholds to access the new Medicare safety net will be lower than the thresholds for the extended Medicare safety net for most people, and more people will receive a safety net benefit as a result. While the average benefit paid will be less, more people will be able to access benefits than under the current arrangements.

For many residents in my electorate of Forde who rely heavily on bulk-billing with their GP, the changes will not reduce access to GP primary care. Safety net benefits currently only account for about one per cent of total benefits paid for GP services, as a high proportion of people are bulk-billed. The bulk-billing rate for concession card holders is some 91 per cent, which means that these people do not have out-of-pocket expenses for these services at the moment and will therefore be unlikely to be affected by any of these changes. Most people do not receive safety net benefits for GP services and those that do are generally from areas...
where higher fees are charged, such as in the higher socioeconomic areas. As we saw before, it is those higher socioeconomic areas that are getting the greatest benefit under the old system. The lower thresholds under the new arrangements may mean that more people receive safety net benefits for these services.

This bill will also allow the government to continue to support singles and families who have high out-of-pocket costs, while streamlining the Medicare safety net arrangements. Importantly, for all in our health system, it will improve Medicare for the long-term future and benefit of this country. I commend the bill as it is presented to the House.

Mr KELVIN THOMSON (Wills) (11:43): I rise to speak on the Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015. A fortnight ago we had the 40th anniversary of the dismissal of the Whitlam Labor government. It was hardly surprising, given the tumultuous nature of that event, which I personally remember vividly, that at that time we saw discussion about the idea of the republic and the propriety of the actions of the Liberal and National parties in blocking supply. To put it in modern context, it would be like the Labor opposition and other non-government senators taking advantage of the highly unpopular 2014 budget and the unpopularity of former Prime Minister Abbott to block supply and to seek to regain office, notwithstanding the 2013 election outcome. It was a deeply unprincipled and opportunistic act.

It is, in my view, even more important now that we recall the Whitlam legacy, which includes free tertiary education, which I publicly supported on a number of occasions, and free and universal health care. It is well known that the Whitlam initiative of Medibank was attacked by the Fraser government but reinstated as Medicare by the Hawke government. Medicare, the Whitlam legacy of free and universal health care, has been an outstanding success. It has given Australia a health system which is the envy of the world. And, if you doubt this, just think about overseas travel. Every Australian who is fortunate enough to travel overseas is acutely aware that they do not want to fall ill or have an accident in another country because, in other countries, healthcare costs are higher and healthcare standards are lower than they are in Australia. Universal health insurance has been an outstanding success. But the Liberal Party hate the Whitlam legacy and they hate public health. And so they give us bills like this one. I said early last year that I intended to become more familiar with health policy. It has been sobering to see how far we have moved from the Whitlam legacy. The fact is that we have seen cuts across every part of the health system, including more than $60 billion cut from Australia’s public hospitals; attempts to increase the costs of medicines for every Australian, including unfair changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme safety net; $370 million cut from preventative health programs; the abolition of the Australian National Preventive Health Agency and Health Workforce Australia; the government’s ongoing GP tax through its MBS freeze, which represents a cut of some $2 billion from Medicare; cuts of hundreds of millions of dollars from public dental programs; cuts to general practice training programs; and cuts to mental health and Indigenous health programs. These cuts truly are at every level of the system.

We have also seen rising health insurance premiums. A fortnight ago, the health minister admitted that premiums are rising at twice the rate of inflation. In fact, some 500,000 Australians have dumped or downgraded their private health insurance. The minister admitted that many people are disappointed with their private health insurance. The reason these cuts
are happening is that this government is not serious about investing in Medicare. The government does not see Medicare as being the heart of Australia’s health system; it sees a much greater role for private health insurers, with a long-term intention of privatising Australia’s healthcare system. Unfortunately, the government plans to do this because it does not believe in Medicare. It sees health only through the prism of cost, not as something that every Australian has a right to. And if the government gets its way, make no mistake: Medicare will be rendered a mere safety net, not the universal health system that it is today. You do not need to look very far, Deputy Speaker, to see what happens in this sort of instance. In the United States, not only do many millions of people miss out on the care they need, but the costs spent on health care are significantly higher than in Australia; indeed, Australia spends below the OECD average on health care. But for this investment we get some of the best health outcomes in the world.

We need to also consider these cuts in the context of what this government plans on doing to private health insurance. In its latest foray into private health, we have seen the government attack community rating, suggesting that some people ought to pay more for their private health insurance. Community rating is important because it means that people pay into health funds when they are young and fit, but then they are able to draw down as they age or start a family, or if they suffer from a major health issue. Under the government’s agenda, health insurance would only be available to the young and the healthy, and only wealthy people would be able to afford private insurance as they age or seek to start a family, or if they develop a long-term health condition. We also know that this is likely to be inflationary; again significantly adding to the cost of health care for every Australian. So Labor will be standing up for the thousands of patients who will be impacted on by this poorly developed policy. We will not be supporting this bill.

I want to turn now to an examination of the bill in some detail. The Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015 gives effect to the 2014-15 budget measure ‘Simplifying Medicare safety net arrangements’. Under the proposed new arrangements, there is only one safety net, with a lower threshold for all patients. However, the amount of out-of-pocket expenses that count towards the accumulation to reach the safety net is lower, and the amount covered once patients reach the safety net will also be lower. It is through these changes that the government is cutting $270 million over five years. At present, all out-of-pocket costs for out-of-hospital Medicare services contribute to the safety net threshold. Under the new arrangements, this will be capped at 150 per cent of the MBS schedule fee. Whilst acknowledging that the new Medicare safety net has lower thresholds for all patients, the bill restricts out-of-pocket costs that can accumulate towards the threshold, and it restricts the benefits payable once patients reach the safety net. The limit on out-of-pocket costs that can count towards the threshold is equal to the difference between the Medicare benefit and 150 per cent of the MBS fee—which in this case is $55.60—or the difference between the Medicare benefit and the doctor’s fee, whichever is the lesser amount. If a patient is charged $120 for a consultation and the Medicare benefit is $72.75, this leaves an out-of-pocket cost of $47.25. As this out-of-pocket amount is below the maximum amount allowed to be counted towards the threshold, $47.25 is counted towards the patient’s threshold. If a patient is charged $150 for the consultation and the Medicare benefit is $72.75, they will have an out-of-pocket cost of $77.25. As this out-of-pocket cost is more than the maximum amount allowed to be counted towards the threshold, only $55.60 is counted towards the threshold. The new, so-
The called simplified safety net involves abolishing the existing original Medicare safety net and the extended Medicare safety net.

The Consumers Health Forum of Australia has expressed concern that safety nets and other compensatory mechanisms to protect against higher out-of-pocket costs are being eroded at a time when increased rates of chronic disease are expected to require significant health expenditure in the years to come. Australians already make a relatively high direct contribution to healthcare costs. Individual consumer co-payments comprise 17 per cent of total health care expenditure in Australia, and are the largest non-government source of funding for health goods and services. In recent years, the health costs that consumers have had to pay from their own pockets have climbed steadily. Australians now spend an average of more than $1,000 a year in out-of-pocket costs. This finding is consistent with the results of a national survey of consumers conducted by the Consumers Health Forum where over 50 per cent of respondents indicated that they had paid between $1,000 and $5,000 for health care in the last year.

The Consumers Health Forum survey of almost 600 respondents across the country provides a worrying picture of vulnerable Australians already struggling to cope with high out-of-pocket costs. The key findings include that many consumers are already experiencing difficulty affording healthcare costs. Many consumers are failing to access needed health care due to costs. Any increase in out-of-pocket costs will further add to the financial difficulties being experienced by many consumers and create additional barriers to accessing appropriate care.

The report shows that the impact of high out-of-pocket costs is most profound for people who are most in need and most vulnerable—those with chronic and long-term illnesses, especially those afflicted with multiple chronic conditions. While the report acknowledges that direct costs of most healthcare services are either fully or partially subsidised in Australia, consumers can still face substantial unbudgeted out-of-pocket costs and co-payments.

The report also highlights the inadequacy of current safety nets to target consumers adversely affected by out-of-pocket costs to ensure that they do not experience barriers to accessing care. One of the problems with the current system of safety nets is that they are based on annual expenditure, which advantages consumers whose healthcare expenses occur in a short time frame over those who have ongoing conditions requiring lower levels of care for longer periods.

Another problem identified by the report is that mechanisms to address inequity, such as healthcare cards, identify people on the basis of income level or carer status but do not accurately target those who have difficulty affording health care. For example, there are many consumers who do not qualify for healthcare cards or pensions who have experienced difficulty in meeting their healthcare costs. Against this background, Labor have serious concerns about the impact that these changes will have on thousands of patients.

We are concerned about radiation oncology patients, people with cancer who have been previously bulk-billed but who will see significant new out-of-pocket expenses. According to one example, a patient with malignant melanoma receiving the SRS or stereotactic radiation treatment would face new out-of-pocket costs of some $7,400 and a patient with prostate cancer having the treatment could face new out-of-pocket costs of some $8,000. Similarly,
patients with breast cancer being treated by private providers might see a 200 per cent increase in their out-of-pocket costs for their radiation oncology.

The Australian Medical Association have said they are opposed to these changes. The President of the AMA, Professor Brian Owler, has said:

The new Medicare safety net arrangements, together with the ongoing freeze of Medicare patient rebates, mean that growing out-of-pocket costs will become a reality for all Australian families, including the most vulnerable patients in our community.

Of course, growing out-of-pocket costs represent the opposite of the Whitlam legacy and the antithesis of Medicare. It will hit older Australians in particular.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has also warned about the impact of the changes, especially in the context of the government's GP tax and its ongoing freeze of Medicare indexation. The college's president, Professor Frank Jones, has said that:

... coupled with the indexation freeze, the legislation will actually increase the cost of care to vulnerable groups. Safety net thresholds will increase by CPI annually while rebates are frozen.

Furthermore, we have had concerns raised by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, cancer groups and others about the thousands of patients who will be adversely affected by these changes. Psychiatrists, especially those providing psychotherapy services to very vulnerable patients, have warned of the serious impact on the patients they care for. Dr Shirley Prager, the President of the National Association of Practising Psychiatrists said:

I and my colleagues are very concerned about the impact the new Safety Net proposals will have on patients who need long-term ongoing mental health treatment as many of these patients will find their health care with a psychiatrist unaffordable.

I acknowledge that the changes mean that many patients will reach the safety net sooner but only in the context of a $270 million cut. The government is able to make these savings by restricting the out-of-pocket costs that can accumulate to reach the safety net and then putting further caps on what will be covered. By contrast, under existing arrangements, all out-of-pocket costs for out-of-hospital Medicare services count towards the threshold. The safety net exists to ensure that patients who have significant out-of-pocket costs in one year are protected, consistent with the principle of Medicare that every Australian should have access to the highest quality of care regardless of their capacity to pay. We do not claim that the current safety net arrangements are perfect, but the way changes have been presented in this bill means they will have a serious, adverse impact on thousands of patients. Therefore, we do not support this bill.

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (11:58): I disagree with the previous speaker's assessment of this bill. The Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015 replaces all of the existing Medicare safety net arrangements with a new Medicare safety net. Existing Medicare safety net arrangements include the extended Medicare safety net, the original Medicare safety net and the greatest permissible gap. This is confusing for patients and makes it almost impossible for them to calculate their rebate. However, our whole health system forms a part of the egalitarian nature of this country. These are important reforms so that we can have a sustainable health system for the generations ahead. These changes are important for the sustainability of Medicare. Eighty thousand more people will gain a benefit from the changes in this legislation. The new Medicare safety net is an important structural reform to the
Medicare arrangements, addressing known issues, including perverse incentives for medical fee inflation, rigid rules which disadvantage families and poor access for non-concessional single people on low incomes. The current safety net, with three overlapping arrangements and inconsistent benefit caps, are complex and confusing for patients and practitioners.

Two independent reviews showed the extended Medicare safety net, the EMSN, to be structurally flawed. The 2009 review identified that this had led to rapid fee inflation in some Medicare benefit schedules, with considerable leakage of government benefits towards providers’ incomes rather than reduced costs for patients. It also highlighted that around 55 per cent of these benefits were going to the top 20 per cent of Australia's most socioeconomically advantaged, with the 20 per cent least advantaged receiving less than 3.5 per cent. The 2011 review showed that capping led to a reduction in safety net expenditure and that this was relatively greater in wealthier areas and major cities.

The current EMSN is regressive, with benefits flowing to patients in higher socioeconomic areas where doctors are choosing to charge higher fees. The EMSN was originally designed to assist patients with high out-of-pocket costs, with safety net benefits intended for the patient. However, the current system threshold and benefit arrangements have facilitated higher charges in specific areas by providing incentives for fee inflation and the shifting of out-of-pocket costs to services that are not EMSN capped—for example, some providers for some services charge a single, high fee for the initial service, and, once the patient has qualified for the EMSN, the patient then receives uncapped reimbursement on the basis of what the provider charges. The introduction of caps across all MBS items is expected to have a moderating effect on these charges.

The member for Wills spoke about oncology, and I will now address that. Based on the current charging behaviour, it is estimated that an additional 1,000 people will receive safety net benefits under the arrangements due to lower thresholds, 800 of whom will be concession card holders. Around 70 per cent of radiation oncology services are bulk-billed, and more than 80 per cent of all services are charged at the scheduled fee or less. This means that a large proportion of patients experience no, or low, out-of-pocket costs for their treatment. The new Medicare safety net is not expected to lead to any reduction in patient care, and a significant proportion of families and individuals who incur out-of-pocket costs for radiation oncology will qualify for the safety net sooner because of the reduced thresholds.

The costs that patients incur for private radiation oncology will depend on the fees charged by the private providers, which include private equity investors that have recently entered the market. About 40 per cent of all radiation oncology services are from private providers. Data shows that between 2004 and 2013 average fees for private radiation oncology patients grew steadily at around 5.2 per cent per annum. From the fourth quarter of 2013 to the fourth quarter of 2014, the average fee for non-bulk-billed services increased by 22.9 per cent. In 2014 the EMSN expenditure for radiation oncology increased by more than 48 per cent—driven by fees, not service volumes. Similar fee inflation was seen in obstetrics and IVF prior to capping of those services in 2010. If charging practices do not change for a standard course of 20 radiotherapy treatments, a patient would see almost no change in their out-of-pocket expenses under the new Medicare safety net arrangements. There have been claims that out-of-pocket costs may triple, but in order for this to happen private providers would have to charge around 2½ times the scheduled fee for a course of treatment.
Most of my constituents would be concerned about how these changes will affect their GP visits, so I will address that as well. The changes will not reduce access to GP primary care. Safety net benefits currently only account for around one per cent of total benefits paid for GP services, as a high proportion of people are bulk-billed. The bulk-billing rate for concession card holders is 91.3 per cent. This means that these people do not have out-of-pocket costs for these services at the moment and will, therefore, be unlikely to be affected by these changes. Most people do not receive safety net benefits for GP services, and those that do are generally from areas where higher fees are charged, such as in higher socioeconomic areas. The lower thresholds under the new arrangements may mean that more people will receive safety net benefits for these services.

The bottom line, from my point of view, is this: these changes will make a difference to how we manage our Medicare program into the future. The current arrangements, which are complex and difficult for both medical professionals and patients to understand, have failed to completely address problems with the program. Some people reach the threshold almost immediately each year due to the unlimited amount of out-of-pocket costs that can be accumulated up to a threshold, and this has provided no further signals to providers about fee restraint. The new Medicare safety net has been carefully designed to respond to issues raised by two independent reviews, which I mentioned before, stakeholders and the public about the impact of provider charging behaviour and out-of-pocket costs faced by singles and families.

The new Medicare safety net will continue to provide an additional benefit to families and singles for out-of-hospital Medicare services once an annual threshold has been reached. The structure of the new Medicare safety net will be more progressive. The thresholds for people without concessions cards will be reduced from $2,000 to $700 for singles and $1,000 for families and from $638.40 to $400 for concession card holders. It is expected that more than 53,000 additional people will receive a safety net benefit under the new arrangements. In particular, 80,500 more concession card holders will receive benefits than under the current arrangements, while the number of non-concessional people receiving benefits will decrease by 27,500.

Unlike the extended Medicare safety net, the amount of out-of-pocket costs per service that counts towards a threshold will have a limit, and the amount of safety net benefits paid per service after the singles or families threshold has been reached will also have a universal limit. This will restrict medical inflation and limit the Commonwealth's exposure while ensuring that more Australians can access safety net benefits. Most importantly, the thresholds to access the new Medicare safety net will be lower than the thresholds for the extended Medicare safety net for most people and more people will receive a safety net benefit. While the average benefit paid will be less, more people will be able to access the benefits than under the current arrangements. This bill will allow the government to continue to support singles and families who have high out-of-pocket costs, while streamlining the Medicare safety net arrangements and contributing to the sustainability of Medicare.

Having said that, Medicare is an important part of the structure of how we look after our society. It has been supported by every government that I have been a part of and by every government that I have been in opposition while they were in government. Medicare is a hot button issue in all our electorates because health care affects every family right across Australia at some time in their lives. These are good changes. They should be supported. I do
not understand the Labor Party's opposition to this. They probably would have liked to have introduced it while they were in government. This will be good for Medicare, and what is good for Medicare is good for the people in McMillan. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr SNOWDON (Lingiari) (12:08): I am pleased to be able to make a contribution to this debate, especially as I have just come from the launch of the 2015 AMA report card on Indigenous health. I want to commend the AMA for the excellent work that they have done and for the content of this document, which will have implications across portfolios and within government, and which is one which I think should be widely supported by the whole community. I will come to it in a moment, because it has particular relevance for some areas of this particular bill.

I remind us that this year is the 40th anniversary of the dismissal of a Prime Minister. Whilst the dismissal itself is something which has received a lot of media attention since that day, the 11th of the 11th, we are seeing a lack of appreciation, I think, of the important changes that were made to our social policy and health policy landscape as a result of the Whitlam government. Among them is our system of universal health care, which is clearly under attack—prior to this by the Abbott government and now by the Turnbull government—with cuts in hospital funding, cuts to Medicare Benefits Schedule items, and cuts to preventative health and public dental programs. There seems, sadly, to be a continuing but obvious plan under the current Prime Minister, following on from Prime Minister Abbott, to kill Medicare by a thousand cuts.

The latest element of the anti-Medicare plan is the private health insurance survey—a so-called survey but a very poorly concealed push poll—is to undermine the community rating system of private health insurance, which prevents premium cost discrimination on the basis of age, gender or health status. This push poll's timing is interesting as it coincides with the attempt to push through today the changes to the Medicare safety net contained in this bill. Labor opposes this further attack on our system of universal health care. Broadly, the bill restricts the out-of-pocket costs that count to reaching the safety net. It then further caps what will be covered towards those costs. The bill, therefore, seeks to undermine the existing arrangements in which all out-of-pocket costs for out-of-hospital Medicare services count towards the threshold and once a patient reaches the extended Medicare safety net, 80 per cent of their out-of-pocket costs are covered for out-of-hospital Medicare services, except if it is in an MBS item to which a cap applies.

The principle of Medicare—that every Australian should have access to the highest quality of care regardless of their capacity to pay—would be further diluted by this bill seeking to limit the amount patients receive back to a cap of 150 per cent of the MBS fee, less the standard MBS rebate. This bill would have damaging effects on the provision of care to several specific groups of people, whose health would be seriously diminished by the proposed changes. Importantly, these changes include this bill giving effect to the budget 2014-15 'Simplifying Medicare safety net arrangements' measures. This, as was a theme with that budget as well as this government's general approach to the health portfolio, represents a cut to the safety nets of $270 million. If you have a cut, someone is paying. We know who will be paying as a result of this exercise. The new so-called simplified safety net involves abolishing the existing original Medicare safety net and the extended Medicare safety net. Those changes mean that many patients will reach the safety net sooner but only in the
context of a $270 million cut! So Labor has really, really serious concerns about the adverse impacts that these changes will have on patients across the country.

Although the bill lowers the safety net threshold for all patients, restrictions on the out-of-pocket costs that contribute to a patient reaching the safety net are introduced and the amount patients receive back once they reach the safety net is also reduced. We are concerned about the impact that these changes will have on radiation oncology patients, patients needing ongoing access to psychiatrists, and IVF patients. Specifically, I am concerned about my own electorate of Lingiari because of the changes and the impact that they will have on those low-socioeconomic disadvantaged patients and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, particularly surrounding oncology and psychiatric services.

The latest data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare indicates that Australian patients continue to incur high out-of-pocket costs for their health care. In 2013-14, individuals spent an estimated $27.7 billion in out-of-pocket expenses on health goods and services. Out-of-pocket expenditure by individuals has grown at a faster rate than overall government expenditure on health. Over the decade, it grew by an average of 6.2 per cent a year in real terms compared with 5.3 per cent for all non-government sources. In the 2014-15 budget, the coalition announced that annual indexation of Medicare fees would be paused for two years, which was then extended to 2018. This pause in indexation has an effect on the incomes of medical practitioners who bulk-bill, as they accept the Medicare benefit as full payment for their services. If practice costs increase, fewer practitioners will opt to bulk-bill and many patients will face higher out-of-pocket expenses. That is just logical. The concern I have, in particular, is the impact it will have on Aboriginal community controlled health organisations around this country, because they will have to absorb these additional costs. Ultimately, these safety net arrangements will be manifold, and, ultimately, they will disadvantage the most disadvantaged. Health commentator Jennifer Doggett described the proposed lowering of the safety net thresholds as:

... woefully inadequate to support the increased numbers of people who will have difficulty meeting their healthcare expenses.

Anne-marie Boxall, writing for The Conversation, noted that while some patients will qualify for the safety net after spending less money:

... they will have to pay more of the high out of pocket costs than they do now. These cuts will hurt people in my electorate, as they will hurt people across the country. They will most particularly hurt those who live in regional and remote Australia, because they are the sickest of Australians. I am surprised that our friends in the National Party have tolerated these changes, because of the impact they will have on their communities. On the introduction of the bill, the AMA President Brian Owler said that the AMA opposes the changes and that:

... the sickest and most disadvantaged Australians will be hit hardest ...

Ms Ley: Rubbish.

Mr SNOWDON: The minister says, 'Rubbish.' Well, maybe the minister does not understand her own legislation.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners President, Dr Frank R Jones, expressed concern that the 150 per cent cap on safety net benefits, when coupled with the existing freeze on schedule fees, would increase costs for vulnerable groups. The minister...
will no doubt say that is rubbish as well. But clearly it is not rubbish. Medical practitioners who have an interest in looking after their patients understand it is not rubbish and understand that the people who will be hit hardest by these proposals will be the most vulnerable in the community. I am surprised that the minister should sit there and say that is rubbish, because it is clearly not.

A person in the advisers box over there is shaking his head. It will fall off if you keep shaking it, my friend! You may not like the criticism but it is valid, and you need to comprehend that the criticism is valid. You may not like the fact that people do not agree with you, but people do not agree with you. I certainly do not agree with you.

I am particularly concerned about the impact on cancer patients and psychiatric services. I will go to the psychiatric services in particular, because they relate very well to this AMA report launched today. This report is about the community appreciating the impact of the need to engage health services for the most vulnerable in our community—in this case, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. This particular document addresses those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who are incarcerated. It identifies the higher level of cognitive impairment and other mental health issues that the bulk of Australia's Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander incarcerated men and women suffer from.

That raises particular issues around the provision of services, not the least of which are psychiatric services. The question of access to services is something which I hope the minister acknowledges. We have an enormous problem with the high incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and we know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians continue to experience a life expectancy of around 10 years less than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. That is a national tragedy, as we know. I have to say—and I compliment the government—we are all involved in a bipartisan way in trying to close the gap. That is understood. But there are elements of government policy which are counterintuitive, because what they are doing is undermining that objective. This particular piece of legislation is one of those counterintuitive pieces of legislation which is counterproductive regarding the prospect of closing the gap and, in particular, in terms of addressing the health issues of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are in jail. The AMA's press release today states:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 27 per cent of all sentenced prisoners, and 29 per cent of people awaiting sentencing. They are 13 times more likely to be imprisoned than their non-Indigenous peers. The imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is rising …

That really is something that is of great concern to all of us.

The situation for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is even more distressing. In 2012 and 2013, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 10- to 17-year-olds were 17 times more likely to have been under youth supervision than their non-Indigenous peers. This is unacceptable, say the AMA. And it is unacceptable, as I am sure everyone in this chamber would acknowledge.

What this report card does, quite significantly—and this is what is important about it from my perspective as someone involved in health—is recognise that shorter life expectancy and poorer overall health for Indigenous Australians is 'most definitely linked to prison and incarceration'. They say that these health issues must be targeted as part of an integrated effort to reduce Indigenous imprisonment rates. What this means is that we have to make sure that
people get access to the services. If you make it more difficult through imposing additional costs—in this case for access to psychiatry services—then you are impeding the possibility of people with a mental illness getting proper services. The minister smiles at me.

Ms Ley interjecting—

Mr SNOWDON: 'You don't know what you're talking about,' she says. Let us be very clear. As Dr Shirley Prager, the president of the Association of Practising Psychiatrists, has pointed out:

If the new Safety Net is legislated a significant group of high need patients ... are poor and unable to work as a consequence of illness, and the intensive psychiatric help that they urgently need to re-build their lives will be lost under the new Safety Net.

Is that true or not true? I might just ask the minister to respond. I am assuming that the Association of Practising Psychiatrists know what they are talking about, and I am assuming that this association has spoken to the minister, or the minister has taken the time to try and seek their counsel. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2015 states, among other relevant data, that mental health related problems accounted for 11 per cent of all problems managed by general practitioners for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients in 2008-13.

We need to understand that we cannot work together, as we are trying to do, to effect change in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes while at the same time introduce legislation that makes it more difficult. That is all I am saying to the government—just look at it. Do not take my word; take the word of the AMA, the psychiatrists association, GPs around the country. Don't they know what they are talking about? They might not agree with you, but at least you should acknowledge their arguments and say quite clearly that you are going to address them. Frankly, I have not seen them addressed in any contributions to this debate. I hope, in the summing up, that the minister might actually address them and assuage the concerns of so many tens of thousands of Australians who will be impacted by this piece of legislation. It is not good enough. We have a responsibility in this country and in this parliament to make sure we look after all Australians, and that is why we will be opposing this legislation.

Mr RAMSEY (Grey) (12:23): When the member for Lingiari rose to his feet, he stated that Medicare was under attack. It is not under attack, Member for Lingiari. The coalition is a great supporter of Medicare. It is under great stress. Medicare will collapse under its own weight unless governments do something to alter the market signals to try to rein in the exponential growth in the Medicare benefits scheme.

In relation to the Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill, it is no secret that the incoming coalition government faced incredible difficulties that were largely left to us by the previous government. There were a lot of unfunded government policies needing urgent attention. We faced unprecedented debt and unfunded promises far into the future, courtesy of the Rudd-Gillard years. Tough times call for tough decisions—tough decisions but fair decisions. Fairness is what must be offered up by governments caring for Australia—not that you would know that, of course, from the Labor Party's position.

I am amazed that, along with the many other sensible reforms they oppose, they oppose these reforms. In fact, the Labor Party are all care and responsibility. Labor have blocked the
accumulated savings measures that they had suggested in government and not legislated; they block the savings that this government would support. Then there are the new expenditure items which Labor back. In total, the three lines of Labor Party decisions come to $59 billion between 2015-16 and 2018-19. It is not as if they have not had a go at savings. They have been brave enough to put forward a whole $5 billion worth. That leaves a gap of $54 billion. You would think that the Labor Party would support this legislation. You would think that one day they might hope to return to government and not want to have a sea of debt and deficits as far as the eye can see. You would think that, if they were not prepared to support these measures, they would support different efficiencies, but in fact it is a policy-free zone on that side of the chamber at this stage. Many oppositions in the past, and perhaps more in recent years, have elected to become a small target coming into an election. At the moment, I think you could say the Labor Party is trying to disappear up its own target.

I note a recent press release from the Minister for Health, who is in the chamber. Recently Medicare claims topped one million a day—not $1 million, but one million claims. There are only 23 million people in Australia, but there are one million claims a day. That has increased by 56 per cent over the last 10 years. Medicare is costing the taxpayer $20 billion per annum. Even more scarly, it is estimated that in 10 years time, in 2025, Medicare will cost the nation $39 billion per annum. Basically, that is a 100 per cent increase over the next 10 years. The population of Australia is growing, but it is not growing that fast. Incomes are rising—though not very much the moment—but they are certainly not going to rise by 100 per cent over the next 10 years. We also know, because the Intergenerational report tells us so, that today, when we have about five taxpayers funding each person who is a recipient of welfare, by 2050 that figure will be down to just over two. These are long-term issues that governments have to grapple with. In fact, there are more than 5,700 items on the Medicare list now, which is an increase of 50 per cent over the last 10 years.

Australia should be alarmed, because this type of growth is unsustainable. It is not the only line of government expenditure in this area of generalised welfare that is projected to rise substantially. The National Disability Insurance Scheme, which is not really costing the nation a lot at the moment because it is in the start-up phase, is estimated cost $32 billion per annum by 2025-26. Child care is expected to cost $20 billion per annum and aged care $32 billion per annum. One wonders where governments—whichever they might be, whichever side of politics they might come from—will find the necessary resources to keep those very fine and admirable arms of government funded. What we really need is a steady, methodical approach to addressing the long-term funding and technical challenges of health.

Health costs are going to keep rising; we will live longer and require more care; and new technologies will keep us alive longer to require medical assistance on another day. Health will continue to make greater and greater demands on the budget, and that is why we need careful adaption and reform. This reform is not just about savings, even though, it must be said, it does deliver some to the government. More importantly, it is about resetting the incentives in the medical system and, to be very blunt about it, to stop medical practitioners deliberately pushing customers beyond thresholds. I know we all have very high opinions of our local doctors, but probably on average they are not much better than any other breed of person and to think that people are not manipulating the system to best suit them is pushing
the bounds of credibility. We need an incentive system that affects not only the consumers but the providers as well.

At the end of the day, there is no such thing as free cover. It may seem free to the individual, but somebody is certainly paying for it. Currently there is a complex web of safety nets—the extended Medicare safety net, the original Medicare safety net and the greatest permissible gap. How is anyone supposed to understand all that? No wonder my constituents and sometimes my family and other friends throw their hands in the air and say, 'How on earth is anyone supposed to understand all this?' Unfortunately, some people understand it only too well and they know how to make the system do the very best for them in a personal sense.

Currently there are no incentives at all. Some reach the current threshold in the first month—in virtually no time at all, once the new year begins. Once they have met the threshold under the current arrangements, they pay nothing towards their Medicare health requirements at all. So there is no signal; it is in their interests and in the interests of their health providers to reach the threshold as soon as possible. Really, that is about as dumb a case of economics as anyone could design. It is a system of all care and no responsibility.

The government has developed a new safety net, one which will advantage more people but one which requires some contribution, so there is a price signal so that people understand the service does not simply fall out of the sky—that people actually have to pay for it. Increasingly we will have to ration services and to find ways to bring the exponential growth of services under control. The government has had two independent reviews; it has met widely with stakeholders and the public; and it has the broad support of industry. But still the Labor Party avoids any responsibility. This legislation will of course pass the House of Representatives, but I am very hopeful that others in the Senate will see the value in this legislation—whether it be the crossbenchers or the Greens—and step up to the plate and recognise that Australia has long-term responsibilities in this area. In other words, we must design a Medicare system that is here for the long term and we must manage the exponential growth. If you applied any of the figures of growth onto a graph, eventually they would reach the point where it goes pop—there is nothing left—and the whole program stops. If there is no more money to provide for the program or there is no more money left for growth, what do we do? Do we stop anybody else going on to Medicare? Do we start rationing services? What do we do? We cannot allow the system to get to that point. It is not possible to continue to raise the extra amounts of money in the economy when these services are growing so much faster than the population or the economy.

The new threshold for people without concession cards will reduce from $2,000 to $700 for singles and to $1,000 for families. That means that families will be able to receive support for extra out-of-pocket expenses at a lower threshold. That is a good thing for families, and it is a good thing for everybody. If you start to incur higher expenses, the Commonwealth will be by your side faster. Concession card holders thresholds will go down from $638 to $400, and so more will qualify for safety net protection. In fact, 53,000 more Australians will qualify, especially concession card holders. These are well-rounded reforms—a considered response. It is about trying to ensure the stability and the longevity of Medicare and to ensure government has the ability to meet all its other commitments—in the NDIS, in aged care, in child care. It is just so important that we get these fundamentals right.
This single little reform of Medicare is no silver bullet; it is just part of a raft of ongoing reforms that need to be done. I know the minister currently has people studying the Medicare listings to identify the ones being overused. I had a doctor come to me the other day quite indignant about the overuse of arthroscopies and a whole range of medical tests. She said to me, 'This is just simply not required medicine. It is not best practice.' While we hesitate to hurl stones or point fingers, it means that the people who are with responsibility are not doing the right thing and it is the government's responsibility to make sure that they do. The safety nets are only one little part of the Medicare system, but they are a sign that we need to provide some kind of market signal to those in the system. Certainly the proposal for co-payments that came in the first Abbott government budget was shouted down by the population at large. That has gone; it is off the agenda. If that plan is finished, we have to find other gentle and fair ways to care for Australians to ensure they have the medical services they need—not just today, but in 10 or 20 years time. We have to ensure too that the Medicare system is still strong and performing well for Australia at that time.

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (12:37): I am pleased to sum up the debate on the Health Insurance Amendment (Safety Net) Bill 2015. I thank members for their contributions to the debate. I present a slightly amended explanatory memorandum which simplifies some of the example calculations and also takes into consideration the indexing of the amount for the greatest permissible gap which occurred on 1 November. This bill amends the Health Insurance Act 1973 to remove the two existing Medicare safety nets and the greatest permissible gap and replace them with a new Medicare safety net. These amendments address issues with the current arrangements and introduce a more efficient Medicare safety net that will strengthen the system for patients and medical practices into the future. Most importantly, the new Medicare safety net addresses issues of fairness. More Australians will be able to access safety net benefits, many of them for the first time. The reduced threshold for access will see an additional 80,000 concession card holders able to access safety net benefits.

Unfortunately, constant chopping and changing of the safety net has seen it become overly complex and failing to support those who need it most. In fact, Labor's shadow health spokesperson admitted on Sky News recently that it has become too complex and it does need to be simplified. I do also ask Labor to justify how in opposition they can continue to support a system that pays patients in some of Australia's wealthiest suburbs an average of $60 of safety net benefits per capita versus just $2 per capita in more disadvantaged areas. The member for Lingiari, whose commitment to Indigenous Australians will certainly never be questioned by me, raised in detail in his remarks the circumstances of Indigenous Australians. We all agree in this place that closing the gap in Indigenous life expectancy should be one of the highest priorities of any health minister, but I do note from the table of distribution of Medicare safety net benefits that I have provided the opposition spokesperson with, divided into SA4 regions, that the North Sydney and Hornsby region has $23 million of safety net benefits in the last financial year and the member for Lingiari's electorate, specifically the Northern Territory outback, has $120,000 of Medicare safety net benefits—$23 million versus $120,000. I hope that gives an indication of the determination of this government to address the issue of fairness in the context of the Medicare safety net.
In government Labor criticised the current safety net arrangements and unsuccessfully tried to fix the very problem that we are here trying to address today. Labor claims to be the party of the fairness test but when it comes to scoring a cheap political point they have no problem with disadvantaging our most disadvantaged. Let me be quite clear about this. Contrary to Labor's claims, and as the evidence of their own reviews show, the people accessing the safety net are by and large from Australia's more well-off areas. Those from the most disadvantaged areas rarely access the safety net, because they never pay sufficient out-of-pocket costs to meet the very high thresholds. That is principally because Australia enjoys a very high and growing bulk-billing rate. This bill will address this very issue of inequality, lowering the threshold and ensuring more Australians will access safety net benefits, many for the first time.

Labor has also made some quite outlandish claims about out-of-pocket expenses. Rather than blithely mouthing the inflated numbers provided to them by vested interests, let us look at the facts. In radiation oncology, more than 80 per cent of all radiation oncology services are charged at MBS fees or less. If current billing practices continue, these patients will not experience any appreciable changes under the new arrangements. A standard course of treatment is defined by industry as 20 treatments of three-field radiotherapy. If this treatment were charged at the 2014 average fee, a patient would have a charge of $11,433. Under the extended Medicare safety net, the patient would receive $8,807 in Medicare benefits including safety net benefits, leaving out-of-pocket costs of $2,626. Under the new arrangements, for this course of treatment a patient would receive $8,784 in Medicare benefits including safety net benefits, leaving an out-of-pocket cost of $2,649—a difference of $23 for a standard course of treatment, a far cry from the hysterical $10,000 or $12,000 which has been mentioned by those opposite in the course of this debate. A similar pattern emerges in IVF. Labor overinflates the costs. The member for Ballarat said the average out-of-pocket costs for IVF were $4,000 rising to $10,000 or $15,000 under the government's proposal. Once again let me present the facts. The average out-of-pocket costs are $2,720 for the initial IVF cycle and $5,085 for a second cycle. Under the new safety net proposal these would rise to an average $2,730 and $5,938 respectively. Yes there is a small difference, but not $11,000 as Labor would like to have us believe. This is true in every example Labor gives—an inflation of the out-of-pocket costs or the number of people impacted.

Let me try one more time to appeal to the common sense of my political opponents on the other side of the chamber. The new Medicare safety net will continue to provide additional financial support to those with high out-of-pocket costs for their out-of-hospital medical services. It will continue to be a benefit that is paid automatically once an annual threshold is met. The new Medicare safety net will be much simpler for patients and health professionals to understand. For the first time patients will have some prospect of being able to calculate their out-of-pocket costs in this streamlined safety net approach. The introduction of accumulation caps and universal benefit caps reduces the incentive for some doctors and other health providers to charge excessive fees. Labor's ad hoc approach to capping has proved not to work in reviews undertaken by their government. Their approach allows creative billing in order to game the safety net system. That is why it is essential that we do not vary the caps from one MBS item or condition to another.
As I have said, the eligibility thresholds for the new Medicare safety net are significantly lower for most people, meaning that more patients will benefit. For families and single people who are concession card holders, the threshold will be reduced from $638 in 2015 to $400. For families without concession cards, the threshold will be reduced from $2,000 in 2015 to $1,000. For the first time, single people without concession cards will be placed on a lower threshold than families. Their threshold will be reduced from $2,000 in 2013 to just $700. This is to acknowledge the fact that they are required to meet their health costs on their own.

The new safety net will also address some of the operational and administrative issues relating to the program. The Department of Human Services will be writing to a large number of people to advise them of their safety net entitlements. A number of different ways to facilitate this communication about the safety net will be introduced, including web-based applications to allow people to register their families. This will be more convenient for patients and will build consumer awareness about the program.

There will also be other administrative changes that aim to assist families undergoing difficult times, such as divorce and separation. The definition of a dependent child will be broadened to include children between 16 and 25 who are temporarily unable to study due to ill health. The definition of a spouse will also be broadened to include couples that are separated by illness or infirmity. For example, where one member of a couple is in a nursing home, the new safety net allows the couple to be recognised as a safety net family. This directly addresses some of the inequity that has been raised by consumer groups and patients in the past. These initiatives all serve to make the new safety net fairer for all Australians.

In summary, this bill will introduce a new Medicare safety net that more closely aligns with the original purpose of the safety net arrangements. It will continue to direct assistance to people who have ongoing costs for out-of-hospital care, such as those with chronic conditions. This comprehensive change to the safety net is an essential component of ensuring that we have an accessible Medicare system that is affordable for the individual and the community—a Medicare safety net that is fairer for all Australians. If Labor are as serious about the concept of fairness as they claim, they should support this measure unamended.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Craig Kelly): The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this the honourable member for Ballarat has moved as an amendment that all words after 'That' be omitted with a view to substituting other words. The immediate question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Question negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question now is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided. [12:52]

(The Deputy Speaker—Mr Kelly)

Ayes ................. 78
Noes .................. 56
Majority .............. 22

AYES
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Andrews, KL
Baldwin, RC
Billson, BF
Bishop, BK
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Question agreed to.
Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care) (12:58): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (12:58): I present the explanatory memorandum to this bill and move:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015 to amend the Defence Act 1903. In 2013 the government made an election commitment to deliver a first principles review of Defence. The report on this review was released on 1 April 2015. The review determined that, while Defence has an outstanding operational record, it is clear that there needs to be a better balance between operational excellence and organisational effectiveness. To achieve this better balance the government has begun one of the most significant reforms to ensure Defence delivers the capabilities we need to ensure Australia is safe and secure.

The government engaged a number of prominent and experienced individuals to conduct the 'first principles' review. The review made 76 recommendations, 75 of which were agreed or agreed in principle by the government. The coalition and the Defence senior leadership are committed to delivering on all of these recommendations. This requires Defence to move from its current inefficient federated approach into a single integrated organisation that delivers enhanced joint capability.
A key recommendation of the review was to establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top-level decision making in Defence. As part of the focus of the joint force, this review highlighted the need to update legislation to formally acknowledge the key role played by the Chief of Defence Force, the CDF, and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, the VCDF, in a modern Australian Defence Force.

The bill amends the Defence Act to formally recognise the authority of the CDF and the VCDF so that the CDF will have full command of the Australian Defence Force by removing the legislative limitations on the CDF's command power. The VCDF will be recognised as the deputy of the CDF. This amendment will clarify that the VCDF has command responsibility as well as administrative responsibilities in relation to the Defence Force, as directed by the CDF, and that the service chiefs will be explicitly subject to the direction of the CDF.

A legislative amendment removing their statutory authority will ensure absolute clarity of the CDF's command and authority. This bill seeks to make some other changes to streamline the legislative foundation of the Australian Defence Force. In addition to strengthening the command roles of the CDF and VCDF the bill also streamlines the statutory treatment of the components of the Australian Defence Force in the Defence legislation, repealing the Naval Defence Act 1910 and the Air Force Act 1923, incorporating substantive provision of these acts into the Defence Act 1903.

These provisions include the recognition of the Regular Army, the permanent Air Force and the permanent Navy together with the reserve components of each of the services and the ability of the Governor-General to call out the Australian Defence Force reserves, under certain circumstances. These circumstances include wartime, peacekeeping operations, support to community activities of national or international significance, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Finally, the bill also consolidates the statutory treatment of the Defence Force Cadets, making provision for the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force cadets in a new part of the Defence Act. The bill also modernises the existing provisions to ensure the relationship between Defence Force Cadets and the Defence community is interlinked. The bill also makes it clear that the Defence Force Cadets are a volunteer, community based youth-development organisation. These provisions include the stipulation that cadets and their instructors and officers are volunteers and not members of the Australian Defence Force, not officials for the purpose of the public governance and performance act 2014, and are administered by the CDF.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:03): I rise today to speak on the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015 and to express my and Labor's support. Labor supports the bill that enacts certain recommendations from the first principles review and will, ultimately, instil a stronger whole-of-organisation approach within Defence.

Our support for this legislation is in line with our often expressed position that we will take a bipartisan approach on national security matters when we are satisfied it is in the national interest. The first principles review was released on 1 April this year and made 76 recommendations that it considered would make Defence the most effective and efficient organisation to enable it to deliver the outcomes desired by government. The first principles review made a range of recommendations about roles and responsibilities and structures...
within Defence, with an overriding goal of achieving a more unified and integrated organisation that has a stronger strategy-led approach and clearer leadership arrangements.

The primary purpose of this bill is to give legislative force to one of the recommendations of the review—namely, that the legislative changes I am quoting here formally recognise the authority of the Chief of the Defence Force and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, including removing the statutory authority of the service chiefs. While removing their statutory authority, the bill ensures recognition of the service chiefs as an integral part of each of their respective services. This bill also introduces a number of measures intended to streamline the legislative foundation of the Australian Defence Force. They are: to recognise the Australian Defence Force as an entity, to clarify the status of the Australian Defence Force Cadets and to recognise the role of Australian Defence Force reserves.

Labor supports the provisions of this bill that are designed to implement two specific recommendations of the first principles review. The first clearly establishes the role of the Chief of the Defence Force as the commander of the Australian Defence Force. The removal of the statutory authority of the service chiefs is also reflective of a broader longstanding trend towards a more holistic integrated approach within Defence, with a greater focus on a joint force—one Defence—rather than three distinct service organisations operating in isolation. We are aware that some in the Defence community regard the changes to the role of the Chief of the Defence Force and the statutory authority of the service chiefs as undesirable. In particular, some have expressed concern that these changes could affect the service chiefs' capacity to do their jobs, including their right of access to the Defence minister.

We have a bipartisan approach to national security issues if we are convinced they are in the national interest. In satisfying ourselves that the proposed changes are in the national interest, Labor sought and received assurances from Defence's leadership that these changes codify existing arrangements in Defence. We also sought and received public assurances from all three service chiefs that they are supportive of the changes. We have been reassured that this legislative change makes no substantive difference to the very real and continuing traditions—and very proud traditions—of each of the services of Navy, Army and Air Force.

While we are supportive of the bill, we note that some of the proposed changes, though minor, will require careful handling. For example, one of the consequential changes to the Defence Housing Australia Act removes the ability of the service chiefs to each appoint one member to the Defence Housing Australia Advisory Committee. Under the new arrangements, the CDF will instead have the power to appoint three people to the committee. It will be important to ensure that in implementing this change appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that each of the three services continues to have input into the process. I want to underscore the point that we have each of the three services providing advice on the Defence Housing Australia Advisory Committee.

The bill also implements a second recommendation of the first principles review—that is, to amend the Navigation Act to allow for consolidation of geospatial information functions into the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation. We have no objection in principle to these two recommendations and we offer our bipartisan support for the bill. But, as I mentioned at the start of my speech, this introduces a number of measures that in all but two cases are not directly related to specific recommendations of the first principles review. As a result of this bill, relevant parts of the Naval Defence Act 1910 and the Air Force Act 1923
are being incorporated into the Defence Act 1903, and these acts are being repealed as they will no longer be necessary. This is intended to streamline the legislative framework for the ADF and reinforce the concept of 'one Defence' as opposed to separately administered services. It is in many ways a continuation of the long-term trend towards a more collaborative, integrated and joint Australian Defence Force. 'Joint' is the direction in which the ADF is going. This in a way just reinforces and underscores the approach that has already been rolling out for many years.

As a result of the repealing of the Air Force Act and the Naval Defence Act, this bill incorporates flexible service arrangements across the ADF, with the CDF able to make or appropriately delegate flexible service determinations. This is incredibly important. It builds on the work that Labor did in government, as part of Project Suakin, to deliver a contemporary workforce with a range of full-time and part-time service categories and options—to deliver a flexible workforce that reflects the modern reality of the working environment today for men and for women.

The bill also proposes changes that will see the legislative coverage of the Defence Reserves amalgamated into a single Defence Act. This is a welcome step and continues, in legislative terms, the integration of the reserves into the 'total force' concept that Labor initiated through Project Suakin and Plan Beersheba.

The bill also provides a clearer definition for ADF cadets, by establishing new provisions as part of the Defence Act, which we welcome—I particularly welcome that. These provisions emphasise that the cadets is a volunteer-based youth development organisation, that cadets are not part of the Australian Defence Force and that instructors are not members of the Australian Defence Force by virtue of their role. The bill will also require the preparation of an annual report on the cadets by the Chief of the Defence Force.

There is a lot of confusion about this, and I speak from experience here. For the 10 years before I entered parliament I consulted with Defence across a broad range of areas, primarily in what was then the Defence Materiel Organisation, but in a broad range of areas—the environment and equity and diversity areas—with the secretary. I also had the great pleasure of consulting with the Australian Defence Force Cadets organisation and, most importantly, the Cadet Policy Branch. I was with the branch for three or four years, and it was a great joy, particularly meeting with the cadets and seeing how participation in cadets actually transforms the lives of young Australians. It gives them enormous skills—it builds their self-esteem, gives them discipline, develops their teamwork skills, builds their confidence and gives them an understanding of structure. I remember that we did a surveys of both the cadets and the staff. I will never forget a little guy I interviewed in Nowra. In the interviews we conducted as part of the surveys he said that prior to his joining the cadets he was a straight-D and -E student and after joining the cadets he became a straight-A and -B student. That transformation occurred in just one year as a result of the time he spent with the cadets.

One thing I was disturbed by at Nowra was the fact that, for some of the young people who came to cadets every Saturday, the hot meal they had in the mess that day was quite often the first hot meal they had all week. It just underscores the vital role the cadets play in building self-esteem and self-confidence as a youth development organisation, and also just in terms of providing a sense of wellbeing. It provides support and advice and, for some of them, food in their belly.
I really enjoyed my time working in the Cadet Policy Branch. As a result of working there for that time, having travelled right across Australia—to Thursday Island, to Nhulunbuy, to Bamaga and various other parts of Australia—meeting with cadets and seeing what had happened with the Indigenous cadet program, I know there is a lot of confusion, particularly amongst cadet staff, about their role in the ADFC—the Navy, Army and Air Force Cadets. There was confusion about what their role was, if they were employed by the ADF and how it all worked. That is why I welcome the fact that this has finally been clarified. It has taken a while; it would have been nice if it had happened sooner, but I am very grateful that it has now been clarified.

I am also very grateful that the message of this being a youth development organisation has been underscored through the review, because there is a misperception among some in the community—and among some of the staff, too—that this is essentially training junior generals and future soldiers. Yes, there is a very strong pathway between the Australian Defence Force Cadets and moving into ADFA and RMC. So that pathway is there. You will find that a number of the top brass in Defence and also senior civilians had been cadets when they were younger. But it is not designed to train junior soldiers; it is a youth development organisation that gives cadets a broad range of skills, like with other youth organisations. The beauty about this one, however, is that you get access to the base experience and the mess experience. You also get access to going into the field and eating ration packs. There are some unique benefits from being part of a youth development organisation that has a connection with the Australian Defence Force. So I really welcome the changes that are being made on the Australian Defence Force Cadet front, because it does clarify the positioning of the organisation and the positioning of staff. There has been a great deal of confusion on that.

Labor and I also particularly support the introduction of an annual report on the cadets from the CDF. That will enhance accountability. What I found when I was working with the Cadet Policy Branch was that the Navy cadets, Army cadets and Air Force cadets all had different approaches—and naturally—to rolling out this youth development program. But, of course, in this modern era we must have a uniform set of regulations and guidelines for how we actually go about that. I recall that quite often the Cadet Policy Branch would implement a particular approach and then there would be a reluctance by some in one of the services or two of the areas for it to be applied across their organisation, or there would be a degree of argument which would end up causing delay. It is fantastic that now there is a recognition that it is essentially one Australian Defence Force Cadet organisation, with one approach, and that the accountability for that will be through one annual report from the Chief of the Defence Force.

The bill also puts into legislation the nature of the employment relationship between the government and the ADF, which is currently covered by regulation 117. The nature of the ADF employment relationship and the unique nature of military service has not, until now, been expressed in regulation. This bill seeks to enshrine this relationship in legislation through the Defence Act. The relevant provision states that no civil contract of any kind is created with the Crown or the Commonwealth in connection with the member's service in the Defence Force. We believe that such an important item should be in legislation in the interest of transparency. It is one more sign of the unique nature of military service.
While discussing the first principles review and this government's response, it would be remiss of me not to mention the cuts to civilian personnel. There are recommendations about it in the review. Labor is always supportive of well-directed reform and efficiency measures, but such reforms should not be used as an excuse for yet more job cuts in Defence. This government has already slashed a massive 2,406 civilian jobs from Defence.

In April, when the first principles review was released, the then Defence minister flagged that the implementation of the review could lead to the loss of at least another 1,000 jobs. This is something that Labor has been highly critical of, as civilian Defence personnel are a vital element to the overall success of our military operations and our capability. Just this month we learned of more job cuts at the Department of Defence, with Defence's executive level workforce to be slashed by 10 per cent in the latest round of redundancies. Some of Australia's most highly skilled and highly specialised federal public servants are civilians in the Defence department. They include project managers, engineers, scientists and IT professionals. I am really concerned that this huge reduction in staff at the Department of Defence has the potential to significantly erode capability. I am particularly concerned about losing significant national security capability and a specialist skill set from the public sector.

This government is determined to make short-sighted cuts at a time when Australia should be investing in critical Defence roles. Losing such large numbers of staff could increase the risk of higher project costs and schedule overruns, and it could risk significant damage to workplace morale. I have been calling on the government—as I have been since I became the member for Canberra, and particularly since this government came in—to use this opportunity to go back on those plans for cuts and to explain how it plans to maintain capability after yet another round of job cuts.

In conclusion, while we support this bill, we will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the first principles review, particularly when it comes to job losses. We are pleased to support this bill which will ultimately instil a stronger whole-of-organisation approach within Defence. The bill updates the Defence Act to clarify the control and administration of Defence in line with the first principles review's first principle—that is, that Defence should have clear authorities and accountabilities that align with resources. In doing so, the bill seeks to ensure that the Defence Act is brought up to date with the way Defence is actually controlled and administered today. We believe it will go some way towards achieving 'One Defence'.

I commend the bill to the House.

Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (13:21): I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important bill, the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. I know that the constituents in my electorate of Tangney are particularly concerned with matters pertaining to our national defence and security. The importance of strategic planning, and readiness has really been brought home to many in this country with the horrific images we have seen with the Paris terrorist attacks recently. It is a cliche but still holds truth that if one fails to plan then one should also plan to fail. It is reassuring to know that this coalition government puts national security and defence at the very highest priority. That is why under the leadership of previous Prime Minister Abbott the government commissioned the first principles review in 2014. The focus of the review was on ensuring that Defence is fit for purpose and is able to
respond to future challenges and deliver against its outputs with the minimum resources necessary.

What we observe today is a world that is changing: the face of terror—the challenge—is changing. The threat is real, growing and ever-present, and this bill demonstrates an agile response to those challenges, very much like the way Prime Minister Turnbull responds to and addresses the changing and challenging economic environment we encounter. Agility is the operative paradigm for our age. This is an outlook and attitude that each of us must become attuned to going forward. Being agile is an approach and a way of thinking that in effect permits systemic review of all decisions, past and present. Here it is important to note that changing course is not always a sign of weakness. Specifically, I would like to give an example of one program, the Joint Strike Fighter program. The Joint Strike Fighter program was a result of a Howard-era decision, and it has been carried on by successive governments—a decision made in different times for a world with different needs. We should critically review why we are still staying the course. There is no nobility or value in blind faith or loyalty—just ignorance. The new government of Justin Trudeau in Canada has reviewed and cancelled that country's participation in the Joint Strike Fighter program. Should our nation go down that road of nonparticipation, we would not be the first or only country to exit the program. There are a plethora of reasons we should do so today, and many of those reasons can be found in the past.

In 2002 we decided, without any capability requirement or analysis that would compare various tenders, to switch off all other options and get 100 Joint Strike Fighters to achieve initial operational capability in 2012-13. I do not see any Joint Strike Fighters in service in Australia today. No: the initial operational capability is now set for 2020, the cost is up, and we are no longer talking about 100 JSFs; we are now talking about 72. This begs the question: if 72 Joint Strike Fighters can do the job, why go to 100 in the first place? That is a waste of money. We should be purchasing only what we actually require. The simple fact is that the initial operational capability, in being eight years late, means that we are getting an aircraft that is even closer to obsolescence before we even get it in service. The aircraft is more expensive than we bargained for. We are getting less than three quarters of what we were initially going to get. And remember, this capability is arriving eight years late, which means it is going to extend out longer, so we are going to have obsolescent aircraft for longer and have fewer of them. And the aerodynamic performance is not within a bull's roar of even the threshold requirement, never mind the objective requirements it had. In fact, its performance is similar to that of the 50-year-old F-4 Phantom, which was known to not be particularly aerodynamically capable in its day.

Yet we persist. Shouldn't we be asking questions, looking at options, rather than buying at the behest of the US and Lockmart? At what point do we question? To give a ridiculous scenario, let's say it gets to the point where we can afford only one Joint Strike Fighter, and it will reach initial operational capability in 2030. Should we be asking the question then? At what stage are we going to go about looking at getting the capability that we require? At what stage are we going to go back to first principles and say, 'This is the capability we require; let's compare contenders and get what is best for Australia?'

Take cost, where Lockheed Martin and Defence were assuring us that each Joint Strike Fighter would cost considerably less than $100 million. In fact, the price is well above $150
million, pretty much lineball with what independent experts at Air Power Australia said. And take schedule: Air Power Australia said it would be years late. Defence and Lockheed Martin assured parliament—and I remember being here in 2006 during these assurances—that initial operational capability would be achieved in 2013. I do not see any combat-capable Joint Strike Fighters anywhere on the planet, never mind in squadron service in Australia. Regarding aero-propulsive performance, Air Power Australia was absolutely on the money, and Lockheed Martin and Defence were assuring parliament that it would at least meet its turn and acceleration performance. Incorrect decisions have been made on numerous occasions, such as when three US services purchased the F-4 Phantom without a gun because dogfights were deemed to be obsolete and it was all going to be missiles. It sounds very similar to the arguments supporting the Joint Strike Fighter. Vietnam proved the fallacy of that argument then. In fact, the end of dogfighting has been suggested for more than half the history of air combat.

The reality, when fighting peer threats, has always come back to bite. The other fact is that most JSF purchasers have other aircraft they will use for their air superiority role, but not us. Potential-threat nations are objectively testing—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Craig Kelly): The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (13:29): Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, 114 years ago in 1901—the first year of Federation—the federal member for Coolgardie, Hugh Mahon, moved a motion calling for a royal commission into the treatment of Aboriginal people in WA's criminal justice system. That motion was never debated but Mr Mahon's point was well made.

More than 100 years later, the royal commission he called for is needed more than ever. In January 2008, WA saw the appalling death of respected Warburton Aboriginal elder Mr Ward, who died while being transported hundreds of kilometres in the back of a prison van in 50-degree heat with no air conditioning or ventilation. On 2 August 2014, a 22-year-old Aboriginal woman, Ms Dhu, died horribly in police custody in South Hedland after being imprisoned for $3,000 in unpaid fines. As CCTV footage aired at the coronial inquest in Perth yesterday graphically showed, while Ms Dhu was moaning in pain and asking for help, police dragged her out of the police lockup by the legs, like a carcass, and tossed her into the back of the van. Police and staff at Hedland Health Campus dismissed her complaints, accusing her of suffering withdrawals from drug use or 'faking it', whereas she was, in fact, having a heart attack brought on by septicemia and pneumonia caused by a broken rib. The footage of the last dreadful moments of Ms Dhu's life will not be released publicly because it is too distressing.

This incident, and many, many others, reveal serious issues with our policing, justice and health systems. There has already been one royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody, in 1987, but very few of the more than 330 recommendations have been implemented. This is an ongoing blight on our nation.
Solomon Electorate: Palmerston Men's Shed

**Mrs GRIGGS** (Solomon) (13:31): I rise today to speak about the great work that the Palmerston Men's Shed does in my electorate of Solomon. Earlier this month I visited the Men's Shed and had the opportunity to meet with the president, Robert Craven, and the secretary, Leigh Travis, as well as some of the other members. I was able to see the great contribution this community organisation makes with the local community. These guys are making bird houses, salt and pepper shakers, and bowls. They are even making a big trailer. They sell most of their goods at the Coolalinga Rural Markets to make themselves sustainable.

The Palmerston Men's Shed is a community workshop area for men to gather, to develop skills and to undertake different activities. As we all know, essentially the Men's Shed is about increasing the wellbeing of men by fostering social connection and increasing their self-esteem. The Palmerston Men's Shed plays a very important role in our community by keeping men active and contributing to their mental health and physical wellbeing. I encourage all Darwin and Palmerston residents to become a part of this great organisation by either getting your men involved or contributing by way of donation. For more details on the Palmerston Men's Shed, people can contact my office or they can have a look on my website where there are connections to the Palmerston Men's Shed.

Moreton-Rankin Unity Shield

**Mr PERRETT** (Moreton) (13:33): I rise to speak about the second Moreton-Rankin Unity Shield. It is good that the member for Rankin is here to hear this speech. We are not quite the Sheffield Field but the Moreton-Rankin Unity Shield, where the Muslims in Moreton take on the Muslims from the member for Rankin's community. He won last year. This year it was a close fought match, but Moreton amassed 109 runs and Rankin 42 runs—I think that puts us in front! Twelve players were drawn from the Holland Park Mosque, the Kuraby Mosque and other communities. I am looking forward to some Bosnian cricket players and Indonesian cricket players coming from those mosques next year. As Ali Kadri, the captain of the Moreton side said, 'It's all about people coming together and having a bit of fun.' Six batting pairs all faced three overs, and I am proud to say that my duo and the member for Rankin's duo did not go negative, because if you get out you take five runs off. We had great fun with the community coming together to show that as an Australian community we can do lots of wonderful things. Thank you to the people who provided the food, the shade and the support throughout the match. It was played in great spirit throughout. I am glad that the Moreton-Rankin Unity Shield will be held by Moreton for the next 12 months, and I look forward to the battle next year.

Moore Electorate: Sorrento Surf Lifesaving Club

**Mr GOODENOUGH** (Moore) (13:34): Sorrento Surf Lifesaving Club is planning for a major redevelopment of its clubhouse to accommodate the steady growth in its membership to 1,638 members and to support the development of junior and youth members. The club has since outgrown its present facilities which were first occupied in 1978 and are beginning to develop maintenance and life-cycle issues, as well as noncompliance with occupational health and safety standards.
The estimated $7 million project scope includes a 790-square-metre extension to the existing building to provide adequate administration facilities, greater capacity for equipment storage, training rooms, change room amenities and recreational areas. The exterior plans also include a 490-square-metre extension to outdoor areas, including a courtyard, a deck and wash-down areas for surf equipment, with integrated landscaping, car parking and dual-use pathways to facilitate public access.

Last week, club president Rob Doherty provided my state colleague Hon. Peter Katsambanis MLC, who is a local resident, and me with a briefing on the project with the objective of securing federal, state and local government funding for the project. Together we aim to raise the public profile of the project and encourage local businesses and the corporate sector to sponsor the building upgrade.

**Moreton-Rankin Unity Shield**

Dr CHALMERS (Rankin) (13:36): There was a moment in the Moreton-Rankin Unity cricket game a couple of Sundays ago where I thought I was facing a young Curtly Ambrose, but instead I was actually facing the member for Moreton, who put in one of the greatest spells of bowling I have ever seen in my life. As much as I wish it was otherwise, his was one of the best overs. I want to congratulate him and his Moreton team for evening the series at one all after Rankin's one-run victory in the inaugural game last year. This year their huge 110-run target off 18 overs was far too much for my boys to chase down. Most of those runs were probably scored off my one over. The game pits Muslim players from Rankin mosques against players from Moreton mosques and it is all about building understanding and a spirit of unity. On a serious note, it was the day after the Paris attacks, and so we began with a minute's silence for the victims.

I am so proud of the way the game was played, and the spirit and dedication shown by every single person involved. I thank the member for Moreton and his co-captain, Ali Kadri. I thank my co-captain, Ahsan Asadi; all the players; the umpires, who donated their time; St Laurie's, for letting us use the field at Runcorn; and all the volunteers and staff who made it work—who cooked the barbecue and did all the legwork to make it such a terrific day. It is fast becoming the key contest of the Australian summer! I really look forward to lifting the shield next year.

**Canning Electorate: Sport**

Mr HASTIE (Canning) (13:37): I rise today to speak on the inaugural City of Mandurah Sports Awards 2015, which I recently had the pleasure of attending in my electorate of Canning. These awards celebrate individuals and organisations that have made a significant contribution to their sport or have had strong sporting achievements. They also boast the diversity of sports available in the City of Mandurah, from rugby to bodyboarding to hockey.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Senior Sportsperson of the Year, bodyboarder Jordyn Ihms, who is currently in Chile competing in the ISA World Bodyboard Championship; and Junior Sportsperson of the Year, hockey player Marshal Puzey. Other award winners included Mathew Calkin, who won the Sportsperson with a Disability Award and travelled to America to compete for Australia in baseball at the Special Olympics. The Team of the Year Award went to the Mandurah City Football Club, who won the division 1 state league championship. Club of the Year was handed out to Mandurah Surf Life Saving Club for their continuing
incredible work patrolling Mandurah beaches. Female Club Person of the Year, which is awarded to a volunteer, was won by Lisa Abbott; and the male Club Person of the Year award was presented to Ken Phillips.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all of the recipients and I look forward to hearing about their future successes.

**Domestic and Family Violence**

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:38): I rise today to congratulate this place and other parliaments around our country that are bringing domestic violence against women and children out of the shadows on this important day, White Ribbon Day. It feels like an important point in time, like we cannot go back from this point; we must keep shining a light on this scourge. It feels like the world is waking up—but it is important to remember the women and children who will never wake up and those who live in fear and terror in their own homes.

It is also important to act. To quote a stranger on Twitter this morning: 'Shut up with the high rhetoric and just fund the services.' I echo that call in this chamber today. I commend also those unions who started the work on domestic violence leave and have seen it introduced into EBAs already.

I commend Bill Shorten and my colleagues in the federal Labor Party for the announcement today about domestic violence leave. It is another action that will bring this issue out into the light. The impact will be substantial if this is brought into workplace law. In businesses and workplaces across the country, when asked, 'Why is she not at work?' the answers will be, 'Because her controlling partner has physically abused her,' or 'Because she has to go to court.' It will shine a light every day on this issue in every workplace where someone is a victim of domestic violence.

**Corangamite Electorate: Innovation**

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (13:40): I rise to celebrate another investment in jobs and advanced manufacturing in Corangamite, this time under our $29.5 million Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund, or GRIIF. While the previous, Labor government announced GRIFF, every single cent of the $15 million allocated by the Commonwealth has been proudly delivered by our government.

It was terrific to be joined by the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, Christopher Pyne, in Geelong last week when we announced that some of our region's most innovative manufacturers have been awarded another $11.2 million in grants. This will create another 145 new jobs, bringing the total number of jobs delivered by the GRIIF over two years to 840.

We toured Jeff Sykes & Associates, a cutting-edge manufacturer of high-end rowing equipment, a great company in Geelong; and AKD Softwoods, another great company, which received $3.5 million. I also want to mention the other grant recipients: Air Radiators, Caronlab, The Edge Glass, Irrewarra Sourdough and MC Herd.

I do want to acknowledge the important contributions of Alcoa and Ford, at $5 million each, and the $4.5 million coming from the state. It is regrettable, however, that the Victorian government is playing games with $7.5 million it promised but did not deliver. Unfortunately,
it has not handed over that money. It needs to do so, because it is jeopardising jobs. That money has to be handed over ASAP.

**Domestic and Family Violence**

Ms BURKE (Chisholm) (13:42): Today, 25 November, is White Ribbon Day, Australia's observation of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The campaign works through primary prevention initiatives, which raise awareness by education and programs with youth, schools, workplaces and the broader community.

On average, one woman is killed every week as a result of intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill health in Australian women aged 15 to 44. One in three women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by someone known to them. The cost of violence against women to the Australian economy is estimated to be $15.6 billion per annum. These are frightening statistics.

Labor has committed to delivering a $70 million package that ensures that those suffering family violence can access critical services when they need them. It includes $47 million to front-line legal services, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services, to ensure people experiencing family violence get legal support and do not have to go to court alone; an initial investment of $15 million in Safe at Home grants to help people affected by family violence to stay in their own homes; and an $8 million investment in mapping perpetrator activities, to look at the interactions between family violence, law enforcement, justice, child protection and related systems to help identify opportunities to prevent violence through information-sharing; and the announcement yesterday by Bill Shorten of a commitment to five days domestic violence leave.

I agree with Rosie Batty, Australian of the Year, who said of family violence:

This is an entrenched epidemic that we've lived with since time began, so we've got a long way to go. But I do believe the tide is turned. It's no longer a subject that only occurs behind closed doors.

This contribution was written by Tara Wainer, who is doing work experience in my office. (Time expired)

**Page Electorate: Hiscock, Mr Jacob**

Mr HOGAN (Page) (13:43): I would like to acknowledge Jake Hiscock today. Jake is a local Lismore mechanic, for Lismore Car Repairs. This year, Jake received the apprentice of the year award from Wollongbar TAFE. As part of this award, Jake was nominated to compete in the WorldSkills Competition in August of this year. The WorldSkills Competition gives apprentices like Jake the opportunity to showcase their trade and skill on a regional, national and, hopefully, international level. Jake competed in the regional competition in Kingscliff, where he took home the gold medal. Thanks to his hard work and dedication, Jake is now one of only 10 mechanics going to compete in the national WorldSkills finals in Melbourne. What makes Jake's story truly inspirational is that he had to overcome hurdles through his school life. His last three years in high school were very tough ones as he watched his sister Danielle battle with leukaemia. Unfortunately, Danielle lost her battle in December 2011—the same year that Jake was meant to complete his final year of high school. I would like to congratulate Jake on his success so far and wish him all the best in Melbourne. I know
his mum, Tanya, is very proud of him. I congratulate Terri McPherson and the whole team at Lismore Car Repairs.

**Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industry**

**Ms MacTIERNAN** (Perth) (13:45): The Parliamentary Friends of Aussie Fashion police are out in force today. They are checking labels to make sure that we have been buying local goods and supporting local designers. I am pleased that I am 'on song' today—sporting an outfit not only designed in my electorate but manufactured there as well. It is more proof that Australian manufacturing is not dead. Tokay is a vertically integrated fashion house run by a mother and daughter team, Jennifer Stefanelli and Jessica McLagan. Extraordinarily, Jessica is actually a mechanical engineer who decided that she was going to join forces with her mother to take the business further. Tokay has been designing and manufacturing its clothing in Western Australia for 16 years and specialises in ladies' occasion wear. They really do produce some stunning, distinctive, beautifully-cut garments which they sell in their three retail locations, including on the iconic and fabled Beaufort Street strip in my electorate. They employ 12 people across their business. I am also pleased to say that my shoes, which you cannot see, are also designed and manufactured in Perth, by the longstanding WA manufacturing icon Benelli, which produces handmade and individually tailored shoes at off-the-shelf prices. These businesses are denying the convention that we cannot manufacture clothing and footwear—(Time expired)

**Domestic and Family Violence**

**Mr HOWARTH** (Petrie) (13:46): This year we have seen the issue of domestic violence rise to the top of local and national media and to the top of Australians' minds. All people should be able to live free from violence. I will say that again: all people should be able to live free from violence. However, today, on White Ribbon Day, we are taking a stand against violence against women. Thank you to the community organisations in my electorate that support women and children, particularly Encircle and Zonta. Earlier this year, we, as the federal government, had great success in ensuring that Encircle's funding was extended for another two years, thanks to the great work that they do. With the help of the Minister for Women and of our local community, we managed to raise over $3,000 for Zonta projects as well. Both of these organisations have held events in the electorate of Petrie today. Well done to them.

I think of one of the latest abuse cases that has hit the headlines—a 23-year-old male found guilty of shooting his partner's seven-year-old child in the head. Yesterday, there was a story on the front page of *The Courier-Mail* in which it was reported that another man was accused of an horrific crime against a child as well. It is a disgrace that, in this year alone, 78 women have been murdered in family violence across Australia since January. Some of these murders were committed violently in public places. I say to the men in my electorate: let's protect the women in our lives. If you need help, call 1800RESPECT.

**McEwen Electorate: 2015 Whittlesea Show**

**Mr MITCHELL** (McEwen—Second Deputy Speaker) (13:48): As you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker, the Whittlesea Show is one of the best regional shows in Victoria. It was held on the first weekend of November this year. It was its 156th year of continually bringing joy and entertainment to the community. It is located in a major growth corridor and attracts
lots of crowds from Melbourne to come up and experience country life just five minutes from
the city. I love attending the show. As I have done every year for the last 12 years, I had my
stall there across the weekend. I saw firsthand the quality of our local agricultural produce and
manufacturing sectors. The Whittlesea Show allows for farming communities to showcase the
best of livestock with cattle, sheep and horses and—for Barnaby—there were even a few
alpacas on show.

There were also competitive events like showjumping, animal handling, woodchop, arts
and craft, photography and even authentic Australian dunny making. I was invited this year to
present the Central Victorian Axemen's Association's woodchop competition at the insistence
of Ian Goss. If you were to see Gossie, you would know you do not argue with him. There
were a lot of attractions for the kids, and even the young at heart, with an animal nursery and
various entertainers across the weekend. There is talk of bringing more attractions for
adolescents, which I think would be a great outcome for the show. I want to acknowledge
everyone at the ag society for this fantastic event, particularly people such as John Keitling
and Tracey Goss, who have continued to make sure that this show is run by families, for
families and for the entertainment of everyone.

2015 Tasmanian Export Awards

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (13:50): I rise to congratulate the winners of the 2015
Tasmanian Export Awards. The Exporter of the Year Award went to Reid Fruits, a business
in my electorate. They were also the recipient of the Tasports Agribusiness Award. Tim and
Debra Reid export 16 per cent of Australia's cherries. In fact, they export 100 per cent of the
cherries that go from this country to Japan, 74 per cent of the cherries that go to Korea and 52
per cent of the cherries that go to China. I also congratulate the Austrade Regional Exporter of
the Year, Tasmanian Quality Meats Pty Ltd. Brian Oliver and John Talbot's business at
Cressy has had extraordinary growth over the last few years. In fact, they were awarded the
national Regional Exporter Award in 2013.

The Export Finance and Insurance Corporation Small Business Award went to Australian
Honey Products. Congratulations to Lindsay and Yeonsoon Bourke, who operate out of
Sheffield in my electorate. The AusIndustry Manufacturing Award went to the iconic Incat
Tasmania. The Tasmania Government Information and Community Technology Award went
to ISW Development from Hobart. The Austrade Business Services Award went to Plants
Management Australia Pty Ltd, a business in my electorate at Dodges Ferry: congratulations
to Chris Sargent and his team.

All of these businesses will go on to the national finals in Melbourne this Friday night. I
wish all these fine Tasmanian businesses every success.

Disability Services

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (13:51): Recently, I met with Irene
McMinn, Mark Hoarau and Janne Bidenko from the DeafBlind Association, an advocacy
group for people with afflictions such as Usher syndrome—people who are legally both deaf
and blind. Completely self-funded, this body has been campaigning to raise awareness and
secure more services for people in our community living without sight and hearing. They
expressed their joy that Labor's National Disability Insurance Scheme will finally deliver the
care and support that people need. But a distinct lack of services still exist for people living
with these afflictions, particularly trained communication guides and people who are skilled in tactile finger spelling—a must for deaf-blind people if they are able to leave their home and communicate with people.

A number of courses in disability and welfare and TAFE certificate III in Auslan were available in New South Wales, but the New South Wales Liberal government's cuts to TAFE have meant that many of these colleges are no longer offering these important services and important courses—a disgrace, in my view. There are a number of private providers but the fees are prohibitive for many people who have these afflictions. As we roll out the National Disability Insurance Scheme and people get packages, we need to ensure that there are qualified people to deliver these packages, particularly for people who are deaf and blind. I call on the New South Wales government to reverse the disastrous cuts to TAFE that have seen these important course reduced and services for deaf-blind people cut in that state.

Perth Airport

Mr IRONS (Swan) (13:53): Today I want to update the House on the recent opening of the new domestic T1 terminal in my electorate of Swan at Perth Airport. This is part of an overall upgrade of Perth Airport that will see it become a world standard airport—which is vital to the Western Australian economy—and also act as the gateway to Perth and Western Australia. From last Sunday, the $200 million terminal 1 Domestic Pier became home to Virgin Australia's domestic services. The new T1 Domestic Pier includes: 22 domestic check-in desks; a total of 10 aerobridges, with A330 capable aircraft gates; and a central retail and dining area. The new Domestic Pier includes design features to reduce energy consumption by the use of natural light and a facade providing shade during the summer months.

Over 4,200 individual contractors and suppliers contributed to the project, working more than 1.8 million man hours. The construction involved over 15,000 cubic metres of concrete, 2,000 tonnes of steel and 35,000 square metres of glazing and cladding. The pier extension is 1.5 times the length of Subiaco's Domain Stadium and the total area of the project is 40,000 square metres. The perimeter of the project is 1.4 kilometres. There are 2,104 seats, which also have access to power. The Pier is 250 metres long, which is longer than the tallest building in WA. It was opened by the Premier of Western Australia, Colin Barnett, and the Minister for Justice, Michael Keenan, representing the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. Congratulations to Virgin and Perth Airport.

White Ribbon Day

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (13:54): A few moments ago Bendigo's walk for White Ribbon Day, an international day for the elimination of violence against women, ended. This year over 600 people gathered at the Bendigo Town Hall and, after speeches, walked through our town, acknowledging the importance of today. I acknowledge the role that our local media, the Bendigo Advertiser and WIN TV, have played in bringing this issue to the forefront of so many people's minds and in ensuring that nobody forgets the significance of today.

I acknowledge the role of employers like Keech Australia, which has a predominantly male workforce, who allowed their workers to come and participate in today's walk. I acknowledge the local support agencies, including the Annie North centre, a refuge, which works tirelessly to ensure that women are supported when it is most needed. I acknowledge the role of our
service clubs and, in particular, the Zonta Club of Bendigo, which for years has partnered with our local police in the City of Greater Bendigo to ensure that events like today happen. Most importantly, I acknowledge the women who have stood up and spoken out, who have ensured that none of us forget the trauma that they face. Finally, I acknowledge Jacinta Pompei, who is our local girl who lost her life to violence. She was murdered by her partner earlier this year. May we not forget.

**Perth Freight Link**

**Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (13:56):** I wish to update the House with exciting news relating to an infrastructure project of major importance in my electorate and in the plans of this government—namely, the Perth Freight Link. I can report to the House that drilling on the extension of Roe Highway, or Roe 8, began yesterday at the Beeliar Wetlands. The Roe 8 extension is something I have championed and campaigned for over a decade. Roe 8 and the Perth Freight Link project are vital cogs in the economic plan to get the country and Western Australia moving.

The people of Tangney know that Roe 8 means less congestion and safer streets. The people of Tangney also know that infrastructure investments support trade, help grow our economy and create jobs for thousands of Australians. This $1.6 billion infrastructure investment is a demonstration of this coalition government's commitment to jobs and growth. It is a demonstration of our commitment to action over inaction, optimism over Labor cynicism. It is a pity that the member for Perth is not here to hear this.

**Indi Electorate: Benalla RSL**

**Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (13:57):** I would like to welcome to parliament today members of the Benalla subbranch of the RSL. Doug Williams is the Benalla rep on the Indi Centenary of Anzac Day committee. He accepted my invitation to come to parliament today to join me for lunch before heading off to visit the War Memorial. There are 165 members of the Benalla RSL, covering all three services. During their time, they have made a huge contribution to this nation, both as members of the ADF and later in their work as volunteers. They tell me that they are one of the major providers of community services in Benalla.

Benalla played a major role in the Second World War, training over 5,000 pilots at the Benalla Airport, which is now hosting some amazing gliding championships, with the international gliding championships taking place in 2017. There are two famous children of Benalla that I would like to bring to the attention of the House: Weary Dunlop, who was a POW on the Thai-Burma railway, and Hec Waller, who was a naval captain and after whom a submarine was named.

Thanks to all those involved in the trip today. I know it is a huge effort. So thank you to Jeff Lewis and his wife, Margaret, and to Delano Dube, social organiser. I would also like to acknowledge two affiliate members, who, although they were not with us today, play a big role in the success of the club: Diane Green, secretary; and Christie Young, treasurer. To all the members of the RSL in Indi, thank you for your work.

**White Ribbon Day**

**Mr EWEN JONES (Herbert—Government Whip) (13:59):** That we in this country actually have to have a White Ribbon Day should appal every man in this country. That we have the victim of tragic domestic violence, Rosie Batty, as our Australian of the Year should
appal every man in this country. All men in this country need to acknowledge that we have a problem here. The sad part is that the default position for all of us on domestic violence is that we think that it is the dregs of society who beat their wives and not us—but that is not so. It is men like us, here in this place, men in suits, who project an image of professionalism, who are going home and inflicting extreme physical and mental violence on our partners and our children.

I was saddened when I had to go and meet with Anne Lewis, the director of the North Queensland Women's Legal Service in Townsville, to advise her that my government had granted the service an additional $1.05 million over three years to assist with the work that they are doing to help women deal with domestic violence—in my community! I wish it was not so. I will do what I can to change attitudes and behaviour.

We the men in this country must set an example. We simply must. Enough is enough.

The SPEAKER: It being 2 pm, in accordance with standing order 43, the time for members' statements has concluded.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:00): I wish to inform the House that the Minister for Vocational Education and Skills will be away from question time today attending to a personal matter and that the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science will answer questions on his behalf.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Domestic and Family Violence

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:00): My question is to the Prime Minister. On average, in Australia every week, one woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner. This is a national crisis. Will the Prime Minister join with me to support legislating for five days paid domestic violence leave into the National Employment Standards?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:01): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question, and I thank him also for making our commitment to stop violence against women and children a national, totally bipartisan priority. It is absolutely critical that all men—as fathers, as grandfathers, as teachers, as employers, as members of parliament, as prime ministers and as alternative prime ministers, like the Leader of the Opposition—make it absolutely clear that violence against women and children must stop. And all of us must recognise that, while disrespecting women does not always result in violence against women, all violence against women begins with disrespecting women. This is, at heart, an issue where there needs to be cultural change.

We know of the deaths that the honourable member spoke about a moment ago—well understood, well mourned. The member for Corangamite last night spoke in this House, movingly, of another death; another shocking case of a woman—a friend of hers—killed by her husband. Yesterday I met with Dr Ann O'Neill, who is a truly inspirational survivor of domestic violence. Her estranged husband broke into her home, shot her and killed her two children before turning the gun on himself. Ann was the only survivor. And yet she says that
the most common question she was asked after that tragedy was: 'What did you do to make him do that?' The victim of the most horrific crime was blamed.

We pay tribute to all of the victims of domestic violence, like Ann, past and present, who have borne the brunt of our failure to act for too long. Violence against women and children is one of the great shames of our nation.

The honourable member has asked me about his proposal to have five days paid domestic violence leave if elected. I thank the honourable member for the proposal. We will consider it very carefully. It is a complicated issue, as indeed the member for Sydney acknowledged earlier in the year. It is important that individual businesses are able to deal with this in a way that works both for them and for their female employees. But we will certainly take it on board. As you know, Mr Speaker, the government has engaged the Productivity Commission to review the Fair Work laws. I understand that, as part of the process, the commission has received several submissions that will raise the issue of domestic violence. We look forward to its report. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the suggestion; we certainly will consider it, as indeed will the Productivity Commission.

Domestic and Family Violence

Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright) (14:04): My question is to the Minister for Social Services. Will the minister inform the House of the steps that the government has taken to reduce violence against women and children?

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Minister for Social Services) (14:05): I thank the member for his question. As the Prime Minister noted, we had the great privilege of listening to a very fine speech by Dr Ann O'Neill earlier in this week, in an event that was allied to White Ribbon week. The Prime Minister noted the question that Ann O'Neill stated she was most often asked—after events of such unimaginable horror, and after which she was very badly injured and survived. But, having lost two children to a murder at the hands of her partner who then committed suicide, to get asked that question—what was it that had happened; what was it that she had done that had brought about that response—is nearly unimaginable. And those incidents that happened to Ann O'Neill—who must actually be one of the bravest Australians I have ever met—were not that long ago. Attitudes have improved, I think, and somewhat substantially.

In addition to announcements that this government has made around the $100 million funding package, on the specific issue of domestic violence and with respect to some very specific, on-the-ground, coalface service-delivery issues, a very important paper was released today. The research paper is entitled Reducing violence against women and their children. I might just note here that Senator Michaelia Cash, the Minister for Women, was a significant driving force behind the commissioning and conduct of this research. It essentially involves qualitative research, amongst other types of research, where focus groups were put questions about scenarios that involved fairly low but not insignificant levels of violence, and then the responses from the groups—and they involved parents and young children; and some of the scenarios involved young children—were interrogated to try and work out what was going on. Fascinatingly, and very unhappily, they mirror in a way precisely that question that Ann O'Neill said that she was most often asked.
The report in essence describes three responses. The first is that there is a very deep underappreciation of what constitutes unacceptable, violating or intimidatory conduct towards a woman or a girl. The second is that there is a consistent minimisation of violence and aggressive behaviour. The third is that there is a very deep passive acceptance of conduct that should simply never happen. I recall something said by a colleague from a previous professional life at the DPP. You would have heard of the term ‘passive aggressive’. He described very many men who are perpetrators in these circumstances as ‘passive dismissive’ about the level of violence in which they have engaged.

This report will help us commission $30 million worth of an awareness campaign because it goes to the very long-term root issue about a very strange masculine permissiveness towards violence. When that violence is permitted at low levels, it grows, unhappily, at high levels.

**Goods and Services Tax**

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (14:08): My question is to the Prime Minister. Prime Minister, a second-year hairdressing apprentice earning only $22,000 per year has already lost $1,000 this year and will lose $2,700 over the next two years because of the Prime Minister’s cut to the Tools For Your Trade payment. Why is the Prime Minister making it even harder for this apprentice to get ahead, with a 15 per cent GST?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:09): Regrettably, what is on display is the sharp difference between the government and the opposition. On our side, we are getting on with the business of creating jobs and driving economic growth. On Labor’s side, we have this not-especially-scary scare campaign. We have speaker after speaker standing up and accusing, insisting and stating, sometimes, that the government is committed to increasing the GST by 15 per cent.

The opposition know that there is no such proposal. The opposition know that we are looking openly at the taxation system and that we are endeavouring to see how we can make the tax system work better to create more jobs for all Australians, including our children and grandchildren, and yet they want us to rule this in and rule that out. They are constantly trying to narrow the scope of the inquiry. They know not just in their hearts but in their heads that the reality is that the inquiry we are undertaking and the work that we are doing is best done in the interests of all Australians if we consider everything, if we consider the whole gamut of proposals, if we consider the proposals of Chris Richardson and John Daley and everyone who has an idea, including the member for Fairfax, who is still the only person on that side of the chamber who has come up with an original idea.

**Goods and Services Tax**

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (14:11): My question is to the Prime Minister. Modelling reported in The Weekly Times showed that if the GST were broadened it would lead to a drop in consumer spending and a drop in real wages across the country. Can the Prime Minister explain exactly how broadening the GST will increase jobs and grow the Australian economy?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:11): I thank the honourable member for the question, which she asks with a tone of triumph, having secured it by her agility! We admire her agility! I have to say to the member for Bendigo very simply that she is essentially
asking me for an opinion on the design of the tax system. She knows as well as we all do that there has never been any proposal to change the rate of the GST or impose an economy-wide tax that applies to all taxpayers, regardless of income, that was not accompanied by countervailing measures to ensure that people on lower incomes were compensated. That is exactly what her own party did with the carbon tax and, of course, it is what happened in 2001 when the GST was introduced.

The honourable member understands that, so she is really asking the question: if the GST were increased and there were no other measures, would it hurt or undercut the disposable income of people on lower incomes? Of course it would. That is why the objective of any changes to the tax system that are effected under our government will be to ensure that the tax system enables and incentivises more jobs and more growth so that more people in Bendigo can get a job, so that more businesses in Bendigo will invest and so that more businesses in Bendigo will have the confidence to take on an additional employee. That is what we are seeking to do. We want more jobs and more growth. That is the objective. To do that, any change has to be fair.

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS**

The SPEAKER (14:14): I inform the House that we have present in the gallery this afternoon Ms Khawaja, a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. On behalf of the House, I extend her a very warm welcome.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Violence Against Women and Girls**

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (14:14): My question is to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Will the minister update the House on Australia's commitment to international efforts to end violence against women and girls?

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:14): I thank the member for Berowra for his question, and I acknowledge his leadership on the parliamentary inquiry into human rights issues confronting women and girls in our region.

The Australian government's message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is clear: violence against women and girls anywhere, anytime, in whatever form it takes, is utterly unacceptable. The Prime Minister and the Minister for Social Services have spoken of the government's role and response in Australia. For women and girls beyond our border, their circumstances can be dire—victims of forced marriage, acid burnings, female genital mutilation, human trafficking, sexual violence and other abuses.

Some of the most horrific violence against women is being perpetrated by the terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria, where sexual violence is being used as a weapon of war and a source of revenue. In fact, Daesh, or ISIL, encourages the subjugation of women and girls. They can be bought and sold at slave auctions. ISIL has written a lengthy manual on slavery—apparently by the group's self-titled 'Islamic State research and fatwa department'—which promotes appalling views, including that sexual assault is spiritually beneficial. We must combat this terrorist group and its pernicious and malevolent ideology, including because of its appalling views and treatment of women and girls.
Addressing sexual and gender based violence is a key component of the Australian government's humanitarian support in response to the crisis in Syria and Iraq. In the past 12 months, the Australian government has provided funding for survivors of gender violence, supporting access to shelter and support services, training for healthcare staff and medical assistance. Today I announce that the Australian government is providing additional support to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Through this fund, we have already, for example, assisted in the development of an acid attack law in Cambodia and supported organisations in Papua New Guinea to introduce local laws to eliminate violent practices, including the torture of women accused of sorcery.

Living free of violence and from the fear of violence is a human right. For women and girls across the world, it is often a matter of life and death. This government will continue to provide strong leadership on this issue in Australia, our region and globally—because violence against women and girls is unacceptable wherever it occurs.

Goods and Services Tax

Mr FITZGIBBON (Hunter) (14:17): My question is to the Prime Minister. Prime Minister, you say you want to have a conversation about taxation in Australia, and that is your right. So let's talk about modelling by AUSVEG, as reported in The Weekly Times, which shows that a GST on fresh food would lead to a five per cent reduction in vegetable production. When will you front up to a conversation with Australia's producers and growers about your plan to hit fresh food with a 15 per cent GST?

Mr Pasin interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Barker will cease interjecting.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:18): I thank the Prime Minister for the opportunity to respond. They just do not get it—this is the problem. They continue to come to the dispatch box and raise proposals that have not been put forward by the government. Maybe they are referring to scenario 3, which was modelled by the former Treasurer and member for McMahon and the Labor Party when they were in government, for increasing the GST and broadening its base. Maybe that is what they are referring to.

The difference between those on this side of the House and those on that side of the House when it comes to having a discussion about tax is this: on this side of the House we know that you change the tax system to support growth and jobs in the economy.

Ms Owens interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Parramatta is now warned!

Mr MORRISON: That is why we did it back in 2000 under Prime Minister Howard and Treasurer Costello. It was done to promote growth and to promote jobs—and that is what it did. But we found out this week from the Leader of the Opposition what the objective of those opposite is when it comes to tax. He said: 'In terms of tax reform, we're proposing a way of finding revenue.' For those on that side, the tax debate is all about how they can jack up taxes to raise revenue. That is why they want to bring back the carbon tax. They want to do that because they want to raise revenue that would cost jobs. That is why they want to bring back the mining tax. They want to raise revenue without providing compensation, tax cuts or any of that. They just want to jack up taxes to raise revenue, because that side of the House they think the way to balance a budget is to raise taxes—well, not on this side of the House. On

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this side of the House, we balance the budget by controlling expenditure and ensuring we have growth.

But now we have their latest proposal: the ciggies tax. The party who brought us the tax that raised no revenue—the mining tax—are now the party who think they can deal with those issues by putting a tax on a shrinking base. Not only that, while they come here and complain about the welfare impacts—

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on direct relevance: the question was about tax on vegetables.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Treasurer is in order. He is still on the topic of tax.

Mr MORRISON: They express concerns for the vulnerable. On the ciggies tax, I go to none other than the member for Ballarat. When asked if the tobacco tax would hit low-income earners, she said: 'What we're trying to do with this measure is actually look at—we know that it will hurt, um, people on low incomes.'

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

Mr Hawke interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney will cease interjecting.

Mr Fitzgibbon: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table statements from the members for McMillan, Gippsland and Murray expressing concern about the imposition of a GST on fresh food.

Leave not granted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:21): I inform the House that we have present in the gallery this afternoon the leader of the New Zealand opposition, Mr Andrew Little MP, and Mr Phil Goff MP. On behalf of the House, I extend a very warm welcome to you both.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Foreign Investment

Mr PALMER (Fairfax) (14:22): My question is to the Prime Minister. Chinese government companies control ports of Newcastle and Darwin, and they are seeking to control the port of Cape Preston in the Pilbara and the port of Melbourne. Newcastle port charges have gone up 43 per cent. If the Chinese government control ports, they control our economy; they decide what is exported and manipulate prices and port charges. We cannot buy ports in China. Should our ports be controlled by the Chinese communist party? Will the government exercise its powers to resume these ports for Australia’s national economic security?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:22): I thank the honourable member for his question. I remember the halcyon days when he was one of the leading friends of China. He was a Chinese prince. I remember when the honourable member was going to build a new version of the Titanic in China. Those were halcyon days, but, sadly, many love affairs
come to an end, and clearly the member for Fairfax's love affair with China has also come to an end.

If I can turn to the question that the member asked, No. 1: our foreign investment framework is administered in Australia's national interest, full stop.

Mr Champion interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Wakefield is now warned!

Mr TURNBULL: That is the objective: we administer in our national interest. We have always been a capital importer; we welcome foreign investment, but there are rules and there are processes. The honourable member raises the issue of the port of Darwin. I make this observation: the decision by the Northern Territory government to lease the commercial port of Darwin was an open process on the public record since early 2014. The Northern Territory government undertook that lease in close consultation with the Commonwealth, including the Department of Defence, our security service and a number of other agencies. The defence department negotiated a deed of licence with the Darwin Port Corporation, defining access and contingency requirements for the winning bidder. Treasury and Defence undertook a careful analysis of the Landbridge bid, consulting widely across all the relevant government agencies. The Department of Defence has repeatedly stated that it does not have any security or access concerns with the lease.

**Competition Policy**

Mr VARVARIS (Barton) (14:24): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on the government's response to the Harper competition policy review? How important is it that Australia's governments work together to find new ways to update our economy and promote growth in jobs?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:25): I thank the very excellent member for Barton. He does a great job as the member for Barton. We would like to see him remain in that role—my neighbour from across the river.

Mr Albanese interjecting—

Mr MORRISON: I notice the interjections from the member for Grayndler, who aspires to be the member for Barton, I notice.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will not be distracted and will come to the question.

Mr MORRISON: It is like the member for McMahon aspiring to be the member for Fowler. It is musical chairs everywhere over there!

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will come to the substance of the question.

Honourable members interjecting—

Mr Burke: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on direct relevance. The Treasurer is the last person who should be talking about preselections, after how Cook started—

The SPEAKER: The member for Watson will resume his seat. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr MORRISON: The question goes to the Harper review, and delivering better services and more choice for Australian consumers and working with the states and territories are what will drive growth and jobs in the economy. Working together with the states and territories to drive growth is what our response to the Harper review is all about. It is resetting the agenda.
on competition policy and setting out agenda for productivity growth over the next 10 years, because we know on this side of the House that we need to drive productivity growth to ensure that the real incomes of Australians are improved and the earnings of Australia are improved against the headwinds that we know are in place in front of our economy.

Now our economy is transitioning and it does need these productivity enhancements in the years ahead to ensure that we can drive growth. That was acknowledged by the Reserve Bank governor only in the last 24 hours. He acknowledged that the transition that is taking place in our economy is underway, and he said in his speech:

A number of data points over recent months suggest that prospects for firmer conditions in the non-mining economy are improving. Business surveys indicate that firms report conditions to be, if anything, above their long-term average in some key sectors. Firms seem to have stepped up their hiring. Job vacancies have been increasing, hours worked have been increasing and employment growth, even before the most recent month's data, had strengthened noticeably over the past year. Labour force participation has risen, and the unemployment rate has been stable. This is supporting income growth as the terms of trade decline works its way through the economy.

So the economy is growing, and it is growing in spite of those headwinds. What we have had in the reaction to the government's announcements in response to the Harper inquiry is the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who says that it will:

… make Australia a more competitive place to do business, as well as delivering a much needed boost to the nation's growth and productivity.

The Ai Group says it will:

… usher in a range of measures to boost national productivity, investment, and economic opportunities for Australian businesses …

UnitingCare Australia says:

Increased choice and control for individuals across a range of human services will lead to improved outcomes for people.

It is referred to by Lin Hatfield Dodds as a 'positive game-changer'. The government are getting on with the job of driving growth and jobs in our economy, and our response to the Harper review does exactly that. (Time expired)

**Taxation**

**Mr Bowen** (McMahon) (14:28): My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to his previous answer and I also refer to the now Treasurer’s statement in parliament in 2009:

… so we put forward a constructive proposal to increase the excise on tobacco by 12½ per cent …

So why did the Treasurer just rule out doing that by adopting Labor's plans?

*Mrs Husic* interjecting—

**The Speaker:** The member for Chifley will cease interjecting.

**Mr Morrison** (Cook—Treasurer) (14:29): I did not hear the member for Chifley's interjection. He was way too far back. I could not hear it. He is not making much of an impression. But I am happy to take the member's question, because this side of the House is not in the business of ruling things in and ruling things out when it comes to improving our tax system. The difference is this: we are looking at ways to improve the tax system to drive growth and jobs. Those opposite only want to look at increasing taxes to chase higher and
higher levels of spending. They believe the way to deal with Australia's fiscal challenges—fiscal challenges that were delivered to this government by those opposite through their fiscal recklessness when they were in government—is to raise taxes.

Ms Ryan interjecting—

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Lalor will cease interjecting. The member for Sydney will cease interjecting. The member for Sydney will not interject.

Mr MORRISON: On this side of the House, when we talk about changing the tax system we talk about doing that in concert with growing productivity through our work on competition reforms, through working with the states and territories on Federation reforms and by increasing growth through our trade deals—which are setting new records as part of the most ambitious trade program ever embarked upon by Australia. All of these measures are about driving growth and jobs. Whether it is talking about taxes or talking about competition reform, that is our objective. On that side, they have never seen a tax they do not want to hike and they have never seen a tax they do not like.

Economy

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (14:31): My question is to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. Will the minister update the House on the challenges facing innovators and entrepreneurs across all sectors of Australia's economy?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) (14:31): I thank the member for Dawson for his question. I know he has a very deep interest in innovation and creativity, especially in the agricultural sector—the primary industries sector—which has been one of Australia's great innovators and great creators of new technologies.

Bill Ferris, the new chair of Innovation Australia, is often referred to as the father of venture capital in Australia. He started his first venture capital business in 1970, even before Israel were starting venture capital businesses, so he truly has been the father of venture capital in this country. He is now the chairman of Innovation Australia, appointed by this government. Today he gave a speech in Adelaide where he released the *Australian innovation systems report* at a CEDA event. Bill identified six challenges that we are facing in Australia if we want to improve jobs and growth in the innovation sector: access to risk capital funding; access to business and entrepreneurship skills; access to international markets; lack of active collaboration for commercial outcomes; insufficient investment and interest in science, technology, engineering and maths curricula; and a risk-averse culture.

I also had the opportunity today to meet with Avi Hasson, the Chief Scientist of Israel. I will be seeing him later this year. The Prime Minister has also been speaking and meeting with Avi over the last couple of months. The Israelis are also informing the effort that we are going to be putting into turning these six areas around that are stopping innovation from helping to grow jobs and create growth in the economy. Everything we do in this government is about jobs and is about growth. The whole purpose of the innovation and science agenda in December will be about creating the kind of structure in the Australian economy that encourages innovation, technology, research and development, commercialising research,
talents and skills, the government as an exemplar, raising capital—all for the purpose of creating more jobs and more growth than we have already created.

We are widely consulting. Recently we had a health stakeholders meeting to discuss how we can more this agenda forward. We had an education stakeholders meeting this morning in my office. The Prime Minister himself has hosted a couple of sit-down roundtables with people in this part of the economy as well as a national economic summit to discuss the things that we can do as a government to promote jobs and growth. I know that the assistant ministers for innovation and science have done exactly the same thing in their areas—in science and innovation. It is very important to bring the entire economy with us. We want to consult, get it right and announce it in a way that will be embraced by the business community.

Mr Burke interjecting—
Mr PYNE: Thank you for saying I am a visionary guy.
Mr Burke: A revolutionary.
Mr PYNE: Oh, a revolutionary guy. I thought you said a visionary guy. I end on that note.

(Time expired)

Climate Change

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:34): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will Australia's annual carbon emissions in 2020 be higher or lower than this year?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (14:34): I am delighted to take this question, because what we have just released today is a categorical, definitive statement from the Department of the Environment that our emissions in 2020 will see us achieve and beat our minus five per cent target. Let me make this point: when we came to government there was a gap of 755 million tonnes that you let—

The SPEAKER: The member for Parramatta will cease interjecting. I remind her that she has been warned. It is her final warning.

Mr Shorten: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The point of order is relevance. The question was very straightforward: will Australia's annual carbon emissions in 2020 be higher or lower than this year? A very plain question.

The SPEAKER: The minister is in order.

Mr HUNT: The expectation is absolutely clear. It was determined by the department today that we will meet and beat our five per cent target. Let me make this point: they are relying on a report from a particular organisation, and this organisation has made three predictions. Two years ago they said we had a gap of 500 million tonnes. Today, categorically and without doubt, we are meeting, beating and sub zero. We go to Paris to meet and beat our targets. Secondly, we have not just closed that 500 million tonne gap; we have closed a 755 million tonne gap. Thirdly, the organisation in question from which they quote said that we would have nine million tonnes, at the very best, of abatement under the Emissions Reduction Fund. And do you know what? It was out by 500 per cent. We produced 47 million tonnes in the first auction and 45 million tonnes in the second auction—92 million tonnes over the two, at an average price of $13.12.
Mr Conroy interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Charlton is warned!

Mr HUNT: They could not have been more wrong in the sources which they now cite. This opposition predicted that we would not ever achieve our targets. They were wrong. What we are seeing is that each year we are getting lower and lower in our emissions compared with the expectations. We are going to meet and beat our targets. My expectation is that we will not just meet our five per cent and your five per cent target that we inherited from you, or minus 13 per cent; we will go further than we have today. So, when we came in, we inherited 755 million tonnes of gap. Then it came down to 421 million, then to 236 million and, as of today, Australia is officially below our targets and our projections. So we will achieve our targets. We are reducing emissions. We have just had the lowest quarterly emissions in Australia's history over the last decade and more.

Mr Perrett interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton is warned!

Mr HUNT: So each successive set of accounts says that we are achieving and beating our emissions.

Agriculture

Mr O'DOWD (Flynn) (14:38): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the minister inform the House how innovation and technology are transforming Australian agriculture, and how does this help to build a stronger Australian economy?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:38): I thank the honourable member for his question, especially coming from the seat of Flynn, where a lot of this innovation is currently happening. It is part and parcel of Australia's plan to deliver not only a better price back through the farm gate but better technology to grow a better product. Right now in Central Queensland we are developing rice that does not require a water paddy. So, to deal with the diurnal temperature ranges, we have greater resilience. This is a plant that, when we deliver it, will be part of the equation that feeds hundreds of millions of people.

It is not just in that area. If we go west into the seat of Flynn, near Emerald, we can see the work that has been done with robotics. I had the pleasure of spending about half a day with Narendra Modi, and his interest was explicitly in robotics and how we can get a better delivery of chemicals, a better delivery of lower compaction across the farm paddock by reason of these modular units. This is happening in Australia. Also in the member's electorate we have the development of iHerd, which builds on the technology that our nation delivered with the National Livestock Identification System and how we can have total traceability of the herd from birth right through to the killing floor.

Everything we do is about making sure this government stands behind the research and development that happens on the farm. About $700 million a year goes towards research and development on the farm, and it is something we are happy to support. In the Department of Agriculture alone, we match, dollar for dollar, in the vicinity of a quarter of a billion dollars a year, and this allows industries themselves to go out and target the things they believe are of assistance to them—things such as the greater usage of drones in making sure we have better
pest control, things such as the greater yields in wheat. We can see that, since 1900 to now, we have gone from about half a tonne to the hectare to over two tonnes to the hectare of where we are at the moment. I am proud to say that Australia has the highest yields of cotton in the world because of the research and development dollars that we spend, and making sure that we are delivering the best possible outcome for our people.

It is great to be part of the country that developed the MSA grading scheme in meat, which is overwhelmingly used in so much of the meat that is purchased today. This is delivering a real premium back to people on the farm. So this nation has the vision, this government has the plan, and we are delivering the innovation and technology that is going to make our nation a better place, with a better return through to the farm gate and a better outcome in the economics of this nation.

Climate Change

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:42): My question is to the Prime Minister. Is it correct that today's updated greenhouse gas data confirms that, after dropping by eight per cent during the last Labor government, Australia's carbon pollution levels are projected to increase under his government's Direct Action policy between now and 2020?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (14:42): By chance, I just happen to have with me Labor's last update, their 2012 projections.

Mr Dreyfus: Answer the question!

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs will cease interjecting.

Mr HUNT: Do you know what Labor's last update of Australia's emissions said, under their watch, under a carbon tax?

Ms O'Neil interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Hotham is warned!

Ms O'Neil interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Hotham has just been warned.

Mr HUNT: Under their watch they predicted that Australia's emissions would grow, between 2012 and 2020, to 637 million tonnes. Let me repeat that: they predicted that our domestic emissions would grow. So how are they going to close the gap? Not by reducing domestic emissions, but with over 105 million tonnes of international abatement. So, on the very question they ask about, their solution was not to decrease emissions in Australia—

Mr Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McEwen is warned!

Mr HUNT: but to go overseas in order to reduce their emissions. What we have seen today is that we are meeting and beating our emissions reductions.

Mr Conroy interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Charlton has been warned.

Mr HUNT: We are meeting and beating our emissions reductions in Australia on our watch, in our time, on budget, without driving up electricity prices. So, at the moment, we have in front of us a target that, on their last explanation, went to 637 million tonnes of
domestic emissions. More than that, it was a 13 per cent increase over the course of the time. Under us, we have seen a dramatic drop, and each successive update in accounting has seen that drop.

Let us go to something else: what is the ALP's target, because they like to talk a lot about targets? In a very painful press conference today, we saw the shadow minister unable to announce a target and unable to articulate their position. What we are doing is achieving our targets. More than that, we are delivering a system which is bringing benefits to landowners. We are seeing that two-thirds of the emissions reductions, which are occurring in Australia, are going to domestic abatement. In terms of the land sector: deforestation, reforestation—

Mr Shorten: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: that of direct relevance. We are asking the government to admit why levels of carbon pollution are increasing under the Liberals.

Mr HUNT: Let me go to the question of direct relevance. To their own predictions of a domestic level of over 630 million tonnes, it is clear and absolute that we are doing the job that they did not do—emissions are coming down and we will achieve our targets. We will not just achieve the minus 13 per cent, we will achieve a minus 26 to minus 28 per cent outcome.

Mr Shorten: I seek leave to table the government's numbers, which show that they will not deliver any improvement to climate change.

Leave not granted.

Hume Electorate: Green Army Projects

Mr TAYLOR (Hume) (14:46): My question is also to the Minister for the Environment. With another Green Army project winding up successfully in my electorate of Hume, could the minister outline how the government is supporting a range of initiatives to combat global warming and improve the environment in local communities?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (14:46): I want to thank the member of the Hume, who is a great Green Army ambassador. In his own electorate I think there have been, or are underway, nine Green Army projects. He is one of the most practical people in this House in terms of the amount of time he has spent with groups in his electorate, doing real work to improve pathways, to remove invasive species, to rehabilitate land—to do all of these different things. Amongst those nine projects is included the Greenways project. The Greenways project has been working on pathways and ensuring that we have local community groups involved.

We have also seen the Yass Gorge rehabilitation project, which has had a very significant Indigenous participation. I met some of them, and they talked about the member of Hume's work, but he has talked about their work. One of the Indigenous participants told me something very significant. He said, 'You know, I hadn't worked for some years and I was looked down upon by some of the elders in my community, but they've seen me with the uniform and they've seen me clearing away invasive species. They've seen the work that we're doing on fencing, on path rehabilitation and other practical initiatives. One of the proudest moments since I left school was when one of the elders said to me, 'I am proud of you and your work'. It was the first time I'd had an elder in my community make that point to me.'

What does the Green Army mean? It means that we are giving young people, who might otherwise not have had an opportunity, the ability to work, the ability to help the environment
and the ability to be back in the field. These things are real and important. So we are opening up opportunities, we are giving them a chance to help with the environment and we are helping to improve the environment around Australia.

I would just give this update: today we have announced that the number of Green Army teams in the field or completed has passed the 500 mark. We are at 508 Green Army teams; we are ahead of schedule. We are delivering what we said we would do; we are doing it in advance of when we said we would do it; and we are doing it in a way that is giving many young people the opportunity, either for the first time or the first time in some years, to enter the workforce, to have dignity and to win the respect of their community.

Broadband

Mr CLARE (Blaxland) (14:49): My question is to the Prime Minister. Under the Prime Minister's stewardship the cost of his second-rate version of the NBN has already nearly doubled to $56 billion and the time frame for rolling it out has more than doubled to 2020. Can the Prime Minister guarantee that all of the technologies that make up his second-rate network, including HFC, will not blow out any further? Will another cost blow-out be more proof that this Prime Minister is all talk and no delivery?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:49): I really thank the honourable member for the question. That was very generous of him—this is the question he has been nurturing for the two years I was the communications minister and had not been able to ask it. I am grateful for the question. Let us be quite clear about this. The National Broadband Network project was undertaken by the previous Labor government after, literally, 11 weeks consideration. It was a shockingly reckless failure of policy and process. When they embarked on the project, they had no idea what it would cost and they had no idea how long it would take. There was no way that they could have known that, because the reality is that they had not done their homework. They committed the Commonwealth to a staggeringly ambitious project—

Ms Claydon interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member of that Newcastle will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL: costing $43 billion, but they had no idea whether it would be that much all much more. It was in its own way the craziest thing done by the Labor Party in six years of misgovernment. As is the lot of the Liberal and national parties, we have inherited this mess and we have had to clean it up.

Ms O'Neil interjecting—

Mr Conroy interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members for Hotham and Charlton, this is your final warning.

Mr TURNBULL: Most bad projects only get worse; this one is getting better. It is getting better because we changed the management, we changed the board, we gave them the flexibility to get on with the job. It will be completed for $30 billion less and between six and eight years sooner than it would have been, had Labor's original plan been continued with

That is not my forecast—that is the forecast of the management of nbn co who for the first time actually know what this project will cost. The reality is that at the time of the last
election the nbn co management, and therefore the Labor government, did not know how much it was costing them to connect premises with fibre. The information they had—  

Mr Clare: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order on relevance.  

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.  

Mr Clare: Will you rule out the cost of HFC going up and blowing out—  

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order. That was an abuse of the point of order process and it will not be repeated.  

Mr TURNBULL: At the time of the election the former management under the Labor Party simply did not know what it was costing. It turns out that, far from costing $2,400 per premises to connect them with fibre, it was costing them, and still costs, about $3,600—and to that, of course, you have to add another $700 for the capitalised cost of the lease of the ducts from Telstra. (Time expired)

Research and Development: Commercialisation  

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (14:53): My question is to the Minister for Industry, Science and Innovation. Will the minister inform the House how the government’s industry programs will assist the commercialisation of research and development at leading Australian research institutes such as those based at Edith Cowan University in my electorate?  

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) (14:53): I thank the member for Moore for his question. I know that he is working closely with Edith Cowan University on the commercialisation of research, and Edith Cowan very recently announced that they have made a tremendous collaboration with the CRC for Mental Health, the cooperative research council in Perth, and a business in Perth called Cytox that is working on a cure for dementia. Of course dementia is a disease that affects far too many Australians—hundreds of thousands of Australians. It is a disease that, while it was evident decades ago, has become very common now because of the changes in the age of our population. It has affected most families—in fact my own mother-in-law has dementia, and it is a shocking, shocking disease. It affects whole families, especially those who stay home to care for people with dementia.  

The work that Edith Cowan University is doing with Cytox and the CRC for Mental Health is very important work, and it is a very good example of the kind of research commercialisation that can happen with collaboration between universities and business. It is exactly the kind of thing that the Australian government wants to encourage with its Innovation and Science Agenda in December. It is something that we do not do nearly enough of. We have very high-quality research in Australia but, while we are sixth in the OECD for the quality of our research, we are 33rd in the OECD for the commercialisation of research. We are getting one part of the equation very right and the other part of the equation not very right. We want to work with universities through the Innovation and Science Agenda and with the business community to create the kind of commercialisation of research that will lead to jobs and to growth. The commercialisation of research will be a significant part of the four themes of the innovation and science agenda.  

Mr Champion: What about all those CSIRO jobs?  

Mr Husic: Fourteen hundred jobs cut.
The SPEAKER: The member for Wakefield has been warned.

Mr PYNE: I hear the interjections from the other side of the House. We will support the CSIRO. Those opposite had six years in government to do something about innovation and the commercialisation of research and did absolutely nothing.

Mr Husic interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley is warned!

Mr PYNE: This government has taken the bit between its teeth and is doing something about changing innovation and creativity in this country. The statement will also cover talents and skills, the raising of capital, changing the culture and what the government is doing through procurement and through its own interactions with its clients to improve our service delivery. It is going to be very exciting. I think universities will welcome it. It will be quite transformative and it will put innovation very much at the centre of the economy, leading to more jobs and more growth.

Special Minister of State

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:56): My question is to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's answer yesterday. How does the minister respond to the following words contained in an AFP search warrant, which I quote in part:

Between 23 March and 13 April 2012, Malcolm Thomas Brough … counselled and procured James Hunter Ashby, to access restricted data, namely the former Speaker of the House of Representatives … official diary, contrary to Section 478.1 of the Criminal Code 1995 …

Mr Ewen Jones interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Herbert will cease interjecting.

Mr Ewen Jones interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Herbert is warned!

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (14:57): I refer the member for Isaacs to my statement of the 18th. I have nothing further to add, and what you are referring to are of course allegations.

Disability Services

Mr HOGAN (Page) (14:57): My question is from Andrew Playford from Ballina, who has sent this question via my Facebook page. He asks: could the minister please update the House on the full implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, how successful the trial areas have been and when will the Page community be covered by this scheme?

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Minister for Social Services) (14:58): I thank the member for Page for his question. It is fortuitous that I have with me the National Disability Insurance Agency quarterly report to COAG—the Disability Reform Council document which came out on 30 September. Of course it is not a coincidence—it is something I carry with me a great deal of the time in this portfolio. It is a very important question and I would imagine that many members would be getting very similar questions on Facebook pages and at other points. It is estimated that around 5,000 people with a disability in the electorate of Page will benefit from the full rollout of the NDIS in July 2017, when the northern New South Wales services district is due to commence transition to the NDIS.
There is a little bit of time to go for the member's electorate and for the people of Page, but his question, and the question from his constituent, goes to two issues, one regarding the success of the trial sites and the second with respect to the timing of the rollout. With respect to the trial sites, we have trial sites in Hunter in New South Wales and Barwon in Victoria, and in South Australia and Tasmania two trial sites that are being conducted state-wide but by age cohorts—those ages are 0 to 14 in South Australia and 15 to 24 in Tasmania—and there are additional trial sites in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and the ACT, with the ACT being a territory-wide trial site. The fortuitousness of having the quarterly report is that it is the document that updates us about the successful nature of those trial sites, or any difficulties that might be arising. I am pleased to say to you, Member, that what the quarterly report says is that at the end of September 2015, 22,960 people had been found eligible for the NDIS—that is across all trial sites—19,758 participants have had their plans detailing their individual support packages finalised, which is obviously a very high percentage of those identified as being eligible, and very importantly the NDIS quarterly report surveys all of those who have come into contact with the NDIS in trial sites and ranks their satisfaction on a scale from minus two to two, and the average level of satisfaction of all those reported was 1.63, which is very high, pleasingly high and indicates that the type of service that is being rolled out in the trial sites is of very high value.

Very importantly, and I think of some importance to the House and to your constituents and all constituents, is the fact that the average package cost of $34,831—that is the average package cost of all those people that I have mentioned going in to the trials and excluding large residencies—is below the benchmark predicted average cost for 2015-16 of $38,600. So $34,831 is below the $38,600 mark and that means it will be sustainable. (Time expired)

**Special Minister of State**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:01): My question is again to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's answer yesterday. How does the minister respond to the following words contained in an AFP search warrant—and I quote in part—that 'between 23 March and 13 April 2012, Malcolm Thomas Brough counselled and procured James Hunter Ashby, being a Commonwealth officer, to disclose extracts from the Speaker of the House of Representatives' official diary and provide those extracts to third parties without authority, contrary to section 70 of the Crimes Act 1914'?

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (15:01): I refer the honourable member to my last answer.

**Veterans**

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (15:02): My question is to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Mr Trevor Lawrence, a volunteer veterans pension and welfare officer, has raised with me that Dobell currently has 2,642 DVA clients. He advised me there are long and arduous waiting periods in regard to requesting and obtaining records from the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs to help facilitate the claims. Will the minister update the House on how the processing of claims will be improved to help our veterans obtain faster access to benefits?

Mr Albanese interjecting—

Ms Macklin interjecting—
Mr Robb interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler, the member for Jagajaga and the Minister for Trade and Investment will cease interjecting. I am struggling to hear the question.

Mr ROBERT (Fadden—Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Human Services and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC) (15:02): I thank the member for Dobell, especially for her care and concern for the 2,600-odd veterans in her electorate. She is right; claims are an issue. Last financial year the department dealt with 21,833 claims. If you look at the three bodies of legislation the department deals with: firstly MRCA, the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, has an average of 109 days to finalise a claim. This is better than three years ago where it was 155 days. It is a 30 per cent improvement under this government, but we still have some way to go. Secondly, under the Veterans' Entitlements Act it is 72 days on average for a claim, which is, again, better than 2012-13 when it was 79 days. And, thirdly, under the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, or SRCA, it is still 140 days for claims to be processed, which is again a 20 per cent improvement on what it was in 2012-13 when it was 171 days.

The government has achieved a 10 to 30 per cent productivity benefit in terms of processing claims, but we still have a fair way to go. It is still not good enough in my view that a MRCA claim takes over 100 days, and a SRCA claim, indeed, over 100 days. The government has instructed the Department of Veterans' Affairs along six lines of effort to begin to deal with this particular issue. The first line is to change the way Veterans deals with its clients to become very veteran-centric rather than claim-centric. At present, if you put a claim under three acts, you get three letters spat out to you. There is no one consolidated view of the veteran within the department. We are going to change that.

Secondly, we are seeking to embark upon a wholesale upgrade of the department's computer systems. The computing in the department is between 10 and 30 years old, some of it, while we were playing pacman, others while Brock was racing around Mt Panorama. Unless we replace the computing, we cannot get a client-centred view of the veteran. Thirdly, the focus on there will allow us to change business processes to allow claim times to come down.

The last three lines of effort the department will work on to begin to address this issue that the member for Dobell has raised—issues that are part of what this government was left to solve—have to deal with focus and priorities on rehabilitation, on mental health and on transition. Two years ago the Department of Veterans' Affairs only knew about one out of every five soldiers, sailors or air men or women leaving the Defence Force. We are now moving to connect systems together so that when you join the ADF you will join the Department of Veterans' Affairs. There will be full clarity on exactly who the client's base will be.

There will continue to be a focus on rehabilitation. Of the 316,000 clients, only 2,000 are in rehab now, we need to increase that number. And we will continue to fund the non-liability mental health care programs so that all of our veterans have access to good quality mental health care. (Time expired)
Special Minister of State

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:05): My question is to the Prime Minister. How can the Special Minister of State retain responsibility for integrity in government when an AFP search warrant states—and I quote in part: between 23 March and 13 April 2012, Malcolm Thomas Brough counselled and procured James Hunter Ashby to access restricted data—namely, the former Speaker of the House of Representative's official diary, contrary to section 478 of the Criminal Code 1995?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:06): The honourable member would know as a Queen's Counsel that there is no new information about this matter since he asked me the same question yesterday. Therefore, I refer him to the answer I gave him yesterday.

Mr Danby interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Melbourne Ports is warned!

Climate Change

Mr WHITELEY (Braddon—Government Whip) (15:06): My question is to the Minister for the Environment. Minister, I have been holding a number of community forums in my electorate, and many of my constituents in Braddon are very keen to know if Australia will meet or, in fact, beat its 2020 emissions reduction target ahead of the Paris conference, and how the Emissions Reduction Fund will contribute to this effort.

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (15:07): I thank the member for Braddon for that question and I congratulate him on his community 'cuppers'; I understand that they are popular and well attended. I want to deal with the announcement today, but before doing that I might do something unusual and invite the Leader of the Opposition to table the document he was holding before. I have a suspicion it might be an outdated set of projections, because today we released a new set of projections and those projections show a reduction of 264 million tonnes—264 million tonnes in net abatement—compared with what was put out in our March projections. So the invitation is there: table the very thing that you seemed to be quoting from before—

Mr Albanese: You said no!

Mr HUNT: because I think those opposite have wilfully, deliberately used a set of figures in this House whilst knowing that it was outdated. What a shabby, shameless bunch of charlatans these folks are—a shabby, shameless bunch of charlatans. Table the document. Give us the material. If you are confident, you should not have a problem with tabling them. But I think, Prime Minister, that they are knowingly using outdated material.

Mr Albanese: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The minister will resume his seat.

Mr HUNT: Have you got the document? Come on.

The SPEAKER: The minister does not have the call.

Mr Mitchell interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McEwen has already been warned.

Mr HUNT: This is a bit embarrassing, hey, Albo?
The SPEAKER: The Minister for the Environment will cease interjecting. The member for McEwen has already been warned. It is late in question time, but not too late. The member for Grayndler—

Mr Albanese: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: on a point of order?

Mr Albanese: Indeed—and I rise in defence of you, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: On a point of order?

Mr Albanese: Yes, on a point of order. The minister keeps conveying the idea that you have to take certain action, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler will resume his seat.

Mr Albanese: And I am very concerned—

Mr Hunt interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler does not have the call.

Mr Albanese: Indeed—

Mr Hunt interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I have not called the minister yet.

Mr Hunt: Thank you, Mr Speaker—and it is always a pleasure to address you appropriately. As for those opposite, what a shabby, shameless bunch of charlatans. I say that because these are the people who wanted to table the document just a few minutes ago, but it seems they have been caught out—

Opposition members: You said no!

Mr HUNT: Well, I am inviting you: go ahead and do it. The opposition are using documentation that is outdated, which today has been updated and shows a reduction over and above that which had already been shown, by an additional 264 million tonnes. Where does that come from? There is 10 million tonnes in additional abatement from the renewable energy target bipartisan agreement; 140 million tonnes from write-downs against business as usual; 92 million tonnes from the first two auctions of the Emissions Reduction Fund; and, on top of that, another 22 million tonnes from the agreement with the Landfill Owners Association. Those opposite will not table the very document that they said was vital to present to this House, because they have been caught out bodgying up the figures. They have trumped up the numbers.

At the end of the day, we are going to meet our targets, we are going to beat our targets and we are going to go to Paris and achieve a global agreement. And I will table our updated figures today.

Mr Turnbull: After that detailed, diligent and dazzling answer, I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper.
Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) (15:12): Documents are presented as listed in the schedule circulated to honourable members earlier today. Details of the documents will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

BUSINESS
Rearrangement
Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) (15:12): by leave—I move:
That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent further statements on the terrorist attacks around the world being made at the conclusion of today's discussion of the matter of public importance and any House business, with each Member speaking for a period not exceeding 15 minutes.

Question agreed to.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE
Turnbull Government

The SPEAKER (15:12): I have received a letter from the honourable member for Isaacs proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:
The importance of integrity in Government.
I call upon those members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

More than the number of members required by the standing orders having risen in their places—

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:13): The Liberal Party came into government in 2013 promising that theirs would be a trustworthy government, a government of integrity. What a hollow promise that was. This government has trashed that promise, just as it trashed all the others it made before taking office. No—whatever they promised, this is a manifestly untrustworthy government. This is a government with no integrity.

The new Prime Minister likes to talk. He likes to talk about how exciting everything is, now that he is in charge. He likes to talk about the future. The Prime Minister wants to talk about anything but the grubbiness of the recent past—the grubbiness of the Abbott opposition and the grubbiness of the Abbott government. But, make no mistake, this government still stinks of the most tawdry episodes of the Abbott era in Australian politics. Key figures from that era now occupy central positions in the Turnbull government. The Prime Minister does not have a clean slate. In fact, he has elevated to his inner circle people who even the former Prime Minister repudiated.

Today's matter of public importance is government integrity. On 21 September, the Prime Minister appointed the member for Fisher—the architect of one of the grubbiest episodes of the Abbott government era—Special Minister of State, the minister responsible for integrity in government. That was an incredible appointment and, as we now see, an incredible failure
of judgement by the Prime Minister. Perhaps he felt indebted to the member for Fisher, who was a key member of the group who orchestrated the Prime Minister's ambush of the member for Warringah on 14 September. The member for Fisher never misses the chance for a good plot, and he was right in the thick of that one, too. Having stewed on the back bench under the member for Warringah, he was richly rewarded by the new Prime Minister for the part he played in the member for Warringah's downfall. Well, the chickens have now come home to roost.

On 17 November, the Australian Federal Police raided the home of the member for Fisher in the execution of a search warrant. The member for Fisher described this, quaintly, as a 'visit' to his home by the police. But this was no social call. The Australian published the part of the search warrant which sets out the proposed criminal charges being considered against the member for Fisher. These are serious matters indeed. I will read from that document, in which it is alleged:

Between 23 March and 13 April 2012, Malcolm Thomas Brough, born 29 December 1961, counselled and procured James Hunter Ashby, being a Commonwealth officer, to disclose extracts from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Peter Slipper's 2009 to 2012 official diary, and provide those extracts to third parties without authority, contrary to section 70(1) of the Crimes Act …

It alleges further:

Between 23 March and 13 April 2012, Malcolm Thomas Brough, born 29 December 1961, counselled and procured James Hunter Ashby … to access restricted data, namely the former speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Peter Slipper's 2009 to 2012 official diary, contrary to section 478.1 of the Criminal Code.

These are serious offences at any time but all the more so when they are alleged to have been committed by a man who must be held to the highest standards. Let us recall the context of this conduct. This was part of a conspiracy between the member for Fisher and two employees of the former Speaker of this House which involved taking parts of the Speaker's diary. The aim of the member for Fisher was to destroy the Speaker and to take his seat. It appears that he would stoop to any means to achieve that aim. It did not matter how low, how improper and how inappropriate the means were. This former cabinet minister was ready to go to these lengths. The member for Fisher, more than most Australians, should have respected the office of the Speaker, should have respected this parliament and must have understood just how grubby his conduct was. The member for Fisher has never explained his involvement with James Ashby and the other employee of the Speaker, because it simply stinks.

This is the man that the Prime Minister considers fit not only to serve as a minister of the Commonwealth but to preside over standards of integrity in government. Australians are meant to accept that a man who is, by his own admission, under investigation by the Australian Federal Police for criminal wrongdoing is fit to set standards for propriety in public office. In the Turnbull government, a man whose home has been raided by the Federal Police and against whom the Federal Police are considering laying very serious criminal charges is meant to be the arbiter of integrity.

This is not just about the member for Fisher, a man who would—we can now see—do anything to advance his own interests and to realise his ambitions to return to the parliament. No, this is about the judgement of the man who has fulfilled those ambitions: the new Prime
Minister. This is about the judgement of a Prime Minister who appointed, as his minister responsible for government integrity, a discredited figure over whom loom allegations of serious misconduct. It is about the judgement of a Prime Minister who stands by the member for Fisher, even after the Australian Federal Police have raided his home and even as they are considering serious charges against him. Surely, the Prime Minister was aware of the member for Fisher's involvement in the Abbott opposition's desperate plotting to bring down the Labor government by even the most underhanded of means. Surely, the Prime Minister had seen the member for Fisher's appearance on 60 Minutes in September 2014, when the member for Fisher admitted to asking James Ashby to take parts of the former Speaker's diary. Surely, the Prime Minister knew that this behaviour, freely admitted by the member for Fisher, could be criminal conduct under Commonwealth law. Surely, he knew that Labor had referred this matter to the Australian Federal Police.

Did the member for Fisher offer the Prime Minister a full disclosure of these matters before his appointment as a minister? Did the Prime Minister ask for such a disclosure, or is that the approach that this Prime Minister takes to the standards of conduct that he expects of the people he appoints as ministers? He probably did not even ask. Did he know that the member for Fisher was under investigation by the Federal Police? Did he even care? The Prime Minister has had the chance in question time this week to clear up all of this. The Prime Minister has had the chance to provide the explanation for his own conduct and the conduct of the member for Fisher—an explanation the Australian people deserve. The Australian people deserve a full explanation from the member for Fisher as to just what his involvement was in the bringing down of the former Speaker. They deserve an explanation of just how he conspired—as a Federal Court judge put it—with members of the staff of the Speaker. These were people who were trusted by the Speaker of this House to serve his interests, not the base political interests of the then would-be member for Fisher. We deserve an explanation. This House deserves an explanation. The Australian people deserve an explanation. In particular, the Prime Minister needs to explain why he thought it fit to appoint the member for Fisher as the Special Minister of State.

I asked the Prime Minister whether he still had confidence in the minister, but this Prime Minister, who normally relishes the chance to lecture Australians from the dispatch box, did not have much to say at all on this occasion. He does not have anything to say about the extraordinary circumstance of a senior government minister's home being raided by the Australian Federal Police. I ask members to think back: when can they last remember an occasion like this where the home of a minister in the Australian government was raided by the Australian Federal Police in the execution of a search warrant?

The Prime Minister has nothing to say about the member for Fisher's behaviour, only that he apparently retains confidence in him. He does not have anything to say about the standards of behaviour that he expects from his ministers, only that he considers the member for Fisher is fit to serve as the minister responsible for government integrity. Just keep this in mind: this is not any minister. This is the Special Minister of State, who is responsible for a whole range of matters to do with integrity of government, including the Australian Electoral Commission and including the entitlement system for the members of this parliament—a whole range of matters that require him to use and apply the highest standards of integrity.
Australians expect their government to be trustworthy, to be accountable, to display integrity. While the Prime Minister continues to run interference for the member for Fisher, while he continues to refuse to explain why he still has confidence in the member for Fisher, he is failing Australians on every one of these counts. (Time expired)

**Mr TUDGE** (Aston—Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister) (15:23): It is a courageous Labor Party who puts up an MPI on integrity in government, because this is the party of Eddie Obeid, of Michael Williamson, of Craig Thomson, of Cesar Melhem, of brown paper bags. And they want to talk about integrity!

*Ms MacTiernan interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Perth will cease interjecting.

*Mr Snowdon interjecting—*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lingiari will not interject.

**Mr TUDGE:** We will talk about integrity in government all day long. We are very happy to compare our record in relation to integrity with the Labor Party's record in relation to integrity. As a member of parliament, the first thing to have integrity about is to actually live in the electorate which you represent. I point out that the member for Isaacs lives in the beautiful suburb called Malvern, which is not even one electorate away but two electorates away from the suburbs which he pretends to represent in Carrum and Patterson Lakes and the like. All I can say is that at least he is very well represented by the member for Higgins, in the seat in which he resides.

There are actually three components in relation to integrity in government. First of all, there is the integrity of the individuals on your team; secondly, there is the integrity of your party—that is so important if you want to have a government with integrity; and, thirdly, there is the integrity of your decisions. I would like to go through each of those three elements. I would put to you, Mr Speaker, and put to the parliament that our record stacks up very finely against the record of the Labor Party in relation to those three things: the integrity of our individuals versus theirs, the integrity of our party versus theirs; and the integrity of our decisions versus theirs.

Let me start with the individuals, particularly on the Labor side. I have mentioned Eddie Obeid. He is a well-known figure and he is well known to the member for Watson, who has frequented his beautiful ski chalet. He was the kingmaker in New South Wales. He pulled all the strings, but he was found to be corrupt by the Independent Commission Against Corruption and is facing very serious charges. I mentioned Craig Thomson, a man who only recently sat in this parliament and was defended day in, day out by every single one of those Labor members of parliament. He was using union funds for services which I will not even mention in this parliament. A magistrate found him guilty—this is the Labor member for Dobell—of 65 charges of theft and fraud. I could mention Michael Williamson. He was the President of the Labor Party. He was found to be corrupt and sentenced to five years jail. These are three individuals just in the last couple of years—very senior members of the Labor Party, senior parliamentarians and very senior kingmakers within the Labor Party.

If you want to then go to maybe a head-to-head contest with our leaders and you want to line up the Leader of the Opposition versus our Prime Minister in relation to the integrity stakes, let's have a look at Bill Shorten. Bill Shorten is the man—as the royal commission into
union corruption has found—who ripped off the lowest paid workers, cleaners, at Clean Event, in order to do a side deal to benefit his union. That is what he did before becoming a member of parliament. He is now the Leader of the Opposition. The evidence was that he ripped off the lowest paid workers in Australia. He is being put up by the Labor Party as their prime ministerial candidate—the man that they have put up as the one who should be the most important decision maker in this country. Of course, he is also the man who knifed not just one Prime Minister but two Prime Ministers, despite all the assurances that he was as loyal to each of those men and women all the way along.

So egregious were some of the decisions which the member for Maribyrnong, now the opposition leader, made when he was a union leader that the current union has overturned those decisions. They have quashed those decisions because they have had a look at them and said: 'No, these weren't right. They don't have any integrity.' This is the man that they have put up to be Prime Minister. I think the real character assessment comes from the man who was here just a moment ago. He sits on the frontbench of the Labor Party. The member for Corio, Richard Marles, said:

If you want to know how Bill has got to where he is now … if you had to identify one thing, I think it is that he has been prepared to make decisions and to do things that almost anyone else would not.

That was Richard Marles, the member for Corio, the shadow immigration spokesperson. That is his assessment of Bill Shorten, the person whom they have put up as their leader and their prime ministerial candidate. He is the man who will be willing to do things that almost no-one else would do. That is not a man with integrity. This is not a man who is deserving of being the Prime Minister. I will tell you this: the Labor Party has form in terms of putting people up for the highest office in the land who lack integrity—because it is not just Bill Shorten. Only a few short years ago, they also put up a man whose name they almost cannot speak anymore—Mark Latham—to be their prime ministerial candidate. He was also not a man with integrity. So they have form in this regard.

I move on now to the integrity of the party, because that is so important as well. Your party is important in the way that people get preselected and in the way that you get supported with your campaigns. If you are not careful, the political party can have enormous influence over members of parliament as well, even after they have been elected.

Indeed, the concern that we have with the Labor Party is that they are run by one particular interest group that really controls the decisions of the Labor Party, far too much, on a day-to-day basis, and this particular interest group is a small interest group in the scheme of Australia—it represents only 17 per cent of Australian workers and is known as the Australian union movement. More, actually, than just the union movement as a whole, it really is just the union bosses who now control so many of the decisions of the Labor Party and have such inordinate influence. We know that these union bosses have half the voting power at their party conferences. We know that they basically preselect their candidates, they fund their campaigns, they pretty much call the shots as to who is going to be their leader and who is going to be their Prime Minister, and increasingly they call the shots on policy. This is not a party with integrity where the members can independently make decisions based on their core values but one making decisions increasingly in the interests of a very narrow section of the Australian community—that being the union movement.
Do not just listen to me on this but listen to Martin Ferguson and perhaps even Bob Hawke. Martin Ferguson says that too many opposition MPs today 'wait for the phone call from the trade union heavies to tell them what to do'. He says that Shorten can't curb union influence because 'too many of the shadow ministry in the caucus are almost as if they are prisoners of the union movement'. This is Martin Ferguson—he used to sit on these front benches as a very senior member of the Hawke-Keating governments and was the president of the ACTU. He now says that the shadow ministers who sit right there on that front bench are prisoners of the union movement. That is not a party with integrity. That is not a party that can make decisions based on core values in the interests of the Australian people. That is a party that is captured by a small interested group, and they are making decisions on their behalf rather than on behalf of the citizens.

I am glad the member for Corio has entered the chamber, because I was just quoting him in terms of his character assessment of the Leader of the Opposition.

Finally, I have mentioned the integrity of individuals being so important. I have mentioned the integrity of the party being so important and how that is lacking in the Labor Party. Finally, if you do not stack up on those two things, you get poor decisions. You do not get integrity in your decisions. And that is what we have seen just so often over the last couple of years in the years of Labor in government. We have seen so many decisions which have been dominated by the union movement—campaigning against the China free trade agreement, for example. We have had the member for Ballarat make extraordinary decisions, where she has denied cash for cancer centres as funds have flowed to their marginal seats. They dismantled the ABCC while they were in power, despite it doing such a great job in terms of cleaning up union sites. We are proud to stand here as a party and as individuals with integrity, and proud to represent— (Time expired)

Mr PALMER (Fairfax) (15:33): I rise today because I am concerned that the whole issue of the Slipper affair is once again diverting the Parliament of Australia away from the real issue facing Australians: the economy. This goes to the very heart of government integrity. The former Treasurer, Joe Hockey, was accused in 2013 by the former member for Fisher, Peter Slipper, who said that the former Treasurer and the current member for Fisher had asked me, at a meeting at my resort in April 2012, to stump up tens of thousands of dollars to pay for Mr Ashby’s legal costs. The accusation was that the current member for Fisher and former Treasurer Hockey requested I make funds available to fund Ashby’s case against the former member for Fisher, Mr Peter Slipper. In April 2012, I met with the member for Fisher at my resort. The former Treasurer, Joe Hockey, was staying at my resort as a paying guest.

I think I have a moral duty and a responsibility to Mr Hockey and his family—and, indeed, to the Liberal Party—to make it absolutely clear that former Treasurer Hockey played no role in the discussion I had with the member for Fisher in respect of the funding of any case by Mr Ashby.

Hockey walked past the table where we were sitting at the end of my discussion with the member for Fisher. He merely sat down to have a coffee, and no mention was made of the Ashby case while Joe Hockey was there. However, before the former Treasurer, Hockey, arrived, the current member for Fisher at the meeting requested I fund the legal costs of Mr Ashby and, while no exact figure was discussed with the member for Fisher, who later ran against Mr Slipper in Fisher, I understood the cost would be at least $200,000. The member
for Fisher stated to me that we needed to destroy Peter Slipper, and that he had all the evidence to put Peter Slipper away for a very long time. I was not told what the evidence was, nor how the honourable member acquired it. I refused the request from the member for Fisher. I did not think it was appropriate then and I do not think it is now that a person funds another person's legal action designed to cause a third party's demise for political reasons. It is especially not appropriate for a citizen seeking election to this House or selection to the ministry to canvass for money and support to seek to damage an individual's reputation by commencing court actions for what can only be an improper purpose—as the judge found in this case.

We need integrity in government and in the full political process. We need to have trust in government from members of the public. Our members of parliament must set a high standard for the community and future generations.

I want to make it clear again that the former Treasurer, Joe Hockey, acted with the highest standards of integrity and knew nothing of the appeal for money by the member for Fisher. The member for Fisher had previously approached me for money. Just before the merger of the Liberal Party to form the LNP, he approached me and advised me as the president of the Liberal Party that the Liberal Party was insolvent and that, unless I wrote a cheque to the Liberal Party for $100,000, it would go into liquidation in Queensland and there would be no LNP. On that occasion, I wrote a cheque to save the Liberal Party to live another day. This action may have encouraged the member for Fisher to seek me out when he wanted more money.

In April 2012 it was totally different. The member for Fisher was seeking substantial funds for what I thought at the time was to damage the integrity of a citizen for purely political purposes—for self-interest. I could not and did not have any part of it and refused to provide any funds to Mr Ashby or the member for Fisher.

The Prime Minister has the highest standards of personal integrity and deserves to have ministers of the highest standards of integrity as well. Every member of the House needs to treat other members as they would wish to be treated. They should not seek to corrupt the staff of any member, spy on any member or steal from any member. This House must be founded on trust of all those who serve the Australian people.

Mr COULTON (Parkes—The Nationals Chief Whip) (15:37): I find it astounding that we are having this debate today when there is a Federal Police investigation underway. It would be incredibly inappropriate—

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my left will cease interjecting. I remind them that standing order 94(a) applies at all times of the parliamentary sitting day, and warnings from question time carry over.

Mr COULTON: for statements to be made in this House while this investigation is going on. I also find it incredible that I am being lectured by the member for Fairfax about integrity in parliament, a man who has made this parliament a plaything for his self-indulgence and who has made outrageous statements on television. Indeed, I believe from his in attendance that he only comes into this place to try to lift his profile. We saw in question time today that he even launched an attack on a legitimate deal done by the Northern Territory government
and the Chinese government to advance his own cause and his own business. So I will not be lectured on integrity by that man.

Indeed, in this place all we as members of parliament have is our integrity. If you want to insult anyone in this place, you question their integrity. I live and die by that integrity. I have seen in my eight years in this place—and as recently as yesterday—some things that really have questioned that integrity in the deals that have been done. We saw it back with the carbon tax. If the members opposite are wondering why their numbers have somewhat shrunk, it is because they have walked away from their traditional constituents, who have been disaffected by their attempt to garner Green votes from the leafy suburbs of the capital cities. We saw that in the deal that was done with the member for Melbourne and others after a former Prime Minister said there would be no carbon tax under a government she led in an attempt to get votes. We saw that when the pensioners of Australia were sold out for Greens preferences.

We also saw that in a deal that was done under the previous government with the member for Denison on poker machines—that was a personal crusade for the member for Denison—despite the fact that the members of the then government knew that what was being requested was an impossibility, despite the fact that across my electorate small golf clubs, bowling clubs and RSLs are funded by a couple of poker machines to pay the green keeper and have a communal place to meet. We saw that Labor's traditional supporters were turned on by the previous government. We saw out of that a trial that went to the union backed clubs in the ACT along those lines.

I bring into this place my integrity. That is all you can keep. If you stay in this place it will be because you put the everyday people that you represent first. Quite frankly, this debate upsets me immensely because quite often the carry-on and the stunts in this place bring all of us disrespect. Time and time again, I find myself defending this place and what we stand for. I actually spend a lot of time defending people on the opposite side because of my belief in this institution. We should not be using this institution for some sort of political stunt or a personal crusade.

We saw week after week members from that side defending the former member for Dobell, who stayed here under dubious circumstances. But they come in here now and lecture the parliament about integrity. This is one of the most bizarre matters of public importance, quite frankly, that I have seen in this place. The member for Isaacs must long for the days when he was a QC and he worked in a place where he actually had some respect and integrity, because quite frankly he is struggling in this place. This is a very paltry and ill-conceived attack. Quite frankly, it is a waste of time for this parliament.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (15:42): I rise to speak about this MPI on the importance of integrity in government, following the member for Parkes. I have been in this parliament for the same time as him—eight years and one day. I know a little bit about the people I have met over those eight years. I know most people are here for good reasons. Irrespective of what side of the chamber they sit on—in government or in opposition—most people are here to do good things.

But what I noted in the speeches put forward by the member for Aston and the member for Parkes was a gaping and incredible silence when it came to defending their colleague. We are here today talking about the importance of integrity in government. I do so through the prism
of having a great respect for this democratic institution. I know how tough it is for the member for Parkes to be an MP a long way, like many of us, away from his family and partner. This is a job that is incredibly tough when it comes to our families and our partners and our lifestyles because of the hours and the travel. So you need to have that unwavering belief in democracy to do this job. That belief in democracy is more important than any one person here of the 150 elected members of the House of Representatives. It is more important than any political party that we represent. It is more important than power. That is why this MPI is so important. If we are going to have faith in this democratic institution—this building; this wonderful piece of history in which it is such an honour for me to represent the people of Moreton—we must have faith in all of the people in this parliament.

Due to my concerns with the actions of three people opposite, particularly the member for Fisher, and following Judge Rares’s judgement in the Federal Court, I wrote to the Australian Federal Police in December 2012. Judge Rares had said that he had reached a ‘firm conclusion’ that the ‘predominant purpose’ of Mr Ashby’s claim was to ‘pursue a political attack against Mr Slipper’ designed to ‘tip the government to Mal Brough and the LNP’s advantage’. That is the history. The matter concerning Mr Brough is not before the courts at the moment; it is only being investigated by the police. The quotes I gave relate to the Federal Court case that threw out Mr Ashby’s claim against Mr Slipper.

My first letter to the AFP, on 21 December 2012, directed them to the findings by Judge Rares, which said:

The material also indicates that Mr Brough procured Mr Ashby and Ms Doane to provide unauthorised access to restricted data contrary to s478.1 of the Criminal Code, and unauthorised disclosure of information by Commonwealth officers contrary to s70 of the Crimes Act 1914.

This communication with the AFP was in December 2012. The judgement of Judge Rares was subsequently overturned by the full court of the Federal Court. However, I note that Mr Ashby has not pursued his claim against Mr Slipper since it was overturned.

We then had that incredible admission on 60 Minutes on 7 September 2014. In the interview, when Liz Hayes asked the current member for Fisher, ‘Did you ask James Ashby to procure copies of Peter Slipper’s diary for you?’ Mr Brough replied, ‘Yes, I did.’ That is why it is quite telling that the two previous speakers to this MPI debate made no mention of their party colleague at all. After that public admission by Mr Brough, I wrote to the AFP again, for the third time, on 8 September 2014, pointing out his admission.

We then had that incredible set of circumstances where, after the democratically elected Prime Minister was cut down by the plotters opposite, the new Prime Minister, Mr Turnbull, appointed the current member for Fisher to the office that requires the highest standard of integrity. This is not a normal portfolio; this is a portfolio with responsibility for key integrity agencies such as the Commonwealth Ombudsman, the Australian National Audit Office and the Australian Electoral Commission and for the administration of the parliamentary entitlements framework, including Cabcharges and the like. This is not an ordinary portfolio. It is extraordinary that he could still be in that job after the Australian Federal Police raided—not visited—his home. He was raided by the Australian Federal Police. Arthur Sinodinos stood down for less. I cannot believe this man is still sitting in that role.

Mr Taylor (Hume) (15:48): Those opposite are right to highlight the importance of integrity in government, because without integrity there is no trust—and, of course, it is
impossible to govern without trust. We are getting on with the business of generating jobs and driving growth because that is what Australians want us to do, but I accept that there is a time and a place to reflect on integrity in government.

I sit on the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit—and I am disappointed that the member for Charlton, who also sits on that committee, has left the chamber—which looks at the way in which government programs are put in place and administered. It looks at important programs that Australians depend on to ensure that money is being well spent and delivering good outcomes for Australians. In sitting on the public accounts committee over the last two years, I have seen an absolute smorgasbord of failures in integrity and competence. We saw the National Rental Affordability Scheme and the Regional Development Australia Fund, but I want a focus for a few moments on the Early Years Quality Fund, because this was absolutely distinctive for its lack of integrity. The Early Years Quality Fund was a $300 million fund launched by Peter Garrett and the member for Adelaide in March 2013, and its stated objective was to upskill childcare workers. If the plan was to spend $300 million, who were the beneficiaries and did the real clients of child care, our kids and their parents, benefit from this program?

The first group that benefited from this $300 million program were United Voice union officials. The childcare industry union, United Voice, was heavily involved in a misleading campaign to recruit members during 2013 on the back of this program. The Australian National Audit Office said that United Voice had engaged in a grassroots campaign to recruit into the union, and the PwC told us that United Voice had sent inaccurate information to childcare providers, indicating that the majority of their staff had to be members of the union for the grants to be approved. So union officials were using $300 million of public money to recruit members. But the second beneficiary—

_Mr Conroy interjecting_

_Mr TAYLOR:_ It is great to see the member for Charlton here, because the second beneficiary was the Labor Party—those opposite. Until 2013, United Voice and its predecessor unions had regularly given around $600,000 to the Labor Party. But suddenly, at the exact time of the last election campaign and the establishment of the Early Years Quality Fund, United Voice almost tripled its donations to $1.5 million. They had never got near that before. The Labor Party gained an unprecedented donation to its coffers at the last election campaign in the very year that United Voice was running a recruitment campaign supported by taxpayer money—and you want to talk about integrity.

The third beneficiary was Goodstart, the preferred childcare provider of United Voice and the Labor Party. Goodstart was given the bulk of the money, which was allocated on the eve of the last election—and, when I say the eve, I mean the very eve. Of the $137 million ultimately allocated, $132 million went straight to Goodstart. Goodstart was on the advisory board, against the advice of the department, which said that early childhood employer organisations should not be invited to join the board to avoid perceived or real conflicts of interest. But the minister ignored it, with what was clearly a lapse of integrity. When questioning the integrity of the program, the relevant department was told by the PMO that it was 'over-thinking the process.' The Auditor-General was asked how many programs like this he had seen in his 40-plus years with the ANAO. He answered:

I am struggling to recall others.
I do not recall any other example like this. This is a grubby episode in the recent history of Australian politics—the sort of lapse of integrity that I would never stand for, and nor should those opposite. I am proud to be part of a coalition that would not stand for this sort of behaviour.

Ms Butler (Griffith) (15:52): It is an offence under section 478.1 of the Criminal Code to cause unauthorised access to restricted data in certain circumstances. The section titled, 'Unauthorised access to, or modification of, restricted data,' provides:

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if:
   (a) the person causes any unauthorised access to, or modification of, restricted data; and
   (b) the person intends to cause the access or modification; and
   (c) the person knows that the access or modification is unauthorised …

The penalty is two years imprisonment. Section 70(1) of the Crimes Act provides:

A person who, being a Commonwealth officer, publishes or communicates, except to some person to whom he or she is authorized to publish or communicate it, any fact or document which comes to his or her knowledge, or into his or her possession, by virtue of being a Commonwealth officer, and which it is his or her duty not to disclose, shall be guilty of an offence.

The penalty is two years imprisonment, and there are accessorrial liability provisions in the relevant legislation that apply.

It has been alleged in a recent search warrant that, between 23 March and 12 April 2012, a Mr James Ashby accessed restricted data without authorisation and communicated the material to a third party. The restricted data was the then Speaker's official diary. In 2012, selected parts of the official diary of the then Speaker were leaked to the media. In December 2012, the member for Moreton wrote to the Australian Federal Police calling for an investigation. One of the allegations into which the member for Moreton sought an investigation was that the now minister had procured Mr James Ashby and another person to provide unauthorised access to the then Speaker Mr Slipper's official diary.

In September 2014, the now Special Minister of State appeared on 60 Minutes. During that appearance, the now Special Minister of State admitted to asking Mr James Ashby to obtain a copy of the then Speaker Peter Slipper's diary. That admission was and remains a matter of great notoriety. The now Prime Minister would have been aware of that admission at the time it was made and at the time that he appointed the now minister as Special Minister of State. Following that interview, the member for Moreton wrote again to the Australian Federal Police in respect of the matter. In October 2015, the Australian Federal Police confirmed to the member for Moreton that the investigation was ongoing.

On 17 November 2015, the Australian Federal Police raided the Special Minister of State's home. The search warrant referred to section 478 of the Criminal Code and section 70 of the Crimes Act, amongst other provisions. The raid was part of an ongoing investigation as to whether the now minister had committed an offence by procuring Mr James Ashby to obtain a copy of the diary of the then Speaker, Mr Peter Slipper. The Special Minister of State has confirmed that the raid occurred. On 19 November, the now Prime Minister, notwithstanding that he was aware of the earlier admission, and notwithstanding that he was aware of the raid that had occurred two days previously, said of the minister:
… at this stage there is nothing to suggest that Mr Brough should stand aside or do anything of that kind.

Paragraph 1.2 of the Statement of Ministerial Standards provides:

In recognition that public office is a public trust, therefore, the people of Australia are entitled to expect that, as a matter of principle, Ministers will act with due regard for integrity, fairness, accountability, responsibility, and the public interest, as required by these Standards.

The Statement of Ministerial Standards from which I have just quoted is a document published under the name of this current Prime Minister, the member for Wentworth, this year. The Prime Minister would be well aware of the contents of the document that has been published under his own name. He will also be well aware, because it is recorded in detail in House of Representatives Practice that in the history of this parliament there have been a number of occasions on which ministers have resigned or taken a leave of absence when allegations had been made against them and were being investigated, while investigations were underway. In some cases, those ministers have been exonerated and have returned to their ministerial responsibilities.

If we are to address the grave democratic deficit that exists in this country, the scepticism and open cynicism that people have about their political representatives, and the fact that large numbers of people, including young people, are sceptical about the health of our democracy, then integrity is of utmost significance. It is important for the future of our democracy that this government act with integrity. Accordingly, the Special Minister of State ought stand aside until this investigation is resolved.

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (15:58): Labor has chosen today's matter of public importance to be about integrity in government. In the choice of this matter, there must be some concern about the level of integrity of those who have made this decision. The matter of public importance exists to allow for a discussion of the most important matters of the day. At this time, could there have been a better choice—possibly a discussion of Syria or events in France or Belgium? Perhaps Labor may think that jobs, economic growth or innovation are important? But no, that is not the case. I am familiar with tactics like this. Tactics of diversion are played by players with no integrity when the game is going against them—players who realise that their game is not good enough and not competitive. They cannot win the game, and so they attack the man. This is a courageous move by Labor, as their record is not pristine. Australian voters are intelligent people and they have long memories. The raising of this matter, currently afoot, will no doubt jog people's memories.

We remember Craig Thomson and the supporters behind him, many of whom still occupy those benches opposite. I remember, sadly, the dispatch of former Speaker Harry Jenkins, a man of great integrity. He was dispatched on the judgement that a man of such integrity in that position was not necessary. This single act exemplified an absolute lack of integrity by the former government, who seemed so focused on political point scoring that any sense of principle or respect for the important institution of government was dispensable. Voters in my seat of Bennelong watched with growing disillusion as the actions of the NSW Labor government were exposed through ICAC proceedings. The actions of former senior Labor ministers Ian Macdonald and Eddie Obeid highlighted a level of behaviour destitute of integrity.
In contrast, since coming to government two years ago, the federal coalition has taken actions to improve integrity both in government and in industry. Our attempts to reinstate the Office of the Australian Building and Construction Commissioner have been designed to bring integrity back to the building industry. The ABCC was an independent, statutory authority that had responsibility for promoting workplace relations in the Australian building and construction industry. And yet it was abolished by the previous Labor government, and members opposite continue to block our attempts to reinstate it. All the while we watch a parade of Labor identities, from the Leader of the Opposition down, being brought before the royal commission into trade unions to give evidence on corruption matters—and they want to talk about integrity.

My first step in considering whether I should enter this world of politics resulted in two meetings: one with Brendan Nelson and one with John Howard. They were very generous with their time, and they had views that impressed me enormously. The overwhelming view that I walked away with from both of those meetings was that those two men were men of great integrity. Their integrity, their character, was attractive.

On Wednesday morning I went to an event for White Ribbon Day. Dr Anne O'Neill spoke—a person of great integrity. Why are we not talking about that in this matter of importance? I recognise integrity when I see it. Those who have brought this MPI on and those who have spoken on this from the other side have, unfortunately, placed their integrity in question. Good government is founded on trust earned through the demonstration of unmistakable integrity.

Mr GILES (Scullin) (16:03): Whoever leads it, this is a deeply cynical government which has done much to undermine trust in politics and government, and has done much to pull apart the Australian people's faith in the integrity of our political processes. It is not just our assessment that makes this case. It is the words of government members, including the Prime Minister, that make this very clear—and not just the Prime Minister, I should say, but also the Special Minister of State. Just this week, in this House, he said, 'Integrity in all things parliamentary is essential.'

Today, on this side of the House we rise to hold him and his leader to that standard. We do so with reference to the calls for a higher standard in public life that have been made by the now Prime Minister. In opposition, he made the case for change—for a different approach to politics and for more integrity in politics. He said:

… we can make it easier to earn and keep the people's trust.

Interestingly, he then went on to say:

To his credit, Tony Abbott has said he is determined to make very few promises before the next election and only to make ones he knows he can keep.

Well, what about that? Isn't that something to reflect on as we debate integrity of politics—a matter that perhaps the member for Wentworth and the member for Warringah can discuss together. But he went on beyond this unusual praise of his predecessor as Prime Minister to say this—and this is an important point that he made in opposition, and he should remember it now that he is in government:

It seems to me we don't simply have a financial deficit, we have a deficit of trust.
He picked up on this theme almost at the moment he became our Prime Minister. He lamented the gap in political practice—the lack of integrity in politics. He said this:

What we have not succeeded in doing is translating those values into the policies and the ideas that will excite the Australian people and encourage them to believe and understand that we have a vision for their future. We also need a new style of leadership in the way we deal with others …

'A new style of leadership in the way we deal others.' Really, Prime Minister? How have you demonstrated that since you came to the high office that you hold?

I touched briefly on the former Prime Minister, who, before his election, was very keen on trust. That changed after he was elected, but it is clear now that things have become worse, not better, since the member for Wentworth became our Prime Minister. In every area of his decision making there is a gulf between his words, his expansive words, and his deeds. He is long on rhetoric but it is all sophistry. When it comes to making decisions that matter, decisions that go to the integrity of our political systems and the integrity of the government he leads, he comes up short. Amazingly, he has nothing to say. He has shown that in this House this week.

But why might all this be? I ask government members to reflect on that, particularly because we are talking about not just a minister but the Special Minister of State—a person whose responsibilities go to the heart of maintaining public confidence in the administration of our system of government. He is the minister responsible, ironic as it might seem in the context of the present debate, for parliamentary entitlements. He is the minister charged with holding up parliamentary integrity. So, what sort of qualities might a Prime Minister look to in appointing a man or woman to that position?

In this case, as the Special Minister of State said in question time today, we are talking about allegations. But these are serious allegations, and there is a wealth of practice that goes to how ministers facing such allegations should be asked to conduct their duties. They should be stood down, as this minister should be stood down while these matters are addressed. As the member for Griffith pointed out calmly and carefully, these are very serious matters. They go to the heart of the minister's responsibility, as well as our collective responsibility, to maintain public trust in our system of government.

Ultimately, as the Special Minister of State himself said, integrity matters. It is everything and it is all of our business. It is not just a question for the minister, the member for Fisher, as the shadow Attorney-General said. It is about the Prime Minister's judgement. It is about his judgement and his willingness to uphold the ministerial code of conduct he is responsible for. Prime Minister, you are right: we do have a deficit of trust. But this is down to you.

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (16:08): There is no doubt that we are all here to serve with the highest degree of integrity. Despite what we have seen over the last hour, in many respects in this chamber there is a lot of goodwill. I just want to make this point today, being White Ribbon Day: I am personally disappointed that we have brought this MPI debate to the chamber, and it needs to be understood that subject matters for matters of public importance debates are determined by those opposite, not by the government. It is a very constructive and important part of the parliamentary process. But it is disappointing that, on a day like today, we could not have had a national debate on how we work together to combat family violence. I ask the Leader of the Opposition whether he could consider this topic for tomorrow's MPI, because it is very important. It is clear what is happening today—this is a political point-
scoring exercise and nothing more. It would also be fabulous to see that we can use this debate to take forward the big issues of our nation. I put that proposal up for consideration.

I want to reflect on the member for Scullin's contribution. I am really disappointed that he has made such a slur on the Prime Minister. In the short time that Malcolm Turnbull has been the Prime Minister, he has implemented some very important policy reforms and made some very important announcements. When it comes to integrity, the one thing that I really hate about politics is this wild exaggeration, to the point where there is very little truth in what a member of parliament says. I think it is one of the reasons why Australians do not respect members of parliament as much as they should or they used to. We just heard from the member for Scullin a quite untruthful representation of the Prime Minister. In the first few weeks that Malcolm Turnbull became Prime Minister he announced the $100 million women's safety package. He announced the NDIS rollout for Victoria and New South Wales. We have seen a comprehensive review of competition law being announced. There is a nation-changing innovation statement on its way. It is this sort of politics that Australians hate, and I would really like to see us move away from that.

I reflect on the member for Aston's contribution about individual MPs and the integrity of our respective parties and the decisions we make. In my contribution today I want to reflect on the unfortunate way in which the Labor Party will, in some respects, say and do almost anything. It does upset me. I was a journalist and I do like to think that the facts play a pretty good role in the story that you tell. I reflect on what happened in my local electorate and how the Labor Party ran its campaign when the former member for Corangamite, Darren Cheeseman, made claims that we were going to blow up the cliffs of the Great Ocean Road and build a four-lane freight highway—it was so ridiculous, so pathetic in its untruth. It completely discredited Labor. Those were the sorts of tactics that we were seeing locally. We continue to see this with the current local candidate, who is making utterly false claims in relation to the NBN. On 21 July, she put out a statement saying:

They are NOT rolling out NBN to thousands of premises. They are rolling NBN out to a few isolated nodes, and most people won't be able to afford the money to connect.

This is the sort of politics that people hate. What the Labor candidate for Corangamite said is a complete untruth. The NBN is being rolled out to everyone at no charge in terms of receiving the infrastructure. At the end of the day those sorts of lies do none of us any good; they do not increase our standing. So, when it comes to integrity, I would like to see the Labor Party start to look at what they are doing in my patch and to tell the truth.

I reflect on the East West Link—one of the worst decisions we have ever seen in Victoria, a decision that cost Victorians nearly $1 billion. Premier Andrews said he would only cancel the contract because it was not valid. That did not prove to be the case. Very disappointingly, in the face of the most appalling conduct by the Victorian Labor government, on a project that federal Labor had previously supported, Bill Shorten did not have the courage to stand up with integrity and say, 'Daniel Andrews, you've got it wrong.'

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): The discussion is now concluded.
Mr PERRETT (Moreton) (16:13): On behalf the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, I present report No. 9 of 2015, \textit{Referrals made August 2015}.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr PERRETT: by leave—The ninth report of 2015 of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works deals with three projects referred to the committee in August. The first project concerns redevelopment works at HMAS Stirling for the Department of Defence. HMAS Stirling is the Royal Australian Navy’s primary operational support base on the west coast. It also provides administration, maintenance and logistics support to foreign navies. Much of the infrastructure and facilities at HMAS Stirling are approaching 40 years of age. In addition, exposure to a coastal environment has left several areas in need of upgrade and repair. Works will include repairing the existing road network, remediating various wharves and upgrading the electrical, communications and waste water systems. Enhancements to the base entrance, training areas, security and parking facilities are also proposed. The estimated cost of the project is $366.8 million.

The committee received a briefing from Defence and conducted an inspection and hearings on 8 October. At the public hearing, the committee noted matters raised by local residents, particularly the redevelopment of the Mangles Bay Marina. This project is not related to the proposed works at HMAS Stirling, but it is in close proximity. The committee heard that Defence is liaising with commercial developers and the Western Australian government to ensure the projects would not adversely affect each other or local residents. In noting the large scale of the project, the committee requires that Defence provide the committee with a status report when the design stage of the project is complete. On the basis of information provided to date the committee is satisfied that the project has merit in terms of need, scope and cost and recommends that it proceed.

The next two projects are for Airservices Australia. This committee has previously reported that existing air traffic management systems used by Airservices and Defence will be replaced by a combined Civil-Military Air Traffic System. This new system is being implemented as part of the OneSKY Australia Program. Both projects I am reporting on today are concerned with upgrading current facilities to support the new combined system into the future. The first project involves refurbishing control towers in Brisbane and Cairns. These towers were built in 1987 and 1990 respectively and have reached the end of their useful life. The proposed works will extend this by at least 15 years by treating corrosion, upgrading mechanical systems and modernising the internal fit-out. The works will also prepare the towers for the installation of new technology, known as the Integrated Tower Automation Suite. This technology will eventually be integrated with the combined Civil-Military Air Traffic System. Works are expected to be completed by late 2016 in Cairns and mid-2017 in Brisbane.

The committee received a briefing from Airservices and conducted hearings on 16 October. During the briefing, the committee saw photographs of ageing infrastructure. At the public hearing, Airservices noted lessons learned from similar projects, specifically around maintaining air traffic services while the works progress and managing expectations of
building occupants. Separately, the works are expected to cost $9.98 million for Brisbane and $13.95 million for Cairns, with a combined total of $23.9 million. At the public hearing, Airservices explained that the higher cost for Cairns is due to the presence of a two-storey building at the base of the control tower. This building requires upgrading and forms part of the scope for the Cairns project. The committee is satisfied that the project has merit in terms of need, scope and cost and recommends that it proceed.

The second project for Airservices concerns constructing additional buildings at air traffic service centres in Melbourne and Brisbane. The proposed works will provide extra operations and training facilities. This will allow the existing air traffic system and the new combined system to run in tandem for four years. Once the combined civil-military system is fully operational it will replace the current system and existing facilities may be repurposed. Works are expected to be completed by the end of 2017, ready for the combined system to be introduced in 2018. The project is expected to cost $107 million.

The committee received a briefing from Airservices and conducted hearings in Canberra on 16 October—we did not go to Cairns, as I had hoped. During the public hearing, Airservices noted that running both systems concurrently will allow staff to become confident with the combined civil-military system before switching over to the new system. During the transition, the two systems will also provide back-up, should one system be unable to meet requirements; thereby reducing the risk of disruption to air traffic services. Airservices also told the committee that the proposed new facilities would have their own power and water supply, providing for reliable and independent operation 24 hours a day.

Given the number of capital works projects in progress, the committee sought and received assurances from Airservices that it had sufficient resources and expertise to manage them all. The committee is satisfied that the project has merit in terms of need, scope and cost and recommends that it proceed. I commend this report to the House.

**BILLS**

*Migration Amendment (Charging for a Migration Outcome) Bill 2015*

Message received from the Senate returning the bill without amendment or request.

*Corporations Amendment (Streamlining of Future of Financial Advice) Bill 2014*

Consideration of Senate Message

Message received from the Senate returning the bill and acquainting the House that the Senate has agreed to the bill with amendments.

Ordered that the amendments be considered at a later hour this day.

**STATEMENTS**

Global Terrorism

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (16:20): I rise to speak indulgence in response to the Prime Minister's statement on the recent terrorist attacks around the world.
Overnight, we have heard again of yet more attacks—in Tunisia and in Egypt. This year we have grieved, again and again, for the innocent victims of terrorist attacks: people going to a concert in Paris; people marching for peace in Ankara; people attending a funeral in Baghdad or buying bread in Beirut. People eating breakfast at a hotel in Mali or attending university in Kenya or playing volleyball in Pakistan or walking down the street in Jerusalem or, indeed, leaving work in Parramatta.

We mourn with those who saw their loved ones go out on a very ordinary day to catch a bus; to pray in a church or synagogue or mosque; to go to school or work; to catch up with friends at a cafe or to see a show. We mourn for those who will never see their family members again. Our deepest sympathies are with the wounded, and our greatest hope is for their recovery from injuries to body and mind.

It breaks our hearts, of course, that there are so many families shattered, so many lives lost, so many bodies broken. It breaks our hearts but does not weaken our resolve. We are resolved to do everything we can to protect our citizens and our values. The government and the opposition stand together in our commitment to the safety and security of the Australian people, and our commitment to combat terrorists at home and abroad. This resolve is a key reason for Australia's military engagement in Iraq and Syria, our participation in the international mission against Daesh. We have a responsibility, as a good global citizen, to respond to the Iraqi government's request for assistance in its fight against Daesh. This year, Australia extended our mission to include air-strikes against targets located in Syria, also under the international legal principle of collective self-defence. We thank the brave men and women of the Australian Defence Force for the professionalism with which they are carrying out their duties. They are a credit to their country.

Labor's support for the campaign in Syria and Iraq is based on humanitarian considerations. The greatest number of victims of Daesh are those who are forced to live beneath their brutal rule. The civil war in Syria has resulted in the gravest humanitarian crisis of our time. Well over 200,000 people have lost their lives, with some estimates at more than 300,000; half the population has been displaced—many millions have fled Syria altogether—and the conflict has become a beacon and a breeding ground for extremists. Syria is of course an exceedingly complex theatre, with a wide range of internal and external actors who have equally wide ranging agendas. Overnight, with the downing of a Russian plane by Turkish forces, we have seen how this complexity can have tragic and unanticipated consequences. It is our hope that Turkey and Russia exercise restraint, and that this incident is not allowed to jeopardise the goal of a lasting and durable peace in Syria. We must all redouble our efforts to make that the case. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, and Labor has consistently argued:

Ultimately a political solution is needed in Syria. Only this would allow attention to turn more fully to eliminating ISIL as a military force.

We have consistently called for a clear strategy in Syria and Iraq—a plan to defeat Daesh and a plan for the day after. This strategy needs to include a strong and coordinated military response to prevent Daesh from perpetrating its crimes. It also needs to include a political solution so that both Syria and Iraq guarantee the rights of all religious and ethnic communities, and we also require a humanitarian response to prevent a generation of children growing up without an education, without adequate health care, without even a country to call their own.
While there are a range of views on the correct plan to defeat Daesh on the battlefield, we agree with most of the international coalition partners that large scale deployment of Western troops is not the correct strategy. Hillary Clinton said recently:

If we have learned anything from 15 years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, it's that local people and nations have to secure their own communities. We can help them, and we should, but we cannot substitute for them. But we can and should support local and regional ground forces in carrying out this mission.

I would add that we have to have a clear objective for this assistance—a plan for now, and a plan for when we leave.

As the terrorist attacks this week, this month, this year, have so painfully shown, we must also combat the threat of terrorist attacks within our borders. French authorities have acted swiftly and strongly against those involved in carrying out the recent attacks in Paris, and who were quite possibly planning further attacks. In Australia, our intelligence, security and law enforcement agencies are at the front line in foiling and disrupting threats to Australians. We have some of the best security and intelligence agencies in the world, and we will continue to give them all our support as they carry out their difficult and necessary work.

We know for certain that our people have stopped attacks in Australia, on Australians, that would have killed our citizens. We all know—how can we not know—that it is possible an attack will not be prevented. It has happened in Australia, with the Lindt cafe siege and in attacks on police officers and police employees in Melbourne and Sydney. None of us can be complacent. But we can all be certain that, while terrorist acts may exact a terrible toll, terrorism will not prevail—because we have seen that every act of terror prompts a thousand acts of courage.

We saw Adel Termos in Beirut letting go of the hand of his six-year-old daughter to throw his arms around a suicide bomber, saving dozens of lives as he lost his own. We saw Michel Catalano telling his young employee to hide as the fugitive Charlie Hebdo gunmen came into his business. He faced the danger alone. And Stephane Sarrade, whose 23-year-old son Hugo was killed in the Bataclan theatre, saying:

I would like to give hope to the next generation. The rest of my life, that will be my work.

Antoine Leiris, whose wife and the mother of his infant son was also murdered in that theatre, wrote in an open letter to the terrorists:

… I will not give you the satisfaction of hating you … You would like me to be scared, for me to look at my fellow citizens with a suspicious eye, for me to sacrifice my liberty for my security. You have lost.

…… …

Us two, my son and I, we will be stronger than every army in the world … all his life this little boy will be happy and free.

Because you will never have his hatred either.

These are great acts of courage, and many smaller ones are no less important—the students and teachers in Kenya who go to school and university every day despite the threats and attacks, and despite the fear they must surely feel; voices raised in La Marseillaise as people were evacuated from the Stade de France; and hundreds of people stranded in Paris after the
attacks given shelter in the homes of strangers who opened their doors, cooked meals and prepared beds.

As people around the world said, 'Je suis Paris,' the people in Paris said, 'Je suis en terrasse'—'I am on the cafe terrace'—as they refused to surrender the everyday pleasures of life. Those who wanted the world to think of fear when they heard the name of Paris have failed. We will remember, instead, solidarity and defiance. Those who wanted the world to think of grief when they heard the name of Beirut have failed. We remember, instead, courage.

When we remember Ankara, we remember that those who were killed were marching for peace. When we remember Garissa, we remember that those killed were striving for an education, for learning—the thing that the terrorists fear most. Every day, in Paris, Sydney, Beirut or Mumbai, we will be in the cafes and the restaurants, at the markets, in our places of worship, at work and in our train stations, schools and offices. That is why terrorism will never win: because the human spirit is unconquerable. Violence in the service of ideology can never defeat courage in the name of our common humanity.

Mr TEHAN (Wannon) (16:31): I give my condolences to the families and friends of those who were killed in the attacks in Paris, Beirut, Egypt and Mali and in all the other places where, over the last two years, the evil of terrorism has shown its ugly face. I commend the member for Sydney for her speech, because she is correct in the fact that it will only be courage which will defeat this evil ideology, which is destroying innocent lives across world as we debate this motion.

It is not just something that we have seen in the last couple of years. Sadly, since 2001 attacks in New York, Bali, London, Madrid, Mumbai and Paris have shaped our world. Sadly, we have seen innocent Australians die. Fortunately, fatal attacks in our own country have been few. Tragically, though, this is no comfort to the families of Curtis Cheng, Katrina Dawson and Tori Johnson. They have seen the full brunt of terrorism here in Australia and have had to deal with the consequences.

There are only two things that will protect us and serve us in this fight—an unwavering commitment to our values and a resolve to destroy terrorism at its heart. Australian values are the best means to keep the hatred that organisations like ISIS, al-Qaeda and Boko Haram are spreading from affecting our citizens. Our values of tolerance, pluralism and individual liberty show in us a determination to fight for the freedoms that many around the world fight to secure for themselves.

We cannot forget that nearly one quarter of Australians were born overseas and have come here because of our values and freedoms. They are what make our country great. Being Australian brings rights but also, just as importantly, responsibilities. We must ensure that we all are united in defending our values and freedoms. After the tragic events in Paris, in the strongest language we have heard from any leader, President Francois Hollande announced to his people that France was at war. He showed that not only would it be French values that would defeat this evil threat but also it would be a collective will around the world to do so. He stated that the republic would not be destroyed by terrorism; terrorism would be destroyed by France.
This government has shown that it too has the collective will to ensure that we are playing our part in trying to destroy Daesh or ISIS. The government has committed the second-largest military contribution in Syria and Iraq to deal with this threat. We have supported our ally, the United States, and the many other countries which have joined forces to defeat this evil organisation. At home, we have also given our intelligence agencies and police forces the tools to do their job in an increasingly dangerous and fast-paced environment. Provisions for foreign fighters, special intelligence operations, data retention and citizenship have all been balanced by reviews which have also been seen to protect our values. Over 120 recommendations have taken into account the views of experts in making sure that we have not only put in place laws to keep us safe but also put in place laws to keep our values safe.

In dealing with the heart of these attacks, we must also continue to show a resolve to deal with them. As the member for Sydney illustrated, we must draw on the courage which has been shown where terrorism has raised its ugly head and use that to make sure that we destroy it at its core. This is the only means by which we can prevent organisations such as Daesh from promoting, provoking, funding or resourcing further attacks.

As President Hollande said, we must combine our forces to achieve a result that is already too late in coming. If we are to defeat ISIS then the West and its allies will have to ensure that they have the collective will to do so. Striking at them to degrade and destroy their capabilities is the only way to ensure they cannot continue to attack us at home. If they are allowed to continue to have a territory where they can act to seek to attack us then we are in danger. But they are operating within an incredibly complex theatre, and we must understand the complexity of the situation. It has been described to me—and it is the best description I have heard—that what we are dealing with is a strategic area which has the complexity of playing a three-dimensional game of chess. If we are to play this game successfully, and ultimately win, it will involve coordinating political, military, diplomatic and covert force strategically.

David Kilcullen is a global expert in military strategy and counter-insurgency. He is the only Australian to have advised the US Secretary of State and the US State Department on counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency. He says western countries have a clear interest in destroying ISIS, and the goal should be to utterly annihilate ISIS as a state. He is one the few people who has had experience in combating al-Qaeda. With others, he put forward a clear strategy for combating al-Qaeda and he has now put forward a clear strategy for combating Islamic State. He has outlined that organisations such as Daesh use an aggregation of grievances to tap into the unrest of citizens in other countries to recruit them, manipulate them and get them to believe that the answer to their problems is jihad.

Ultimately, the only way to destroy this network is to destroy Islamic State at its core. But, without political will, we will be constrained in how much we can do. We have to continue to play a part in doing this. We must ensure that parliaments around the world are also encouraged to have the political will to do what much be done to defeat ISIS. Political will is one thing, but a diplomatic effort is the next. President Hollande has shown that there is a clear intent in Europe and other parts of the world to make sure there is a political solution to enable us to deal with ISIS on the ground, and we must do what we can to help and support France in putting that solution together. We know it is complex; we have seen that recently with the shooting down of a Russian aircraft. But what that should do is once again strengthen
our resolve to make sure we can get a clear strategy in place. We must make sure that we can get the United Nations Security Council acting as one against the situation that is currently evolving on the ground in Iraq in Syria. We must ensure that we can get a unity of purpose to dealing with the complexity of the situation. If we do not, the suffering that we are seeing, especially in Syria and Iraq, is going to continue—and it is suffering the like of which we have not seen since the end of the Second World War. There have been well over 200,000 lives lost in Syria. Millions of people are assembled on the border seeking shelter, food and personal security. There is a complex web of nations surrounding Iraq and Syria looking after their own national interests but also needing to combine to ensure that we can defeat this global problem which continues to touch all nations not only around Iraq in Syria but elsewhere across the globe.

It is only if we can overcome these strategic hurdles that we will make greater headway. That is why it is important that Australia continues to play its part in calling on the global community to have the political will to achieve a political solution to the complex strategic environment in Iraq and Syria and act to defeat Daesh. As leader of the free world, President Obama faces a legacy test like no other in trying to bring all this together. While we all must admit that out missteps have contributed to the situation, we must use the renewed global resolve that has come from Paris to forge an outcome. If the moment is not seized, the will to act will drain away and the world will be less secure as a result. We now have a chance to implement a political solution that will allow us to take action against ISIS, and only by doing this can we prevent further suffering.

My hope is that we will see countries of the free world unite behind President Hollande in his mission to put together the solution we need to combat ISIS. That will make our jobs easier, here, in keeping our nation safe which, as we know, is the greatest priority that any government should have. We have superb intelligence agencies. We have a superb police force. We have a superb community engagement in trying to keep our nation safe. But we need to also make sure that we are doing everything we can abroad to keep our nation safe. That is why we need the political fix when it comes to dealing with Daesh on the ground.

In the last two years Australia's security-threat level has been at high. We must be doing everything we can to reduce this. We must be doing everything we can to make sure our citizens are safe. This will continue to be difficult. Currently before parliament is a new bill seeking to place control orders on teenagers as young as 14. When I came into this parliament, five years ago, the idea that we would need to be placing control orders on 14-year-olds is something we all would have been aghast at. But that is the reality we are dealing with. We are dealing with an evil that knows no bounds, and we must show we have a political will that has no bounds to defeat it.

Dr Leigh (Fraser) (16:46): These past few weeks have been a sombre time for communities all over the world. Over recent times, acts of terror have wracked the livelihoods of many and have increased the fear of brutal and unpredictable violence. Events in Paris have particularly shocked and repulsed us. They have also catalysed a sense of unity in confronting those who would see our societies eroded by distrust and hatred.

On 10 October over 100 people lost their lives when two bombs were detonated, at a peace rally, in Ankara. A video shared on social media depicts a group of demonstrators holding hands and chanting just before the first blast goes off in the background sending the crowd
running towards the railway station. On 31 October, 224 people in a Russian passenger jet were killed when the aircraft was calculatingly exploded by a bomb, most likely planted before take-off.

This came in a long line of terrorist attacks in Egypt that targeted military, security personnel and tourists in that country. Forty-three people passed away, on 12 November, when a double-suicide bombing was carried out in the central business district of Beirut. Numbers give a surface impression of the damage done in these attacks, and beneath each of these numbers are individual people. Ali Awad, only 14, was chopping vegetables when the first bomb hit the city. Adel Tormous, who would die tackling the second bomber, was sitting at a nearby coffee stand. Khodr Alaa Deen, a nurse, was on his way to work his night shift at the teaching hospital of the American university.

On the next day, 13 November, over 120 people lost their lives in brutal orchestrated attacks in Paris. The combination of mass shootings, suicide bombings and hostage taking resulted in the deadliest attacks, in France, since World War II. Included in those who lost their lives was Claire Camax, mother of two, described as 'someone radiant; an overflowing joy of life', and Ludovic Boumbas, a Fedex employee, who took a bullet to save a woman nearby as he dined with friends to celebrate his birthday.

The massacre, in conjunction with the assault on Charlie Hebdo in January, struck the core of the French cultural psyche, which idealises freedom and reason. Then, less than a week after the Paris attacks, 20 people were left dead in a luxury hotel, in Mali, after militia stormed the Radisson Blu, taking around 170 staff and guests hostage. Among the victims lay Anita Ashok Datar, an international aid agency worker from Maryland and former member of the Peace Corp, and three executives from the China Railway Construction Corp. These people were killed in the context of a previous six attacks, this year, in Mali.

Daesh and similar groups are now responsible for over 1,000 deaths outside Syria and Iraq, but that is a fraction of the deaths they have caused in those two countries. In Syria and Iraq, the loss of life caused by Daesh, over the past year, is estimated at more than 6,000. And over the same time span, in Nigeria, the terrorist group Boko Haram is also estimated to have killed over 6,000 people. The randomness associated with this atrocious loss of life in recent attacks, in places such as Paris, Beirut, Egypt and Mali, has made the power of fear a poignant and pressing issue for people all around the world.

With the diversity of countries and peoples that have been attacked, the sequence of attacks has inspired feelings of shared global vulnerability. We remember those who were carrying out the tasks of the everyday when they were struck down without reason. They were having a coffee, on the way to work to support themselves and their families, preparing food for the day, and holidaying. We remember the victims as people just like us, whose lives were stolen from them. We mourn the victims of the terror attacks around the world in a tone that reflects the relationships we cherish with our own relatives, friends and neighbours. We sense what those communities have lost. We ask ourselves what it means, what is to be done, what is next and where the violence comes from.

Many will have read David Kilcullen's Quarterly Essay 'Blood year'. To read his depictions of the horror in the Middle East, over the past decade, is to be reminded of Goya's masterwork, The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters. What we see is the spear point of these attacks and the young men and women who become the tools for the politics of terror, the
result of reason suppressed and stupefied. It is important, too, that we recognise it is the result of religion co-opted and twisted. I would recommend to the House Graeme Wood's article 'What ISIS really wants', published in The Atlantic earlier this year, and the book Islam and the Future of Tolerance, by Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz.

Terrorist cells are made up of individuals with their own ideologies and pathologies. But terrorist cells, like terrorism, crystallise out of a complex mixture of social, economic, historical and ideological factors. The sinister alchemy that turns an impassioned youth into a suicide bomber will not be neutralised by force alone. We need to address the causes as well as the outcomes of political terror. We cannot completely obliterate extremism, but nor should be tolerate it. Wherever extremism is pursued—in Paris, Beirut, Jerusalem, London, Bamako, Baghdad or Damascus—it is anathema to the values that underpin free societies of tolerance and diversity.

Eli Berman's excellent book Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism, and Louise Richardson's What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat discuss the fact that in order to crush terrorism we need to understand the social circumstances out of which terrorism emerges. This means showing that governments can do a better job of providing social services to help the community that would-be terrorists care about. That might, for example, mean using soldiers to protect aid workers who are building new schools, and perhaps even providing security for girls to attend the school in the months after it opens. By helping governments in developing countries to provide services that are currently being delivered, or disrupted, by insurgent groups, we can simultaneously help the poor and hurt the terrorists. Failed states are the friend of terrorist groups.

An example of this approach of focusing on social service provision and understanding its links to terrorism was discussed by Eli Berman, where he talks about how Egypt's President Nasser undermined the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950s by nationalising schools and health clinics. By directly providing electricity, health care and welfare services, governments improve the outside options for young people and help dissuade them from taking the wrong road. This is the kind of counter-insurgency approach that David Kilcullen has described as 'armed social work', because it unravels the power base of a would-be terrorist organisation. Of course, our security and intelligence capacity must be sufficient to thwart these eruptions of callous brutality and terror. But we have to work just as hard to defuse the tensions and conflicts that give rise to extremism.

We are up against groups that move towards their goals in a number of different ways: by inciting regional conflict—for example, by attacks inside Iraq and Syria—and by exacerbating the Sunni-Shia fissure through the Middle East. We are up against groups that aim to build relationships with jihadist groups that can carry out military operations across the Middle East and North Africa. They aim to inspire or to assist remote extremist sympathisers to plan and carry out attacks in the West and in countries in our region, such as Indonesia. By pursuing these different paths, such terrorist groups seek to create an atmosphere of chaos and an impression of power that outstrips their actual resources. We know the tracks they are moving along, and we know there is no one way to block this range of activity.

Perhaps we get a clearer view of the victims of terror when the target is a city like Paris. Hopefully we will go on to look closer at the regions and cities in which this kind of violence
is becoming grimly routine. Every life that has been lost to terrorist violence compels us to do better in stamping out the causes and the consequences of extremism.

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (16:56): I speak in support of the Prime Minister's statements on terrorism and national security, in response to the recent terror attacks in France, Mali, Tunisia and numerous other locations in the world. These events have galvanised global resolve against terrorism. May I add my condolences and sympathies to the victims, and their families. I fully support the government's commitment to be part of an international coalition providing military support to combat terrorism, provide humanitarian protection, and assist legitimate governments to regain control over their sovereign territory by combatting Islamic State insurgents and other terrorists.

An integral part of our Western culture is the notion of defending one's territory and property in the face of conflict, by force if necessary. The Anzacs and those before them were legendary in their courage on the battlefield. Running away and surrendering is not the Australian way nor is it the West's way. Standing up to tyrants with military power is an integral part of our culture. The great song Rule Britannia aptly sums it up:

The nations, not so blest as thee,
Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall …

Today we see the results of populations desperately fleeing failed states where tyrants have taken hold. If we are to prevail in the future then Western culture in respect of dealing with conflict with military force must prevail over pacifist cultures, otherwise Australia will not be able to adequately defend itself in the future.

Although these events are located several thousand kilometres away—half a world away—they have a profound effect on the national security of the Australian homeland. Recently, we have seen a raising of the national terror threat level, three terror related attacks on Australian soil, and the disruption of a number of potential terror plots by our national security intelligence agencies and the Australian Federal Police.

Terrorism has its origins in failed states with a collapse in governance. Among its root causes are a breakdown in law and order and a lack of economic development and opportunity, which breeds poverty and envy and provides a breeding ground for radicalisation. Access to surplus military weapons from nations updating their armouries compounds the problem.

Combating terrorism will require a more decentralised model of security and plans for more localised self-defence. Given the sporadic nature of attacks, traditional centralised law enforcement methodology will not be able to provide a sufficiently rapid response to emergency situations. Private security measures may be required in the future by businesses and organisations, as governments cannot be expected to meet all requirements.

A part of the technological war on terror is also being fought from within my electorate. The Security Research Institute based at Edith Cowan University is one of the leading cybersecurity and digital forensic groups in the world. It is recognised for its expertise in human, physical and aviation security. The institute is led by Professor Craig Valli and consistently delivers quality outcomes in computer and digital forensics, network and wireless security, information warfare, physical security and risk management. The institute was recognised by the Australian Computer Society as the Security Centre of Expertise. The
group's other achievements include a digital forensics tool developed with the WA police to assist with cybercrime, preliminary crime scene investigation, disaster victim identification and evidence tracking.

Border security is of paramount importance. As former Prime Minister John Howard once said, 'We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come.' Merit-based migration is the notion that Australia should only accept migrants who are prepared to make a contribution to our nation and bring with them skills and human capital.

It is of great concern that a number of Australian citizens have acted contrary to the laws of Australia by travelling to foreign nations to participate in armed conflict for foreign causes. This amounts to treasonous conduct. It is true to say that the enemies of the state are not limited to any one particular ethnic or religious group. A number of constituents have contacted me recently to express their concerns about the brutal atrocities perpetrated, with fears for their own personal safety, and to express outrage that certain subsets of the immigrant community are being grossly disloyal to Australia. These are very valid concerns, and I believe a tough stance should be taken on these issues. We must promote and defend a strong culture based on Western values, and build a strong democracy. There is no room in Australia for alternative legal systems, such as tribal or sharia law. There must be one legal system for all Australians.

Australia's immigration system has traditionally welcomed people from across the globe into our multicultural community over the years. In return, our society is entitled to expect that when migrants arrive in our country they will adopt a positive attitude, strive to integrate into mainstream society, obey the laws and make a constructive contribution to their new homeland. Above all, society expects that they will be civic minded, loyal and patriotic to Australia and their fellow Australians. Experience has shown that the majority of immigrants have indeed settled and become good citizens—which is testament to our immigration system and our multicultural society.

Unfortunately, there are certain enclaves that have failed to integrate into mainstream society and have adopted hostile, antisocial and radical attitudes towards mainstream Australian society and its culture. In the worst of instances they have resorted to violence and intimidation. Currently, there is a great deal of unrest in the community about perceived threats from particular subgroups. The government is taking measured and responsible steps through increased surveillance and security measures to protect our citizens by mitigating threats. Members of the community need to be vigilant, review their own personal safety and take appropriate lawful measures to protect themselves.

As national leaders, it is important that we are careful not to generalise or stereotype any particular ethnic group or religion as being solely associated with these illegal, criminal and terrorist acts. Rather, as representatives of our community, we have a duty to speak out against fundamentalism, extremism and criminality in all their forms. We must take tough measures to protect the fabric of Australian society, founded on Westminster democracy and the culture, values, traditions and principles which we hold dear. These are the very things which make Australia the country we love and the very characteristics which draw thousands of immigrants to our shores.

Selective multiculturalism is the notion that Australian society should be selective and only adopt those aspects of multiculturalism which are synergistic or complementary, and that
mainstream Australian culture should prevail where foreign cultures are inconsistent with long-established social norms. I subscribe wholeheartedly to embracing the synergistic and complementary aspects of multiculturalism. However, when there is a clash of cultures, a conflict of ideals, then I advocate for adherence to the prevailing Western culture in Australian society in terms of conforming to social norms, maintaining the Protestant work ethic, being diligent, embracing scientific methods, being respectful and being democratic. These are the very things that make Australia the country which we hold so dear. There is no room in Australian society for divided loyalties.

We must fight vigorously against the emerging counterculture and anti-establishment elements in our society which seek to undermine our proud national heritage and Australian way of life. We must proudly celebrate our founding British culture, institutions and values which form the basis of our great Australian society and which have allowed us to enjoy prosperity in peace. The lessons we can learn for current and future generations of Australians are of patriotism, loyalty to our country and service to our nation.

The recent issue of the radicalisation of youths leaving the country to take up arms against Australia has its origins deeper and over a longer period of time than simply over the internet and social media. There has been a clash of cultures in existence for some time in certain communities across Australia. These matters have not been adequately resolved due to a politically correct regime reluctant to offend. The effort to combat the spread of radicalism in our suburbs and communities must start in our schools, with young people being taught a balanced curriculum of Australian history, civics education, sport and the values of community service and good citizenship. Young Australians need to understand the value of achievement through education and workforce participation. Our youth need to develop into well-adjusted adults over the course of their school years. Quick-fix anti-radicalisation programs will not be effective.

The Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy did a remarkable job in providing me with a balanced education at Aranmore Catholic College and turning me and my classmates into good citizens, many of whom were also from migrant backgrounds. Our education consisted of mainstream academic subjects balanced with sport, community service, pastoral care and Christian religious education. A good education is what is missing in a lot of these cases.

We must strongly oppose radicalism, militancy, and moves to introduce foreign legal systems into Australia. Together we must unite to defeat our enemies that intend to do us harm and bring those who have contravened Australian laws to justice. We have a responsibility to protect our national borders and be very selective to ensure the merit based selection of immigrants who are committed to integrate into mainstream society and will strive to become good Australian citizens. Australians can be assured that the government is committed to maintaining strong border protection, merit based immigration and strengthening of our Defence Force capabilities. I am proud to be part of a government that will take a hard line against radicalism, extremism and militancy whilst at the same time upholding the rule of law and protecting traditional Australian institutions and culture. We will not allow global terrorists to scare us into a state of fear that allows prejudice to unravel the social cohesion in our mainstream communities. Neither will we allow zealots and fundamentalists to disrupt the fabric of Australian society.
I wish the members of the Australian Defence Force well as they face numerous challenges and dangers in the service of our nation. I would encourage patriotic Australians to enlist in the defence forces or the reserves. I thoroughly enjoyed my participation in the ADF parliamentary program and would highly recommend joining the reserves to other Australians. Similarly, on behalf of the Australian community, I express appreciation to the officers of the Australian Federal Police, emergency services personnel and our national security and intelligence operatives as they work diligently to neutralise prospective threats and maintain our safety and security.

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (17:10): I have risen in this place on a number of occasions now to bring to the attention of the Australian people—I have long ago given up on trying to influence the people in this place—to the fact that the term visas, for people who come here and tend to stay here, now number over 620,000 a year. There are over 200,000 migrants coming to Australia. There are near enough to 300,000 student visas, which are normally for about four years, and an average of about 150,000 section 457 visas. Our migrant intake has been at around 250,000, but there has been an extraordinary bulge in student visas. Obviously I cannot use his name, but one of the three most influential and powerful senior-ranking people in tertiary education in Australia intimated to me some 10 or 12 years ago that if we stopped the universities from being visa shops we would close half of the universities in Australia.

I went to university. After a few years they found out I was there and they threw me out, of course! But prior to that we could reflect upon the fact that there was only one university in Queensland. So, in the space of the past 30 or 40 years, and most certainly in the past 20 or 30 years, we have reached the point where we now have I think seven universities in Queensland. Of the graduates they are turning out, obviously a hell of a lot of them are these people who are coming from overseas. If you tell me that you have to come to Australia from India—a country of 1,000 million people—to get an education, then I am not going to take you very seriously. And if someone were to say to me that they were coming from China to Australia to get a good education in Australia, that would really be laughable—a country of nearly 1½ thousand million people, and they cannot get a university education there but have to come to Australia? That is not likely; that does not happen.

The people who are coming here are coming because they are buying the right to stay in Australia. There are people on the government side of the parliament—but not many of them now—who in days past would say, 'Oh, they're going home.' Well, Mr Abbott attempted to send them home. He started checking on people in Melbourne. But the reaction was so violent that he had to abandon that within two days and disown the initiative. He was removed from the prime ministership of Australia some four weeks later. I am not saying it was on account of that occurrence, but you would have to be naive to think that it was not a contributing factor.

Say you are bringing nearly 650,000 people a year into an economy that only generates 200,000 jobs. I am fascinated by the market fundamentalists that run this place, on both sides of the parliament, but the Liberals are probably sprouting the free market philosophy. We have an advertisement that comes on our television about 20 times a night, and that is clearly because they are not selling it to anyone. When I saw the former Prime Minister get up in this place and clap for Minister Robb because of the free trade deal with China, I thought: 'Is this
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getting you any votes? I'm going to work from here to Bourke backwards, or paddle to Magnetic Island in a barbed wire canoe, if this is going to get you any votes.' Well, four weeks later he was out on his head. Again, I am not saying that it was on account of that. But, if anyone thinks that this free trade business is going down well with the Australian public and that this mass migration policy of the ALP and now the LNP is going down well with the Australian people, then again I would say you believe in my chances of getting to Magnetic Island in a barbed wire canoe.

It is just simple mathematics, if you are bringing 650,000 people into the country every year and the economy is only generating 200,000 jobs, and if you have over 200,000 school leavers and young people joining the workforce each year, then there are 800,000 people chasing 200,000 jobs. Somewhere, someone must go on the dole here, and it is not the people that are coming in. They are coming in from countries where the average wage levels are $5,000 a year, and that is about the average wage level throughout all of the Asian countries and the Middle Eastern countries. So they come here where they are entitled to nearly $30,000 worth of income and benefits, even if they do not work. Well, you would be a mug not to come here, wouldn't you?

I think anyone that goes down to a grocery store or gets a taxi or whatever—any after-hours jobs—they are all taken now by people from overseas. People say, 'Well, Australians won't work,' and I am getting very truculent about that because I, as an Australian, do not particularly like being called a 'bludger'. My forebears, the people of Queensland—we happened to have been cane cutters, where we were paid on tonnage; we happened to have been miners, where we were paid on yardage; and we happened to have been people that worked in meat works, where we were paid on tally rates—we only got paid for what we did. We were the hardest working people that ever there were. There was no air conditioning in those days either.

Let me come back to the bill. If you are bringing nearly 650,000 people a year into this country and a very large number of them are coming from countries that are on fire, where there are mass killings, upheavals, revolutions or whatever word you want to use, where terrorists are running amok and the government's democracy and rule of law are not things that any of these people understand. But, if you are bringing in people from these countries, then you simply must, as sure as the sun rises, recognise that some of them will escape through the net and they will be terrorists—and if they use our country to promote the terrorism from the country from which they came.

I have a lot of dealings with people from Indonesia and I have really found them excellent people to deal with. The people and the governments of Indonesia have returned good for evil, they have been good neighbours to us, in spite of insult and offence after insult and offence. Yet they have continued to show the sort of Christianity which should, of course, be the hallmark of our society, not their society.

The previous speaker beholds us to reflect upon the education system in Australia. I cannot speak for the state education system; I cannot speak for the modern Catholic education system. I went through a system where I had nuns and Christian brothers teach me, and one of the great advantages that I have had in life and much of everything that I owe in life will be sheeted back to those people. The nun was the principal of my little convent primary school in Cloncurry; her name was Sister Thomas. I cannot find a decent book on Mother Mary
MacKillop; they seem to be preoccupied with a fight she had with a bishop or something. No-one is interested in that. She was one of the great spiritual leaders of this nation, one of the great creators of this nation, and all they can talk about is somebody fighting with the bishop. But I suspect that she was very much like Sister Thomas. There were eight years of primary school, and every single morning of our lives Sister Thomas stood us in front of the Australian flag and we said these words, which I remember to this very day:

God Bless our lovely morning land, Australia
God keep her with his enfolding hand, Australia.
On Earth there is no other land, like our enchanting Southern land,
Our own dear home, our Mother land, Australia.

And, if you stand in front of the flag and you sing that every morning of your life for eight years, it has to leave an impression behind.

A lot of people are coming to Australia and they do not have that cultural background. They do not have that cultural bent. They do not have those aspirations. And, before everyone starts getting a little bit Islamic here, I think we should take a cold shower, because in outback Australia, and particularly outback Australia where I come from, the Afghan cameleers were very much part of the building of this nation. The only form of transportation we had was camels, and the only people who knew how to work that form of transportation—it was a highly specialised field—were in fact the Afghan people who came to Australia.

I could tell a lot of funny stories, I could tell a lot of outrageous stories from my own family who mixed with these people and worked with them. They aspired to become patriotic and were accepted as patriotic, good Australians. They wanted to become Australians, and that was one of the reasons and motivations that they came here. Clearly there are an awful lot of people coming here now that simply do not have that aspiration. In fact, it could be said that they have aspirations that we become like their country. Have a look at their countries, from Morocco across to Pakistan, they are on fire. I saw a newspaper report the other day that said that no prime minister in Pakistan history has completed a term in office. That is in sharp contrast to the nation next door, India, where, with one exception, I think almost every prime minister has completed their term in office. There is something very different there and it is naive to pretend that there is not.

Those people of the Islamic faith who have come to Australia—and I know many of them from Indonesia—set a very good example of small-C Christianity, where you love your neighbour and you have a responsibility to your neighbour. They set a very good example for Australians. Also, on two occasions, specialist surgeons have had to battle to save my life, and in both cases, judging by their names—I would not know what religion they are and I would not be the slightest bit interested—I would say they had Islamic backgrounds. One of them fought for 20 hours straight, trying to save my life. Obviously, I owe those men a very great debt of gratitude. I am trying to raise money to have a bust put up for one of them, Dr Modica; he is one of the leading heart surgeons in Australia. Anyone else who has had the great privilege of being a patient of Modica’s would say exactly what I am saying. A number of people have rung me up about that. We pay great tribute to him.

It also needs to be said that I want my country to love everyone who is here. There are very few pure merinos in Australia—very, very few pure merinos! I was on an aeroplane recently
with a Scotsman and I had to listen for two hours to his diatribe of hatred against the English. My own towns, where I come from, are very much Cornish and Welsh mining towns, where people were treated like slaves by their English masters out of London. There is no love for London among those people, I can assure you.

So we can be very proud of what we have achieved in Australia on the basis of being a very egalitarian society.

In my electorate I have people from Albania who are very prominent in the Atherton Tableland. In fact, there are 11 major organisations there (tobacco, the maize board, the major Rotary Club up there and various others) and, when this terrorist business started in the Middle East, I was very surprised to find that the people prominent in eight of those 11 were in fact of the Islamic faith—surprised in the sense that I could not see any difference between us, and I was really a bit put out that other people even considered telling me that they were different. (Time expired)

Mr SIMPKINS (Cowan) (17:25): We are here today speaking about national security because around the world—in Europe, Africa and other places as well—there is an evil that seeks to undermine great principles and great traditions. We are having this debate because people have died. They have been attacked by evil. They have been attacked by people that have no regard for the sanctity of human life. There have been attacked by people who claim piety in their religion and yet, through their acts and through the way they so often live their lives, they show no religious background whatsoever. They have no piety. They have nothing to recommend them. They are, in my view, subhuman.

Ankara just recently, Mali just a few days ago, Tunisia yesterday, and Paris, of course: these are the most recent examples of where this evil, this terrorism, is taking place. It is by Daesh, IS by another name, and Boko Haram. The names are out there, but really this is all about an evil philosophy that has no real connection whatsoever with humanity.

In the face of these threats, and in the face of these deaths that they have inflicted upon not just France but the other countries I have mentioned, we are fortunate because we have great strength. We refuse to bow down and accept the fear that these terrorists offer. We refuse to change our policies with regard to Syria and Iraq. That is one of the things they want, of course—a change in policy. They want us to back off from the bombing raids that are taken place against IS. They want us to accept their plans for a caliphate, a radical Islamist nation with a radical Islamist agenda. So they are trying to instil fear to make sure there is a change of policy, and we must resist that.

What is required is absolutely the resolute action we have seen in recent days. Faced with the brutal and inhuman attacks in Paris, we saw the French President saying, 'No, we're not going to back off. In fact, we're going to hit you harder.' Indeed, that is exactly what happened. I believe there were 12 major bombs into Raqqa, in Syria. That is the right response on these sorts of occasions.

Of course, in Europe they do not have the same advantages that we have here. We are an island nation. Our ability to control our borders is very clear and it has been exact under this government. We also have a history of restricting access to automatic weapons—again, a problem that Europe unfortunately continues to have. We have taken action against elements that can make up explosives and we have done that over many years as well. We have our
outstanding Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, ASIO, which does a wonderful job, assisted by the Australian Federal Police and the state police forces. Of course, we also have the Australian Defence forces—the Army, the Navy and the Air Force—that do such wonderful work in Syria and in Iraq, and even here in the homeland, Australia itself. We have these advantages. We have these organisations and agencies that are defending this country and doing the right thing.

We are also greatly aided, in the face of the threat of Islamist terrorists who are, unfortunately, attacking so many places around the world, by those people of the Muslim faith who are prepared to stand up and report on the radicals. I myself have been contacted by people in the past who tell me about these threats in Perth—not in Western Sydney or Melbourne but in Perth. I have referred those matters on to the appropriate agency. I say thank you to all those people who are prepared to stand up and be counted and say, 'These are not the threats that I want for my country,' and talk to the relevant authorities to identify those who are a threat to this country. They are good Australians, and I greatly appreciate what they do for our country.

We are, however, faced with a highly media savvy threat, and that is Daesh. They have thousands of Twitter accounts, they are most active on social media and they are able to reach out to people who can be appealed to by the message that they put out there. There might be an element of religious piety in their message, but, as I have said in the past in this place, unfortunately they reach out to the darkest nature of some people. They reach out to the people who like to hurt other people. They reach out to bring people to Syria or Iraq on behalf of Daesh. They reach out to people who like the idea of maybe being paedophiles or sadists or participating in the sexual slavery of others. These are some of the messages that I think appeal to the darkest nature of these sorts of people. These people are not just from Australia. They are from around the world; many countries have these foreign fighters. I would suggest that what draws them to this fight and what probably draws them to terrorist acts in Australia and elsewhere is this interest in those darkest of motivations. I believe that, whilst they might talk a little bit about religious faith and piety, that might be a cover for this darkness in their souls, in their natures and in their motivations. It is the darkness which appeals to these people.

I cannot imagine why someone would take steps to cut another person's head off, have sexual contact with a child or sell somebody as a slave. I cannot imagine how someone could do that. It is because I cannot imagine how a real human could do that that I absolutely and fundamentally believe the only way that Daesh will be defeated is militarily. The total destruction and bombing of these people are very good things. If an Australian is involved in such brutality and evil over there and they are bombed as well, I think that is a great thing because they are not, in my view, any longer worthy of being an Australian or being considered human. If that is what they do—if they do those sorts of dark, terrible things—then they should not be regarded as human. They should have no standing. I appreciate the fact that firm action, such as air strikes—whether it is by the French, by the Americans or by our own outstanding Air Force—is a good way forward. Who knows? In the future, there might be a need for other forms of military action as part of a dedicated attempt by a coalition to do what needs to be done. I do not think that we should ever rule out resolute action to
defeat evil, to destroy evil and to kill all those involved with this evil. It is something that we must be prepared to do. I can see it coming in the future.

With regard to Australia, I have already talked about some of the people in my community in Cowan who have approached me and told me about the things that they have seen and heard. They are prepared to stand up and be counted and, through me, make contact with the relevant agencies. I commend them again for that. I commend all those Muslim leaders who are also prepared to stand up and be very clear in their condemnation of terrorism and the evil of Daesh. The challenge, of course, is to make sure that the message that we put out there is very clear, listened to and reaches those who could be corrupted by the message of Daesh. That is really important. When we see a 15-year-old who can basically leave a mosque, leave the influence of others, and go up behind a public servant in the streets of Parramatta and shoot him in the back of the head, it really says something about the threat level in this country.

Whilst I think the agencies that we have working against this threat and the laws that this parliament has passed and continues to consider passing are the right way that we must act and are the right way for us to be prepared to defend this great country from such threats, we also need the cooperation of all the people in the community, including Muslim leaders. I encourage parents and extended families to be prepared to talk to their young people about how evil IS is and how evil Daesh is and what they do has nothing to do with correct behaviour. There is no excuse for joining IS and there is no excuse for what IS does. There must be an engagement. There must be people who are prepared to talk about this in the houses of this country to help turn young people from this path, to tell them that there is no redemption in acting for IS and to tell them that society is not against them. There is no excuse for acting like this. No grievance justifies this sort of evil behaviour. This country is a land of opportunity. This country is a land where people, if they want to work hard and get stuck into their education, they can achieve great things. It does not matter where someone comes from. What matters is their character and their willingness to work hard to achieve a successful future.

I again offer my condolences to those families who have lost loved ones. We, together as a parliament, are resolute in our commitment to fight the evil of terrorism, to fight Daesh, to destroy it and to see this world a safer place as a result.

Mr DANBY (Melbourne Ports) (17:40): Everyone who has visited Paris cannot help but fall in love. All of us who have been privileged enough to visit Paris have our stories. Often we were there for the first time when we were young, full of promise and often short of money, wandering around the cobbled streets and lanes, being overwhelmed in the galleries, awestruck by the palaces and the places of worship and mesmerised by the sheer beauty of what is almost certainly the grandest and most gloriously designed city in the world. All of us from this new land marvel at the magnificence of the Ancien Regime.

There is perhaps no other city like Paris that demonstrates that what we individually accumulate does not really matter beside what we accomplish together as people. The pinnacle of achievement and accomplishment for the people of France is their spectacular capital. Its exciting history, its style, its cuisine, its vibrancy, its splendour, its grand boulevards and its joie de vivre are a celebration of human achievement and of the glory of the civilization we have built. It is the most visited city on the planet. One million Australians
visit Paris every year. It is a place that so many young people scrimp and save for and dream of visiting—some with a sketchbook in hand and inspiration in their heart. So many stories are told, for generations, of finding love there. It is that kind of city: it moves you, it captures you and it lifts your gaze from the ordinary to the possible. Paris is a city of lights and a city of dreams. It is a place of glorious history and a future made bright by the hopes and aspirations of all those who make their home there for a lifetime or who make a visit that they will never forget.

Emma Parkinson, the articulate young woman from Hobart, who is studying in Paris and who attended a concert on a Friday night at the Bataclan, told her story on the weekend. Her smiling cheerfulness and her determination to keep enjoying life, no matter what, is the perfect embodiment of all those who have visited that great city. It will always be this way. She dismissed the bullet wound inflicted by the ISIS terrorists who attacked the crowd of unarmed young concert-goers—even targeting people in wheelchairs. With a smile, she dismissed the bullet wound as a mere—with a typically Australian phrase—'pain in the arse'. She insisted that she was incredibly lucky. She understood what this murderous scum were all about:

They were targeting young people who were having fun, laughing and being happy and doing what young people do … to incite hate and fear and make people afraid and escalate … racism.

She stated what she is about and what we are about. She said:

I won't give in to fear. I won't give in to fear.

I doubt we have had a greater ambassador for our nation than this young, poised, hopeful, cheerful and cosmopolitan woman from Hobart. She is touring the world. As an Australian, she showed strength and decency and calmly told her story infused with Australian values. Her parents must be so very proud of her.

It is popular in American politics to speak of that great country and its many great cities as a 'shining light on the hill'. It is, of course, a biblical reference, not in my tradition but in others, in Matthew 5:14:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Now more than ever and more than in any other place in the world right now, because of the recent obscenity inflicted on it, because of the stoicism, the steady resolve and the strength shown towards what it has endured, because its future's brightness is powered by the hopes and dreams by all those born to it and drawn to it, Paris is indeed a shining light on the hill.

From that light on the hill, we will keep burning brightly long after we have crushed IS, long after we have held those who funded and enabled it to account and long after we have done our bit to bring peace and tranquillity to all of those who dream of a better life in the Middle East and death and destruction to all of those whose evil threatens not just the Christians of Mosul but the Muslims of Melbourne and the Jews of Manhattan.

I hear a lot of loose talk about Islam. I hear it on talkback. I hear it sometimes from some constituents. I hear it a lot. I want to make clear my views on this not only as a member of the opposition but also as a Jewish member of the Australian Parliament. Just because a murderer claims to represent a certain cause does not mean they do. We have seen ample evidence that the Paris terrorists, indeed the 9/11 terrorists, were not religiously observant people. They led troubled, often debauched lives. Mass murderers can try to cloak their evil in a shroud of
religion or ideology, but their crime and slime always soak through. They do not represent Islam for me any more than the Branch Davidians responsible for many deaths in Waco, Texas or the supposedly worshipful militia who blew up US government buildings in Oklahoma represent Christian Protestants. Religion has been used and abused this way—as evil's excuse—for many centuries and it will probably continue for all time. Evil's creativity is, sadly, boundless.

Australia must be tough on terror, but we must never be afraid. We must be mercilessly tough on terror because the safety of our citizens depends on it. This Parliament has responsibility for many matters, set out in our Constitution, and frequently enlarged since Federation, but none is more important than national security and keeping Australians safe. We cannot build a strong economy and we cannot educate our kids, heal the sick and address disadvantage and injustice unless we keep the nation and all its people safe. We must do Emma Parkinson proud and be able to look ourselves in the mirror. Racism has no place in Australia. History tells us societies that indulge in it pay a very high price indeed. In tolerance there is remarkable strength.

We value the separation of worship from politics. We value a respect for the faith of others and its free practise as long as it does not interfere with the rights of others. We respect the traditions and decent values that underpin the great faiths of the world, many of which happen to have shared and consistent values. Everything we know and love about Australia is embodied in tolerance. We must be ready to fight, with all our resolve, with all the weapons at our disposal, weapons of war and persuasion, to fight all the enemies of tolerance, however frightening or amorphous, foreign or domestic, Mullahs or media, Daesh or demagogue, in order to keep our tolerant, inclusive and diverse nation safe from bombs and bigotry in our time and for all time.

I want to conclude by echoing the words of that wonderful Englishman, the BBC broadcaster Andrew Neil, who in a broadcast that almost shattered the Twittersphere said:

Welcome to This Week, the week in which a bunch of loser jihadists slaughtered 132 innocents in Paris, to prove the future belongs to them rather than a civilisation like France. Well, I can't say I fancy their chances. France: the country of Descartes, Monet, Sartre, Rousseau, Camus, Renoir, Berlioz, Gauguin, Hugo, Voltaire, Matisse, Debussy, Ravel, Saint-Saens, Bizet, Satie, Pasteur, Moliere, Zola, Balzac.

Cutting edge science, world class medicine, fearsome security forces, nuclear power, Coco Chanel, Chateau Lafite, coq au vin, Daft Punk, Zizou Zidane, Juliette Binoche, liberte, egalite, fraternite, and creme brulee.

Versus what? Beheadings, crucifixions, amputations, slavery, mass murder, medieval squalor and a death cult barbarity that would shame the middle ages.

Mr Neil concluded:

Well IS or Daesh or ISIS or ISIL or whatever name you're going by—I'm sticking with IS, as in Islamist scumbags—I think the outcome is pretty clear to everybody but you.

Whatever atrocities you are currently capable of committing, you will lose. In a thousand years' time, Paris, that glorious city of lights, will still be shining bright as will ever other city like it. While you will be as dust, along with the ragbag of fascist Nazis and Stalinists that previously dared to challenge democracy and failed.

Vive la France.
Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects) (17:48): I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise and to participate in this debate and join with my fellow parliamentarians from all sides of the chamber to express my horror, my revulsion and the most fundamental moral contempt for the attackers in Paris and what they have done and in doing so to speak on behalf of my constituents in Bradfield and, of course, to express sentiments which I am confident are shared by every Australian.

In recent weeks the world has seen numerous terrible atrocities carried out by extremist terrorist organisations. The attacks in Paris, in which some 130 people were killed and a very large number were injured, were sadly just one of an extremely troubling series of events. In October, 103 people were killed in Ankara after two suicide bombers detonated their bombs in a crowd of peace activists. On the day before the attacks in Paris, suicide bombers killed 43 people in Beirut, and in Mali last week 21 people were killed after extremist militants took over 100 people hostage at a hotel in that nation's capital. Of course, the Russian jetliner that was downed by what is now believed to be a terrorist bomb is yet another example of the disturbing and troubling series of atrocities which we have seen around the world.

The sheer numbers are shocking in their magnitude, but what they remind us of is the fact that we are engaged in a battle of fundamental values. On the one hand, we have a murderous group bent on forcing people to live in a repressive theocratic state through the use of force. On the other hand, we have the values represented by liberal democratic nations like France.

All that we hear about the violent repression imposed on those who live in the parts of Iraq and Syria controlled by the terrorist group ISIL or Daesh is extremely troubling. While information about daily life is limited, what we do know is that fear and brutality are used daily as weapons against the people living under the control of this evil group. Extreme restrictions have been imposed on a bewildering array of aspects of day-to-day life, and any violation of those restrictions can result in imprisonment, torture or execution.

It was, I think, no accident that Daesh decided to mount this attack in Paris, a city which is significant for so many reasons but a city which was at the very centre of the Enlightenment, an era of human progress in which medieval superstition yielded to rational, fact based inquiry and, of course, a period of history in which the recognition of and the emphasis on the rights and possibilities of the individual, regardless of class or background, began to emerge. The philosophical advances made during the Enlightenment underpin much of what forms the basis of our democracy here in Australia and similar democracies all around the world—ideas of individual liberties, such as freedom of religion and freedom of expression, and the idea of a social contract between citizens and the state. The work of key figures of this period, such as Voltaire and Rousseau, contributed very substantially to the formation of the very concept and, in turn, the reality of the modern democratic state. As a city which was at the very epicentre of this philosophical activity, Paris has long embodied and stood for these ideas.

It was also, I suggest, no accident that these terrorists chose to attack people who were out enjoying themselves and enjoying some of the simple pleasures of life—hearing dinner or a drink in a restaurant or bar, watching a football game, attending a concert. The notion of people being free to choose how they spend their time, the notion of people being free to spend some of their time simply enjoying themselves, is anathema to totalitarian regimes and, even more so, theocratic regimes. ISIL's hatred of such freedoms is evident in the oppressive and violent way in which they control areas like Raqqah in Syria, a place where people live in
a constant state of terror and where the ability to enjoy life's simple pleasures is virtually nonexistent.

We can often frame the rights and freedoms that we enjoy in a country like Australia in high-minded terms, but it is these simple pleasures which bring so much meaning to life—the opportunity to spend time with friends and family, the opportunity to enjoy yourself and engage in recreation at a time of your choice, making your own judgement. Attacks of the kind that took place in Paris are designed out of a completely different and utterly hostile impulse. They are designed out of an impulse and a desire to prevent us from living our lives freely and without fear.

One of the themes of the classic novel of life under an oppressive totalitarian regime 1984 was this notion that the ordinary and simple pleasures of life were not to be permitted to people under that regime. Indeed, the loyal party servant Winston, the hero of that novel, who briefly enjoyed some of those pleasures, was quickly caught and punished for doing so. Orwell's novel reminds us that totalitarian regimes take a very dim view of people enjoying the simple, routine and ordinary pleasures of life. Sadly, hostility towards people enjoying those simple pleasures is at the very core of the approach of this violent and oppressive movement and the theocracy which it has established and which it purports to speak for.

Tragedies of the kind that we have seen in recent weeks prompt us to reflect on the values and freedoms that define us as a nation, particularly in light of the obvious fact that these attacks are very much framed with a view to damaging and destroying the values and the lifestyles based on those values which we enjoy in a country like Australia.

In referring to ISIL's objectives in seeking to establish a theocratic state, I very much join with the observations which have been made by so many that ISIL should certainly not be taken as representative of Islam and that in fact, in many ways, its behaviours are entirely at odds with the religious practices and philosophies of all the world's great faiths.

It is very important in a liberal democratic nation like Australia that, as we take the necessary and appropriate steps to the maximum extent possible to guard and protect against the threat which is presented by a global terrorist movement like ISIL or Daesh, we do not inadvertently surrender the basic freedoms which are central to our way of life and which go to the core of that clash of values between what underpins a Western liberal democracy like Australia or France and the perverted ideology which is motivating this group of evil terrorists. Of course there are difficult choices which must be made and we do need to take appropriate steps, as the Turnbull government is doing, with the support of the opposition, which we welcome, to protect as best we can the Australian people against the threat to our collective physical safety. But it is very important that our fundamental values as a nation—freedom of thought, freedom of worship and freedom of association—continue to be championed and continue to be observed. Ultimately, what is extraordinarily important is the great diversity of our nation—our ethnic diversity, with the fact that Australians come from every corner of the world and the fact that Australia has amongst the highest percentages of adult population born overseas of any OECD nation; and our religious diversity, with many faiths being practised in Australia, and where people are free to choose to practice any faith, or no faith, as they judge appropriate. All of these values and practices are enormously important. They contribute enormously to the strength of our democracy and the quality of
our collective lives, and it is extraordinarily important that we hold true to the values that define us as a nation.

On behalf of the people of Bradfield, I express my deep sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of all those who have been lost in the series of terrorist attacks. I give my very strong support, again also on behalf of the people of Bradfield, to the people of Paris, France and all the nations where these terrible attacks have occurred. I hope that these nations will properly respond to what has occurred, that, collectively, the world can restate the values that we hold dear and that the terrorists will not succeed.

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (18:01): On behalf of the people of Kingsford Smith, I extend our sincerest condolences and sympathies to Parisians and the people of France as they recover from this evil atrocity perpetrated upon their nation by a group of individuals who are not human but, really, animals.

Kingsford Smith has a very proud French heritage that is probably stronger than in any other electorate across the country. Since February 1788, when Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de La Perouse, sailed into Botany Bay—or Kamay, as it was then known—our area has celebrated a rich French heritage, with places like Frenchmans Road, which is still there in Randwick and was one of the first roads in Sydney, named after the people from La Perouse's original expedition who used to make the trek over the sandhills from Botany Bay to what is now Circular Quay; Beauchamp Road in Matraville, where I live, which was named after a famous French explorer; and, of course, the suburb of La Perouse, where La Perouse's original expedition set foot on land in Australia.

Since that time, the bonds between our community and the people of France have grown stronger and stronger, and more and more people of French descent have settled in our community. This is reflected in the wonderful institutions of French heritage in our area. Principally, Australia's premier French school, Lycee Condorcet, which is located in Maroubra, provides a first-class French education to not only the kids of French expats but many locals as well. It has a very strong and proud sporting heritage. I see the kids from the French school at the local pool at Maroubra when I go to swim some laps every morning, and they are very strong swimmers. It is a school with a great sporting tradition. Last week I phoned the principal, Philippe Courjault, to extend the condolences, thoughts and prayers of our community to the students and their families. A wonderful service was held at the school in honour of those who passed away tragically in Paris a couple of weeks ago. There is also the Friends of the Laperouse Museum, a group of locals and people of French heritage who keep the wonderful heritage of La Perouse and his expedition to Australia alive in our community. On Saturday last week, they had their annual general meeting. I attended to deliver a message of love and support to the French people who live in our community and also, more widely, to the people of France. Let me tell you, on behalf of our community, that we feel your grief. We offer our sincerest prayers and thoughts in your moment of grief.

When my wife and I visited France on our honeymoon, we were fortunate to travel to the north of France to some of the World War I battlefields. It was a very moving experience. One of the most touching moments was visiting the Victoria school in Villers-Bretonneux and the wonderful monument to Australian soldiers on the outskirts of that little village. As you walk into the Victoria school, named after the state of Victoria, you see the following words emblazoned along the entrance to the school: 'Do not forget Australia'—or, in French,
N'oublions jamais l'Australie'. When the school was ruined in World War I, it was rebuilt by the people of Victoria. It was the people of Victoria's gift to that wonderful little town that many Australians had fought at on behalf of the Allies. The catchcry of the time was: 'By diggers defended, by Victorians mended.' An appeal went around the state of Victoria for people to chip in to rebuild this school, and that is exactly what Australia did—and the people of Villers-Bretonneux have never forgotten that.

When my wife and I travelled to this little town, we got lost on our way to the cemetery and the Australian memorial. I went into a little grocery store and asked the woman behind the counter if she could provide me with directions on how to get to the memorial, and she said, 'I will take you there.' I said, 'No, no, you don't need to take me there; just provide me with instructions.' She said, 'No, you are Australian; I will take you there.' That, to me, symbolised this wonderful bond between Australia and France, which is still evident to this day, 100 years later, in the people of that town. As the words that are emblazoned on the school say, they have not forgotten Australia. You walk around that little school and you see drawings that the kids have done of kangaroos, koalas, the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House. It is really a touching experience to see that Australia has made such a difference to that particular French town. When the Victorian bushfires hit on Black Saturday some years ago, in 2011, the people of that town responded and again provided support to the towns in rural Victoria that were hit by those shocking bushfires—another great testament to the bond between our two nations and our people.

As I expressed at the Friends of the Laperouse Museum on the weekend: as the words emblazoned on the Victoria school state, 'Do not forget Australia', now is the time that Australians will not forget France. Now is the time that Australia stands by our good friends in France, and that is exactly what we will do.

France is one of the world's great republics—a strong nation and a symbol of liberty, freedom, democracy and, importantly, peace. In the wake of the terrorist attacks a couple of weeks ago, the people of Paris and the people of France have stood tall and said: 'We will not bow to threats and acts of violence or terrorism. We will not change our way of life. We will continue to uphold those great cultural principles that defined our nation.' Well, I say to the people of Paris and the people of France, on behalf of their friends in the electorate and community of Kingsford Smith: the people of Australia stand proudly with you; we will, with you, see off this threat; and you will continue to be a fine example to the world of freedom, liberty and peace. May those who lost their lives in those terrible terrorist attacks rest in peace.

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia) (18:10): It started on the plane last Sunday night as we were making our way to Paris to represent Australia at the International Energy Agency meeting just two days after the tragic events in Paris on the Friday before. It had been decided that the meeting of the International Energy Agency would go ahead because to cancel it out of fear would represent another small victory for the terrorists who seek to destroy our way of life. As I made my way, on that plane, from Melbourne to Paris, I looked at the empty seats around me, which are not a common scene on a plane into a European capital city such as Paris. Once we got off the plane, there was an eerie silence in the terminal. We went to get our baggage, and I asked the
young man who was escorting us, a Frenchman, what he thought of what had just transpired. He said that he was horrified and he himself was a second generation Muslim in France.

We made our way to the hotel. We were briefed by security services about potential threats and what to do in the event that there is shooting, a bomb or another attack. We debated, as a group: 'Do we go outside for a walk? Should we break into smaller groups? Is it too dangerous? Should we not go at all?' I asked myself, 'How did it come to this? Paris—a city of 10 million people, the city of lights known throughout the world for its culture, its arts, its monuments and its museums—brought to its knees by these tragic terrorist killings.'

We did go for a walk down the Champs-Elysees, where there was a guard outside every cafe and every shop. The roads were not nearly as busy as they would normally be. You could tell that everybody looked at each other with a hint of suspicion and a hint of fear. I have to say that that is how I felt as I made that walk. We made the walk around the Champs-Elysees and, on the way back to the hotel, we finished off at the Arc de Triomphe, Napoleon's monument to France's vainglorious past. The irony was not lost on me or the travelling party that here was a monument testament to France's strength throughout the world, and here we were in Paris at the lowest point of the Fifth Republic. Not since Vichy France, when the Nazis controlled Paris during the Second World War, have we seen such bloodshed and loss of innocent life.

Later that afternoon, I accompanied Ambassador Stephen Brady to the memorial outside the Bataclan concert hall. I have to say, it was more than sobering. It was shocking, because outside the concert hall there were clearly police, ambulance services and other emergency services still going about their gruesome task. Along the fence line there were thousands of candles, hundreds of flags, thousands of messages and so many photos of people who had lost their lives. One message will stick with me forever. It said, 'Rock kills you,' and it had a symbol of the peace sign with the Eiffel Tower in the middle. Rock kills you. These were young people—more than 120—who lost their lives. They had simply gone out to a concert on a normal Friday night. There was another message, 'Best wishes from Bingara Australia, nous sommes avec vous'—a message from some Australians saying that they were standing with their French brothers and sisters at this time.

All Australians feel deeply about what has happened and cannot help but be moved by the tragedy that has befallen France because, but for the grace of God, it could have been us. We have lost more than 100 Australians in terrorist attacks since September 2001. The Bali bombings changed our nation forever. There were the Marriott Hotel bombings in Indonesia, including at the Marriott Hotel. We have seen the Mumbai attacks. We know about the London bus bombings and the Madrid train bombings. In Paris at the beginning of this year we saw the tragic Charlie Hebdo attacks and the attacks within the kosher supermarket. There have been attacks through Brussels, Amsterdam and every other major European capital.

In Australia, but for the incredible work of our intelligence and law enforcement agencies, I have no doubt we would have faced an outcome as horrible as we have seen throughout Europe. Let us be under no illusions about the threat from Islamic extremism here in Australia. I accept that Islam is not the problem, but we have to accept that within Islam there is an extremist ideology that is turning young men and women toward a violent way.

There are 110 Australians fighting in Syria and Iraq. More than 40 Australians have already lost their lives, including a number of suicide bombers. There are 190 Australians
here in Australia providing support to those over in Syria and Iraq—whether it is recruitment or financing. More than 140 passports of Australians have been cancelled, and ASIO and the AFP tell us that they have more than 400 high-profile terrorist investigations under way. That should alarm everybody in this place, because we have seen what one man with a gun and a black flag can do in Sydney, with the Lindt cafe. We have seen the killing of the innocent police worker at the Parramatta police station, and we know so many other more serious attacks have been thwarted.

Australia has more foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria than Canada or the United States. Why is this? Where is the strong condemnation of what has transpired over in Paris and elsewhere? I believe the Grand Mufti should have done more, and I am not afraid to say it. If we do not deal effectively with this threat, then we will be dealing with our own tragedy here in Australia. I know the Prime Minister sees this, as do the National Security Committee of Cabinet and our intelligence and security forces. We have introduced into the parliament five tranches of security and counter-terrorism legislation. We have resourced our authorities to record levels. We have deployed Australian Defence personnel to Syria and Iraq and made the second-largest contribution there behind the United States. We are doing everything possible to deal with this threat both at home and abroad.

But there are hard questions that needed to be asked. They are being asked in France by President Hollande, not because he faces regional elections in a few weeks time and Le Pen and Sarkozy are breathing down his neck, but because he believes in them. After Charlie Hebdo and the events at the kosher supermarket, when they took a more conciliatory tone, they know they have to change tack. That is why Francois Hollande, in his speech at the Palace of Versailles, said that France is at war, the response will be merciless, and the French republic will do everything possible to protect its community. He called for changes across European borders and for tighter restrictions on gun trafficking and the movement of peoples.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an incredibly thoughtful writer, is a woman who was born in Somalia, made her way to the Netherlands, became a member of parliament and famously made a movie with Theo van Gough, who then was tragically stabbed to death by a Muslim extremist. Now she finds herself in America with personal protection, where she is speaking her mind about her previous faith, growing up as a Muslim, and about what needs to be done. She has some home truths for us. She talks about how Europe needs to take on some of these challenges. She talks about how the infrastructure of hatred and some of the preaching that goes on in mosques and in our schools and elsewhere needs to be tackled head on.

We need to call out this extremism for what it is. It is a threat to our way of life. I have no doubt that, if the young 15-year-old who killed the Australian police worker in Parramatta could have got his hands on more than a gun, on something that could cause more death and destruction, he would have, because he believed in martyrdom—a life after the here and the now.

Everyone in this chamber has a family, and that family is the most important thing that we have in this world. It is much more important than a career, much more important than a reputation, much more important than any material possession. More than 120 people lost their lives in France, and their families will grieve forever. We owe it to ourselves and to the Australian community, as leaders of our country, regardless of what side of the political fence we sit on, to not succumb to political correctness, to not succumb to weakness but to
Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (18:25): It is now almost a decade and a half on from 11 September 2001, when we witnessed one of the worst international terrorist attacks involving four separate but coordinated aircraft hijackings, used very strategically to cause huge damage in the United States. I remember it very well because that was the year that my son Nicholas was a first-year apprentice electrician. I remember him waking me up at around 4.30 or quarter to five, when he was up to go to work, as he had just seen this unfolding on the television. It was almost with disbelief that we then witnessed what had unfolded at the World Trade Centre. More than 3,000 people died on that day. Citizens of 78 countries perished at the World Trade Centre in New York. This bloody attack was the beginning of a new kind of war. I am not saying that it was unprecedented in terms of the style of attack or the fact that it was terrorism, but this was global terrorism declaring war on the rest of humanity.

These terrorist groups, which include al Qaeda, ISIL, ISIS, have strong designs on creating a caliphate and have instigated a spate of attacks on foreign countries to achieve that aim. In fact, as we have been reminded, only 12 days ago we saw the deadly series of attacks that occurred in Paris. In a matter of hours, in six different locations, militant terrorists carried out coordinated shootings and suicide bombings that killed 130 people and left about 190 people seriously injured. These innocent people were killed at random in a bustling urban area while going about their normal business enjoying a night out at a concert, going to the football or simply socialising at a restaurant. They were going about their normal life. These are absolutely devastating crimes, and you can see the sense of awe, shock and sadness that lingers at the crime scenes, and in the cafes and marketplaces, among the people of France. What we have seen there has resonated throughout the rest of the world. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of France, people of a Western culture who were targeted because of that. Seven terrorists involved in the attacks were killed, with one identified fugitive still on the run. Clearly, there are more out there planning attacks, many within the safety of their bases in Syria and Yemen. They have networks which clearly extend across the globe.

A day before the Paris attacks, Beirut experienced one of the deadliest bombings since its civil war ended 25 years ago. Two suicide bombers blew themselves up on a busy street in the southern suburbs of Beirut, killing 43 people and wounding over 200 people. The bombings came at a busy time in the evening when the streets were full of people, including women, children and the elderly, gathering after work and socialising.

In fact since 2013 much of the southern part of Beirut has witnessed a string of deadly suicide bombings. This occurred after the proactive engagement of Hezbollah in Syria in its fight against ISIS and other terrorist groups. Therefore, these are reprisals against the people of Lebanon. Just a few hours after that attack, it was ISIS that issued a statement to say that they were behind those bombings. Russia has not been spared from these calculated terrorist attacks, either. A Russian airbus was downed over Egypt on 31 October with what appears to have been a bomb placed on board. It exploded in midair, killing 224 people. I suppose everyone in this place and no doubt most Australians, watching through the electronic media, saw the shocking images of the mangled wreckage of the Russian airliner and the personal possessions strewn across the desert floor—absolutely horrific scenes. Last Friday jihadists remember that this is a serious, serious threat that can be defeated and must be defeated and will be defeated.
continued to press their attack in Mali, where gunmen stormed the Radisson Blu Hotel and took up 170 hostages, before killing 19 people—six Russians, three Chinese, two Belgians and one Israeli among them. They were indiscriminate.

These high-profile attacks have targeted people simply going about their normal lives—people congregating together enjoying sport, arts, culture—in fact, doing things in places that we would all take for granted as being part of our involvement in normal society. However, this also highlights the growing vulnerability to extreme violence and terrorism, but more than that it indicates, in my opinion, what these terrorists want to change—our normal way of life. In all these atrocities, the extremists took lives of civilians with inhuman ferocity and without discrimination. This is the same sort of terrorism and violence that Syrian refugees are currently fleeing. No injustice, no matter how serious, can justify such barbaric acts of terrorism.

Here in Australia we are not immune to terrorist acts. Since last September, we have seen three home-grown terrorist attacks inspired by ISIS on Australian soil—the stabbing of a Victorian police officer and an Australian Federal Police officer in Melbourne in September 2014; the Martin Place siege in December 2014, which took the lives of Katrina Dawson and Tori Johnson; and the recent fatal shooting in Parramatta of the New South Wales police employee, Curtis Cheng. These show that we are not immune to acts of terrorism.

With terrorism escalating across the globe, it has become more important than ever for international communities to come together to share our beliefs in freedom and liberty and to work together to disrupt these barbaric organisations, which purport to extinguish the values that we hold dear. My deepest sympathies go to all these victims of these atrocities and their families. There, but for the grace of God, we could also be subject to atrocities of that magnitude.

I must pay regard to our law enforcement agencies. From personal experience I know how hard they work to ensure that we are protected. I must say that it does take a very special person with very special courage to wear the police uniform. On behalf of a grateful community, I thank them for what they do to keep our society and our people safe. We must exercise a global solidarity when it comes to terrorism and we must always have the commitment to never allow our freedoms, and liberty and our way of life to be put in jeopardy by these terrorist based organisations.

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (18:35): Today I rise to pay homage to the 130 innocent people who were murdered in France. We must always remember to have sympathy for the victims, their families, friends and loved ones. For me, one of the most powerful moments was seeing the solidarity of the French people singing. These recent events in Europe and indeed the world demonstrate that people are being seduced by an evil cult and are committing despicable acts on innocent people.

We must be vigilant. We must be tough, but we must not be scared and run. Nor should we be foolhardy or rash. Here in Australia, it is horrifying and bewildering to know that there are people in our great country, right now, planning acts of violence in some twisted show of support for the horrific and violent organisation that is ISIS. It was scary today to see the New South Wales Deputy Police Commissioner, Catherine Burn, confirm this fact. While Australian police across all jurisdictions are doing an incredible job in preventing these senseless attacks, sadly, some have slipped through the net.
We call these people terrorists, because that is what they are. I fear the label is being used by some as a badge of honour, some twisted justification that they have some political or religious cause to hide behind that gives them some right to murder innocent people. Let us be clear about this. They are not martyrs. They are not heroes. They are simply gutless. They are not justified through some twisted and misguided religious calling—not to the Islamic faith, not to anything. Those seduced by ISIS are simply pawns of this evil regime. They are servants to thuggery, rape, murder and torture. They have forgotten that sanctioning their evils on humanity only exposes them as imperfect; shows their teachers for what they truly are—vile and full of hate.

Many Islamic people in our community throughout Australia have condemned these acts and have expressed their desire to live in a peaceful Australia. So the Islamic community must continue to be active to ensure that radicalisation of their young people who are perverted by the twisted and evil uses of ISIS no longer occurs. While significant sections of the Islamic community are indeed doing this, there are still some senior figures sending out confusing and conflicting messages. We need to be sure that this also stops. We all have an interest in ensuring that children are not radicalised. We all have an interest in ensuring that when we see any of those messages on the internet, or any acts of young people being radicalised, those children and the preachers involved are rapidly reported to all local security agencies to ensure not only the peace and freedom of our community but also the welfare of the young people being perverted by this twisted cult.

We must keep our communities safe. We love the freedom and safety we have in Australia, and it is important that we protect that. Many Muslim people do not want to see their young people killed—they do not want to see their young people going off for a cause that stands for nothing but evil. One in five Australians mad enough to travel to Syria and Iraq will end up dying there. Calls for unilateral action to defeat ISIS are not realistic. In fact, in many ways this is marching to the ISIS tune—dragging countries one by one into a world war. The peoples of the world must work together—we must work swiftly and smartly to defeat this curse. We must ensure that our actions are measured and calculated, and that we attack those who would choose to attack us. We need to not allow this hatred to infect us. At the end of the day, we need to think about the freedoms we have here. The fight is about our democracies, it is about our freedoms. I love the French words liberte, egalite and fraternite. They are important because we must protect our liberty, we must protect our freedoms. These are what we fight for. It is important that we fight for our values. If they do not want to join us then perhaps they should find somewhere else to live. Freedom stands up for itself, and we must ensure that our countries are free, that our children are safe and that ISIS is ultimately defeated.

Mr RIPOLL (Oxley) (18:41): What a sad and terrible day it was on Friday, 13 November 2015. The terror attacks in Paris have shocked the world and rocked France, as well as the rest of us. It has shocked us into the acknowledgement that terrorism by whomever it is perpetrated is aimed at all of us—all of the citizens of the world who believe in freedom, in equality and in the rule of law. The ISIS attacks in Paris were aimed directly at the heart of democracy and liberty—designed, through a senseless loss of life, to injure all of us and strike fear into our hearts. This was as much an attack on the people of France as it was an attack on the people of Australia. It was an attack on all faiths—an attack on Christians, Jews, Hindus...
and Buddhists and also an attack on Muslims. The indiscriminate terror killings have no explanation, no justification and no basis in the name of any faith. They, ISIS, are just terrorists aiming at destroying our way of life and destroying an institution, but much worse these attacks are designed to turn us against each other. Let us not do that. Let us not blame each other—instead, let us work together to fight this terror. And this is exactly what we have seen in France when a defiant population has crowded back into the streets around Paris in the cafes and restaurants and places of entertainment.

Of course, this is what makes Paris such a special place for more than 30 million visitors each year. The city of light is host to more than a million Australian visitors—Australians on a once in a lifetime trip, working or studying. That connection to Australia could not have been more real for one brave young teenager, Emma Parkinson—that one in a million Australian who was shot and severely wounded in the Bataclan theatre. We are all hopeful of a speedy and full recovery for Emma and pay tribute to her courage. Emma Parkinson serves as a reminder of the strong link between our two countries, which dates back 100 years. In fact, just two weeks ago, on Remembrance Day, the parliament hosted a French delegation of senators who came to pay their respects to the Aussie diggers who helped liberate France and small towns during the First World War. The delegation leader, Senator Marc Daunis, spoke of the great love and deep appreciation the French people continue to feel for the Australians who came to help them fight for freedom. That was 100 years ago, but here we are again fighting a war—yes, it is a war—against those who would take away our freedom. So in some way we are all connected. For me that connection is very strong because France is where I was born and lived until the age of nearly six before my family migrated to Australia.

Australia, like France and all other democratic countries that base their form of governance on the principles of freedom and the fundamental right to live in freedom, has strong values and we uphold these principles for all of our citizens. But this, of itself, is not enough, whether it is in France or whether it is in Australia. Both countries must do more and fight back those that would do us harm. Australia, like France, has fought to defend these same principles of freedom, in some cases side-by-side defending against tyranny and despotic ideology. But be it 100 years ago, 75 years ago or just two weeks ago, today our democratic societies must be defend our collective freedoms against the scourge of terrorism.

Paris, Lebanon, Mali, Bamako, New York, Washington or in the air above Egypt, terrorism has no bounds and it can strike at any time. But we must continue to stare down those who seek to attack our way of life, because we have no choice. Every act of terrorism is an attack on humanity and is not something that we have sought. Motivated by hate and often perpetrated in the name of faith or religion, these are false claims; there is no faith and there is no God in terrorism. Put simply, the motivation for terrorism is hatred, control and fear.

What we know about the attacks in Paris is that the death toll remains at 129, with 352 others injured and some 40 people remaining in critical condition. Investigators believe that up to 20 people were involved in the attacks. French President Francois Hollande has declared a three-month state of emergency as well as deploying troops and extra police right across Paris. As the Prime Minister of Australia and the Leader of the Opposition noted in parliament: liberty, peace, justice and democracy are virtues our two countries have fought for and share. These values are etched into our way of life, respect for the rule of law and our fellow citizens.
Australians are united in grief from this senseless loss of life and we stand as one with the French people, determined to not let the barbaric acts of those who hate taint our ways of life. There has been an enormous outpouring of grief and shock from Australians for what took place in Paris. This was done through quiet, peaceful and respectful gatherings in our major cities across the country to show our support for our French friends. In Brisbane, the community gathered with the Queensland Premier, the federal Minister for Immigration and Border Protection and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane with a host of other elected representatives at all levels of government to express our support for the French people and to stand shoulder to shoulder with our friends. I was deeply moved by the gathering and I know directly how much this has meant for people in France.

Here in Australia, such a beautiful and peaceful country, we too are no strangers to terrorism; we too are victims of terrorism, and we are not naive about the real threats that we face here at home. That is why the Labor Party stands as one with the government to take strong action to prevent, detect and deal with those who would want to harm us here. The actions that are now being taken in Europe, some would say are harsh, some would say are extreme and some would say go much further than we would have ever expected. But I think all of the actions now being taken by European countries, in particular in relation to protecting their citizens, are a direct response to what has taken place.

I think that, sadly, there is an awakening of the reality that terrorism reaches into all of our homes in some way, that the many acts of terrorism that we have seen over many years—and in particular the acts of terrorism that we saw in Paris—spell an end to naive views about those who may be targeted more than others. There is no-one who is safe. I think that Australians, having woken to the news of what took place in Paris, have come to that view as well.

There is a very deep and strong connection whether people have been to Paris or not been to Paris; there is this feeling that it is a safe place to go, a place that we all, at some time in our lives, want to visit. I think, in part, that is why we were so deeply shocked by what took place there, because we know it is our young Australians who go there for their special visit, their special holiday, who were impacted with so many lives being lost.

Of course what took place in Paris does not detract from other losses of life in other areas, I mentioned previously. It is important that we say that all lives are valuable, that all lives are important and that the Australian nation must play a global role and a strong role in the fight against terrorism. This is not something that will go away, I suspect, very unfortunately, in the next few months or even few years. But it is something that we can beat; it is something that is defeatable, and we can play a role in the defeat of terrorism.

My heart goes out to all the families that have lost loved ones, not just in Paris but in other terrorist attacks, the many, many people that this has affected deeply right around the world, particularly here in Australia but also particularly for all my family in France.

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (18:50): I too am pleased to be able to rise in this place and take this opportunity to send my deepest condolences to the people of France and to everyone affected by the recent attacks in Paris, but also, as we have seen since Paris, in Mali. We recognise that they continue to mourn in respect of the tremendous loss that has occurred.
On 14 November Australians awoke to the devastating news that Paris had been attacked with hundreds injured and more than 120 killed. It is news that felt a little bit like deja vu, as 2015 had marked 14 years since the devastating attack on the World Trade Centre towers in New York, taking thousands of lives.

In the past 12 months, the people of Australia have also felt the mortifying sting of extremist attacks. This year, sadly, we lost NSW Police Force employee Curtis Cheng, who was murdered by a radicalised teenager. Our nation paused in disbelief as the Lindt cafe siege in Sydney took the lives of Katrina Dawson and Tori Johnson. They are devastating losses that we will never forget. I, along with all other Australians, condemn in the strongest possible terms these acts of terror.

Paris is a famous city that thousands of Australians and millions of people from around the world travel to every year. It is a city known for its beauty, romance, food, fashion and, above all, freedom. The extreme act of terror on the people of France and visiting tourists by ISIL is a determination to attack and suppress that freedom not just in France but throughout the world. Australia and Western nations in general around the world have fought for freedom in the past, and every time we have prevailed.

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'Terrorism and deception are weapons not of the strong but of the weak.' ISIL are weak. They seek to assert some form of religious tyranny, a threat in the name of God, but instead they commit the work of the devil. As I touched on in a contribution in this House yesterday, Roger Scruton, in the foreword to a book on Islamic philosophy, makes the point that it is a belief system that is in need of reformation—something that Christianity went through several hundred years ago, coming out the other side all the better for it.

Australians are solid in their support for freedom and, when faced with terror, death and loss, we have always seen the best in humanity rise from the devastation. The freedom and values that we enjoy in this country unite us. We live in one of the best places in the world. Our multiculturalism and our shared love of freedom are what bring us together—the freedom to live where we choose, follow any career we desire, travel the world, study, practise a religion and celebrate cultural traditions.

When the French people left the stadium, the Stade de France, after that shocking attack, they were not cowed. They sang their national anthem, proudly. That is how all free people should respond to these attacks. For every act of terror, we have seen people respond in ways that restore our faith in humanity and encourage us to further unite against the fear and devastation that terrorism brings. The best defence against terrorism is not to allow fear to win but to focus on uniting as a community to seek to defeat those who would bring that fear into our communities.

Australians should be reassured by the fact that we have some of the finest security agencies in the world. We have a government—and an opposition, as this is the position on all sides of politics in this House—that is utterly committed to protecting the safety of Australians at home and, as far as it can, abroad. We have some significant mechanisms in place through our intelligence and policing agencies to keep our community as safe as possible. Our country will not let fear take over. Australians should not fear going out to dinner, attending a concert or going to a football game. We should, and we will, live our lives
every day in the same way we always have: with freedom—the freedom of democracy, the freedom to choose, the freedom to live our lives the way we want.

While the alert level remains high in Australia, as it has been since September last year, we should all be reassured that our government and hardworking security agencies are doing their utmost to protect us all. Recently we have seen the parliament pass additional legislation, in the form of updated counter-terrorism legislation, to continue and strengthen their ability to do that.

Unfortunately, we have seen many other terrorist attacks around the world over the previous few years. The recent terrorist attacks by ISIL in Paris, Mali, Ankara in Turkey, as well as other places throughout the Middle East, are the latest examples. We have even seen attacks by Palestinians on Israelis in the streets of Israel which could equally be classified as terrorist attacks.

In closing, I leave the House with another thought from Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, whose profound spirituality and belief in justice inspired the world:

You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.

We should continue to remain vigilant in the face of the threat from organisations like ISIL, but we should always reflect on the wonderful values and culture that we have in this great country that people from the four corners of the world have come to live in, to celebrate the freedoms and the opportunities that it presents. Those opportunities are still before those people, and we should focus on those opportunities, because they are what make this country great now and will continue to make it great into the future.

Mr ZAPPIA (Makin) (18:59): On 10 October this year, the following tribute notice appeared in the Adelaide Advertiser:

GOLOTTA, Angela Sylvia Rose. Killed in Bali on October 12, 2002 by Islamic Terrorists Aged 19 years old. Lovingly remembered by her Granny and Grandpa and her entire family. My darling granddaughter, we lovingly remember you, each and everyday. Your sunny nature and your care and dedication to both people and animals brought a ray of sunshine into many lives. We should have been celebrating your 33rd Birthday next week. We can only imagine the heights you would have reached by now. You were bubbly, happy, ambitious and clever with a large circle of friends, and you had a such a marvellous sense of humour. You are so badly missed by all the family and friends. Granny and Grandfather, Mother Tracey, Father John and Brother Michael, and the entire Taylor family.

A similar message was placed only a couple of weeks later when Angela would have turned 33. A similar message has appeared, I believe, every year since Angela was killed in Bali in 2002. Her family still grieve her loss. They always will. Angela was 20 years old. She was in Bali with her family: her mum, her dad and her brother. They are good people, and they were there on a family holiday together. Angela is one of the tens of thousands of innocent people who, in recent decades, have lost their lives because of the actions of extremists. Those killed or injured come from all walks of life, cultures, religions and ages and all parts of the world.

We have entered a period of global war, but, unlike World War I and World War II, the war is not between nations but between ideologies and cultures. In today's globalised world, ideologies and culture transcend national borders. What is common to previous wars and today's war is that they are equally caused by power and greed. The desire for power to control the people of the world is, in turn, driven by greed in most cases but masked behind
slogans of democracy, freedom, religion or injustice. In a world with a rising population and diminishing resources, the fear for survival also becomes a cause of conflict. Of course, the international affairs experts will each have their explanation of causal factors, as will those who either will benefit from or have a direct interest in the conflict. Global politics has become more tangled than ever before, and the motives and instigators of each terror attack are becoming less and less clear. What is clear is that men, women and children are being brutally killed, tortured and enslaved by people to whom they have done no harm, whom they have never met and to whose safety they pose no threat. Even more disturbing is the sadistic nature of those who participate in terrorism and extremism. Just as confusing is that those very people who commit the atrocities, who participate in terror attacks, do so knowing that they, too, will very likely die, as so many of them already have. Yet, for all of their bravado, after committing their cowardly acts of cold-blooded killing, they flee in desperation, in search of refuge and safety for themselves, unlike a true soldier, who confronts his foe front-on.

The extreme cruelty is not only proudly depicted on YouTube videos or reported in newspaper stories. Many of us also hear of it from the relatives, friends and countrymen of those killed who now live in Australia. I have listened to and seen the sadness in the faces of people in my own electorate whom I personally know and who have lost family members in both the New York twin towers attack and the Bali attacks. Those families still grieve for the innocent lives lost—in just about all cases, young people who lost their lives well ahead of time, suddenly, deliberately and without any explanation as to why. I also hear of it from people I represent who come from areas of conflict and who relay to me their personal experiences of brutality and cruelty beyond what any decent person could ever comprehend. I have joined some of those people in solidarity at services where they mourned their losses and prayed for the souls of those lost.

Only two weeks ago, I attended a candlelight vigil held by the Hazara community of Adelaide in response to the beheading of seven Hazara people in Afghanistan just days earlier. The seven people included four males, two women and a child. They had been kidnapped for no known reason and, for no obvious reason other than being Hazari, were then killed. The Hazara people are a minority Shia group who make up about 20 per cent of the Afghan population and who seem to be persecuted wherever they go. As several of the placards held up at the vigil read, 'It is not a crime to be Hazara.' Yet it seems that it is for no reason other than being Hazara that so many of them are being killed, tortured, raped or abused. The Hazara people in Australia have reached the safety of our borders, but their anxiety continues for the lives of family members and friends who remain in Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East and whose lives are at risk. The plea of the Hazara people of Adelaide to the Australian government is not to forget or close our eyes and ears to the Hazara people in places overseas where they are still being persecuted, where they are defenceless and where their lives are still at risk.

I bring their pleas to the attention of the Australian government, as I promised I would do. The Hazara people are not alone in being persecuted or in being victims of extreme ideology and brutality. I have spoken in this place on previous occasions about other groups who are being treated in a similar way. Again, they too plea for assistance from decent people around the world.
National security across the world has become a political priority for most governments. Indeed, here in Australia in recent days, we have had legislation addressing security matters, and in recent weeks and months there has been other legislation doing the same—all in response to trying to counter the threat of extremists and radicals. It is legislation that in days gone by would perhaps never have been contemplated, yet we have reached a point where we as a parliament believe that we need to act in order to try and protect the people of this country. Indeed, the people of Australia expect the government and the parliament to act, and so the government does whatever it believes it can do. Only yesterday, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition made statements on national security and what we as a nation can and should be doing. Those statements were made in response to what is happening around the world right now and what Australia's role may well be in any response that occurs. We do have a responsibility as a good global citizen to join in with not just Western nations but other nations who take this issue seriously and who believe that the only way that this issue can ever be managed is by nations working together. I agree with that. I believe that is the only response that you can embark on when you are dealing with a war that has been from the outset fought not between nations but between ideologies and cultures.

Perhaps what is lesser known is the massive additional costs that are being borne by society, including here in Australia, as a result of the counter-terrorism responses. If we look at the efforts that have been made by governments in the last decade alone there have been more staff placed in different areas of national security, more police on the streets, more screening processes, more document security systems put in place, more elaborate tracking devices and more highly sophisticated military equipment. All of these things cost money. Indeed, they cost millions and perhaps billions of dollars. They add to the cost of government and take away from society that money which could otherwise be spent on more essential things that are needed by the people of this country.

Terrorists and extremists have indeed changed the world. They are impacting on everyday life in pretty much every part of the world. Right now, none know this more so than the people of Paris, France, who have been affected twice in the space of a year: firstly, the Charlie Hebdo killings, where some 11 people were killed; and then more recently in Paris, where 130 people lost their lives. As other speakers have said, it has occurred in Ankara, where 103 people lost their lives; in Mali, where 21 people lost their lives; and in Beirut, where some 43 people lost their lives. It is suspected that a terrorist bomb downed the Russian aircraft, with 224 people losing their lives. Here in Australia, we are also very aware of the risk of terrorism. We saw Curtis Cheng lose his life only a month ago. Less than a year ago, we saw Tori Johnson and Katrina Dawson lose their lives in the Lindt Cafe siege. So it has hit within our borders in the same way that it has hit other countries. For those reasons, we do need to play our role in whatever the appropriate response is.

What the appropriate response is is not a simple matter, and that is made very clear by the constant dialogue taking place between international leaders with respect to finding a response to what is going on. It is a difficult issue. But, at this point in time, it is important that we also join with the families who are mourning those they have lost and also with the families of those who have been injured as a result of these activities. We join with them to show them that we are in solidarity with them, which, at the very least, will give them some degree of comfort knowing that the rest of the world cares.
I join with my colleagues in this place who have already expressed their condolences to those families for the losses that they have incurred in expressing my condolences. I also indicate to those families, albeit that some of them may never get to hear this speech, that to some extent I share the pain of what they are going through and that we do stand in solidarity with them.

**Mrs MARKUS** (Macquarie) (19:13): When as colleagues we rise to speak on such an issue as the recent terrorism attacks around the globe, we join in a nonpartisan way not only to speak on behalf of our own people, Australians who, in the recent attacks in Paris, have been directly affected but also to speak on an issue that impacts every part of the globe in one way or another. When members spoke today, they reflected on this government's first priority, and that is of course the safety of everyday Australians. But I am sure that as I and others watched the unfolding of the recent events in Paris, the question for all of us was: how, in a very challenging, unpredictable environment around the globe, do we get the balance right between an open and free democracy and putting those barriers, laws and resources in place to protect our people?

As we reflect on what has happened in various parts of the world, and I will talk about that a little bit later, what has happened is brutal, evil, unfounded behaviour which has resulted in tragic loss of life where innocent men, women and children—people who are grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, husbands and wives; people that have connections and people that are loved—are tragically taken from us. Of course, others have to deal with the long recovery from injury, sometimes to return to a life similar to before, but other times not. Anybody that has observed these events directly has a long-term psychological challenge ahead of them.

But what do we do at this point in time? We acknowledge the grief, the loss, and we have an emotional response, but at the same time what we see in leadership is that capacity to calmly look at how we move forward from here. It has already been mentioned earlier that this requires leaders coming together. This requires nations working together in a coalition that aims to fight to ensure that we maintain our values, those values that underpin our democracy, and that we work with determination and resoluteness to defend and protect those freedoms that we hold so dear.

As we have seen in recent days and weeks, often when we see these attacks take place the result can be division. We question: who do we trust; how can we trust? I have many friends that are of Muslim faith. Indeed, the Mahdi community that hold their celebrations in Marsden Park are here because they have been persecuted. Their mosques have been burnt down in Pakistan and other parts of our region. They have come here because they seek safety from persecution and from their women being raped. They come here and they invest in Australia. They raise the Australian flag on Australia Day. They encourage and connect their community to business, to work. They invest in their young people and talk to them about the importance and the value of becoming an Australian.

The government's approach has several important layers. I want to focus on them very briefly. As a government we want to maintain a strong multicultural society. We come from all nations around the globe. We have a very strong history of being able to do that, probably better than any other country in the world. We also want to help those institutions and sections of our society to combat violent extremism ideology where it emerges. We want to
challenge and undermine the appeal of terrorist propaganda, particularly online. Importantly, we want to intervene and divert individuals away from their violent extremist views.

We look at where attacks have taken place most recently and, of course, we have reflected on Paris. I want to talk about the people. There were 120 killed and more than 300 injured. Of course, Emma Parkinson, an Australian, was very brave during that event. In Beirut 40 people were killed. But these are 40 families, 120 families and 300 families. The Russian airliner has been mentioned over Sinai, when 224 people were killed. These are families that are directly affected by evil. Mali and Ankara have been mentioned. Momentarily I want to reflect on Curtis Cheng. While I did not have the opportunity to know him, as someone who has lived in Greater Western Sydney for a number of years, I have many connections with the police that work in the region. In fact, the husband of one of my staff works for the police. Immediately all of us were on the phone to each other asking: ’Is everybody safe?’ These are people that we know, potentially, that can be impacted. Of course, Martin Place has been mentioned.

If we are going to really protect people, what has to be the focus is the evil threat from ISIL. It is a global issue. It must be addressed at its source in the Middle East. It is important that our involvement in the coalition efforts in Syria and Iraq is resolute and effective. Strategically, ISIL wants to create division between us.

It is also vital that legislation and the environment of legislation is able to empower our police, our defence forces and our key people in the intelligence community with the powers and the resources they need so that they can take action. We have invested $1.3 billion in our agencies. That was mentioned earlier by the member who spoke about the cost. The cost is worth it. It is about keeping us safe. It is so vital. I want to particularly acknowledge ASIO, Defence, our police, Border Protection officers and communities around Australia that are coming together to fight for what is important to us—our freedom.

Again I want to pass on my condolences and acknowledge the deep sorrow we feel for those who have lost loved ones recently and over recent years through terrorism attacks. I want to affirm and acknowledge the government, with the support of the opposition, being resolute in determining to ensure that we do everything we can to defeat ISIS.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (19:23): I appreciate the opportunity to make a statement on the terrorist attacks in Paris and around the world in recent weeks, recent months, recent years and recent decades. It was earlier this year that a former German MP, Jurgen Todenhöfer, wrote a book called Inside ISIS: 10 days in the "Islamic State". He did this after being almost embedded with the group in Syria. He warned that the terrorist organisation is far more 'dangerous and organised' than people in the West realise. He added:

They are extremely brutal. Not just head-cutting. I'm talking about the strategy of religious cleansing. That's their official philosophy. They are talking about 500 million people who have to die.

He said:
The West underestimated the risk posed by IS dramatically.

It was only earlier this month that the President of the USA, President Obama, in an interview said:

... we don't have ground forces there in sufficient numbers to simply march into Al-Raqqah in Syria and clean the whole place out. And as a consequence, we've always understood that our goal has to be
militarily constraining ISIL’s capabilities, cutting off their supply lines, cutting off their financing at the same time as we’re putting a political track together …

The interviewer then said:
And that’s the strategy you’ve been following. But ISIS is gaining strength, aren’t they?

The US President replied:
Well, no, I don’t think they’re gaining strength. What is true is that from the start, our goal has been first to contain, and we have contained them.

Those words were said a few days before the Paris terrorist attacks. When it comes to the idea that we have contained them I think it is worth going through some of the terrorist attacks in the last 30 days only.

I will start with a list of terrorist attacks just this year which numbers close to 300. I will list just some of the terrorist attacks and deaths that have occurred around the world in the last 30 days. On 20 October we had 145 people killed in Nigeria from Boko Haram bombings. They were suicide bombings. On 31 October we had the downing of the Russian Metrojet flight, with 224 people killed in the Sinai in Egypt after that flight took off from Sharm El Sheikh airport. On 4 November we had a suicide bombing in Arish in Egypt, killing three people and injuring 10. On 5 November we had another suicide bombing in Lebanon, killing five people plus the perpetrator. On 6 November we had a 16-year-old Palestinian shoot and wound an Israeli Defense Forces soldier in a lone wolf attack. On 7 November we had 12 people killed when multiple bombs were set off across Baghdad. On 9 November we had suicide bombings killing three people in Chad. Also on the same day we had another four people killed when a 14-year-old girl suicide bomber detonated herself at a mosque in Cameroon. On 12 November we had 43 people killed in an ISIL suicide bombing in Beirut in Lebanon. On 13 November there was the tragedy in Paris, where 130 innocent civilians who were merely going to a football game, going to the theatre, watching a rock concert or simply having dinner at a restaurant lost their lives. On that same day there was also another 19 people killed in bombings in Iraq, with another 33 people injured. On 17 November we had bombings in Nigeria killing 34. A few days later we had the attack at the Radisson Hotel in Mali, leaving 19 dead. Right now, the city of Brussels remains in lockdown, with threats of serious and imminent attack. Only just this morning we heard that Tunisia is in a state of emergency after a bomb went off in a bus, killing another 12 people.

This does not sound like containment to me. We must acknowledge the scope of the problem that we face. Our grandfathers fought and defended—

Debate interrupted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The **SPEAKER** (19:30): Order! It being 7.30 pm, I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

**Goods and Services Tax**

Mr **PERRETT** (Moreton) (19:30): When the GST was introduced by the Howard government, Prime Minister Howard was adamant that it would never, ever increase beyond 10 per cent. A senior caller on ABC radio in Perth in 2001 asked Prime Minister Howard:
If you were re-elected, will you increase the GST? You spoke on a program last year to say that, as a senior, I would be so much better off with the GST. Well, I know my sums don't add up.

Prime Minister Howard responded to the caller:
Well, the answer to the first question is no; we will not increase the GST.

When pressed further by the radio announcer about whether the GST would be increased, Prime Minister Howard said:
But we're not going to increase the GST.

The radio announcer asked:
Never ever?

John Howard replied:
We are not going to increase the GST. There are no circumstances in which the GST, in fact, needs to be increased.

We fast forward from that interview to 2015, when we have a senior Liberal National Party senator from Queensland, Ian Macdonald, saying:
I was around when this GST proposal was originally introduced and at the time I and everyone around from the Prime Minister down promised that it would never go beyond 10 per cent. We all swore in blood that it would not; that it would remain at 10 per cent and that's a commitment that I as one of them who gave it intend to honour.

Senator Macdonald from Queensland is not the only one in the current government who was in the coalition government that made that promise in 2000. I wonder whether the others will honour their commitments sworn in blood, including members of the executive such as the Deputy Prime Minister, Warren Truss, the Minister for Defence, Senator Payne, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Bishop, and the current Special Minister of State, Mr Brough. Other members of the then coalition government, Tony Abbott, Bronwyn Bishop, Bruce Scott, Ian Macfarlane, Warren Entsch, Bill Heffernan, Sharman Stone, Kevin Andrews and Senators Ronaldson and Abetz, all made the commitment that the GST would never, ever go above 10 per cent.

What we do know is that the Turnbull government is now considering breaking that sacred commitment to the Australian people and raising or broadening the GST. Prime Minister Turnbull indicated this on 3AW on 6 October 2015 when Neil Mitchell said:
But everything is on the table—superannuation, negative gearing, capital gains, tax—everything. The GST, everything is on the table.

Prime Minister Turnbull responded:
Everything is on the table. That's right.

Again, on ABC Radio National on 1 October this year, Prime Minister Turnbull said:
Fran, everything is on the table.

We know on this side of the House what the consequence of raising or broadening the GST will be: it will increase the price of everything. Every single one of my constituents will have to pay more. Every single one of my constituents who are struggling to make ends meet will have to pay more. It will cost my constituents more every time they get the groceries, buy their children's school books, go to the doctor and pay for their electricity and gas bills, even if they go to the Rocklea market and stock up on fresh fruit and vegetables.
NATSEM modelling shows that, if the GST is increased to 15 per cent—a 50 per cent increase—and broadened to apply to fresh food, health care, education, and water and sewerage, an average family with a household income of $86,000 will pay an extra $6,200 per year. If the GST is increased to 15 per cent and the base left as it is now, that family would still pay $3,200 extra each year. If the base is broadened to include fresh food—heaven help us if that ever happens—health care, education, and water and sewerage but the rate is left at 10 per cent, that family would still pay an extra $3,000 per year. This would be an additional cost at a time when families are doing it tough.

The GST does not currently apply to fresh food—as you can see if you go to your grocery store—medicines and health care; school, TAFE and university fees; child care and early childhood education; or rent, mortgage payments and council rates. There is good reason for that. These are all things that we do not have a choice to pay for. They are what we call the essentials. Even if the government tried to compensate taxpayers by lowering the rate of income tax, that would not adequately compensate the people who would be worse off. We all know how these sugar highs used to bring in the hard vinegar turn out. You get a little bit of the flavour out of your mouth for a while, but soon after the pain comes and stays.

The NATSEM modelling shows that lowering the rate of income tax by five per cent would still make the lowest 60 per cent of households worse off, while the top 40 per cent would, effectively, gain at their expense. It is unfair and un-Australian. I cannot believe that the Turnbull government would do this rather than force big multinationals to pay their fair share of tax. Labor will never support an increase to the GST rate or a broadening of the base to include fresh food, health care or education. (Time expired)

### Taxation

#### Superannuation

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (19:35): I rise tonight to talk on this adjournment debate in relation to tax as well, as it happens. I know there is a discussion that the Australian community and the parliament is having at the moment in relation to tax. We have heard from the member for Moreton and his scare campaign on the GST, but he knows that it is not Liberal Party or coalition policy that we are going to do that. We are trying to have an adult conversation with the Australian people about all sorts of taxes—for example, payroll tax, which I believe is a tax that stifles growth. It is a tax that hits people when they want to employ more people. Is that a great tax to have out there? Income taxes vary as well; there are all different levels. So I welcome an open discussion about tax.

But I did want to talk quickly about superannuation. I believe that superannuation is essential and that all people, no matter what their age, should be putting money into superannuation. At the moment the government spends about $40 billion a year on pensions, which is something like 10 per cent of the budget—a very high percentage. We should be encouraging people to put more money into super so that, 20 years from now, there will be less money required for pensions. If we encourage more people to save and put money into super, that will mean fewer expenses that the government has to pay.

During this open discussion I want to rule one thing out as well—that there will be changes to super. I do not think it is the right way to go. I think that we should be encouraging all people, whether they are lower income, middle-income or high-income, to put more money
into super. The days when you could put a lot of money into super are gone. The maximum that you can put in per year is $30,000, if you are under 50, and $35,000, if you are over 50. If you are a younger person under the age of 30 and if you salary sacrifice $1,000 a year on top of your wage and pay 15 per cent tax on it, then that is $850 a year that you are putting away. After 10 years, you have an extra $8,500 plus interest. So if you can put away that sneaky little amount if you are on a wage of $30,000, $40,000 or $50,000 a year, then that all adds up. If you are aged between 40 and 55 and you can afford to salary sacrifice $5,000 a year, at 15 per cent you would save $875 in tax. After 25 years, you would have some $106,250 after those concessions are gone.

So I would say to the government, which I am a part of, and to the opposition that we should be encouraging people to put more in super. We should not be looking to tax it more. When I talk to accountants, one of the things that they say to me when I am out and about in the electorate is that people do not want to put more money into super because the rules are always changing. We do need a bit of stability. As a government, as an opposition and as a parliament as a whole, we should not be looking at the concessions going, 'Gee, look how much money we could get back in tax if only we changed super.' We should be going, 'Hang on, we'll leave those concessions there, because in 20 years time future federal governments will not have the big expenses that we currently have on pensions.' Where is the foresight? Let us not take the easy road and hit super.

I say this in relation to low-income earners, middle-income earners and high-income earners: we need to be encouraging all of them to put more away. If you are over 55 and you are approaching retirement age, you need to be putting as much as you can in. If you can put in the maximum amount of $35,000 a year—you might be married and able to salary sacrifice a wage—that is a great thing to do. After you have paid your house off, hopefully, you can put more and more into super so that you are able to self-funded. I say to those self-funded retirees: thank you for what you have done; thank you for putting money away and not being a burden on the government. It would have been at a time when superannuation was difficult to put away. Super is really important for people under 50 at the moment, where they have been able to put more and more away. So I say to the parliament, leave super alone. Let us continue to give concessions, because it is only going to help future generations.

Asylum Seekers

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (19:40): Many members of this chamber grapple with the best way to respond to the international refugee crisis. In 2015, for the first time since the Second World War, the number of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people worldwide has exceeded 50 million people—including around 20 million refugees and two million people seeking asylum. No one country can provide protection to all of those people who need it. In the absence of a comprehensive international solution, decisions made by individual countries have life and death consequences for different groups of people. Weighing these consequences is a challenging policy and moral question. People of good will can look at the same set of facts, the same complexities in this area, and come to differing conclusions. One thing is clear, however, there is no silver bullet—no simple solutions without other consequences.

In this context, those who pretend that there are simple solutions to this issue can make it difficult to have a serious conversation about how we can weigh the consequences of our
choices in order to pursue the most compassionate, generous policy possible for those in need. Last week, Senator Hanson-Young of the other place wrote a piece in *The Monthly* that was particularly unhelpful in this respect. The article argues that former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's response to the Indochinese crisis in the 1970s should be seen as the model for responding humanely to this issue today.

As a member representing an electorate with a very large Vietnamese-Australian community, I have had much cause to reflect on this. On the wall of my Canberra office is a picture of the Pulau Bidong refugee camp in Malaysia, where many Vietnamese asylum seekers passed through on their way to Australia—including many of my constituents. It is a constant reminder to me that the process of resettling refugees from Indochina under the Fraser government was far from simple. It took more than a decade of work by Australian, ASEAN and UN diplomats.

After the fall of Saigon in 1975, millions of Vietnamese began to flee their homes to neighbouring South-East Asian countries—particularly Thailand, Malaysia and later Indonesia. In 1978, a UN conference of 36 nations was convened in response to the crisis and made provision for the resettlement of 120,000 people but ultimately failed to stem the flow of people fleeing Vietnam. Overwhelmed by the number of people on the move, these nations began turning back asylum seekers to the persecution that they had fled. In the next year, 1979, a further UN conference agreed that states in the region would provide temporary accommodation to refugees in exchange for the resettlement of 260,000 refugees, and, crucially—thanks to the initiative of Australian diplomacy—Vietnam agreed to enforce an orderly departure program that dealt with the source of this exodus. Later that year, after years of diplomacy from a worldwide coalition, an agreement was reached under which Indonesia offered Galang Island to the UNHCR as a refugee processing centre.

Ultimately, more than 2.5 million people were resettled in the Indochinese crisis. The program was such a significant achievement that the UNHCR was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1981. However, it was not until 1989, when 77 nations endorsed the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese refugees that the crisis was ultimately resolved. More than a decade of diplomacy was needed to implement this process, but this impediment did not get a mention in the senator's op-ed. She did, however, claim that the Labor Party:

… want us to think that there are only two options; either be cruel to refugees or open the borders and see people die needlessly at sea. They want you to forget that there is another way. That is nonsense, and the senator knows it.

Labor has aggressively pursued a regional solution to the movement of asylum seekers, like that adopted in response to the Indochinese crisis, for years. Indeed, in 2011, the Gillard government reached an agreement with Malaysia where 800 asylum seekers who arrived by boat would be transferred to Malaysia in exchange for 4,000 processed refugees waiting to be resettled from camps in Malaysia. This regional agreement was, of course, voted down by the senator's own party with the support of the coalition. Despite this, the senator's article goes on to argue that Australia should set up asylum seeker processing centres in Indonesia and Malaysia. The tricky bits—how to achieve this challenging diplomatic outcome and how we respond to people who would seek to arrive by boat in the interim—are again left unsaid. The misleading, politically opportunistic and completely unhelpful impression left by this article is...
that all that is lacking to realise a regional solution is political will; the difficulties of international diplomacy are ignored.

In contrast, Labor are not in the business of offering simplistic political snake oil on asylum policy. We are in the business of developing a practical, compassionate, generous asylum seeker policy. This year's Labor national conference adopted a platform that commits Labor to:

… take a leadership role within South East Asia and the Pacific to build a regional humanitarian framework to improve the situation of asylum seekers … supporting the UNHCR in providing health and education services to asylum seekers … advocating for work rights for asylum seekers, similar to what would have been achieved under the proposed Malaysia Agreement in 2011.

We also committed to practical, compassionate measures that will work in the short term—continuing the combination of offshore processing and regional resettlement together with the policy of turning back boats that has stopped the flow of vessels arriving on our shores. We also committed to abolishing TPVs, introducing a 90-day rule, returning references to the UN Refugee Convention in the Migration Act, independent oversight of Australian funded processing facilities and increasing UNHCR support to $450 million. (Time expired)

Tasmania: Timber Industry

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (19:45): Tonight I want to tell Kelly Wilton's story—the story of a long-term family of the Derwent Valley. It gives me pleasure to tell the story, which is part of the fabric of my state of Tasmania. Our nation's story starts with our Indigenous people, whom I acknowledge as the first people of our land. They have a unique cultural heritage that is rightfully recognised. Today, I want to focus on a part of our history that has shaped my home state of Tasmania for more than 200 years. It has been the foundation of our economy and the fabric of our society. It has been the common denominator that has bound our communities together continuously since European settlement. It still is the common denominator that connects families across generations and across communities in my state.

The heritage that I speak of is Tasmania's timber heritage. Tasmania was settled in 1803 but our timber history predates Australian settlement. In 1788 Captain Bligh took refuge on the shores of Adventure Bay, at Bruny Island, a small island off the south-east coast of the state. He had his men dig sawpits and harvest timber to repair his ship, the Bounty. Captain Bligh took note of the density of the timber on the island, which later became a deciding factor in the settling of Van Diemen's Land by the British. Van Diemen's Land had an abundant source of unique, high-quality timber and deep ports that could handle the export of that timber to colonies on mainland Australia and also back to Britain. Our timber industry was Tasmania's first primary industry.

My state's convict past, which we now embrace in an almost legendary sense, is also intertwined with our timber heritage. Timber harvesting was an essential priority for our first settlers but it was also used as a punishment for the most unruly convicts, who were supposedly subdued during times on the timber gangs. They were sent out in the harshest weather conditions, wearing inappropriate clothing in heat, rain and snow. And they did this on rations of food that left them emaciated. The timber gang convicts were ordered to dig sawpits by hand in hard packed earth that had not previously been turned. These pits had to be deep enough for a man to stand and wide enough to exceed the girth of the timber they felled by axe. Teams of two men each worked the sawpits, one on top and the other underneath in
the pit, showered by sawdust. This is where the now common phrases in our language—top dog and bottom dog or underdog—originated. The logs were carried out of the bush on the shoulders of convict teams before the luxuries of bullock teams to recover the timber. They became known as the centipede gangs.

Free settlers came. Convicts got pardons and set up businesses harvesting timber. Towns grew. Our economy was built on the trade. We celebrate our maritime history and heritage, and rightly so—we even have a maritime museum—but without our timber heritage it would not have begun. Without casks made from Tasmanian timbers for the whale oil exported around the world and Huon pine for the whaling ships, there would not have been a reason for it to be. By the mid-1800s those who depended on timber for their living recognised the need to make sure the yield harvested was not self-limiting, and have regulated and replanted ever since. By the early 1900s there were generations of families who had Tasmanian sawdust running through their veins. And they had the bush in their lungs and their hearts. Timber workers have always been the first called when a bushfire happens in Tasmania because they know how a fire behaves under different climatic conditions and difficult terrain—a necessity learned and passed down through generations. These days our timber industry is diverse, including harvesters, contractors, truck drivers, craftsmen, wooden boat builders, machine operators, scientists and foresters. It is a most sustainable industry, and these people were the original conservationists.

The direct employment from timber harvesting would not happen without the support network of Tasmanian timber towns—the shop owners who make their mates breakfasts and lunches, the pub owners who encourage the tall tales of work in the bush, the mechanics, the metal workers and the tyre fitters who co-exist in a symbiotic way. 'Industry' is not a word; it really defines what is, very much, part of our heritage. This is Kelly Wilton's story, but it is the heritage of all Tasmanians—an unspoken kinship, an understanding that connects people. My heritage is the strength and tenacity that makes us hold our heads high in good times and bad, which timber families are so proud of. This is Kelly's heritage.

I note that the World Heritage Reactive Monitoring Mission is in Tasmania this week, and I encourage them. I had an opportunity to meet with them on Saturday but unfortunately, because of inclement weather, it was moved to today and for obvious reasons I am not available. They consider the cultural heritage of this industry.

Fowler Electorate: Community Services

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (19:50): I regularly speak about the extraordinary cultural diversity in my community. In fact, Fowler is the most multicultural electorate in the whole of Australia, with nearly 70 percent of its population being born overseas and speaking a language other than English at home.

It is a strong and vibrant community, one which I take great pride in representing. However, as a community with many refugees resettled from violent conflicts and war torn countries, many are in search of a better life. Fowler also has significant pockets of disadvantage. A high proportion of families in my community are from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Many families struggle with the reality of living with disabilities and, similarly, many experience difficulties with cultural barriers and coming to terms with integrating with the broader Australian community. Therefore, in my community we rely heavily on settlement services as well as social and welfare support.
Earlier this month I attended the inauguration ceremony of the 12th management committee of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel. This organisation was established in 2003 to meet the culturally specific needs of the Indo-Chinese community. Funded by the Department of Health and Ageing and through the very generous donations of its trustees, the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel provides quality palliative care to many elderly members through their 88-bed aged-care facility in Bonnyrigg. I have worked very closely with the care manager, Elena Lau; the long-serving general manager, Veronica Hon; and the administration manager, Sylvie Huynh. Board members including Peter Wong AM, Harry Tang OAM, Phuoc Thang Tran, Michael Chan, Henry Tang, David and Anna Nguy, and Vincent Kong are all close personal friends, and I see the great work they do in our community. Most importantly, this was an occasion to acknowledge the newly-elected chairperson, Mrs Chou Ma, in fact the second woman ever to be elected to this important position. Mrs Ma is a remarkable businesswomen in her own right and will make an extraordinary contribution to the hostel in ensuring that senior citizens in the broader Chinese community have access to quality aged care.

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to attend the 22nd AGM of Asian Women at Work. I have spoken regularly in parliament about their activities, particularly with respect to their strong advocacy for migrant working women. Since 1995, Asian Women at Work has provided a strong voice for more than 2,000 women who are isolated from information and support. Ensuring that these women are informed of their working rights, this organisation has been at the forefront of providing its members with counselling, training and education to empower their participation in the workforce. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the organisation's coordinator, Lina Cabaero, and its community workers including Bich Thuy Pham, Angela Zhang and Roni Wang.

My community is unfortunately overrepresented with families living with disability. However, we are most fortunate to have a number of organisations that are dedicated to providing support for people living with disability. Last Friday I attended the 34th AGM of Disability South West, a not-for-profit community organisation which has provided many services to residents living with disability in Liverpool and Fairfield. Since 1981, Disability South West has provided outstanding support services to people with disability, their carers and families through their programs. From brain injury programs to peer support services and leisure linked activities for young people experiencing challenging behaviours, Disability South West's services are making a phenomenal difference to the lives of these people. Of course, the work that they do cannot happen without the dedication of their board of directors, staff and volunteers. Specifically, I acknowledge the great work of President, Ken Bury, and Chief Executive Officer, Sean Langshaw. Their endeavours and their compassion and care in looking after people with disability are most commendable.

These organisations play a vital role in shaping the lives of people in my community. We are particularly fortunate to have their support and services. All these groups make a difference for the better in our community, and for that I thank them most sincerely.

Western Australia: Roads

Mr IRONS (Swan) (19:55): In September I was joined by the member for Canning, Andrew Hastie, the then Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, Premier Colin Barnett, and the local Belmont MLA, Glenys Godfrey, in my electorate of Swan to announce the opening of the
Grand Gateway near Perth Airport. We were able to make that announcement four months ahead of schedule, which is proof the coalition is committed to delivering the infrastructure WA needs. The Grand Gateway is the first impression for visitors to WA—and it makes a great impression, a fantastic impression. I am here today to provide an update of the project which is making road users very happy in my sunny state, but first let me give you a brief background.

The Gateway WA project is being delivered by using an alliance contract, where five industry leaders are working on partnership to deliver this major project. While some of the preliminary work packages began in early 2013, the major construction commenced in the third quarter of 2013. There are several segments that make up the road part of this project. These include Tonkin Highway being widened to six lanes, Leach Highway being upgraded to an expressway standard, several new grade separated interchanges and an upgraded intersection of Tonkin Highway and Roe Highway. If you have been to the Perth Airport lately, you will see the roads leading to it are beginning to look first-class. In September the Grand Gateway was lit up gold, blue and purple in celebration of both the Western Australian AFL teams making the finals.

This week the alliance team has been busy doing painting, kerbing and landscaping around the airport area of the project. The primary focus of the project for this month has been at the Roe Highway/Berkshire Road intersection, which includes on- and off-ramps. This is a major project milestone because it means Roe Highway traffic will be relocated onto the new bridge which runs over Berkshire Road. Roe Highway traffic can now travel uninterrupted over Berkshire Road, reducing travel time. That particular part of the project is expected to be completed this weekend, so, from Monday morning onwards, through movements on Roe Highway will be free-flowing for road users.

And it is not just road users who are benefitting from this great project. The project is delivering a number of upgrades and improved facilities that are designed to enhance the local area. The project has constructed approximately seven kilometres of new acoustic walls so that traffic noise is reduced for residents living near the major highways. The project managers brought in acoustic experts who determined the location and height of the walls. Those experts monitored noise using data loggers. They used these results to determine the locations and height of the walls. By positioning these walls between the road and residential properties, the sound from the road is forced to diffract around the edges of the walls, reducing the direct sound pressure. These walls can reduce road traffic noise by about five to 10 decibels, which would halve the perceived noise level, making life easier for residents living near these highways.

Twenty-one kilometres of new shared paths are also being installed as part of the project, which will provide improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. Once construction is completed, the new paths will provide improved access for walking and cycling along the new road alignment. Cycling infrastructure is an important part of this project, as Perth has experienced an increase in the number of cyclists using paths in recent years for commuting, exercise and leisure. It leads to fewer cars on the roads and improves traffic flow. As part of this project, seven cyclist-pedestrian underpasses and one bridge have been constructed to provide connectivity. There are several benefits of these paths: it is a safe way for the public to cycle or walk, separated from the busy road; there are multiple local connections where
people can join the path; and the network provides opportunities for people to walk and cycle for health and recreational purposes.

I have saved the best news for last. The construction phase is now nearing completion and all the work is expected to be finished by the end of the first quarter of next year, ahead of the planned consolidation of the domestic and international Perth airport terminals. The Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects is in the chamber. His dedication, along with that of the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in having this project completed early, has enabled an extra interchange to go ahead. I look forward to welcoming the ministers to Western Australia for the opening of the magnificent Gateway WA project, which was built without a mining tax but through good operations and planning by the coalition government, which is seeking to build the infrastructure that Australia needs.

The SPEAKER: It being 8 pm, the debate is interrupted.

House adjourned at 20:00

NOTICES

The following notices were given:

Ms O'Dwyer: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to social security, student assistance and higher education support, and for related purposes.

Mr Keenan: to present a Bill for an Act to amend legislation relating to the criminal law, law enforcement and background checking, and for other purposes.

Mr Williams: to move:

That this House:

(1) recognises tourism is a major strength of the Australian economy, which:
   (a) generates around $100 billion a year; and
   (b) employs more than one million Australians in 270,000 businesses;

(2) celebrates Australia being ranked among the top 10 countries in the world in the Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2016;

(3) recognises our tourism industry is one of Australia's top export sectors with significant growth opportunities from the Asian middle class; and

(4) welcomes the Government's ongoing commitment to the sector with the announcement of a Minister with the sole responsibility for Tourism.

Mr Billson: to move:

That this House:

(1) recognises the importance of changing the national culture to make disrespecting women un-Australian;

(2) welcomes the Government's $100 million Women's Safety Package to combat domestic violence;

(3) supports efforts at the upcoming COAG meeting to engage all levels of government and the broader community on this shared national endeavour;

(4) places on record its deep concern about the use of new technology and in particular smart phone tracking applications by family violence perpetrators to obtain and monitor the location of their victims; and

(5) calls on all governments to consider this as part of their strategy to combat domestic violence and technology facilitated abuse.
CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

McEwen Electorate: Aveo Retirement Village

Mr MITCHELL (McEwen—Second Deputy Speaker) (09:30): It was an absolute pleasure to be invited to open the final stages of Aveo Retirement Village in Sunbury when I returned home after the last sitting week. It was also a great pleasure to congratulate the staff and the management on 10 years of dedicated service to the care and comfort of their residents. The final stage of the development, which was unveiled last week, completes the vision of a village of independence and strong community spirit that is inclusive and welcoming. Not only that, it is a great place to live. The village is located close to the train station, shopping centre, golf course, bowling club, pool, football clubs and churches, and it offers a range of spacious and contemporary residences which are fully equipped with everything needed for self-sufficient living.

Research by the Property Council of Australia shows that most people living in an retirement village wish they had made that move sooner. They love the new residence, their lifestyle and the companionship of like-minded people. More than 180,000 Australians live in retirement villages, which means that almost six per cent of our over-65 population are experiencing these advantages. Supporting people as they age in our community is becoming more important than ever. We know that when our community members are isolated, either through health or other circumstances, this results in a decline in their wellbeing. We know that older people living alone, who have worse social cohesion and support around them than other people, generally suffer from both physical health and mental health issues, so it is important that we make sure that older people in our community are still engaged and connected. There are many organisations around, such as Men’s Sheds, for example, that do that sort of work, continue to make people feel engaged and treat them as they should be treated: a very valuable part of our community. What we find, too, is that, when our community members are engaged with their peers and are involved in activities that resonate and pique their interest, there are some real community benefits that result. We know that engaging with a community of our peers is an incredibly rewarding experience, whether it is to catch up at the community centre, have a friendly game of bowls or darts, or even tinker away in a workshop.

The CEO of National Seniors Australia, Michael O’Neill, said that the importance of the environment we live in is that we can shape our health, independence and happiness into later in life. A sense of belonging and cohesion that arises from community living places like Aveo Retirement Village is linked to lower levels of depression, anxiety and stress for older Australians. We see a delay for these residents in entering into aged care or assisted living, as well as a reduced need for medical intervention due to the presence of support nearby. The benefits of residential options like Aveo Retirement Village for the whole community cannot be denied. They allow older Australians to continue exercising a choice in the direction of their care and the way they want to have a high quality of life. I can tell you from when they invite me there every pre-election to do a debate and talk about politics, there are some very intelligent and feisty people living in that area.
Road Safety

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Assistant Minister for Defence) (09:33): I take the opportunity this morning, as we approach the festive season and the extended holiday period, to encourage Australians to consider the opportunities to explore regional Australia over the summer months. Regional tourism is obviously a very important industry for many communities right throughout Australia, but none more so than for the community of Gippsland, where we have an extraordinary range of natural attractions. I am sure you, Deputy Speaker, have had the opportunity to travel through Gippsland and experience the mighty Gippsland Lakes, Ninety Mile Beach and the high country. One of your colleagues, the member for Gellibrand, has already accepted my invitation to visit Gippsland over the holiday period and enjoy everything we have to offer.

Having raised the issue of regional tourism and the vast distances involved in travelling throughout regional Australia, I need to make another important point, and that is in relation to road safety. I encourage people who are taking breaks in regional Australia over the summer period to make sure they consider their own personal safety and the safety of their family. The festive season is a time for sharing with loved ones and family members, for getting together at family reunions and experiencing everything Christmas has to offer. It is also a time of significant increases in road fatalities and serious injuries. Our region, as I indicated, has many attractions which bring people from right across Australia to visit. Unfortunately, summer is also a peak period for accidents on our roads. People travelling longer distances than perhaps they are used to leads to fatigue, which is one of the major factors contributing to road trauma. I call on Gippslanders and the people visiting our region to aim for a zero road toll over the holiday period.

Unfortunately, the statistics are quite alarming in relation to the rural road toll. People are more likely to die on a rural or regional road than on a metropolitan road. The five-year average for rural road fatalities in Victoria is 148 people. I have great concerns about that, and I am working with the police and my community on initiatives to reduce the rural road toll. I reflect on the comments made by Superintendent Michael Grainger, of the Victorian Police Road Policing and Strategy Division, last year. Commenting on a study of all road deaths in 2014, he said 57 per cent were in rural areas and 51 per cent involved single vehicle accidents in 100 kilometre zones—and that means the accident is more likely to be traumatic for the people involved. We have higher speed accidents and we have more severe injuries as a result of those collisions.

There is a misconception that only city drivers or visitors to our regions die on country roads. That is simply not the fact. The majority of people killed or injured on rural roads are local people. I appeal to people in my community of Gippsland and also those travelling through the region over the summer period to take care on our roads, drive to the conditions and make sure they enjoy a well earned summer break in the Gippsland community.

Shortland Electorate: Christmas

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (09:36): Christmas is a very special time. It is a time when family and friends come together, it is a time when the community joins together and it is a time when we as members of parliament have a unique opportunity to build on that sense of community. In my electorate the suburb of Belmont is going to take on a unique role this year. Instead of just sitting back and enjoying Christmas the shops in Belmont have
decided to join in a competition that I am running and decorate their windows. We are bringing the spirit of Christmas to Belmont, and it starts this Saturday. On Saturday, Councillor Chad Griffith will be hopping on a boat and the 16 Ft Sailing Club will be taking him to the wharf at Belmont. He will hop off that boat and then be piped to the Belmont city centre by the Clan McEwan Pipe Band. Along the way, he will be handing over lollies to children. When he arrives, carols will be sung by a local group. Saturday is going to be a very big day in Belmont. All the children in the area will be able to meet and greet Santa as he arrives. And over the ensuing weeks, when the shops prepare their windows with interesting, bright and festive displays, there will be an opportunity for families to walk around the streets of Belmont and feel that sense of community.

This is all about building a sense of community. Strong communities come together to enjoy things such as are happening in Belmont. Too often, communities are divided and people are too busy to engage in activities together. But what we are doing in Belmont is building a sense of community by bringing families together and promoting the enjoyment that surrounds Christmas. The children will have the opportunity to be involved at the grassroots level. I put out a challenge to other members of parliament, although I know that in some cases this is not always possible: be part of your community, enjoy your community and undertake activities that will promote the festive season. Along the way, you will help the businesses in your electorate by supporting them.

Percy, Ms Jackie; and El Wakil, Ms Sharon

Clarke, Ms Emma

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Counter-Terrorism) (09:40): I am here today to acknowledge the efforts of a few inspiring community members from my electorate of Stirling. Local resident Jackie Percy and her sister Sharon El Wakil have been able to raise almost $20,000 and gain support for autism after a successful crowdfunding campaign. Jackie’s son Ned was diagnosed with a severe type of autism at just three years of age. As a result, he is completely nonverbal and relies on sign language, grunts, picture cards and anything else he can find to let them know what he is thinking. After a long wait, Ned was finally accepted into the Smart Pups Assistance Dogs program, which allows him to be paired with a specially trained service dog—a puppy that will grow up with him and be his companion in life.

These dogs, however, come at a very large cost, and Jackie and her sister Sharon have been fundraising for her son’s autism ever since. They have set up an online fundraising page, including a blog giving insight about Ned’s condition to members of the community. Their determination has seen them hold pop-up restaurants and quiz nights. Both have been very well received by members of the community and the family has been able to raise almost $20,000 in a few short weeks. I acknowledge not only the efforts of this family but also the generosity of the individuals who support such a deserving young boy. It is a privilege to have such a loving family in my community who are continually striving to achieve their goals. Their success is a testament to their hardworking attitudes and they are outstanding role models for all members of the Stirling community.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate aspiring young basketballer 15-year-old Emma Clarke, who received a $500 Local Sporting Champions grant through my office so she could compete in the under-16 Australian Junior Basketball Championships held in Tasmania in

FEDERATION CHAMBER
July. Emma is an enthusiastic sportswoman who spends more than 16 hours per week attending basketball training sessions with four different teams, including Western Australia's under-16 state team and the State Basketball League. In January, Emma underwent a series of trials in order to gain a position in the competitive team. Her hard work, dedication and enthusiasm towards her sport paid off and, as such, she made the trip as a player—and as the captain.

I met with Emma a few weeks ago and she told me of her experiences representing her state at the national level. At only 15 years, Emma has a dedication to her sport that is to be admired by all, describing herself as being 100 per cent committed and giving everything a go, no matter how hard the situation may be. She describes basketball as her passion and says life would not be the same without it. Her experienced gained at the national level has strengthened her resolve to take her basketball as far as she can. She hopes one day to be invited to the Australian camp and attend the Australian Institute of Sport.

It is great to see such inspiring young sporting members of the community represent their state with such passion and enthusiasm. I am pleased that her hard work has paid off and I wish her all the best for future events.

**Live Animal Exports**

**Mr ALBANESE** (Grayndler) (09:43): Many of my constituents have contacted me over the past months, concerned by the recent reports of animal cruelty and mistreatment by some in Australia's live export trade. Many of these same constituents want to see the member for New England, the agriculture minister, use the statutory powers he already has to prosecute those who breach our export laws. Labor introduced these powers through the Export Supply Chain Assurance Scheme, or ESCAS, in 2011. This reflects Labor's commitment to see animal welfare maintained throughout the live export process both in Australia and overseas.

The regulatory regime we created forces exporters to show they have a plan to treat animals humanely and provides a monitoring and auditing system all the way from port to abattoir. Heavy sanctions and penalties can be applied for breaches of ESCAS. These range from financial penalties, the suspension of an export licence, the cancellation of a licence—or indeed imprisonment. These provisions are currently available and it is up to the minister to examine the recent allegations that have been made about breaches of these rules and take action where necessary.

When last in government, Labor took the strong decision to suspend exports to Indonesia while supply chain welfare assurances were sought. This was a significant decision for Australia to take, as we have been exporting livestock for over a hundred years.

Prior to the last election, Labor also committed to appointing an Inspector-General for animal welfare and live animal exports as an independent statutory officer to oversee the ESCAS. Labor remains committed to the position. Unfortunately, the coalition government has failed to implement this important and independent position.

Labor has also recently proposed that the minister provide regular reports to the parliament. The minister's report should place on the public record an easy-to-access and understandable account of the state of the sector, any animal welfare incidents, and how they have been dealt with. I want to see effective welfare provisions in place. It is currently up to the agriculture minister to explain why he has refused to introduce the additional checks that the former
Labor government proposed. The agriculture minister must also outline how he will meet his ministerial responsibilities in ensuring that animal welfare is maintained in the industry.

**Calare Electorate: headspace**

Mr JOHN COBB (Calare) (09:45): I have to say I am thrilled to speak about the new headspace which is set to open in Orange early next year. It will bring the total number of headspace sites across the country to 100 centres, and as we already have one in Bathurst that will mean two of them operating in Calare.

The new centre will mean young people living in smaller communities to the west and the north of Orange will no longer have to travel to Bathurst to receive help and treatment. The need in Orange is clear as the community continues to look for more relevant and accessible services, with many young people needing support as they struggle with health problems or drug and alcohol problems.

Last year, headspace in Bathurst held nearly 5,000 appointments, helping around 1,000 young people. We believe Orange will offer support to a similar number of young people, with calls already coming in from people trying to book appointments. The coalition government are committed to providing more mental health services that specifically cater to the needs of our younger Australians, and the need is clear. Three-quarters—an amazing figure—of all mental illness is present in people under the age of 25. I guess a reason for that is modern life, and perhaps what they sometimes take when they should not, but that is a fact. So we have to provide these young people with treatment and support services early on to avoid serious and debilitating conditions later in life.

Headspace was developed by the former coalition government and it is doing an incredible job in providing young people with the support they need in a comfortable environment. In fact, I had the pleasure of opening the Bathurst headspace in 2007. The response of the Orange community has been wonderful. A number of organisations and individuals are already stepping up to join the consortium of groups, and it is a very wide consortium that want to support and do support headspace. Marathon Health will be one of the bigger supporters of the Orange headspace, with a number of other organisations offering in-kind services.

Orange is just one of five new regional centres announced in Mental Health Week last year. Regional young people deserve to have access to treatment for mental health issues despite living in regional Australia and the bush. It is a serious issue that is not going away, and we must continue to tackle it head on. I thank Headspace operations manager Peter Rohr for all his hard work and dedication towards getting this facility up and running in Orange.

**Melbourne Electorate: Christmas**

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (09:48): At this time of year, many of us are spending extra money, buying Christmas presents, celebrating the end of the year with our colleagues, friends and families, and planning office Christmas parties. We are out more, socialising more and buying more. Wouldn't it be good if, with all this extra spending, we were also doing some extra good? There are many social enterprises who use their business to contribute to the community, and now is the perfect time to think about where our money is going and what good we can be doing with it.
So I say to everyone: consider organising your office Christmas parties or buying your Christmas presents this year at one of the excellent social enterprises in Melbourne that are making a massive difference in our city. If you are looking for gifts, you can buy a bike, bike accessories or training courses at Good Cycles, a not-for-profit bike shop in Docklands. It sells bikes and accessories and supports at-risk young people through training programs and material donations. Buy your clothes from the amazing Social Studio in Collingwood, a Collingwood-based fashion label that uses upcycled and reclaimed materials to make clothes while also providing training and work to people from refugee backgrounds, or from HoMie, a store in Melbourne Central that donates an item of clothing to a person experiencing homelessness for every purchase that you make in the store. You could buy a bracelet from McAuley Community Services For Women, in Kensington, to support the work they do with women and children escaping family violence. Buy skin care from Metta Skincare, a Melbourne based company that sources all of its ingredients comes from suppliers using sustainable practices and uses 50 per cent of its profits to support not-for-profit organisations working in the area of sustainable agriculture, fair trade and eradication of poverty. Buy a welcome doormat from The Welcome Committee to help fund a campaign advocating for the humane processing of asylum seekers and refugees in Australia. Or support Pollinate Energy, who are getting solar powered lights to Indian families, bypassing coal fired electricity. If you are not looking for gifts, you can buy your Christmas pudding from Stre, a catering organisation with a cafe in Melbourne city that provides training for young people at risk of homelessness. Or do your grocery shopping at Friends of the Earth co-op in Collingwood.

There are so many venues who now provide great food and atmosphere while also supporting the community, and some of them will do catering for your Christmas party too. Why not look at organisations like Stre, SCARF, The Cutting Table, Lentil as Anything, Long Street Coffee, Charcoal Lane and The Sorghum Sisters. Or you could go to cafes and bars such as Kinfolk, Shebeen and Feast of Merit who donate 100 per cent of their profits to organisations working in Australia and the developing world to combat poverty and disadvantage. If none of this stuff is for you, I am pretty sure there is no way you can deny the need for toilet paper, so you may as well buy the forest friendly toilet paper from Who Gives A Crap and donate 50 per cent of profits to WaterAid, an organisation that builds toilets and improves sanitation in the developing world. I encourage everyone to visit the Good Xmas Trail website for Christmas shopping ideas for social enterprise. Make sure you use the money you are spending this Christmas to do good.

White Ribbon Day

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (09:51): Today is White Ribbon Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. I am an ambassador, and each year we restate our oath: I pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

Yesterday morning I attended the media stand-up against violence towards women and their children with the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, Minister Porter and many members of the press gallery represented by Laurie Wilson, the President of the National Press Club. Also there was an incredible survivor of domestic violence, Dr Ann O'Neill. Dr O'Neill left school at 15 and married young and had two children. At 24, while she and her children were asleep, her estranged husband broke into their house and shot all
three of them. The two children died; she survived but lost a leg. She is now an inspiring speaker and opponent of violence against women and their children. She maintains an incredible level of positivity in her attitude. She has gone on to obtain first-class honours in a bachelor's degree in social work and a PhD in international health.

There are lots of statistics that highlight the depth of this social problem. A woman dies at the hands of a current or former partner nearly every week. One woman in three has experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One woman in five has experienced sexual violence. One woman in four has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner. More than half the women who have experienced violence had their children in their care when the violence occurred. The problem extends to society's attitudes to this issue. Ninety per cent of rapes are committed by someone known to the victim, and yet 98 per cent of rapes reported in the media are committed by someone not known to the victim.

I commend the government for dedicating $30 million to an awareness campaign. Attitudes must change: violence against a partner is never excusable. No matter how intense relationships may get, violence is never the answer, and victims of abuse must know that it is never their fault. I say to all men: the most masculine, the most manly thing you can do is always to respect your partner. Today marks the day to make these statements, but that respect must be expressed every day of the year.

**Forum for Dialogue Among Nations**

Mr DANBY (Melbourne Ports) (09:54): The success of Poland has been commented on by many people. Since the end of the Cold War, unfortunately for people in Ukraine the national income per capita has remained virtually the same, whereas in Poland it has increased by six per cent. It is an open society. It is an engaging society. Anyone who goes there—and I have been there twice in the last decade—can see all measures of success in that wonderful society. Part of its success is the process of self-realisation and self-analysis over events that happened over the last 100 years but certainly during and since the Second World War.

One of the symbols of success is an organisation called the Forum for Dialogue Among Nations, a non-profit Polish organisation whose mission is to foster Polish-Jewish dialogue, eradicate anti-Semitism and teach tolerance through education. The forum fulfils its missions through seminars, publications, exhibitions and exchange programs targeted at Polish and Jewish youth and leaders throughout the world. This morning I will welcome His Excellency Pawel Milewski, my good friend the Polish ambassador, and Andrzej Folwarczny, the visionary president of the forum for dialogue, who will be here meeting a number of parliamentarians from the Polish-Australia and the Israel-Australia parliamentary friendship groups. Andrzej has a program, which I participated in, that takes people with some kind of leadership role in the Jewish communities in America and Australia and deeply engages them—or reconnects them, I would say—with all levels of Polish society, academic, intellectual and artistic. It is a revelation for all of us. Lost roots, lost connections and lost history are reconnected—a wonderful idea.

Even more impressive is the forum for dialogue's program in Polish high schools, where sometimes the grandchildren or great-grandchildren of people who perished in the Shoah are welcomed back into their village, their town et cetera by the high school students, who, in conjunction with a PhD from Warsaw, Torun or some other place, have investigated the
Jewish roots of that particular person, their families and their local communities. Later, the forum for dialogue gathers sometimes 1,000 Polish schools together in Warsaw. Some of the schoolkids have never been to Warsaw. The Polish leadership, including my good friend Bogdan Borusewicz, the chairman of the Polish Senate, commends all of these youngsters on re-establishing Polish history. I commend the forum for dialogue and I congratulate Andrzej Folwarczny on receiving the Order of the Rebirth of Poland for his work in the forum for dialogue.

Moore Electorate: North West Metro 2015 Small Business Awards

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (09:57): The Joondalup Business Association held the North West Metro 2015 Small Business Awards, showcasing the achievements of local entrepreneurs at a gala dinner held at the Joondalup Resort Hotel on 20 November. Our region can be described as an emerging economic powerhouse. In the June 2015 quarter, the unemployment rate in the city of Joondalup was 2.9 per cent, less than half of that of the national average of six per cent. Our gross regional product grew 6.2 per cent in the past year to $5.88 billion. Total tourism and hospitality sales amounted to $850.7 million. Retail trade is the largest employer in our region, generating 9,270 local jobs, whilst the local construction industry generated $3.19 billion last year.

I offer my congratulations to the following category winners, who embody the spirit of enterprise and entrepreneurship. I make special mention of Debbie Lanario from The Good Guys Joondalup for winning Business of the Year with over 15 employees. The Business of the Year with fewer than 15 employees was won by Outback Initiatives. The winner of the Best Educational Services award was Talent Co. Dance & Entertainment. The Best Home-Based Business was won by Love Letters. The Aroma Cafe, based at the West Coast Institute of Training campus, won Best Retail Business. The Best Online Business category was awarded to CommunityToGo. The Customer Service award was won by John Mason Real Estate. The People's Choice award went to West Coast Cabling Solutions. Calvin Flatters was named Entrepreneur of the Year, and his business, Calvin's Plumbing and Gas, also won the Best New Business category. The Best Trade Services award was awarded to A Man at Hand.

The regional economic outlook looks positive, with major investment in several landmark commercial projects in the pipeline and increasing business and consumer confidence. Thank you to the executive officer, Kay Solanki; the president, Russell Poliwka; and the JBA board members for running a superb event and advocating so strongly for the interests of the business community in Joondalup.

Scullin Electorate: Multiculturalism

Mr GILES (Scullin) (10:00): On Sunday the news brought into households around Australia had some confronting images courtesy of a group that calls itself Reclaim Australia. They brought to towns across the country a protest characterised by hatred, bigotry and, in many cases, violence. It was pleasing to see a level of political condemnation of these attacks on the fabric of our multicultural society, with leadership from people from across the political spectrum standing up for all Australians. It is right that these violent protests are condemned, but it is not sufficient if we are mindful of supporting a genuinely diverse and inclusive society.
So while these images were being projected I was pleased to see that, in the Scullin electorate, we were seeing a very different side of modern Australia. That afternoon, I attended a festival of peace, harmony and friendship which was organised by a group which calls itself Cultural Bridges, a local grassroots multicultural organisation bringing together in a sharing spirit so many of the cultures that make up the rich fabric of Melbourne and, in particular, Melbourne's north. We had the Persian women's group and the Cypriot Turkish women's group. We had a group representing the stories and concerns of Iranian refugees. We had the diverse Arabic women's group. We had a Sri Lankan stall and Indian and Pakistani women's groups. We had Encompass Church, Whittlesea University of the Third Age, Greenbrook Community House and Lalor Community Gardens. The Epping Scouts provided a barbecue. And we had a range of other groups showing the true side of the tolerant, respectful and engaged multicultural community spirit of Melbourne—a stark contrast to those protests. It was a real pleasure to be there along with hundreds of my constituents who all demonstrated a keen interest in sharing culture and coming together again in a spirit of peace, harmony and friendship and recognising that the great quality of our communities is in their diversity.

I would like to acknowledge the committee of the Cultural Bridges group for their work in organising such an important event and building social cohesion and enhancing social harmony. In particular, I would like to thank Bill Aspinall, the president of the group, and his family and friends, who helped set up the festival and managed the afternoon tea and Trish Macken, a community member who organised and baked the scones for the afternoon tea. I would like to acknowledge the Karapa steel pan band for providing much of the entertainment, as well as all the groups that got up and sang, danced or otherwise participated in sharing the cultural highlights of this event. It was really good to see this level of grassroots community leadership. These are challenging times for multicultural communities, who often feel under threat. They deserve support in this place from all of us, and it is terrific to see that support also demonstrated on the ground in the community.

Page Electorate: Sport

Mr HOGAN (Page) (10:03): Teenage driver Nikky Youngberry completed a sensational passing move to steal the show at the Castrol Edge Lismore Speedway on Saturday night. Youngberry took out the junior sedan feature race after shocking the New South Wales champion, Brady Haynes, in the run to the chequered flag. Haynes looked on track to win the event but Youngberry pulled off a spectacular inside pass to snatch the lead just five metres from the line. Sam Weir finished third. It was the first feature race win for Youngberry, who is in her third season of competition.

While Youngberry was notchting her first win, veteran driver Mick Santin claimed another win in the wingless sprint car division to move into the lead in the Driver to America series rankings. But it was not all smooth sailing for Santin, who was forced to navigate his way from the rear of the field after an incident with rival Mick Reid left his car idle on the track. Regulations dictate that any car that stops on the track but can still continue the event goes to the rear of the field for the restart. Santin delivered a magnificent drive through the field to claim victory from Kevin Willis and Warren King.

The 25-lap wingless sprintcar feature race was also not without incident. Seven laps into the event, Mitchell Randall made a move on the inside of David Eggins. The pass proved
costly, with Eggins forced to watch the rest of the race from the infield after the front end of his car was damaged. Trent Disson was also sidelined by the incident. Eggins and Kevin Willis lead the points score at the end of the heats with 39 points each, ahead of Warren King on 38, and Mick Reid and Mitchell Randall both on 37. Meanwhile, Jamie Usher walked away uninjured after a ride on the wild side in a wingless heat race. Usher ran over Adam Bailey's rear wheel and launched his car high into the safety fence at near full speed.

Litre Sprints made their first appearance of the season during Saturday's race meet and did not disappoint. Former Lismore junior Kurt Wilson set a blistering pace from the rear of the field in the feature race. Wilson moved from the rear to third in seven laps and into the lead two laps later. Wilson is the holder of nine track records at the Lismore circuit, which is more than any driver on the current Australian speedway scene. The father and son team of Glen and Ethan Eyears filled the minor placings. AMCA Nationals again turned on excellent racing and Geoff Hayes headed into the feature undefeated with three wins in the heats. Stuart Hall, however, took out the main event from Queenslander Luke Geraghty and Lewis Gamble. Ford driver Nick Chilcott had a night to remember in the Production Sedans, winning three heats and the feature in a very impressive performance. Northern Rivers driver Luke Watt took out the four-cylinder sedan feature race. I congratulate all involved in what was a very entertaining night.

Newcastle Electorate: GP Access After Hours

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (10:06): GP Access After Hours is an innovative, highly valued model for delivery of comprehensive, high-quality after-hours primary health care to the community of the lower Hunter region, including my electorate of Newcastle. It is a multifaceted service that incorporates four major elements: a telephone patient-streaming service, where qualified nurses triage patients to ensure they get the best advice and care they need; GP clinics in five locations across the Hunter urban region, with more than 250 experienced local GPs on roster; a transport service provided to patients who could not otherwise attend a clinic; and a home visit service for patients needing home care or an assessment. The service has provided care to more than one million patients since its inception more than a decade ago, and it enjoys very broad community support. Indeed, until very recently, it enjoyed bipartisan support in this place.

While it has been long established that GP access is a service that the Hunter community wholeheartedly supports, the total savings to the health system through its operations have never been fully estimated until now. This year, the operators of GP access, Hunter Primary Care, commissioned the Hunter Research Foundation and the Hunter Medical Research Institute to undertake an economic analysis using a cost-study approach of the delivery of the GP Access After Hours services and what it means for savings around the health system costs and, indeed, what it would mean if GP Access After Hours did not exist. Using a combination of patient surveys, actual patient volumes and costs across both GP access and alternative services, the study found that GP access saves the overall health system more than $10 million a year. The largest savings delivered by GP access is in emergency department presentations. Without the service operating as it is, more than 61 per cent of GP access users said they would have gone to a hospital emergency department if the service did not exist. This economic savings is in line with best practice clinical treatment for patients using the
service, with GP treatment a more appropriate primary healthcare treatment than emergency department treatment for most users.

In essence, GP access is not only good social and health policy, it is also smart economic policy. GP access relies on federal government funding to operate and, as I mentioned earlier, until this year this service had enjoyed bipartisan support. When the Liberal government then left them out of the 2015 budget, they had to fight for their future. The service was only saved after the community came out in force, with thousands signing petitions, writing letters and voicing their concerns. I call on the Turnbull Liberal government to end the uncertainty for this service and to guarantee secure, long-term funding for GP access after hours. *(Time expired)*

**Hinkler Electorate: Employment**

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (10:09): I am angry. I am absolutely fed up with people who are talking down my region. Confidence breeds confidence. As far as I am concerned, I am raising my family in the greatest region in the greatest country in the world. I am fortunate to represent a region that has a perfect climate year-round. Hinkler is a place where loggerhead turtles come to nest each year. Humpback whales play in our waters when they make their annual migration. We are one of the largest producers of fruit and vegetables in the country and we are renowned for our fresh seafood. We are also home to some of Australia's most iconic brands. Housing and land are affordable.

Now, I acknowledge there are challenges. Our local unemployment rate is historically high. Earlier this week, though, national media reported that Wide Bay has the worst unemployment rate in the country at 10½ per cent. Some local media followed suit. They referenced other media reports as their source. They quoted local commentators who were willing to add their two cents worth without first checking the figures themselves. Was it a 10½ per cent increase? Was that an increase or a decrease? The reports did not say. If only headlines reporting a decrease in the local unemployment rate attracted the same level of interest as headlines like 'worst in the country'. But good news does not sell—and shame on our national broadcasters.

Anyone who has even a basic knowledge of data collection understands that small sample sizes can result in substantial fluctuations month to month, making the data unreliable. Using the more reliable three-month average to October 2015, what the ABS data actually showed—if they had looked—was an unemployment rate of 8½ per cent. That is an annual drop in unemployment of 2.4 per cent compared to the same three-month period in 2014. Out of the 87 ABS statistical regions, this puts Wide Bay in 11th position. That is still unacceptably high, but it is not first.

I am angry about this because unemployment is the single biggest issue in my electorate. It is an issue that I am passionate about. Attracting investment to create jobs and helping people to find work is my No. 1 priority. I have written countless letters to the editor. I have pointed out that unemployment is too important an issue to be used as a political football. As a community, we need to work together. Media outlets have also called for the blame shifting to stop, and yet, in their selective reporting, they are effectively doing exactly the same thing. The coalition government is doing everything it can to help through incentive programs, relocation systems, wage subsidies and training. Hinkler has been prioritised for programs...
like Work for the Dole. But the bottom line is that there are not enough jobs locally. That is
the bottom line.

Together, as a community, we need to attract investment to the region by telling everyone
how great it is. We need to shop locally and support businesses so that they have the
confidence to create new jobs. That is why I am trying to create a military dive wreck. It will
attract more tourists to the region. It is why I have launched the hashtag bundybayandbush for
a local campaign, and in January next year I will host a community jobs forum in Hervey
Bay. Together, with positivity, we can make Hinkler an even better place to work, raise a
family and do business.

Blair Electorate: Centenary of Anzac

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (10:12): This year, people across Ipswich and Somerset have
remembered and reflected on events 100 years ago: the first Anzac Day and the tumultuous
years of the First World War. This Sunday, on 29 November, the communities of Blair
commemorate another significant local anniversary: the centenary of the March of the
Dungarees. On Sunday I will join the Rosewood community to unveil a plaque at the
Rosewood cenotaph to acknowledge the Dungarees march. We congratulate the Military
Brotherhood military motorcycle club for their work in organising the plaque. This weekend
the club will commemorate the centenary of the Dungarees march with a charity motorcycle
ride tracing the original route from Warwick to Brisbane.

I am pleased that the Rosewood event was partly funded through the Anzac Centenary
Local Grants Program. The former federal Labor government created this program, and to the
credit of the coalition government they have continued it to help local communities decide
how to best commemorate the Anzac Centenary locally. The program also assisted the
Bundamba Anzac Observance Committee to commemorate the March of the Dungarees in
Bundamba. I was happy to offer my support to both projects that help keep alive the memory
of the famous March of the Dungarees in the Blair electorate.

This famous march and recruitment drive, which was for the Australian Imperial Force,
began with 28 volunteers in the South East Queensland town of Warwick on 16 November
1915. Over the next 12 days they walked some 257 kilometres through country towns and
urban communities such as Toowoomba, Gatton, Laidley, Rosewood, Mount Marrow,
Walloon, Ipswich and Oxley. They were called 'the Dungarees' by their commander,
Lieutenant Binnie, for the casual denim uniforms they had been issued. Everywhere they
stopped, they added new volunteers. They arrived in Brisbane on 29 November 1915, 100
years ago this Sunday, with 125 volunteers. When they went through Ipswich, they recruited
42 new volunteers. The snowball drives aimed to gather new AIF recruits at each town, in the
way in which a snowball collects snow.

As the Dungarees approached Ipswich, they were greeted by a spontaneous cheer from a
large crowd waiting at the One Mile Bridge. It is interesting to note that I found The
Queensland Times on 27 November 1915 reported it as follows:
Business was temporarily suspended, patriotic bunting gaily bedecked the more imposing buildings
within the city—
Ipswich—
reached across the streets, and was visible even in the hands of the little school mites.
It went on:
Suddenly, the cry: "They're here!" rang out, and sure enough the little band was in sight. The "Dungarees" were a long way off, but the din of cheering, shouting, bands and bugles playing, reached out to them, and they straightened up, and marched down the hill, head erect.

... ... ...

Coming towards Ellenborough-street the dense crowds that lined the balconies and thronged the sides of Brisbane-street raised a terrific cheer that simply drowned the band.

I congratulate the Rosewood and Bundamba communities for their support for this wonderful event.

Flynn Electorate: Liquefied Natural Gas

Mr O’DOWD (Flynn) (10:16): Today, I want to praise the gas industry for the benefits it has given to my electorate of Flynn and which it will continue to give for at least the next 25 years.

Two major announcements last week gave a further vote of confidence to the LNG industry. These will directly benefit the Surat Basin—Taroom and Wandoan; the Bowen Basin, at Moranbah; and Gladstone, where there are three gas plants that are ready to hit peak production in early 2016. And up to last week QGC had also dispatched 62 gas tankers to overseas markets and Santos and their partners have had their first shipment go out of Gladstone, and ConocoPhillips and partners are about to start at the end of November with their first shipment of gas.

The first announcement by QGC was that of 1,600 jobs and an investment of $1.7 billion in construction of 300 to 400 new wells. This will incorporate a large compression station and pipeline, and will feed into the existing infrastructure. The announcement follows receipt of the Commonwealth and state government environmental approvals. The approvals for this 'Charlie development' will add benefit and life to local communities, and will benefit all.

The second announcement relates to the ACCC giving Shell a clear run for a takeover of British Gas. That is worldwide, and it is a $91 billion takeover bid. This bid paves the way for the development of the state's biggest untapped gas resource, the Arrow project. There are a lot of gas reserves in and around that Moranbah area, which I mentioned before. The takeover still needs approval from the FIRB and China's Ministry of Commerce.

A pipeline from Moranbah to Gladstone has been planned for many years. This is on top of the $65 billion already invested in the gas plants in Gladstone. Construction jobs are now winding back, and the company has moved into their production mode. Thank you.

Corio Electorate: Geelong Western Public Cemetery

Mr MARLES (Corio) (10:18): In August 2011, I spoke to this place about the significance of our heritage in our local cemeteries. When you visit these places and read the headstones, you see lives that have been lived, achievements that have been made and people who have been loved. Beautiful headstones speak to the sorrow and loss of husbands and wives, the unbearable grief of parents and the sadness—and ultimately the pride—of children who have buried their loved ones in these places. These are sacred places to our communities. They tell the story of our local history.
There is one particular cemetery that I want to speak to this place about today, and that is Geelong Western Public Cemetery, which is one of the oldest cemeteries in the Geelong region and in my electorate. It was established in the 1850s and was laid out by Christopher Porter. Its plantings were supplied by Baron von Mueller. It is one of the most significant cemeteries in the state of Victoria.

In this cemetery lies Willem Baa:Ni:ip, who was born in 1836 and died in 1885, otherwise known as 'King Billy'. He was the last of the Indigenous Barrabool tribe. He fought for the right of his people to live on their land. He saw in his lifetime Geelong develop from a small camp, really, to a major agricultural centre. Today, he is an enormously significant figure in Geelong, and particularly amongst the Wathaurong people. My office spoke this morning with Reg Abrahams, the cultural adviser of the Wathaurong, who said that he was an enormously significant figure and that his place needs to be preserved.

It is also a cemetery which houses Fanny Brownbill, who in 1938 succeeded her husband as the member for Geelong and became the first female Labor member of the Victorian parliament. She was a president of the then Matthew Flinders Girls School and she helped establish Grace McKellar House. Also buried in this cemetery is Allan Couzens and his father, Stan Couzens. Allan, who died in 1980, was the husband of the current member for Geelong, Christine Couzens.

So it is with enormous concern that I raise the issue of a Telstra tower which is sought to be built in the middle of the western cemetery. Last week, a seven-person panel of the City of Greater Geelong unanimously decided, after 371 objections, to oppose this. But today, it is reported in the Geelong Advertiser that Telstra plan to appeal this decision through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. I urge Telstra to listen to their community. I urge Telstra not to go through with the appeal. It is an error of judgement on their part, and they need to respect their community.

Solomon Electorate: Mental Health

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (10:21): Last month I held a mental health roundtable to hear directly from stakeholders about some of the issues and concerns that they have in their sector and how they relate to the Territory. I would like to place on record my thanks and gratitude to Steve Voulanas, who is the coordinator from Casey House, which is a youth refuge in my electorate; Lorraine Davies, from the Mental Illness Fellowship; Chris Franck, from Banyan House, which is a residential therapeutic community in my electorate; Emma Reid, from Top End Health Service; and Mark Smallley, from the Salvation Army, which operates the Sunrise Centre Drug and Alcohol Service.

I would also like to place on record my thanks to Richard Campion from the Top End Health Service; Wendy Ah Chin, who is the executive director for Aboriginal Health; and Mike Melino, Margaret Farrell and Merrilee Cox, all from the Department of Health. It is important that their participation, the wonderful insights that they had and the contributions that they were able to provide through their firsthand experience of working in this sector are acknowledged.

I would also like to thank the Territory Health Minister, John Elferink, for his cooperation, and particularly for enabling his department staff to participate in this forum. It was really good to get a Northern Territory government's perspective on the issues at hand as well.
Everyone at the table brought a unique perspective to the discussion, and I would like to, as I said, thank them for sharing their experiences.

In my electorate we face some challenges with mental health. There are relatively high rates of substance abuse and homelessness. We have a relatively small population, but an increasingly diverse one. We are also geographically isolated from other service providers. Some of the issues discussed included clinical planning and mapping in the field; education among the public and also health professionals—including GPs—to enable a suite of assistance to those requiring mental health care; the funding gap in care programs; the crossover between corrections and mental health care; the gap in the levels of care available in Darwin and Palmerston; and the effect of alcohol abuse and ice, particularly involving young people in that community.

As I said, the forum was extremely insightful, and I will take all the opinions on board and consider them in the event of any possible reform in this area. I have already spoken with the minister, Susan Ley, about the feedback that we received and she was very receptive to this. I want to reassure people that I will do my very best to make sure that the experiences on this forum will inform the national debate.

Glebe Street Fair
Newtown Festival

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10:24): One of the great pleasures of being a member of parliament is the opportunity to participate in celebrations in our local community. This month I had the opportunity to go both to the Glebe Street Fair and to the Newtown Festival. Despite less than ideal weather for the Glebe Street Fair, more than 100,000 people turned out for this 32nd annual fair. The fair, run by the Glebe Chamber of Commerce, is one of the oldest events of its kind in Sydney. It is a not-for-profit event, with proceeds being used by the chamber to support community programs, including the wonderful Glebe Youth Service which has been supporting young people in our area for more than 30 years.

The theme this year was putting the ‘Glebe’ back into Glebe Street Fair, with a focus on involving local businesses and community groups. That was led by the new president of the chamber, Kris Spann, who, along with the rest of the chamber, deserves huge thanks for the success of the event. The chamber is focused on local business participation and has had real success in gaining increased support from the local business community. As well, the fair emphasises the rich creative culture of Sydney's inner west.

The previous weekend, the Newtown community came together for the Newtown Festival, a celebration and promotion of local culture. The festival is run every year by the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, and some members of the centre have been involved in organising the festival for the entire 37 years it has been running. Funds raised by the festival go towards two community programs: First Response and Protecting the Newtown Vibe. These assist some of the most vulnerable members of the community with issues like homelessness, addiction, affordable living, mental health and past trauma.

I try to get to both the Glebe Street Fair and the Newtown Festival every year, and in almost every year I have been the member for Sydney I have managed to do that. So, since I was first elected, I have seen the growth in both of these festivals from quite small—although
very valuable and very fun—festivals to what are now enormous productions that attract people to our local community from right across Sydney. They are opportunities for our community to get together, but they are also opportunities for people from across Sydney to see the wonderful suburbs of Glebe and Newtown at their very best. Most importantly, the money raised from these two events that bring our community together is used to support, in the case of Glebe, the fantastic work of the Glebe Youth Service and, in the case of Newtown, the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Mr ENTSCH (Leichhardt) (10:27): On Friday, 20 November, people around the world stopped to commemorate the 16th annual Transgender Day of Remembrance. In more than 20 countries, people remembered those who have died as a result of anti-transgender hatred and prejudice. In Sydney people gathered at an event organised by the Gender Centre, while in Brisbane the Story Bridge was lit up in the trans flag colours of pink, blue and white. Candlelight vigils were held in major cities, including Perth and Brisbane. Officially, in the past year 81 transgender people have been murdered, most of these in America and Brazil—and the majority were transgender women. In Australia we may not have such a high incidence of violence, but it certainly does happen in our country. Little more than a year ago, in a horrific murder-suicide, Brisbane transgender woman Mayang Prasetyo was brutally killed by her partner, Marcus Volke. It was also timely to take a moment and think of those who have taken their lives as a result of not being able to come to terms with their gender identity or sexuality.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance is all about uniting in support, reaffirming what we are doing to reduce discrimination and reminding ourselves about what still needs to be done. As the co-chair of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for LGBTI Australians, I am pleased that reducing inequality under the law is one of our key focuses. I am working with my co-chairs Senator Rice and the member for Moreton, and with the member for Indi, as a means to help young transgender boys and girls gain access to hormones without having to apply to the Family Court. This is very important to these young people, and I certainly look forward to getting a successful outcome early in the New Year.

I would like, at this point, to recognise 12-year-old Isabelle Langley and her parents, Naomi and Andrew, for being so public in their journey and about the challenges the family has faced. A big thank you to Senator Rice for the fabulous work she and her office are doing. I have also spoken to the Attorney-General and the Minister for Health and look forward to progressing this issue.

The member for Moreton and I have been meeting with Safe Schools Coalition Australia this week. This organisation does valuable work in promoting inclusiveness and acceptance in schools for young LGBTI students. However, their work is being undermined by the Australian Christian Lobby, which is flooding MPs with emails that are untrue, misleading and very damaging. The co-chairs of the parliamentary friendship group are also calling on the ACL to stop these activities, as our schools must be encouraged to provide safe and supportive environments for LGBTI students.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr John Cobb): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for constituency statements has concluded.
Debate resumed on the motion:
That the House take note of the document.

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (10:31): I rise to speak in relation to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics report that was tabled a few days ago, Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia annual report 2014. A number of things have been canvassed already by the chair in reference to overall economic conditions. What is interesting to note is that we keep being told that everything is rosy with the economy and that we have very little to worry about and we should stop talking the economy down, yet we continually get evidence that the economy is not performing in line with the claims being made by the RBA or the government. If things were going so well, we would not be having downgrades of Australia’s growth figures by the OECD or the IMF; we would not be in a situation where unemployment is affecting nearly 800,000 Australians, and we would be in a situation where wages would actually, at some point, start growing strongly.

For some time now, the concern has been that wages growth has been so muted that in fact it is at its lowest rate of growth since records began. If you are wondering why people are not spending and why businesses are not investing, one of the big reasons, I would imagine, is that people feel they do not have room in their household budgets to spend more. If they know that they are not earning more—if they know that their wages are not increasing—then it does act as a massive constraint on their ability to spend. It is wages growth that is required, more than anything else, to lift overall economic activity—particularly as we go through the transition from the mining boom to having the non-mining sector grow, and seeing investment grow in that sector is crucial.

One of the big things that is needed to underpin growth in the non-mining sector—and for quite some time it has been tagged as needing to grow—is dwelling construction. But if you look at the broader statistics, on not just construction but purchases, you can see that—as a result of banks starting to increase variable rates, ahead of the increased capital requirements that will be imposed on them from July next year—clearance rates at auctions have tanked. Back in June, they were at about 90 per cent in Sydney; recently they were a shade under 60 per cent. So something is going on out there that is not as rosy as is being suggested.

I do commend the Reserve Bank governor, though, in highlighting, as he has in a major speech in the last 24 hours, the need for investors in particular to start realigning their expectation of dividend growth, because, at the moment, a lot of public companies are pouring money into dividends and basically not taking the opportunity to ramp up business investment.

Again, there have been some concerns about the rate at which business investment is growing—or the lack of growth, more importantly, that will drive future economic growth. So there are definitely concerns there. There does need to be a lot more certainty. We are not getting that certainty with a new Treasurer who seems to jump from issue to issue within the space of a week, or defers big economic decisions, as we have seen in the release of the response to the Harper competition review in the last 24 hours, where yet again we are going...
to have another lengthy discussion about whether or not we will proceed on section 46 reform around the effects test after extensive consultation with industry. Instead of just biting the bullet, we have this dragging along.

One element of the recent hearing with the RBA that I was particularly focused on relates to the whole framework of payments as they are carried out in this country and as they are oversighed by the Payments Systems Board that sits within the RBA. The need for a more secure, stronger and more dynamic payments system is driving online commerce. It will be important in underpinning online commerce. The role of the PSB will take on greater significance in the years ahead. There have been some legitimate concerns raised about the transparency, openness and willingness of the PSB and the RBA to engage in meaningful stakeholder consultation.

I think the RBA has an attitudinal problem. I think the RBA needs to adjust the view that it takes to industry and stakeholder engagement. This was epitomised—and I was particularly concerned by this—by a comment expressed in an offhand way by the RBA governor during the hearings about dealing with industry. This is what he said in response to my concerns about the fact that industry was being asked to consult in a very rapid way, out of the blue, on reviews being undertaken by the PSB, with little formal warning and little time to respond, and in particular in the aftermath of the FSI that had already gone through extensive industry consultation as it was:

But other than the normal undercurrent of complaining on the part of various people that they do not like to be regulated, which is always there, I was not myself on the receiving end of complaints about timing.

Industry stakeholders need to have confidence that, if they raise things that are of concern to them that they believe need to be improved in the system, they need to have confidence that their concerns will be taken seriously. This is not the first time I have heard the Reserve Bank governor use these types of words in relation to complaints he receives from time to time or issues raised by people.

The RBA may be independent but it is not isolated from the community. It needs to be able to manage those concerns in a much better way and not be, dare I say it—and I am very cautious of the words I am about to use—dismissive of legitimate concerns that are raised. For instance, people have said that the PSB should be a lot more open in the aftermath of its own meetings. In fact, PSB representatives to the Senate economics committee suggested that after every meeting they put out media releases that spell out what changes are being made in the payments systems area. When I took them through their media releases post those meetings, I saw that, quite unlike the minutes of the RBA board that are released when making decisions on monetary policy, the PSB media releases are flimsy at best. They do not actually say what the PSB is considering.

I am led to believe that their most recent media release said that 'the PSB discussed a number of changes at the recent meeting' but would be 'releasing details about that in a couple of weeks time'. Frankly, that is not good enough. If the PSB says that it is able to be transparent, open and forthright about the decision-making processes being undertaken within a board that is responsible for a massive area that underpins online commerce, then they need to do better. And they are simply not. That is the proposition I air in this House. I believe they need to put their hearts more into the consultation process with industry. This sector of
industry—the sector that is facilitating payments—is going to be massively important to the economy. They do not deserve to be treated as if they are some sort of complaint generator, which the Reserve Bank described as ‘the normal undercurrent of complaining’. They deserve a better attitude from the RBA, frankly, than what has been displayed so far.

It will also be interesting to see what comes as a result of some of the Senate inquiries into credit cards and the way in which the PSB manages that process. There have been some views aired that the PSB may need to be taken out of the control of the RBA and put into another regulator. I am not yet convinced that is the best way to go, because I think payments should sit within the central bank, but people who are arguing the case for taking the PSB out of the RBA have their argument strengthened when they see some of the dismissive attitude by the PSB, including the failure to move and the failure to be transparent. The case being made to get them out of the RBA is strengthened by the PSB’s own actions. I certainly encourage them to do that. I would also encourage them to keep the competitive spotlight on sections of the banking industry that refuse to embrace innovation and change.

I recently started trialling the Apple Pay system that is available on most iPhones. It is only available to customers of Amex. The reason is that the banks are withholding the ability for iPhone and Apple to use that as a payment platform. The PSB can certainly look at that and can continue to keep the focus on the banks. *(Time expired)*

Debate adjourned.

**Federation Chamber adjourned at 10:42**
QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Department of Defence: Staff Contracts

(Question No. 861)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of recruitment, training and service contracts undertaken by the Minister's department(s) in 2014-15, (a) how many new staff contracts were entered into, and of these, what are the relevant staffing levels, and (b) what total sum was spent on recruitment, and of this, what is the breakdown for (i) recruitment agency fees, (ii) advertising, (iii) assessment processes, and (iv) other associated costs.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) Defence enters into a wide variety of recruitment, training and service contracts with external service providers, and is generally not involved in labour arrangements for contracted ongoing services, whether regular, periodic or intermittent. To provide a meaningful response to this question, Defence has focused on providing APS recruitment numbers, including ongoing engagements and non-ongoing APS employee contracts.

Based on this approach, Defence engaged 341 ongoing APS employees and 112 non-ongoing APS employee contracts in 2014-15. Table 1 provides a breakdown by classification group.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Non-ongoing</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APS1 - 6</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>323*</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL1 - 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES Band 1 – 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
* Includes 195 graduates

(b) The total sum spent on recruitment (non-ADF) in 2014-15 was $1,201,282, broken down by the following categories. The recruitment agency fees not only relate to 'fees' paid to the recruitment agencies, but also direct costs to the agencies for services/resources they provided, including salaries for casual staff to undertake work at Defence. (i) Recruitment agency fees $482,818 (ii) Advertising $223,310 (iii) Assessment processes $345,942 (iv) Other associated costs $149,212.

Department of Defence: Casual Staff Contracts

(Question No. 879)

Mr Conroy: asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of labour hire firms contracted by the Minister’s department(s) in 2014-15: (a) how many positions were filled using casual staff from labour hire firms; (b) what sum was spent on the provision of these casual staff; and (c) what roles did these casual staff fulfil.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:
Defence employs civilian staff under a wide variety of arrangements, including shift work, intermittent tasks (such as for the maintenance of equipment), periodic tasks, fixed term contracts (such as completing a one-off evaluation), and overseas work (engaged either locally or in Australia).

Consequently, some interpretation of the intent of the question was required to enable a meaningful response to be provided, and Defence has excluded:

- firms providing services outside Australia (as the time available did not permit the collection of information from overseas);
- labour arrangements for contracted ongoing services, whether regular, periodic or intermittent; and
- consultancies.

Based on this approach, Defence filled 56 casual positions using labour hire firms in 2014-15, at a cost of approximately $2.98 million. Table 1 (attached) provides a breakdown by position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of positions filled</th>
<th>Cost (including GST)</th>
<th>Roles performed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,280.85</td>
<td>Scribing services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$35,015.20</td>
<td>Transcription of audio tapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$8,917.46</td>
<td>Administrative Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$176,554.40</td>
<td>Legal, contracting &amp; commercial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$103,860.54</td>
<td>Implement enhanced financial viability analysis processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$101,206.99</td>
<td>Business intelligence and commercial analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$317,251.53</td>
<td>Internal labour market reform implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$28,600.00</td>
<td>WBS management and data alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$46,158.39</td>
<td>SCRAM assessment and software parametric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$24,676.00</td>
<td>Executive Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$91,627.93</td>
<td>Business support for WHS information system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>$1,087,679.05</td>
<td>Rehabilitation case management and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>$741,845.15</td>
<td>Policy implementation and administrative support – honours and awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$81,619.18</td>
<td>Superannuation policy advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$113,040.52</td>
<td>Public affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$24,146.52</td>
<td>Housing policy research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>$2,984,479.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Department of Defence: Office Space**  
(Question No. 915)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of office space leased or owned by the Minister's department(s): (a) where are these offices located, (b) how much space (in square metres) is each office, (c) how much of this space is currently unused, and of this, what is the cost of (i) rent per month, (ii) utilities, including electricity and/or gas, telephone and internet, (iii) office furniture and/or hired equipment, including artwork and plants, and (iv) any other associated services.

**Ms Julie Bishop:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

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**QUESTIONS IN WRITING**
(a), (b) and (c) Please refer to Attachment A.

Defence has based its office accommodation occupancy data on the September 2014 Australian Property Data Collection (PRODAC) return provided to the Department of Finance. Data is currently being compiled for the 2015 return for submission by the end of October. The data is collected for building office accommodation which is greater than 500 square metres. Occupancy data is not provided for building office accommodation that is less than 500 square metres, or otherwise exempt from reporting. Properties exempt from reporting include office accommodation at military bases, secret installations and overseas property leased from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Copies of Attachment A can be obtained from the House of Representatives Table Office.

Department of Defence: Offices Efficiency Upgrades
(Question No. 933)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of the Minister's departmental office(s), has the building(s) received energy efficiency upgrades; if so, (a) when, and (b) how has this upgrade affected (i) average energy use, and (ii) average energy cost.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

Defence manages a wide portfolio of assets with more than 700 leased or owned properties, containing more than 25,000 built assets. Office buildings account for 8.17 per cent of Defence's total building stock.

Defence has had an energy efficiency program in place since 2009 that clearly identifies priorities for achieving energy efficiency on the estate. Energy efficiency initiatives include lighting efficiency upgrades as well as upgrades to heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. The program identifies and funds initiatives that drive natural resource efficiency and reduce utilities costs, thereby saving operating expenditure across the life of assets.

In 2013-14 Defence continued the trend for a third year in reducing stationary energy consumption (electricity and gas). Stationary energy consumption was 3,814,943 gigajoules in 2013-14, down from 3,887,232 gigajoules in 2012-13, a decrease of 1.86 per cent.

The Energy Efficiency in Government Operations Policy has two intensity targets that relate to office buildings:

- Tenant Light and Power 7,500 megajoules (MJ) per person per annum; and,
- Central Services, which includes building air conditioning and lifts, 400MJ per square metre (m²).

In 2013-14, Defence achieved the Tenant Light and Power target (at 6,884 MJ per person) and was extremely close to achieving the Central Services target (at 402 megajoules per m²).

In 204-15 Defence spent approximately $127 million on energy costs (light and power).

Department of Defence: Contracted Services Consultants
(Question No. 951)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of the use of: (a) consultants, and (b) contractors, by the Minister's department(s) in 2014-15, (i) what total sum was spent, (ii) what services were provided, and (iii) which firms provided the services.
Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) and (b) (i), (ii) and (iii) Defence contracts above $10,000 are published on the AusTender website (www.tenders.gov.au), including details for services provided to Defence and the service providers.

**Department of Defence: Media Monitoring**

(Question No. 969)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on Monday, 17 August 2015:

What sum was spent by the Minister's department(s) on media monitoring and associated services in 2014-15.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

$711,201.06 (ex GST).

**Department of Defence: Media Monitoring**

(Question No. 987)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

What sum was spent by the Minister's department(s) on market research and associated services in 2014-15, and what policy areas did this inform.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) The total Departmental cost for market research in 2014-15 was $2.283 million.

(2) In 2014-15 Defence expenditure on market research predominantly relates to:

- Research for services provided by Defence;
- Research on Australian attitudes to Defence and security issues; and
- Research to maximise ADF recruitment.

**Department of Defence: Advertising**

(Question No. 1005)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

What sum was spent by the Minister's department(s) on advertising and associated services in 2014-15, and what policy areas did this relate to.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

The total Departmental (including DMO) amount spent on advertising and associated services for the 2014-15 financial year was $59,664 million.

In 2014-15 Defence expenditure on advertising predominantly relates to:

- Recruitment advertising
- Advertising for public submissions to the White Paper
- Community awareness about military activities
- Promotion of Departmental Events
Department of Defence: Office Equipment
(Question No. 1023)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

What sum did the Minister's department spend in 2014-15 on the purchase and/or lease of (a) food and beverage equipment, and (b) exercise equipment, for staff in the (i) Minister's office, and (ii) departmental office(s).

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) (i) Nil.
(ii) $0.286 million.
(b) (i) Nil.
(ii) $2.5 million.

Department of Defence: Legal Services and Credit Cards
(Question No. 1041)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

What sum did the Minister's department spend in 2014-15 on (a) legal services, and (b) credit cards.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) The total Departmental (including DMO) amount spent on legal services for the 2014-15 financial year is provided in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Legal Expenditure</th>
<th>Expenditure (GST exclusive)</th>
<th>$m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Department of Defence Spend</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Legal Expenditure - DMO</td>
<td>Expenditure (GST exclusive)</td>
<td>$m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Department of DMO Spend</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) The total Departmental (including DMO) cost of credit cards for the 2014-15 financial year is provided in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Cards</th>
<th>Spend $’000</th>
<th>Fees &amp; Charges $’000</th>
<th>Total $’000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defence Travel Card (DTC)</td>
<td>287,780</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>288,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence Purchasing Card (DPC)</td>
<td>247,120</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>247,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Department of Defence (including DMO) Spend</td>
<td>534,900</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>535,767</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTIONS IN WRITING
The DPC amount excludes the 2-2.5 per cent surcharge applied to credit card purchases as this cost is acquitted against the purchase and is therefore not reported separately. The summary also excludes Fuel Cards, and Cabcharge (etickets/fastcards).

**Department of Defence: Mobile Phones and Tablets**

(Question No. 1059)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

(1) What sum did the Minister's department spend in 2014-15 on the purchase and/or lease of (a) mobile phones, and (b) tablet devices for (i) Ministerial staff, and (ii) departmental staff. (2) What sum was spent on telecommunications contracts associated with these devices by (i) Ministerial staff, and (ii) departmental staff.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) and (2) inclusive of parts (a), (b), (i) and (ii) These questions have been previously answered under Question on Notice No. 117 from supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 22 October 2014. This response remains extant.

**Department of Defence: Office Refurbishment**

(Question No. 1077)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

What sum did the Minister's department spend in 2014-15 on (a) office refurbishment, and when and where did this occur, and (b) the purchase and/or lease of office furniture.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) The total spend on projects that were specifically office refurbishments was approximately $7.22 million in financial year 2014-15. Please refer to Attachment A for a breakdown on when and where this occurred.

(b) The total spend on purchased and/or leased office furniture for FY 2014-15 was $3.533 million.

**Attachment A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commencement &amp; Completion Date FY2014-15</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total Project Cost (m) (Inc GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commenced July 2014 Completed September 2014</td>
<td>ADFA School of Engineering Office (Building 17)</td>
<td>$0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced March 2015 Completed August 2015</td>
<td>Fyshwick, Canberra</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced August 2014 Completed October 2014</td>
<td>Cootamundra Drill Hall</td>
<td>$0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced August 2014 Completed October 2014</td>
<td>Latchford Barracks Building 106</td>
<td>$0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced &amp; Completed October 2014</td>
<td>Albury Wodonga Military Area Building E0451</td>
<td>$0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced April 2015 Completed May 2015</td>
<td>ADC Weston Creek</td>
<td>$0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement &amp; Completion Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Total Project Cost (m) (Inc GST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced February 2015</td>
<td>Anzac Park West</td>
<td>$0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed August 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced November 2014</td>
<td>Anzac Park West</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed December 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced March 2015</td>
<td>105 Tennant Street, Fyshwick</td>
<td>$0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed April 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced February 2015</td>
<td>Russell Offices Building 1</td>
<td>$0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed March 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced July 2014</td>
<td>Russell Offices Building 3</td>
<td>$0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed September 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced August 2014</td>
<td>Russell Offices Building 2</td>
<td>$0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete September 2014</td>
<td>Campbell Park Office</td>
<td>$0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced August 2014</td>
<td>29 Brindabella Cct</td>
<td>$0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed June 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced April 2015</td>
<td>33-35 Brindabella Cct</td>
<td>$0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed May 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$7.22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Department of Defence: Departmental Staff Redundancies**  
*(Question No. 1129)*

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of departmental staff (a) how many redundancies were made in 2014-15, and (b) what is the total cost of payments associated with these redundancies.

**Ms Julie Bishop:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) 241.

(b) $26.28 million.

**Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet: Ministerial Staff Training 2014-15**  
*(Question No. 1292)*

**Mr Conroy** asked the Prime Minister, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In 2014-15, (a) what sum was spent on training for Ministerial staff; (b) on what date(s), and at what location(s) did the training occur; and (c) what outcomes were achieved.

**Mr Turnbull:** As the honourable member is aware, I was sworn in as Prime Minister on 15 September 2015. As the honourable member's question relates to matters before that date, I am advised by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet that the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) to (c) The amount of $1,481.81 (GST exclusive) was spent in 2014-15 on training requirements for two ministerial staff in the Prime Minister's Office. One staff member attended IT skills training in
Canberra over various dates throughout the year; the other attended a health issues conference held in Sydney in September 2014. Various outcomes were achieved by the participants.

**Department of Defence: Departmental Media Events**  
(Question No. 1337)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on Monday, 17 August 2015:

In respect of departmental costs for media events and photo opportunities in 2014-15, what (a) date was each event held, (b) location was each event held at, (c) sum was spent on each event, (d) announcement and/or issue did the event relate to, and (e) was the expenditure for.

**Ms Julie Bishop:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

Due to the breadth and complexity of the question, an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources would be required to develop a response.

**Department of Defence: Ministerial Media Events**  
(Question No. 1366 and 1637)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

In respect of ministerial costs for media events and photo opportunities in 2014-15, what (a) date was each event held, (b) location was each event held at, (c) sum was spent on each event, (d) announcement and/or issue did the event relate to, and (e) was the expenditure for.

**Ms Julie Bishop:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

Due to the breadth and complexity of the question, an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources would be required to develop a response.

**Department of Defence: Conference Costs 2014-15**  
(Question Nos 1389 and 1642)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

Did the Minister's department host any conferences in 2014-15; if so (a) on what date(s) did each conference occur, and at what location(s), (b) what total sum was spent on each conference, and of this, what sum was spent on (i) meals and accommodation, and what are the details, (ii) travel, and what are the details, and (iii) social events, and what are the details, (iv) travel, and what are the details, and (e) what outcomes were achieved at each conference.

**Ms Julie Bishop:** The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a), (b) and (c) The total amount spent by Defence for hosting conferences in 2014-15 was $3.020 million. The details of each conference are provided at Attachment A.

*Copies of Attachment A can be obtained from the House of Representatives Table Office.*
Department of Defence: Conferences Costs 2014-15
(Question No. 1418)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015: Did the Minister host any conferences in 2014-15; if so (a) on what date(s) did each conference occur, and at what location(s), (b) what total sum was spent on each conference, and of this, what sum was spent on (i) meals and accommodation, and what are the details, (ii) travel, and what are the details, and (iii) social events, and what are the details, (iv) travel, and what are the details, and (c) what outcomes were achieved at each conference.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

No conferences were hosted by the Minister for Defence or the Assistant Minister for Defence in 2014-15.

Department of Defence: Hospitality Costs 2014-15
(Question Nos 1470 and 1647)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Defence, in writing, on 17 August 2015: In respect of catering and hospitality by the Minister in 2014-15, (a) what total sum was spent, (b) for what functions was the catering and hospitality, (c) on what date(s) did each function occur, and at what location(s), and (d) for each function, what sum was spent on (i) meals, (ii) drinks, (iii) hospitality staff, and (iv) other costs.

Ms Julie Bishop: The Minister for Defence has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) In 2014-15, a total of $13,420.18 excluding GST was spent on catering and hospitality by Defence.

(b), (c) and (d) Tables A and B provide details of the catering and hospitality for the Minister for Defence and the Assistant Minister for Defence respectively, for 2014-15.

Table A: Details of catering and hospitality costs for the Minister for Defence for 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Drinks</th>
<th>Hosp'ly Staff</th>
<th>Other Costs</th>
<th>Catering</th>
<th>Total (ex GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General tea &amp; coffee supplies for visitors</td>
<td>Ministers Offices</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$473.37</td>
<td>$473.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working breakfast – First Principles Meeting Working dinner with a number of Senior Defence Staff attending with the Minister Official dinner</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>07 Aug 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$107.95</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$107.95</td>
<td>$107.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>13 Aug 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$502.27</td>
<td>205.45</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$707.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>05 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$240.00</td>
<td>$361.82</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$601.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>12 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$243.63</td>
<td>$370.00</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$49.10</td>
<td>$662.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTIONS IN WRITING
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Drinks</th>
<th>Hosp'y Staff</th>
<th>Other Costs</th>
<th>Catering</th>
<th>Total (ex GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official dinner in honour of VADM Kaju visit to Australia</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>15 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
<td>$833.64</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$1,683.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official dinner</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>19 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$307.28</td>
<td>$211.82</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$25.45</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$544.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Squadron Thank You function</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>26 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$4,090.9</td>
<td>$1,337.1</td>
<td>$625.1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$6,053.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Principles dinner</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>27 Nov 14</td>
<td>The Hon David Johnston MP</td>
<td>$490.00</td>
<td>$475.45</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$965.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General tea &amp; coffee supplies for visitors</td>
<td>Ministers Offices</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>The Hon Kevin Andrews MP</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$154.66</td>
<td>$154.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental briefings for Minister</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>12 Mar 15</td>
<td>The Hon Kevin Andrews MP</td>
<td>$195.15</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$195.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backbench briefing</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>23 Mar 15</td>
<td>The Hon Kevin Andrews MP</td>
<td>$42.16</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$42.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$7,069.3</td>
<td>$3,795.3</td>
<td>$699.7</td>
<td>$628.03</td>
<td>$12,192.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B: Details of catering and hospitality costs for the Assistant Minister for Defence for 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Drinks</th>
<th>Hosp'y Staff</th>
<th>Other Costs</th>
<th>Catering</th>
<th>Total (ex GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Lateral meeting with New Zealand Chief of Defence Force &amp; New Zealand Secretory of Defence</td>
<td>Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
<td>24 Jul 14</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$410.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Lateral / Bi-Partisan Australian American Leadership Dialogue Conclusion Dinner Lunch with Senior Defence Staff</td>
<td>Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
<td>05 Oct 14</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
<td>$188.75</td>
<td>$3.66</td>
<td>$38.34</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$230.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Lateral / Bi-Partisan Australian American Leadership Dialogue Conclusion Dinner Lunch with Senior Defence Staff</td>
<td>Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
<td>05 Oct 14</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
<td>$188.75</td>
<td>$3.66</td>
<td>$38.34</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$230.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Lateral / Bi-Partisan Australian American Leadership Dialogue Conclusion Dinner Lunch with Senior Defence Staff</td>
<td>Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
<td>05 Oct 14</td>
<td>The Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
<td>$188.75</td>
<td>$3.66</td>
<td>$38.34</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$230.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JeHDi Launch
Canberra
19 Sep 14
The Hon Stuart Robert
$149.09
Nil
Nil
$9.62
Nil
$158.71

TOTALS:
$851.06
$115.48
Nil
$261.22
Nil
$1,227.76

Type 2 Diabetes log Books
(Question No. 1515)

Mr Albanese asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 08 September 2015:
(1) Why have companies providing essential log books to people receiving treatment for type 2 diabetes outsourced their deliveries to overnight couriers rather than using Australia Post.
(2) What was the cost of distribution of these log books in the last year it operated under Australia Post.
(3) What is the cost of distribution of these log books estimated to be for (a) the first year under the new system, and (b) 2015-16.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
The National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) is the only Commonwealth funded scheme in my portfolio that currently provides self-management information directly to people with diabetes, however it does not provide log books to people receiving treatment for diabetes.

National Immunisation Program Schedule
(Question No. 1735)

Ms MacTiernan asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 15 October 2015:
(1) When were (a) hepatitis B, and (b) rotavirus, vaccines added to the National Immunisation Program Schedule (NIPS).
(2) How many children were infected each year with (a) hepatitis B, and (b) rotavirus, in Australia before the vaccines were introduced.
(3) What cost benefit and risk analysis was provided to justify the inclusion of these designated vaccines, and will the Minister provide these reports.
(4) What work has been undertaken to determine the cumulative effect on infants of the adjuvants used in administering the vaccines listed on the NIPS.
(5) What is the annual cost of providing each of these vaccines, and what sum of this is paid to the vaccine manufacturers.
(6) Which companies manufacture each of these vaccines.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(1) (a) Hepatitis B vaccination was first funded under the National Immunisation Program in 1997 for adolescents aged 11-12 years; and in 2000 for infants aged 0-12 months.

Note: the adolescent program is no longer active on the National Immunisation Program as the current adolescent cohort should have been fully immunised against hepatitis B in their first year of life.

(b) Rotavirus vaccination was first funded under the National Immunisation Program in 2007 for infants aged 2-6 months.

(2) (a) The universal hepatitis B infant vaccination program commenced in 2000. Notifications of hepatitis B have been reported to the Nationally Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS) since 1991. Table 1 summarises notifications of hepatitis B in children aged 5 years or younger between 1991 and 2000.
Table 1: Notifications\(^1\) of hepatitis B in children ≤ 5 years of age, 1991 – 2000\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Notifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Data extracted from NNDSS on 21 October 2015.

\(^2\) The Northern Territory and Queensland did not report all cases of hepatitis B until 2004 and 1994 respectively.

\(^3\) Includes cases that may have been acquired prior to 1991.

(b) Rotavirus is not nationally notifiable, and therefore the annual number of notifications prior to the introduction of the rotavirus vaccines is not available. Estimates of burden are based on hospitalisations, emergency department presentations and visits to general practitioners.

Prior to the introduction of the rotavirus vaccines on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) in July 2007, this virus was responsible for high levels of morbidity in children aged 5 years or younger, with approximately 10,000 hospitalisations, (around half of all hospitalisations for acute gastroenteritis in this age group), 22,000 emergency department visits and 115,000 general practitioner visits annually in Australia. Since the introduction of the rotavirus vaccines on the NIP, substantial reductions (approximately a 71% decrease) in hospital presentations for both rotavirus-specific and all-cause for gastroenteritis have been reported.

(3) In 2005, the National Health Act (1953) was amended to provide for the evaluation of cost-effectiveness of vaccines by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC). Following this amendment, new vaccines cannot be listed on the National Immunisation Program unless they have first been recommended as being cost effective by the PBAC. Further, all vaccines must first be registered for use in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration. This registration process includes a quality, safety and efficacy assessment.

Hepatitis B vaccines for adolescents and infants were added to the National Immunisation Program prior to the PBAC process being established in 2005, and were therefore not subject to cost-effective analysis.

Rotavirus vaccines were considered through the PBAC process in 2006 where they were deemed cost effective by the PBAC and recommended to be added to the National Immunisation Program. Public summary documents outlining the PBAC recommendations for rotavirus vaccines are available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme website at:


(4) Adjuvants are chemicals added to vaccines to enhance the body’s immune response to a vaccine. Aluminium salts are currently the only form of adjuvants used in the childhood vaccines supplied under the National Immunisation Program, and have been used in vaccines for more than 60 years. A number of epidemiological studies have found no evidence to suggest that aluminium salts in vaccines cause any serious or long-term adverse events. In addition, aluminium intake from vaccines is lower than everyday intake from diet (including breast milk) or medication.
(5) The annual funding provided to purchase hepatitis B containing vaccines from manufacturers is approximately $64 million. Note: this figure includes the monovalent hepatitis B vaccine provided at birth and the combination vaccines containing hepatitis B protection provided during infancy.

The annual funding provided to purchase rotavirus vaccines from manufacturers is approximately $41 million.

(6) Rotavirus and hepatitis B containing vaccines are purchased from both GlaxoSmithKline (Australia) Pty Ltd and bioCSL (Australia) Pty Ltd for supply under the National Immunisation Program.

**Airport Leases**

(Question No. 1548)

Ms Collins asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 15 September 2015:

Can he provide an update on the lease provisions disputes between certain airport corporations and councils (Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee, Estimates, 28 May 2015, page 54).

Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The airport leases require the airport lessee companies to pay ex-gratia rates to local authorities.

Of the 21 federally leased airports, Sydney, Gold Coast, Jandakot, Hobart, and Launceston airports advise they are in dispute with local authorities regarding land valuations or the rates equivalent amounts notified by local authorities. Where airports and their local governments are in dispute, airports have paid the undisputed amount of ex-gratia rates to the local authorities.

The lease also identifies areas on airport excluded from ex-gratia rates calculations. In some cases there have been disputes over whether the ex-gratia rates notified by local authorities included amounts for exempt parts of the airport.

The underlying policy objective of competitive neutrality does not support an expectation to pay any amount notified by a local authority if that amount exceeds the level of rates applied to comparable off-airport landowners.

The Australian Government (the Government) is concerned there are unresolved disputes and urges the parties to engage in a committed attempt to reach a resolution. The Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (the Department) wrote to all local authorities in August 2014 to set out the Government's expectations around the payment of ex-gratia rates.

More recently, the Deputy Secretary of the Department met with a number of local authorities and airport lessee companies to assist them to reach a resolution.

**Perth Freight Link**

(Question No. 1549)

Ms MacTiernan asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 16 September 2015:

Was the plan for the Perth Freight Link first proposed by the Western Australia Government; if so, (a) when was it first submitted to the Australian Government for consideration, and (b) can he provide a copy of the submission by the Western Australian Government.

Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Development of the Perth Freight Link project incorporated development work previously undertaken by the Western Australian Government for the Roe Highway Stage 8 and High Street Upgrade projects. The Western Australian Government released a preferred concept design for the Roe
Highway Stage 8 in May 2011. A submission to Infrastructure Australia on the High Street Upgrade was considered in 2012-13 and the project was included on the Infrastructure Priority List in 2013.

Building on the development work undertaken for the Roe Highway Stage 8 and High Street Upgrade projects, the Perth Freight Link project was developed collaboratively between the Australian and Western Australian Governments. This was based on a continuous dialogue and exchange of information between the governments.

An Executive Summary of the Perth Freight Link Business Case was released in late 2014 which detailed the project's reference design. The reference design incorporated the Roe Highway Stage 8 and High Street sections. A copy of the Executive Summary is available on the Main Roads Western Australia website (www.mainroads.wa.gov.au). The Executive Summary outlines that alternative options and innovation will be explored as part of the tendering process. This tendering process is currently under way.

The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development has also recently provided a submission to the Senate Inquiry into the Perth Freight Link project. The Department's submission, a copy of which is available on the Parliament House website, provides further detail on the project's development and the process undertaken to commit funding to the project.

**Australian Citizenship**

(Question No. 1557)

Ms Rowland asked the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, in writing, on 13 October 2015:

In respect of the joint announcement he made on 20 August 2015 of a series of community consultations to be had on the discussion paper 'Australian citizenship—Your right, Your responsibility', (a) will the (i) report, and (ii) submissions, be made public, (b) were records of the public consultations provided to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security for its inquiry on the Australian Citizenship (Allegiance to Australia) Amendment Bill 2015, (c) did the terms of reference for the public consultations include matters such as (i) the design of the citizenship test, (ii) citizenship eligibility, and (iii) the citizenship pledge, and (d) did the terms of reference foresee any potential changes to policy on citizenship (i) eligibility, (ii) testing, and (iii) the citizenship pledge.

Mr Dutton: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) (i) The report will be considered by Government and any release considered in due course.

(ii) The discussion paper did not indicate that submissions would be made public. Therefore, in the interest of protecting individuals' personal details and views, submissions will not be made public.

(b) No.

(c) There were no terms of reference for the public consultations. The public consultations were informed by the discussion paper 'Australian citizenship citizenship—Your right, Your responsibility'

(d) The public consultations will help to inform any changes to Australian citizenship policy.

**Department of Communication: Alcohol Purchases 2014-15**

(Question No. 1845)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Communications, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

What sum did the department and agencies within the Minister's portfolio spend on the supply of alcoholic beverages in 2014-15, and for what purpose(s) was the alcohol purchased.

Mr Fletcher: The Minister for Communications has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:
The Departments financial management system does not centrally manage expenses portfolio wide, nor allow for a distinction between spending on 'alcohol', and 'other hospitality costs' for internal hospitality expenses.

To attempt to provide this level of detail would involve an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources.

**Department of Agriculture: Drinks Cabinet Costs 2014-15**

(Question No. 1866)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

What sum was spent on replenishing the Minister's drinks cabinet in 2014-15, on what date were such purchases made, and what was purchased.

**Mr Joyce:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources does not provide alcoholic beverages to its Ministers office.