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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FOURTH PERIOD

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

House of Representatives Office holders
Speaker—Hon. Bronwyn Kathleen Bishop MP
Deputy Speaker—Hon. Bruce Craig Scott MP
Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell
Members of the Speaker's Panel—Mrs Karen Lesley Andrews MP,
Mr Russell Evan Broadbent MP, Mr Alexander George Hawke MP,
Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mrs Natasha Louise Griggs MP,
Mr Ewen Thomas Jones MP, Mr Craig Kelly MP, Hon. Charles Christian Porter MP,
Mr Donald James Randall MP, Mr Ross Xavier Vasta MP, Mr Brett David Whiteley 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. Anthony John Abbott MP
Deputy Leader—Hon. Julie Isabel Bishop MP
Chief Government Whip—Hon. Philip Maxwell Ruddock MP
Government Whips—Mr Scott Buchholz MP and Ms Nola Bethwyn Marino 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

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicks, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth</td>
<td>Robertson, NSW</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<th>Division</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Denison, TAS</td>
<td>IND.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams, Mr Matthew</td>
<td>Hindmarsh, SA</td>
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<tr>
<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>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyatt, Mr Kenneth George AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
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**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—Katters Australia Party; AG—Australian Greens; PUP—Palmer United Party

### Heads of Parliamentary Departments

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Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder  
Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—C Mills  
Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
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<td>The Hon. Tony Abbott MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>The Hon. Alan Tudge MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Deputy Prime Minister)</td>
<td>The Hon. Warren Truss MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development</td>
<td>The Hon. Jamie Briggs MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>The Hon. Julie Bishop MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
<td>The Hon. Andrew Robb AO MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Brett Mason MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Employment (Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Employment (Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon. Luke Hartsuyker MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for the Arts (Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Joe Hockey MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Small Business</td>
<td>The Hon. Bruce Billson MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Mathias Corman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer</td>
<td>The Hon. Steven Ciobo MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Agriculture</td>
<td>The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Education (Leader of the House)</td>
<td>The Hon. Christopher Pyne MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Education</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Bob Baldwin MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Hon. Kevin Andrews MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Finance</strong></td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Minister of State</td>
<td>Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance</td>
<td>The Hon. Michael McCormack MP</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.
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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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<td>Hon Bernie Ripoll MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business</td>
<td>Julie Owens MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon Michael Danby MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon Tanya Plibersek MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</td>
<td>Hon David Feeney MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<td>Senator the Hon Penny Wong</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Julie Collins MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Alannah MacTiernan MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Western Australia</td>
<td>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Treasurer</td>
<td>Hon Chris Bowen MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Competition</td>
<td>Hon Bernie Ripoll MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Jason Clare MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Resources</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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Thursday, 30 October 2014

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Infrastructure

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (09:01): by leave—At the last election, the coalition promised to scrap the carbon tax, stop the boats, get the budget under control and build the roads of the 21st century. We are honouring all these commitments—but my task today is to report on one of them, our infrastructure agenda. I said that I intended to be the infrastructure Prime Minister—and that part of that was delivering an annual infrastructure statement to the House of Representatives. So today I am pleased to report progress in building the modern infrastructure that our country needs.

Infrastructure does matter. It helps determine our quality of life as well as our country's competitiveness, productivity and living standards. Australia needs an infrastructure Prime Minister because for too long, infrastructure improvements have not kept pace with population growth or the needs of our people. Too many of us have painful, firsthand knowledge of the problems with our national infrastructure, particularly in our big cities. People leave for work earlier than they did a decade ago because the traffic jams just keep getting worse and worse. Parents rack up late fines at childcare centres when freeways slow to a crawl. Businesses see their costs rise when trucks idle in traffic. Air travel between our cities is actually slower today than a generation ago—because of clogged airports and surrounding road networks. And exports can be held up at bottlenecks in key freight networks, particularly, again, in congested cities. That is why building the infrastructure of the 21st century is an essential part of the government's economic strategy to build a strong and prosperous economy and a safe and secure Australia.

This budget committed $50 billion to infrastructure. It is the largest infrastructure investment in our nation's history—and the government's spend is forecast to generate a record $125 billion of public and private investment in infrastructure over the next decade.

To help the states and territories, the government has introduced an asset recycling initiative. It is an incentive for them to privatise existing assets and to reinvest the proceeds into new economic infrastructure. Asset recycling should reassure the taxpayers who paid for the assets in the first place that their investment is being preserved and their legacy built upon.

I am pleased to say that every state and territory has signed the National Partnership on Asset Recycling. That will help them to build the infrastructure they need, including, it should be said, public transport infrastructure. It is cooperative federalism at work—as is the National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure, which will make roads safer for truck drivers and for all the vehicles that share the roads with them. This is a five-year agreement and the funds will flow this year to the states that have signed up.

We promised that big new projects would be underway within 12 months of a change of government and we are delivering. In New South Wales, Australia's biggest urban road project, WestConnex, has begun, with geotechnical work underway across stages 1 and 2. Stage 2 of WestConnex, which duplicates the M5 East, will begin ahead of schedule because
the Commonwealth will provide a concessional loan of up to $2 billion on top of the $1.5 billion we committed for stage 1.

WestConnex will create almost 10,000 jobs during construction and, when complete, it will bypass 52 sets of traffic lights. It will reduce travel times for the 100,000 motorists who use the motorway every day by up to 40 minutes and take 3,000 trucks every day off Parramatta Road.

As well, the Commonwealth and New South Wales government are working together to complete the Pacific Highway upgrade by the end of the decade; and, in just the past year, 32 kilometres of the highway has been duplicated, including the Sapphire to Woolgoolga upgrade, and now 397 kilometres or 60 per cent of final highway length is complete.

The duplication of the Pacific Highway, combined with the NorthConnex project in Sydney, means that, by the end of the decade, at most there will be just two stretches of traffic lights between Melbourne and Brisbane.

In Victoria, the Commonwealth is investing $3 billion toward Melbourne's East West Link. The East West Link will create more than 6,000 jobs during construction and it will reduce travel time by up to 20 minutes for commuters travelling from Geelong to the city and beyond. Stage 1 alone is expected to allow 100,000 vehicles each day to bypass 23 sets of traffic lights, and on 29 September, the Victorian government signed contracts to build stage 1 of East West Link. The link has been inked, so there can be no turning back from this major project that will help tens of thousands of Victorians every day.

In South Australia, the Commonwealth has committed $944 million to upgrade the North-South Road Corridor. This project will create 1,000 construction jobs and early work is already underway on Ashwin Parade.

In Western Australia, the Commonwealth has committed $174 million to widen and strengthen the North West Coastal Highway, which is the main link between Geraldton, Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland. Construction will commence in the next month.

The Gateway WA is on track. The Commonwealth is providing $615 million for the 40-kilometre Northlink WA project. Planning is underway and construction will commence in 2016. Planning is also underway for the $1.6 billion Perth Freight Link project funded with $925 million from the Commonwealth.

In Queensland, five major projects have been completed on the Bruce Highway—at Gin Gin, Mackay, Cairns, Calliope Crossroads near Gladstone and at Burdekin. The last section of the Townsville Ring Road will start within 12 months. Early works have begun on the Gateway Motorway upgrade. And the procurement process is underway for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, so that major construction works can start next year. The Commonwealth's commitment of up to $1.28 billion is the largest ever federal contribution to a single Queensland regional road project.

In Tasmania, the Commonwealth has committed $400 million to the Midland Highway and the Westbury Road Upgrade will be completed by the end of this year.

In the Northern Territory, the duplication of the first sections of Tiger Brennan Drive has been completed, and the Commonwealth has committed a further $77 million towards upgrading Northern Territory highways with planning already underway.
In addition to these major road projects, the government is spending $2.1 billion on the Roads to Recovery Programme and funding a $565 million Black Spot Programme to improve the most dangerous stretches of road throughout our country. Then there is the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme providing $248 million to increase the number of rest areas and improve connections to freight networks. There is also the $229 million National Highway Upgrade Programme for practical improvements such as shoulder and centreline widening, strips and wire rope barriers. And the government is providing $300 million for the Bridges Renewal Programme to upgrade deteriorating bridges across the nation.

Airports are our gateways to the world. For more than 50 years, governments have talked about a second airport for Sydney. Finally, and not before time, the talk is over. We have taken the final decision that Badgerys Creek will be site of Sydney’s second airport—or, as I prefer, Western Sydney’s first airport. The government has commenced consultations with the Sydney Airport Group. We are working up the commercial model and the airport concept designs and construction should begin in 2016. This airport is irrevocable. It is going ahead, and construction should begin in 2016. By mid-century, the new airport could generate a $24 billion increase in our gross domestic product and 60,000—60,000—new jobs in Western Sydney. It is the centrepiece of our long-term vision for Western Sydney.

And heeding past lessons, it will be a case of roads first, airport second: the roads will be built before the first plane has landed. A $3.6 billion, 10-year partnership with the New South Wales government is underway, starting with the upgrade of Bringelly Road. Together, our road package and the airport will give Western Sydney the modern infrastructure it deserves.

In Hobart, environmental and design studies for the extension of the runway at Hobart Airport are underway. This $38 million upgrade will help Hobart to become the gateway to the Antarctic and give the potential for direct flights to Asia.

As well, planning work and consultations are currently underway on the Inland Railway between Melbourne and Brisbane which would significantly improve freight productivity compared to the coastal line via Sydney.

Importantly, the government is also getting on with the job of rolling out the NBN so that Australians will have access to very fast broadband as soon as possible, at affordable prices and the least cost to taxpayers. This government has connected more premises in just one year than the previous government did in five! An independent cost-benefit analysis of the NBN found that this government’s multi-technology approach will deliver net economic and social benefits of almost $18 billion.

The government is determined to end the dam phobia that has largely stopped the construction of new dams for the past three decades. Water is a priceless asset especially when the vagaries of our environment make it so scarce. Strengthening our water storage capability is essential if our country is to grow. We do need to build the right dams in the right places. Most of these dams should be feasible without government support. But we are looking at some modest seed funding to help break the anti-dam mindset.

Just as we promised to end the analysis paralysis and get projects moving on the ground, we also promised a long-term vision for Australia’s infrastructure needs and a comprehensive
plan to deliver it. We have passed legislation to make Infrastructure Australia more independent, robust and transparent, with a board-appointed CEO, so that states, territories, industry and the community can be confident it is working in the national interest, and not just the Commonwealth's interests. And to see our nationally significant infrastructure needs more clearly, we have tasked Infrastructure Australia to develop a 15-year infrastructure plan. The plan will cover all economic infrastructure—transport, energy, communications and water. It will evaluate projects receiving more than $100 million in Commonwealth funding to help clarify our country's infrastructure priorities for the future. It is reform to build the right projects at the right time for the right price. The work done to make costs and benefits more transparent should build deeper engagement by private investors in infrastructure.

Australia is not alone in facing a greater need for infrastructure investment. Almost every country needs more and better infrastructure to underpin jobs and growth, and almost every government lacks the resources to underwrite that investment. Governments do not have the money to deliver on their own.

As this year's G20 president, Australia has made boosting private sector investment in infrastructure a priority. We are driving a global infrastructure initiative for quality investment across the G20 and beyond. Part of this initiative is a new global infrastructure hub that we hope will be based in Sydney.

This government is committed to building the infrastructure that we need to get products to market faster, to speed up the wait for freight and to get employees to work and home again with less time wasted in traffic. Nothing boosts confidence like cranes in the sky and bulldozers on the ground. It is an unmistakable sign of faith in our future. Next year, I look forward to reporting further progress in delivering the projects we promised in our plan to build a strong and prosperous economy for a safe and secure Australia. I table a copy of my statement.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (09:16): I commend the Prime Minister on his statement and I ask leave of the House to move a motion to enable the member for Grayndler to speak for 15 minutes.

Leave granted.

Mr MORRISON: I move:

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended as would prevent Mr Albanese speaking in reply to the ministerial statement for a period not exceeding 15 minutes.

Question agreed to.

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (09:17): I welcome the relatively brief statement by the Prime Minister on his record of infrastructure delivery in his first year in office. I suspect that in delivering his account, the Prime Minister was thinking of former Tory Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who once said:

You don't tell deliberate lies, but sometimes you have to be evasive.

In infrastructure, talk means nothing; only results matter. Despite going to the election giving Australians the impression it would maintain Labor's six-year focus on nation building, the government is struggling to deliver results. It continues to present old Labor projects as though they are new. It continues to treat its election promises as though their delivery was somehow optional.
The government has also run up the white flag on traffic congestion by scrapping all Commonwealth investment in the best remedy to solve the problem—better public transport. Just a few days before the election, Tony Abbott told the National Press Club a line that he has repeated today, that there will be cranes and bulldozers at work on major new infrastructure projects within one year of the election. As recently as last week, a Senate estimates committee heard there were no cranes at work, no bulldozers either—just clouds of bulldust. Today's statement by the Prime Minister is more of the same.

Before addressing the statement, let me remind the House of the infrastructure record of the former Labor government. We inherited an infrastructure deficit. The Howard government had squandered the windfall receipts from the mining boom on middle-class welfare and electoral bribes. That money should have been used to build roads, railway lines and ports. Over the following six years and despite the global financial crisis, Labor rolled out an infrastructure investment program which yielded results that can best be illustrated by a single statistic. When Labor took office, Australia was 20th amongst OECD nations in terms of infrastructure investment as a proportion of GDP. When Labor left office Australia was first. Looking at it another way, Labor lifted total infrastructure spending from $132 per person to $225 per person. While others talk about infrastructure, Labor deliver. We are nation builders. We realise, as John F Kennedy once said:

Things do not happen. They are made to happen.

Over six years Labor established Infrastructure Australia to provide, for the first time, a system for evidence based decision making on infrastructure; doubled the roads budget, and upgraded 7½ thousand kilometres of road; rebuilt or built anew 4,000 kilometres of railways—about a third of the national railway network was rebuilt. As a result of that investment, we reduced the freight rail journey from Brisbane to Melbourne by seven hours and the journey from the east to west coast by nine hours.

We committed more to urban passenger rail than all previous Commonwealth governments combined from Federation right up to 2007. We created the nation's first aviation strategy, the nation's first port strategy, the nation's first national freight strategy. We initiated planning for the second Sydney airport. We focused on cities by establishing the Major Cities Unit and the Urban Policy Forum, including experts from government, planning and development sectors to advise government in better long-term planning—a proud record of achievement.

We did not just throw money at building new toll roads and pretend we were meeting our nation's infrastructure needs. We established a process for evidence based decision making on infrastructure and collaborated with states and local government to make sure that we got it right. Then we delivered in spades.

During last year's election campaign, the then opposition leader made infrastructure a central plank of his platform. A year later, his promises are undelivered and his platform is tottering. I know why. During the period of the Labor government, the then opposition leaders never had a positive idea and took no time for serious policy consideration. The now Prime Minister was too busy being negative. He turned, indeed, the coalition of yesterday into the 'noalition'. As election time approached, the most negative opposition leader in Australian history realised he needed to find a positive narrative, so he turned to infrastructure. The problem was that his ideas were too narrow, not thought out and came with no proper planning.
That is why these plans are now crumbling and why this first year has been dominated by broken promises. Let's look at a few. The then opposition leader promised to retain the independence of Infrastructure Australia. He also promised to reappoint its chairman, Sir Rod Eddington. He failed to do so. And one of the government's first actions was to launch an assault on Infrastructure Australia's independence. It proposed legislation that would have given the Minister for Infrastructure the power to dictate its research agenda and to censor publication of its findings. The proposal went so far as to suggest that the minister should have exclusive power to exclude entire classes of infrastructure from Infrastructure Australia's consideration.

This was a sneaky, backdoor attempt to warn Infrastructure Australia off the government's ideological no-go area of public transport. Fortunately, the government ultimately backed down on this ridiculous plan due to pressure not just from the parliament but also from outside—from the Business Council of Australia, from Infrastructure Australia itself, from the Property Council and from the Urban Development Institute of Australia. It folded as a result of this pressure.

Another key coalition promise was to require all Commonwealth infrastructure spending worth more than $100 million to undergo a proper cost-benefit analysis. That analysis was to be ticked off by the experts at Infrastructure Australia. The government has treated this promise with contempt from day one. In its first budget, it handed the Victorian government $1.5 billion as an advance payment for Melbourne's East West Link project. Indeed, $1 billion of this is for stage 2, which not only did not commence last financial year when the payment was made; it will not commence this financial year and not even next financial year; yet a billion dollars has already been paid for this project.

We can only conclude that the payment was designed to pad Premier Napthine's budget bottom line in advance of the Victorian state election. We should also never forget that this favour to a political mate came at a time when the government claimed it was facing a budget emergency. So much for the budget emergency—making advance payments years in advance of any construction. That compares with what the assistant minister told the Civil Contractors Federation—and the minister may well remember this. On 6 June he said:

So we are driving the state governments very hard to give us timetables to ensure that we’re meeting the expected time of delivery of these projects. That we’re hitting milestones, that we’re only making payments to states when they actually deliver the milestones, that they’re not getting money in their bank account prior to milestones being delivered …

But that same month a billion and a half dollars arrived in the Victorian government's bank account, years in advance of anything actually happening.

The government also provided a concessional loan for Sydney's WestConnex project—another project without a cost-benefit analysis. For anyone who knows anything about Sydney, stage 1 of the WestConnex project goes to Haberfield and stage 2 goes to St Peters—to the west of the airport. I am a supporter of the concept of taking people to the city and freight to the port, but the road needs to do both of those things if it is to stack up—yet the money has already been paid.

If you thought East West and WestConnex were bad, have a look at the so-called Perth Freight Link. It used to be known as Roe 8. This project seems to have been pulled out of a Weet-Bix packet—no cost-benefit analysis and no clarity on details. Even the Western

CHAMBER
Australian Liberal government is in the dark. In June, the WA government's Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Jim Chown, told a parliamentary committee:

... at this stage we have not actually got plans that are worthy of public scrutiny.

He said that a month after the budget announcement. This is the Liberal Party person in government responsible for this project—an extraordinary proposition.

The government currently has legislation to institutionalise cost-benefit analysis on projects funded to the tune of more than $100 million. There is a fundamental problem here, though: the analysis would come after the projects have been funded. So you determine what projects will have a cost-benefit analysis after you have determined that they will receive more than $100 million of government funding. News flash: do the cost-benefit analysis prior to determining where the funding will go. That is a fundamental principle of what should happen. This explains why there are problems. Just ask one of my constituents. Vince Crowe received two letters from a representative of the WestConnex Delivery Authority on 26 June 2014—on the same day. The first letter said, 'We're going to buy your property,' and the second letter said, 'We don't need to buy your property'—on the same day. That is what happens when you do not get planning right.

Such misadventures are bad enough, but the government's biggest mistake is its refusal to spend a cent on public transport. You cannot deliver solutions to urban congestion without dealing with both road and rail and without having strategies for transport. If you are going to have the infrastructure of the 21st century—as the rhetoric goes—you need to deliver on urban public transport, you need to deliver on high-speed rail and you also need to deliver on the National Broadband Network. And one of those infrastructure challenges is just that. The 21st century is the information age. All Australians deserve fibre to the home. All Australians deserve best practice. When we talk about analysis paralysis, an example is that, over the last 12 months, there have been eight separate inquiries into the National Broadband Network—eight separate inquiries. So we need to be serious about that.

The government's infrastructure strategy has been to take money off projects that had cost-benefit analysis, like the Cross River Rail project and Melbourne Metro—to take money from urban public transport—and give it to roads. The government does deserve credit for the work that has been done on Badgerys Creek. But Badgerys Creek needs to have not just roads, but rail. It needs to preserve the corridor, but it would be logical—when you have the rail line being built to Leppington funded by the former state Labor government—to extend it further and to connect with the main western line. That would be the smart thing to do.

Government members interjecting—

When the Prime Minister was attempting to spin the 2014 budget he claimed he had delivered significant infrastructure investment. The truth is that his statement today repeated a range of projects, many of which are just about ready to open. Gateway WA and the projects on the Bruce Highway that he mentioned, like Calliope Crossroads, are projects that have been underway for years.

The so-called asset recycling plan has been spoken about by those opposite in the form of interjections. The truth is that the only thing that was recycled there was the money. They took money from the Building Australia Fund, called it the Asset Recycling Fund, and pretended that there was new investment where there was not. The truth is that the former
government lifted infrastructure investment from 20th in the OECD to first. This current government needs to give a commitment that it will maintain that investment at first place. It is simply that. I commend to the government the advice of Henry Ford, who once said, 'Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.' The government should get infrastructure investment right. If they do that the nation will benefit.

BILLs

Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention)

Bill 2014
First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Turnbull.
Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Minister for Communications) (09:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The bill contains a package of reforms to prevent the further degradation of the investigative capabilities of Australia's law enforcement and national security agencies. The bill will require companies providing telecommunications services in Australia, carriers and internet service providers to keep a limited, prescribed set of telecommunications data for two years.

The bill amends the Telecommunications Interception and Access Act 1979 (interception act), and the Telecommunications Act 1997 (telecommunications act).

Modern communication technologies have revolutionised the abilities of people to communicate, collaborate and express themselves. Sadly, however, these same technologies are routinely misused and exploited by criminals, including those who threaten our national security.

Historically, telephone companies have kept call records showing the numbers of both the A and B parties, time of call, duration of call and often the location of the parties. These records have been kept for long periods and were used for billing purposes. Under existing and long-standing legislation, a range of law enforcement and other agencies have had the ability to access this information without a warrant. These records are regularly subpoenaed in civil proceedings, as well.

When a device is connected to the internet it is assigned an IP address. This is, like a telephone number, a unique address. While many hosts have static or permanent IP addresses, in the vast majority of cases IP addresses are allocated dynamically by the internet service provider or telco providing the communication or the connection to the internet. Telecommunication companies have the ability to retain the details of the customer IP address allocated and many do so, but for differing periods. The capture and retention of these addresses is more straightforward in the fixed line broadband environment than in wireless networks. The widespread use of network address translation to more efficiently use the limited number of IP version 4 addresses also adds a level of complexity.

The type of data referred to in the bill as telecommunications data, more often described as metadata, is information about a communication but not its content. So, in the telephone world, it reveals that one number belonging to a particular account was connected to another
number at a time and for a duration, but does not reveal what they discussed. In the IP world it reveals that a particular IP address, which may have been observed to have been engaged in some unlawful activity, had been at the relevant time allocated to a particular account. In the context of messaging—email, for example—it reveals the sender, recipient, time and date, but again not the content. Access to content, I stress, requires a warrant.

Access to metadata plays a central role in almost every counterterrorism, counterespionage, cybersecurity and organised crime investigation. It is also used in almost all serious criminal investigations, including investigations into murder, serious sexual assaults, drug trafficking and kidnapping. The use of this kind of meta data, therefore, is not new. However, as the business models of service providers are changing with technology they are keeping fewer records. And they are keeping those records for shorter periods of time because they do not need them any longer, in many cases, for billing. Many of the records that are still kept are kept because of legacy systems put in place years ago. In June 2013, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security concluded that this diminution in the retention of meta data is harming law enforcement and national security capabilities, and that these changes are accelerating.

Existing powers and laws are not adequate to respond to this challenge. Preservation notices under the interception act can require carriers to ‘quick freeze’ records that they hold, but these notices cannot create records that have never been kept, and cannot bring back records that carriers have deleted days, weeks or months before a crime is brought to an agency’s attention.

Simply put, investigations are failing.

For example, in a current major child exploitation investigation, the AFP has been unable to identify 156 out of 463 potential suspects, because certain internet service providers do not retain the necessary IP address allocation records to enable the resolution of the IP address—that 32-bit number—to the particular account number the person in question was using. These records are critical to link criminal activity online back to a real world human being.

These impacts are not limited to law enforcement agencies in Australia. I give an example provided to us by the Federal Police. During a recent Europol child exploitation investigation, child exploitation investigations relied heavily on access to telecommunications data as perpetrators primarily shared information online, meaning that physical evidence was rarely available. Three hundred and seventy-one suspects were believed to be in the United Kingdom. Using retained telecommunications data, UK authorities were able to positively identify 240 suspects, leading to 121 arrests and convictions. In contrast, of the 377 suspects believed to be in Germany, which does not have a data retention regime in force, German authorities were only able to identify seven and were unable to obtain sufficient evidence to arrest or convict a single person.

Last year, a major Australian ISP reduced the period for which it keeps IP address allocation records from many years to three months. In the 12 months prior to that decision, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) obtained these records in relation to at least 10 national security investigations, including counter-terrorism and cybersecurity investigations. If those investigations took place today, vital intelligence and evidence simply may not exist.
No responsible government can sit by while those who protect our community lose access to the tools they need to do the job. In the current threat environment in particular, we cannot let this problem get worse.

**Data retention**

As such, this bill will allow regulations to prescribe a consistent, minimum set of records that service providers who provide services in Australia must keep for two years.

A two-year retention period is based on the advice of our law enforcement and security agencies, as well as the experience of a number of foreign jurisdictions. While many cases are solved within a few months, investigations into serious and complex crimes and threats to security often span many years, requiring access to older records.

The government recognises that data retention raises genuine concerns about privacy. We are committed to addressing those concerns.

As a starting point, the government will release the draft dataset and refer it, along with this bill, to the PJCIS for review and public inquiry. The draft dataset is, of course, not final, but it is already strictly limited. For example:

- service providers will not be required to retain the content or substance of any communication, including subject lines of emails or posts on social media sites
- the act will expressly exclude a person's web-browsing history, and
- providers will not be required to keep detailed location records that could allow a person's movements to be tracked, akin to a surveillance device.

The government will also carefully consider any recommendations made by the PJCIS about the dataset, or the broader regime provided for in the bill.

There has also been a great deal of conjecture about how much data retention may cost. As I have previously stated, the government is committed to ongoing, good faith consultation with industry and expects to make a substantial contribution to both the cost of implementation and the operation of this scheme.

This consultation will continue over the coming weeks, in parallel with the PJCIS inquiry, through a joint government–industry working group, headed by the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department and deputy chaired by the Director-General of ASIO, Major General Duncan Lewis, Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mr Andrew Colvin and the Secretary of the Department of Communications. These consultations will focus particularly on settling technical aspects of the dataset and the costs of meeting the obligation.

What I can say is that, to date, our consultation with industry has been very productive. For example, based on industry advice, the bill allows individual service providers to develop an implementation plan that provides a pathway to compliance over up to 18 months. These plans will allow industry and government to prioritise the retention of data that is most critical to investigations, while allowing service providers to significantly reduce their costs by aligning any systems changes with their internal business cycles.

**Access arrangements**

This bill does not provide agencies with new powers to access communications data; the bill simply ensures that data will continue to be available to agencies as a part of legitimate investigations, subject to the same, strict limits that currently apply.
In fact, the bill will strictly limit, and indeed reduce, the range of enforcement agencies permitted to access telecommunications metadata without a warrant.

The bill will allow what we might call 'traditional' law enforcement agencies, such as the police, Customs, crime commissions and anticorruption bodies, to access this information.

The bill will also grant the Attorney-General the power to declare, via legislative instrument subject to parliamentary oversight, additional agencies. Before making such a declaration, the Attorney-General will be required to consider a range of strict criteria, including whether the agency is subject to a binding privacy scheme.

**Safeguards**

The bill will also introduce a range of new and enhanced safeguards. In particular, the bill:

- introduces, for the first time, independent and comprehensive oversight of access to telecommunications data by enforcement agencies
- requires the PJCIS to review the effectiveness of the scheme no more than three years after the end of its implementation phase, and
- requires the Attorney-General to report annually on the operation of the scheme.

The government is also considering reforms to strengthen the security and integrity of Australia's telecommunication infrastructure by establishing a security framework for the telecommunications sector. This will provide better protection for information held by industry in accordance with the data retention scheme. The government expects this reform will be finalised well before the end of the data retention implementation period.

**Concluding remarks**

This bill is critical to prevent the capabilities of Australia's law enforcement and national security agencies being further degraded. It does not expand the range of telecommunications metadata which is currently being accessed by law enforcement agencies. It simply ensures that metadata is retained for a period of two years. In the IP world, the object of the scheme is principally to ensure that dynamically allocated customer IP addresses are retained for two years so they can be resolved to an account holder. The bill expressly precludes any obligation to retain information relating to web-browsing activities. In other words, customer IP addresses will be retained for two years but not the details of the IP addresses of the sites to which that customer may connect in the course of their internet activity.

More broadly, this bill demonstrates the government's commitment to ensuring that access to sensitive and personal information by these agencies is strictly controlled through robust accountability processes. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**Australian War Memorial Amendment Bill 2014**

**First Reading**

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by **Mr Robert**.

Bill read a first time.

**Second Reading**

**Mr ROBERT** (Fadden—Assistant Minister for Defence) (09:47): I move:
That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to present legislation that will give effect to the government's election commitment to prohibit the imposition of parking and entry fees at the Australian War Memorial.

The Australian War Memorial, as this House well knows, is the nation's home of reflection, remembrance and commemoration.

It houses our national story of service in times of war and peace.

Every year, close to one million Australians, and over 200,000 school students, visit the memorial to pay their respects to the fallen, as well as to visit the world-class museum. I acknowledge the schoolchildren in the gallery this morning on their visit to parliament; I expect they too will be visiting the War Memorial as part of their visit to Canberra. Every year, so many of those schoolchildren enjoy that marvellous experience.

Indeed, a visit to the War Memorial has been ranked by TripAdvisor as Australia's No. 1 tourist destination and is the only Australian location listed in the group's world top 20 destinations.

The government is determined to ensure that current and future generations of Australians, as well as current and future generations of our schoolchildren and international visitors, can continue to visit the Australian War Memorial at no charge.

As we enter the centenary of Anzac this decision takes on greater meaning as more and more people plan to visit Canberra to learn about Australia's military service during the First World War.

The bill will amend the Australian War Memorial Act 1980 to prohibit the levying of parking and entry fees at the memorial's Campbell site.

The Australian War Memorial combines a shrine, a world-class museum, and an extensive archive.

The memorial's purpose is to commemorate the sacrifice of those Australians who have paid the ultimate price and died in war.

The memorial's mission is to assist Australians to remember, interpret and understand the Australian experience of war and its enduring impact on Australian society.

The concept of a national memorial and museum was first conceived by Charles Bean, a war correspondent and the official historian of the First World War.

His words, recorded after the Battle of Pozieres in 1916, captured the importance of this national memorial:

Many a man lying out there at Pozieres or in the low scrub at Gallipoli, with his poor tired senses barely working through the fever of his brain, has thought in his last moments: "Well—well—it's over; but in Australia they will be proud of this."

At the memorial, visitors can see and experience the Roll of Honour, the Hall of Valour, the dioramas and the Hall of Memory which contains the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.

The names of more than 102,000 Australians who have given their lives in war and in other conflicts are remembered on the Roll of Honour in the cloisters that line the Commemorative Courtyard, which contains the Pool of Reflection with its eternal flame.
The Hall of Valour honours Australian recipients of the Victoria Cross and the George Cross.

The government has invested over $27 million in the redevelopment of the First World War galleries at the Australian War Memorial, a key project as part of the centenary of Anzac. These redeveloped galleries will complement the galleries telling Australia's story of service and sacrifice in the Second World War, Korea and Vietnam, as well as in peacekeeping operations and the war in Afghanistan.

This bill will ensure that entry to, and parking at, the Australian War Memorial remains free for everyone for evermore.

Debate adjourned.

TARIFF PROPOSALS

Customs Tariff Proposal (No. 1) 2014

Excise Tariff Proposal (No.1) 2014

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer) (09:51): I move:

Proposals described as Customs Tariff Proposal (No. 1) 2014 and Excise Tariff Proposal (No.1) 2014 in the terms of the printed proposals which are now being circulated to honourable members.

The government is continuing to implement all of our budget measures in an orderly and methodical way. As part of the 2014-15 budget, the government announced it would reintroduce the biannual indexation of fuel excise to inflation. The excise and customs tariff proposals I have just tabled give practical effect to this decision. Funding constraints at all levels of government have become a significant impediment to the provision of the infrastructure that Australia needs to bolster the productive capacity of the economy and prosperity for the 21st century.

This government is responding to the needs of the economy by building infrastructure that will drive economic growth, create jobs and improve productivity. That is why we have committed to the biggest increase in road expenditure in Australian history. Reintroducing fuel duty indexation will contribute to a secure funding source for these productivity enhancing road infrastructure projects going forward. In difficult budget circumstances, this is the responsible way to immediately start building the roads that Australia needs.

The impact on individual households will be modest. For a typical household which consumes 50 litres of fuel per week, the estimated price impact of fuel indexation by mid-2015 will be around 40c per week. Implementing this policy now, through the use of tariff proposals, is essential to the government's plans to build a strong and prosperous economy into the future. That is why I am tabling these excise and customs tariff proposals.

These tariff proposals will, from 10 November 2014, index the rate of fuel duty for liquid fuels, such as petrol and diesel, to the consumer price index. The new rate will be 38.6c per litre. Consumer price index indexation of duty on fuel will apply each year thereafter on 1 February and 1 August. Other duty rates for alternative fuels, such as gaseous fuels, will be indexed in the same manner.

The tariff proposals will also simplify the burden on businesses by rounding the applicable duty rate of indexed fuels from three decimal places of a cent to one decimal place. For example, if it were applied to the current rate of petrol, this would have the effect of changing
the excise and excise equivalent customs duty rate from 38.143c per litre to simply 38.1c per litre.

Amendments to the law will also be introduced shortly as part of the Tax and Superannuation Laws Amendment Bill (2014 Measures No. 6) Bill 2014 to ensure that businesses which claim fuel tax credits continue to receive the appropriate credit when a tariff proposal increases the rate of fuel duty being collected.

Fuel tax credits ensure that businesses operating heavy—that is, greater than 4.5 tonnes of gross vehicle mass—on-road vehicles or using fuel for off-road purposes are not affected by fuel duty. This removes the incidence of fuel duty for these business activities. The government considers it very important that business will be able to receive fuel tax credits equal to the rate of duty on fuel as soon as possible so that they do not have to wait until a later date to claim them.

The government is continuing to implement all of our budget measures in an orderly and methodical way. For further details, a summary of the alternations made by the tariff proposals has been prepared and is being circulated.

Debate adjourned.

**BILLS**

**Tax and Superannuation Laws Amendment (2014 Measures No. 6) Bill 2014**

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Ciobo.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer) (09:58): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce a bill that implements a range of improvements to Australia’s tax laws. Importantly, this bill will also help clear more of the backlog of the 92 unenacted tax and superannuation measures this government inherited when we came to government. This, in turn, will provide investment certainty and allow Australian business to actually get on with doing business. And where there is business, there is opportunity.

This bill includes two measures that were left unlegislated by the former government: one concerns business restructures, the other concerns investments in managed investment trusts. By taking action on these measures, the government is delivering much-needed certainty to businesses and investors. Under the Abbott government, Australia is open for business.

This bill also supports the reintroduction of fuel duty indexation by ensuring that businesses which claim fuel tax credits or receive grants under the Cleaner Fuels Grants Scheme continue to receive the appropriate level of credits or grants.

Fuel duty indexation will provide a predictable and growing source of revenue that the Commonwealth will use to help deliver the government’s new road infrastructure projects. In the long run, this will assist all businesses by reducing the costs of transporting goods around this great country.
This bill will make it easier for firms to restructure by extending the business restructure rollover provisions. In the usual course of growing a business, a firm may reach a point where it needs to restructure. However, in some cases, this could result in an income tax liability for the owners of the firm, even though no real change in ownership will take place.

This is where the rollovers are important, because they make it possible for businesses to defer the income tax consequences from a restructure.

These amendments will extend some of the existing rollover provisions to revenue assets and trading stock, and will also improve how the law operates. By removing income tax barriers to restructuring, the government is supporting Australian businesses—large and small—to grow and to succeed.

This bill will also make amendments to the managed investment trust withholding tax regime, which will increase certainty and reduce red tape for investors.

This bill amends the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 so that foreign pension funds can access the managed investment trust withholding tax regime, as well as the associated lower rate of withholding tax on income from certain Australian investments.

Under the current law, the managed investment trust withholding tax regime does not apply to payments made to a trust without 'presently entitled' beneficiaries.

This means that a payment from an Australian managed investment trust to a foreign pension fund may not fall within the managed investment trust withholding tax regime. As a result, a payment from an Australian managed investment trust to a foreign pension fund may be taxed at the highest marginal tax rate.

The amendments in this bill mean that foreign pension funds will be treated as the final beneficiary of a fund payment and will have access to the concessional managed investment trust withholding tax.

Allowing foreign pension funds to access the managed investment trust withholding tax regime is both consistent with the original purpose of the regime and with industry practice.

By applying this measure from July 2008 (the date the regime commenced), industry will have certainty about the treatment of foreign superannuation funds that invest in Australian managed investment trusts.

It is all about certainty.

This bill will also amend the law to give effect to certain taxation arrangements for the United States force posture initiatives, first announced in 2011 by the then-Prime Minister and the President of the United States.

The United States force posture initiatives in Australia currently involve annual rotational United States Marine Corps deployments, and better aircraft cooperation activities in northern Australia. This represents a significant development in Australia's alliance and defence cooperation with the United States.

The Force Posture Agreement, which was signed on 12 August 2014, provides a legal, policy and financial framework to govern United States force posture initiatives in Australia. It contains important protections and assurances for both countries.
For example, it provides an exemption from Australian tax for Australian source income derived by United States contractors in connection with the initiatives in Australia. A legislative amendment to the tax law is required to give effect to this aspect of the agreement.

The legislative amendment introduced by this bill will apply only to United States contractors performing duties directly connected with the force posture initiatives in Australia, and not to United States contractors in Australia performing other unrelated duties for the United States government. The exemption from Australian tax will only apply if the relevant income is taxable in the United States.

The government remains strongly committed to ensuring that Australian workers and service providers are able to maximise the potential benefits of the United States force posture initiatives in Australia.

This commitment is embodied in the Force Posture Agreement, which obligates United States forces in Australia in connection with the force posture initiatives to strive to use Australian suppliers of goods, products, and services, including Australian workers and Australian commercial enterprises, to the greatest extent practicable, in accordance with United States laws and regulations.

As a result of these United States force posture initiatives, small businesses are likely to benefit from the increased demand for goods and services from the presence of United States personnel on rotational deployment in northern Australia.

The government is also getting on with calmly and methodically implementing the budget.

The government has decided to give practical effect to the fuel excise indexation budget measure by way of tariff proposals to be validated by parliament within 12 months.

The government announced as part of the 2014-15 budget that it would reintroduce the indexation of fuel duty excise.

Funding constraints at all levels of government have become a significant impediment to the provision of the infrastructure that Australia needs to bolster the productive capacity of the economy and prosperity for the 21st century.

To provide a secure funding source for road infrastructure, the government is committed to reintroducing the biannual indexation of fuel excise to the consumer price index.

To give effect to this commitment, earlier today the government tabled fuel excise and customs tariff proposals.

In difficult budget circumstances, this is the responsible way to immediately start building the productivity-boosting roads Australia needs.

This bill will make important amendments so that when a tariff proposal increases the rate of fuel duty being collected, businesses who claim fuel tax credits or grants under the Cleaner Fuels Grants Scheme continue to receive the appropriate credit or grant.

These amendments will apply to the tariff proposals tabled earlier today and any future fuel duty tariff proposal.

The amendments to fuel tax credits will continue to ensure that fuel duty is a tax on final consumption of fuel rather than a tax on business inputs.
For those businesses using fuel in off-road operations or operating a vehicle with a gross vehicle mass in excess of 4.5 tonnes, indexation of fuel duty will not increase their business costs. This is because these businesses are able to receive fuel tax credits to offset the fuel duty paid.

This removes the incidence of fuel duty for these business activities and avoids imposing additional costs on business.

If passed quickly, these amendments will ensure businesses will be able to receive fuel tax credits equal to the rate of fuel tax duty specified in the tariff proposal straight away. This will save businesses from having to claim extra fuel tax credits at a later date and avoid any negative cash flow consequences that result from the use of tariff proposals.

The bill will also make similar amendments to the operation of the Cleaner Fuels Grant Scheme.

Full details of each of these measures are contained in the explanatory memorandum.

The measures in this bill are part of the government's plan to secure Australia's future. The government is committed to building a future that is just and prosperous, which means creating the right environment in which Australian businesses can grow and flourish.

The measures in this bill are part of the government's commitment to help investors, small business and corporate Australia get on with their jobs and create opportunities so that all Australians can benefit.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES
Publications Committee
Report

Mr COULTON (Parkes—The Nationals Chief Whip) (10:06): I present a report from the Publications Committee sitting in conference with the Publications Committee of the Senate. Copies of the report have been placed on the table.

Report—by leave—agreed to.

BILLS

Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014
Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr HOGAN (Page) (10:07): I am very happy to speak to this Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014.

I know, as a lover of sport—as most of us are—that this issue is a very important one. Australia has been very clear on its position on doping in sport for many years. People in Australia, sports lovers in Australia and participants in Australia demand clean sports in this country, and the government will do whatever we can to stamp out drug cheats, including in our continued support for the WADA code.
We were a supporter of the establishment of the World Anti-Doping Code and an early signatory to the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport. This government strongly supports a fair, safe and healthy competitive environment for all athletes, importantly, as sport is an international thing from all nations. Besides doping being a serious risk to an athlete's health and their wellbeing, it is also cheating. We all know many famous stories that involve international sports stars from decades ago. We all know the story about Raelene Boyle; she would certainly have been a gold medallist had it not been for other people taking substances that improved their performance.

I remember one Christmas reading Lance Armstrong's biography. At the time it was an inspirational story. From memory, I think it was called *It's not about the bike*—unfortunately, that came to be proven to be true! So not only is it a damage to their health but it is also, as we know, cheating.

The Howard government introduced requirements that doping must be addressed by sports in Australia, and this government will continue that policy. All individual Australian sports have anti-doping policies in place which recognise upholding the World Anti-Doping Code. We continue to work in partnership with all sports in administering that code.

The World Anti-Doping Code is administered by sports and governments around the world and ensures that athletes are treated the same and abide by the same rules everywhere, regardless of nationality or sport. Almost all the major international competitions require national sporting teams to be World Anti-Doping Code compliant.

Australia cannot, on the one hand, demand that our athletes compete on a fair playing field in international competition, with the same rules and sanctions applying to all and, on the other hand, support sporting organisations by deciding independently: if to test, what to test for, when to investigate and whether or not to penalise doping athletes. This is not going to work. In my view, professional sports and athletes benefit from demonstrating a commitment to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code—the integrity of sport requires it.

What is the gist of this whole bill? We know the health benefits of including children in sport. It has many intangible benefits for a person's whole character when they are growing up. There is an economic impact and the sheer joy of participating or coming together to support a local team. This plays a very integral role in so many parts of our community and the cohesion it brings. It is fun, it should be safe, it should be fair and it should be egalitarian. For sport to retain these values it must be about the pursuit of competition in a fair contest, free from doping. The anti-doping regulations are a key part of the approach to maintaining sport integrity, and the WADA code is the global standard for 170 governments and 300 international sporting bodies.

The aim of this bill is to amend the ASADA Act so it is in alignment with the revised World Anti-Doping Code that comes into effect on 1 January 2015. These are necessary changes to ensure we remain code compliant and uphold our commitment to drug-free sport. In making these changes, it is appropriate to streamline and simplify a few aspects of the ASADA Act at the same time. These changes will not impact on current anti-doping matters and it would be inappropriate to comment on these while these issues are ongoing. The ASADA legislation before the House ensures that the Australian government remains committed to the WADA code.
The key changes through the code and additional administrative changes will be: the prohibition of athletes and support persons from associating with convicted drug cheats—this is designed to protect athletes from knowing doping facilitators, such as unscrupulous doctors or support staff currently outside anti-doping regulations; complicity—aiding and abetting or covering up a doping violation is now a violation in its own right; increasing the sanction under the code from two years to four years for deliberate doping infractions, such as taking anabolic steroids—this is an important one because, if you ban an athlete for four years, it is almost writing their career off in their chosen sport; smarter target testing—by testing for specific substances for particular sports—for example, steroids for strength sports and blood doping for endurance sports—and making testing more efficient and targeted; establishing a violations list that formalises a requirement to publish a list of people who have received an anti-doping sanction for the period of that sanction; provision of a review panel in the Australian Sports Drug Medical Advisory Committee, which is separate to ASADA, to provide a mechanism for athletes who apply unsuccessfully for a therapeutic use exemption; removing unnecessary distinctions in types of information received by ASADA by clarifying content as protected information, regardless of the source and ensuring that the same provisions apply for all information to protect the unlawful use of that content—this will enable ASADA to comment publicly in response to incorrect statements by an athlete or their representative to correct the record; and the removal of the register of findings—the register is currently confusing to athletes and to the public, as the Anti-Doping Violation Panel does not in fact make a 'finding', rather, they make an 'assertion' that it is possible that a violation has occurred. This information is provided to ASADA and to the sport to consider through the normal tribunal process. Importantly, whilst this register is removed, safeguards to appeal a decision to the ADRVP by athletes are retained.

So the major purpose of all this is that we want the WADA code to protect the fundamental rights of athletes to participate in doping-free sport. It is going to promote fairness, health and equality for athletes worldwide. It ensures that sport will be played in a harmonised and consistent set of anti-doping rules across the globe. The code provides civil sanctions for those caught doping, not criminal penalties. The application of sanctions by sport is a proportionate response for individuals involved in doping. Sanctions generally involve periods of ineligibility to participate in that sport.

The code has been revised through an extensive two-year consultation process and signatories, including international sporting federations, must amend their individual antidoping arrangements by, as I said earlier, 1 January 2015. Given our commitment to the code under the UNESCO convention, the Australian government, along with 175 other governments which ratified the convention, is also obliged to update its antidoping arrangements to align with the revised code. The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014 seeks to ensure that Australia's arrangements are compliant with that revised code.

The vast majority of athletes are not linked to doping. For those athletes—and I think this is very important—the amendments have very little impact other than supporting their efforts to compete in a safe and drug-free environment. The amendments seek to continue to protect the clean athlete and to harden sporting environments against doping. The amendments also include some streamlining of existing processes.
It is very important that this bill be passed because, if these amendments are not enacted, Australia's antidoping arrangements will be non-compliant from 1 January 2015. As a consequence, our antidoping legislation risks falling out of step with the arrangements of national sporting organisations. If the legislation is not passed, it will do significant damage to Australia's sporting reputation and Australian athletes will face a highly complex system of differing rules and regulations from elsewhere. The code is the guiding document that provides the harmonisation. It will give effect to international obligations.

The review I just mentioned culminated in the endorsement of the revisions of the code and the international standards at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Johannesburg on 15 November. Organised into themes, the significant changes that we have seen between 2009 and 2015 are longer bans from sport for people involved in doping; more flexibility in sanctioning specific circumstances; elevating the importance of investigations and the use of intelligence in the fight against doping; increasing the focus on athlete support personnel who are involved in doping; placing more emphasis on smart test distribution planning and smart menus for sample analysis; and balancing the interests of international federations and national antidoping organisations. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (10:16): I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this important bill, the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014, about administration of sport in our nation. It may be a cliche to say that sport is very tightly bound up in the Australian identity but it is absolutely true. I think the vast majority of us are great fans of our sports teams. Some of us aspire to play on the team and many more of us just aspire to cheer. It is very important that there is integrity in the administration of sport and it is very important that the rules around antidoping do everything they can to ensure that integrity.

One of the great things about sport is that the best player should win. The person who wins should be the person with the most talent, the person who trained the hardest in the team that worked most closely together, and that is all that any of us want. We want to make sure that sporting events are won and lost on their merits because we all care about sport.

My first memory of being a viewer of sport was the 1981 Ashes tour of England. It is a bit of an unhappy memory for an Australia cricket fan, but I think we all have our memories of Australia's involvement in sport. For kids in particular, sports people are their heroes. Sporting leaders are much more exciting for our children than their parents and certainly more than politicians. It is really important that the system is administered in a sensible and fair way.

Not everything is fair in the world, but everything should be fair on the sporting field. That is a very important point. It is also important that the administration of sport is conducted in a sensible and calm fashion and that also applies to antidoping provisions. We do not need Hollywood-style press conferences with flags arrayed and designed for effect. We need a sensible and calm approach to these matters. I was disappointed last year to see the press conference by the member for Blaxland and Senator Lundy in relation to these issues. Without getting into the specifics of any cases, I did not think that that press conference was consistent with the idea of a sensible, dispassionate and unemotional administration of sport and specifically antidoping provisions.
This is not an area that should be politicised. This is an area where all Australians should be on the same page, one where we demand fairness in our sporting events and we demand that our individual players do the right thing. Importantly, we need to do this as part of a global effort because, if Australia has different rules from other countries in relation to antidoping then, of course, that is not a level playing field. Just as we would expect that a Belgian athlete, a French or a British athlete or whoever complies with the fair rules of play, so should we. Our rules cannot be different; to do so would be inconsistent. If we want to hold ourselves to the highest standards, we must opt-in to a global system of administration, as we do in so many other aspects of administration. We should not get to pick our own set of antidoping rules. We should be a part of a global coalition, effectively fighting against this evil scourge against our sporting endeavours.

This bill ensures that the Australian provisions in relation to these matters are consistent with those adopted by WADA across the globe—of course, ably led in previous years by a former member of this House, former Premier of New South Wales, John Fahey. WADA does the important work of ensuring that our sports are clean. We do not need to dwell on those unfortunate examples of past events at the Sydney Olympics, obviously events in the sport of cycling and others as well. We know that this is a real issue and we know that we have got to act upon it, and act upon it we shall.

There are a number of changes which will bring us into line with WADA rules. One is prohibiting athletes from associating with convicted drug cheats, similar to criminal association type laws we see in the criminal laws in many state codes. It is an important issue here because we do not want our athletes, frankly, hanging around with people we know are drug pushers. It is important that that is stamped out. Complicity in this area, covering up on behalf of another athlete, is absolutely unacceptable. It is not only the case that you should not cheat yourself; you certainly should not facilitate anyone else's cheating, and we will be making sure that that is the case under this set of rules. Penalties will increase from two years to four years for deliberate doping infractions for the more serious drugs such as anabolic steroids, and that is absolutely appropriate because this is a very serious matter.

There are a range of other initiatives as well: a more sophisticated testing regime as required under the WADA code and establishing a violations list that formalises the requirement to publish a list of people that have received an antidoping sanction. Let's be transparent—if someone is found to have been involved in doping, frankly, let's tell the world. Let's make sure that people know about that, because these are not the sorts of people we want in sport and we do not want this to be something that is swept under the carpet. It also creates a new review panel, the Australian Sports Drug Medical Advisory Committee, separate to ASADA, to provide a mechanism for athletes who apply unsuccessfully for a therapeutic use exemption where they have a legitimate use for a drug which would otherwise be out of bounds. That is an important change.

There are a number of other technical matters, importantly, allowing ASADA to say something publicly when athletes or their representatives make incorrect statements. It has happened, unfortunately. I think we have all seen examples where athletes and their representatives have come out and criticised ASADA or other bodies for the method in which drug sampling is undertaken and have made inaccurate statements. It is appropriate that ASADA can effectively defend itself from those sorts of accusations.
This is a really important piece of legislation. This is fundamentally about fairness. That is all any of us can ask. We love our sports teams, we love what they represent—they represent the very best of Australia, they work hard, they play by the rules and they are great heroes for many of us and, very importantly, for kids. I would dare to suggest that for most kids the first figure in their life that they really look up to and really aspire to be one day is a sporting hero. We have got to make sure that Australian kids when they have that hero do not get let down and do not have a situation where they find out that actually that person was not playing by the rules, because that is sending exactly the wrong message. This is an important set of provisions and I am very pleased to speak in support of this legislation today.

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (10:27): I am most pleased to rise to speak on the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014. Our nation has a long and proud sporting history, sporting heritage and sporting reputation. This is something that did not just evolve overnight by the efforts of one or two people; it is something that has evolved over a century by the efforts of our most famous athletes—from Don Bradman to Dawn Fraser and across thousands and thousands of other athletes who have participated in Commonwealth and Olympic Games or who have pulled on that green and gold jersey. Every single one of them has added to our sporting reputation, our sporting heritage and our sporting traditions. No matter what nation we are playing against, we always tend as Australians to fight above our weight. If an Australian pulls on the green and gold jersey, it does not matter who they are fighting, the opponent from the other side will know that they are competing against someone who will play the game as tough as it possibly can be played but that it will be played as fair as it possibly can. Our job is here as members of parliament is to guard and protect the heritage, those traditions and our reputation. That is what this bill does.

Australia was an initial supporter of the establishment of the World Anti-Doping Code and we were a very early signatory to the UNESCO Convention against Doping in Sport. This bill brings us in alignment with the revised World Anti-Doping Code that comes into effect on 1 January 2015. Here are a few specifics about bringing us into compliance with that code. Every nation that participates in sport, every athlete has the same standards across the world no matter what nation they are from. There is a prohibition on athletes and supporting persons that are associated with convicted drug cheats. There is a new provision which makes aiding and abetting or covering up a doping violation a violation in its own right. We have increased some of the sanctions under the code from two years to four years for deliberate doping infractions such as taking anabolic steroids. We also established a violations list that formalises a WADA requirement to publish a list of people who received antidoping sanctions for a period of that sanction. By this bill, this government is ensuring that our sporting legacy, our sporting heritage and our sporting traditions are protected, because ultimately we are the guardians of that legacy.

This brings me to the so-called 'darkest day in sport': 7 February 2013. It was not the darkest day in sport. I put it to you that, amongst all the dark days of the six years of the previous government, that day was the darkest of the previous government. That was the day they lined up the CEOs of the AFL, rugby league, rugby union, soccer and cricket like naughty schoolboys on a stage and had a stage managed press conference. We know the entire purpose of that press conference was not to unveil some great revelations that they had
discovered. It was simply a political distraction to get the bad political news off the front pages of the day and have this as the replacement.

Why would a government do such a thing? We have seen that they do not understand the importance of the traditions—including sporting traditions—and history of this nation. It is the job of the Minister for Sport—their most important job and their first task—to be the guardians of our nation's sporting reputation, and what we saw was a squalid political stunt. We saw the previous government prepared to absolutely trash our nation's sporting reputation around the world with that press conference last year.

This government is taking a different approach. We understand the importance of our sporting heritage. We understand the importance of our sporting reputations. We will be the guardians of those. We will do everything we can to protect them so they will continue to flourish, so our sportsmen will continue to be a proud part of our nation's history and traditions. That is exactly what this bill does, and I am very pleased to commend it to the House.

Mr WHITELEY (Braddon) (10:33): It is funny, isn't it? We grow up with many heroes, and most of them are in the sporting field whether they be top-line AFL footballers, whether they be the most elite of athletes, whether they be world-class basketballers, weightlifters or, dare I say it, cyclists. As previous speakers have quite correctly identified, there is nothing more shattering than to find that those in whom you have placed so much faith, trust and adoration are but hollow vessels when it comes to authenticity, integrity and honesty in their sport.

I have a very good friend who absolutely idolised Lance Armstrong. He had every bit of memorabilia you could find and read every book. There would not be a day that went by where there would not be a post on Facebook comparing the efforts of Lance Armstrong to many other efforts around the world, putting Lance Armstrong on this amazing pedestal. He stuck by Lance Armstrong for many years when people were alleging that this great sportsman in fact had an issue with performance-enhancing drugs. He stood by and defended him because he had everything invested in him as his idol. This adult—not a child—was shattered when it was finally confirmed and Lance Armstrong admitted he had been taking performance-enhancing drugs. An adult—a grown man—shattered by the dreams that he had.

I rise today to speak in support of the government's Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014. As all honourable members of this chamber know full well, the Australian government has long been a committed advocate of clean sport and strongly supports a fair, safe and healthy environment for all athletes at home and around the world. In a country that loves its sport, honours the pursuit of athletic excellence and values physical skills and ability, Australians everywhere have been increasingly aware and concerned about the growing linkages between drugs, result fixing and organised crime. One only has to peruse the sports pages of our national media to see how much everyday coverage is now being given to a subject which until only a relatively few years ago was highly unlikely ever to have been considered as anything other than an anomaly. Yet, alarmingly, a recent Sydney Morning Herald survey in February 2013 found that some 67 per cent of respondents were of the view now that athletes were most likely to use illegal substances.

In May 2013, The Australian newspaper reported in a story on football:
We are only now learning the full extent of "treatments" offered to footballers … In the rush to stay competitive some sportsmen are happy to play guinea pigs. For an insight into this mindset, consider this from AFL great Leigh Matthews: "If you ask any sportsmen, 'What do you want to be, a squeaky clean loser or a rule-bending winner?' they'll choose the latter every time."

The potential rewards from sporting success, combined with the availability of substances and techniques that are not easily detectable through testing, now clearly provide a temptation to too many.

Some sports have been more susceptible to doping in the past than others, but no sport and no country is immune. The World Anti-Doping Code, administered by sports bodies and governments around the world, has, by working together to implement harmonised anti-doping programs that are robust, effective and fair, long sought to ensure that regardless of nationality or sport athletes everywhere are subject to the same treatment and rules in the fight against doping in sport.

Since WADA was formed, we have seen the implementation of consistent anti-doping rules and regulations across all countries and all sports throughout the world. The first ever World Anti-Doping Code was implemented in 2004, and there are now over 660 signatories committed to this rule book. The UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport, which allowed governments to recognise and accept the code by way of international treaty, was ratified in record time. 176 countries, or 98 per cent of the world's population, have signed, allowing national governments to introduce measures to help rid their societies of doping. There is the annual list of prohibited substances and methods that WADA has been responsible for since the introduction of the code, and which is well recognised by the anti-doping community globally. In addition, there has been a move away from solely a culture of deterrence to an exploration of preventative measures. Education and athlete awareness are now staple parts of the anti-doping culture.

As a result of these measures, we are increasingly seeing cheats brought to account, not only through traditional scientific testing but also through long-term investigations. Yet the reality is that despite the substantial efforts and unrelenting commitments that have been undertaken both nationally and internationally in the fight against doping in sport the challenge to identify doping practices and stamp them out has continued to get tougher and tougher.

In response to these growing concerns, a comprehensive review of the World Anti-Doping Code was initiated in late 2011. In reviewing the code, there was a common recognition amongst anti-doping authorities that more and more sports are now operating in an environment that provides a greater incentive to cheat through doping. While athletes or athlete support personnel who have been found to have committed anti-doping rule violations have been subject to sanctions, such as ineligibility to compete and/or disqualification of results from sporting competitions, it was necessary to take further action to protect sports from those who orchestrate systemic doping programs. As a consequence, a number of key changes in the code were developed, including higher penalties for serious anti-doping rule violations, such as use of anabolic steroids; the addition of two new anti-doping rule violations; smarter targeting of testing of samples; the development of seamless information-sharing arrangements between relevant national and international government agencies and
improved information flows with sporting organisations; and greater use of intelligence gathering and investigations in detection strategies.

Whether we like it or not, sport is big business. Winning is now not only about the glory of physical prowess—such as is the case with my boot camp leader behind me, the member for Bass!—but also, in many cases, about gaining substantial financial reward. It is more financially lucrative than sportsmen and sportswomen of our parents' generation could have ever imagined. And it is not just the athlete. It is now the trainer, the coach and the whole support team that are involved. The prizes for coming out on top of the pile are so great that some feel they should do anything to get there. Evidence has shown the athlete entourage is a crucial area for anti-doping. Behind each doper is a coach, a physician, a doctor or others, who may be actively assisting the athlete to dope. We have seen unscrupulous support teams encouraging naive young athletes to take short cuts. That is why WADA now wants to have support personnel included in anti-doping sanction processes.

As we all know, sports doping presents not only a serious risk to an athlete in their health and wellbeing, but is fundamentally an action of cheating, which ultimately serves to debase all that is good and valuable about sport. Cheating exists in all parts of society, and it would be naive to assume that no athletes would take shortcuts, particularly with the rewards at stake and with sport being as competitive as it is today. However, WADA has to make sure that the vast majority of athletes—those who are clean—are rewarded through their hard work and fair approach to their sport. As we all know, sports doping not only presents a serious risk to an athlete's health and wellbeing, but it is, fundamentally, an action of cheating. While there always will be those who will want to take shortcuts to succeed, we have a responsibility to ensure that the athlete's health must come first. We also want to send the message that cheating is not acceptable.

The Australian government agency responsible for working with sporting organisations to eliminate doping is the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority, ASADA, whose powers and functions are specified under the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Act 2006 and Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Regulations 2006. They are responsible for working with sporting organisations to eliminate doping and ensure that Australia's arrangements are in line with the World Anti-Doping Code, and that our athletes are working under the same rules.

This bill we will be debating today, the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority Amendment Bill 2014, will bring Australia's anti-doping legislation into alignment with the recently revised World Anti-Doping Code and the new international standards, which will come into force on 1 January 2015. The bill's provisions will ensure that Australia not only continues to effectively meet its obligation to contribute to a safe and fair sporting environment, but also better safeguards athletes' health and provides the fundamental values of sport that all Australians hold so dear.

**Mr DUTTON** (Dickson—Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (10:43): The debate has clearly shown that we all recognise it is essential that Australia is committed through action to protect clean athletes and the integrity of sport, through internationally harmonised anti-doping principles. In other words, we want our athletes to be protected by the same anti-doping rules as the rest of the world. We want our athletes to compete with integrity on a level playing field, and we are committed to uphold those principles ourselves. The objective
of this bill is to adjust Australia's anti-doping arrangements so they align with the revised World Anti-Doping Code due to come into force on 1 January 2015. The revisions to the code were developed through an extensive two-year consultation process involving all stakeholders, including athletes, sports administrators, anti-doping officials and governments. This process provided a comprehensive review of the current arrangements and a broad consensus on how to best deal with the future threats that doping poses. Stakeholders in Australia and internationally are already moving to align their antidoping arrangements with the revised code. International sporting federations are expecting their national sporting organisations to have code-compliant, antidoping policies in place by 1 January 2015.

If these amendments are not passed, Australia's antidoping legislation will to varying degrees fall out of step with the antidoping arrangements under which our national sporting organisations operate. For example, our sporting organisations would simultaneously face differing antidoping requirements between their international federation counterpart and ASADA, including differing violations, sanctions and athlete-reporting requirements.

The changes to the code will allow the international antidoping community to deliver an enhanced effort to prevent, detect and penalise doping in sport. They target the more serious doping practices, place larger and greater scrutiny on athlete support persons involved in doping, recognise the growing importance of investigations in the detection of doping and facilitate smarter targeting and testing regimes. At the same time, the changes are designed to promote the rights of athletes and ensure adherence to procedural fairness in doping matters. The proposed amendments embody those principles.

It is also appropriate to make additional administrative changes at this time. With investigations and intelligence gathering now forming an integral element of any strategy for detecting doping, ASADA's capacity to undertake these activities in partnership with key stakeholders is embraced by proposed amendments to the management of information. However, these amendments include appropriate protections. Another example is the streamlining of the independent antidoping-rule violation panel process, ensuring that it is clear that findings are and will continue to be made by sporting tribunals.

The struggle to rid sport of doping and ensure our athletes compete on a level playing field requires a coordinated, consistent and harmonised global effort. This bill ensures Australia is fulfilling its role as part of that global effort to protect the rights and wellbeing of clean athletes whilst improving the ability to detect and sanction international doping cheats. I commend the bill to the House.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (10:47): by leave—
I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.
Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014
First Reading

Bill received from the Senate and read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice) (10:48): I present the explanatory memorandum to this bill and move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014 amends several acts and provides a number of important measures that will enhance the capability of Australia's law enforcement, intelligence and border protection agencies to protect Australian communities from the threat posed by returning foreign fighters and those individuals within Australia supporting foreign conflicts.

The Attorney-General has commented about the nature of the security threats that we all face and, therefore, the necessity of this legislation. The risk posed by returning foreign fighters is one of the most significant threats to Australia's national security in recent years.

The bill has had the benefit of being reviewed by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, under the chairmanship of Mr Dan Tehan, the member for Wannon. The government supports all 37 of the committee's recommendations and we thank the committee for its detailed consideration of this bill. Amendments were made to the bill in the Senate to implement these recommendations. These amendments improve the clarity of certain provisions in the bill and ensure the powers provided for in the bill are subject to appropriate review.

Against this background, the bill enhances the capability of our security agencies and strengthens Australia's already robust counterterrorism laws in several key areas. Measures in the bill will improve this regime by clarifying what is meant by 'advocating a terrorist act' for the purposes of listing terrorist organisations. This updated definition will cover circumstances where an organisation directly or indirectly promotes or encourages the doing of a terrorist act. Amending the terrorist organisation training offences will also enable prosecutions in circumstances where there are no formally defined teaching and learning roles in a training session.

The bill will provide for the continuation and enhancement of a number of key counterterrorism measures, including control orders, preventative detention orders, police stop, search and seizure powers, and ASIO questioning and detention powers so that these powers will continue to be available to relevant authorities. This bill will see them extended until two years after the anniversary of the 2013 federal election—7 September 2018. The National Security Legislation Monitor will complete a review of these offences by 7 September 2017 and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security will conduct a review by 7 March 2018.

Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and security agencies to monitor and investigate individuals of security concern is essential to combat the foreign fighter threat. A delayed notification search warrant scheme will allow the AFP to covertly enter and search premises without the knowledge of the occupier of the premises, and then provide notification.
at a later date. By delaying notification of the execution of the warrant, the AFP will have the significant tactical advantage of allowing an investigation to remain confidential. Extensive safeguards will ensure that the bill balances the legitimate interests of the Commonwealth in preventing serious terrorism offences with the need to protect important human rights.

**Lowering the threshold for arrest without warrant for terrorism offences**

The bill is amending the arrest threshold for foreign incursion and terrorism offences to allow the police to arrest individuals on reasonable suspicion, rather than reasonable belief. Amending the threshold in this way will enable police to take rapid action to prevent individuals boarding a plane to travel overseas in circumstances where there may not be sufficient time to gather evidence to achieve the current threshold of reasonable belief. This will enable law enforcement agencies to disrupt terrorist activity at an earlier stage.

**Improving the collection and admissibility of evidence collected overseas**

The successful prosecution of terrorism-related offences often relies on evidence obtained from outside Australia, where the majority of the alleged offending often occurs. The amendments to the Foreign Evidence Act 1994 will provide Australian judicial officers greater discretion in deciding whether to admit foreign material in terrorism-related proceedings, while still providing the appropriate judicial protection of the rights of the defendant. That is, judicial officers will consider the evidentiary value of the foreign material and whether the admission of the material would have a significant adverse impact on the right of the defendant to a fair trial.

**New 'advocating terrorism' offence**

The bill also introduces a new offence of 'advocating terrorism'. Currently an organisation can be listed as a terrorist organisation if it directly or indirectly counsels or urges the doing of a terrorist act, directly or indirectly provides instruction on the doing of a terrorist act, or directly praises the doing of a terrorist act. However, there is a current gap in the law around individuals promoting terrorism. To address this issue, a person will commit an offence if they intentionally counsel, promote, encourage or urge the doing of a terrorist act or the commission of a terrorism offence. The offence carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

**New 'declared area' offence**

The bill creates a new offence of entering a declared area overseas where terrorist organisations are active. This will enable law enforcement agencies to bring to justice those Australians who have committed serious offences, including associating with, and fighting for, terrorist organisations overseas. However, it would not prevent a person from travelling overseas, including to a declared area, for defined legitimate purposes.

**Expand existing Customs' detention powers**

The bill will allow Customs officers to detain a person where the officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that the person is intending to commit a Commonwealth offence, or is a threat to national security or the security of a foreign country. Once detained by a Customs officer, the individual will be made available to the appropriate law enforcement agency as soon as practicable. These amendments play a crucial role in Australia's defence against foreign fighters, as they prevent individuals from travelling outside Australia where their intention is to commit acts of violence.
Expand the collection and use of personal identifiers of citizens and non-citizens both arriving and departing from Australia

Currently, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service are only aware that a person is intending to depart Australia when the traveller presents for check-in and boarding. This provides a short time frame to assess any potential alerts or risks. Amendments in the bill will expand the existing Advance Passenger Processing system, requiring airlines and maritime vessels to report on persons who are expected to be on a departing flight or voyage.

The bill also includes measures which will allow the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to collect, access, use and disclose personal identifiers for purposes of identification of persons who may be a security concern to Australia or a foreign country. These amendments will allow for an authorised system, such as eGate, to perform accurate biometric identification almost instantaneously, and will contribute to strengthening Australia's borders.

Enable ASIO to recommend visa cancellation of a person who is offshore, who ASIO suspects might be a risk to security.

The bill will enable the Minister for Immigration to cancel the visa of a person who is offshore where ASIO suspects that the person might be a risk to security. This amendment will provide ASIO with 28 days to conduct further investigation and issue an assessment that the former visa holder is a direct or indirect risk to security, and recommend their visa should remain cancelled. If ASIO does not provide such an assessment within 28 days, the Minister for Immigration must revoke the visa cancellation, and the person's visa will be re-instated. This emergency visa cancellation provision will better enable the Australian government to ensure that noncitizens who might be a threat to security are not able to return to Australia whilst further ASIO investigations remain ongoing.

Limiting the means of travel for foreign fighting or support for foreign fighters

The bill will enable the Minister for Foreign Affairs to temporarily suspend a passport to prevent a person who is onshore in Australia from travelling overseas where ASIO has unresolved security concerns about them. This amendment will provide ASIO with the capacity to prevent and disrupt individuals of security concern, at short notice, from going overseas to participate unlawfully in foreign conflicts.

Welfare cancellation

Finally, the bill will amend several laws to provide for the cancellation of welfare payments for individuals of security concern. This important measure will ensure that the government does not inadvertently support individuals engaged in conduct that is considered prejudicial to Australia's national security.

The Australian government is committed to fulfilling its most important responsibility—to protect Australia, its people and its interests—and we will continue to do so while instilling confidence that our national security and counter-terrorism laws will be exercised in a just and accountable way. This bill is an important step in the government's continuing efforts to strengthen Australia's robust national security laws to proactively and effectively address the threat posed by returning foreign fighters. I commend the bill to the House.

Leave granted for second reading debate to continue immediately.
Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (10:58): The Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014 is the second national security bill brought forward by the government in this parliament. The first, the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2014 was passed through the parliament on 1 October. Labor insisted on a full review of that bill by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, and we ultimately supported the bill subject to the government implementing each of the committee's recommendations for improvements to that bill.

The Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill is of a very different nature to the first bill. When I spoke in the second reading debate of the first bill I said that it was comprised of largely uncontroversial, though worthy, updates and adjustments to intelligence legislation. Though in public debate these changes were necessarily caught up in concern over current events in Iraq and Syria, the reforms in the bill were not formulated to respond to those unfolding events. To the contrary, the measures in the first bill were based largely on the work that was initiated under the previous, Labor government, including an extensive inquiry by the intelligence committee that was tabled in June last year, long before the current spasm of terrorist violence. The measures in the first bill updated and adjusted the architecture of our national security organisations in a broad way so that our agencies are better able to meet demands on them well into the future. Those measures are intended to endure well after the current threats have faded.

The foreign fighters bill contains a very different set of amendments to our national security laws. I want to emphasise this point. The foreign fighters bill directly addresses current threats to Australian security, which have arisen out of present circumstances in Syria and Iraq. Where the first bill focused on the structure of our national security institutions in the long view, this bill focuses on conferring new powers and creating new criminal offences that the government believes are most relevant to addressing the immediate threat of Australians joining with terrorist groups overseas and potentially returning to Australia to carry out terrorist attacks here.

Labor offered the government its constructive bipartisan support for the first bill. We have offered constructive bipartisan support for this bill. As the Leader of the Opposition has said on many occasions now, Labor believes that our security agencies and national institutions should have the powers and resources they need to keep Australians safe from the threat of terrorism, and we will support the government in providing those powers and resources.

However, our bipartisan assistance to the government on matters of national security is never a blank cheque. Bipartisanship on national security means that we share the government's assessment of the current threat and that we will support necessary and effective measures to address the threat. As an opposition, it means that we will conduct our side of the debate and our negotiations with the government in a constructive fashion. But that does not mean we cannot be a constructive critic. It does not mean we will support every measure the government proposes. It does not mean that we will not advocate for improvements to those measures that we support, to ensure that they will be effective.

Though we share the commitment of the government to taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the community, our own Labor values inform the approach we take to fulfilling this commitment. It is this approach of constructive bipartisanship that we have brought to bear in the debate on this bill.
I want to be clear about this. Most of this bill is largely uncontroversial and we have supported those measures with which we agree. But we have also been critical about some aspects of this bill and have argued hard for improvements to some measures. Labor foreshadowed, during debate on the first bill, that subsequent bills may merit a different approach. This has proved to be the case with regard to the foreign fighters bill. We have sought much broader changes to the foreign fighters bill than we sought to the first bill, arising as it did out of a lengthy bipartisan process of open public inquiry begun by the Labor government.

Labor has fought hard over the past weeks to improve this bill, both by making sure that it actually assists our agencies in addressing the foreign threat and by insisting on necessary safeguards for the fundamental democratic freedoms which characterise our society and our way of life in Australia. We pursued these improvements in the committee, where Labor members and senators closely scrutinised the bill and tested the case for each new measure. In cooperation with the government members of the committee, we achieved 36 substantial recommendations for improvements to the bill.

In negotiations with the government we pursued these improvements, on which we have achieved agreement, not just on the full implementation of the committee recommendations, but also on yet further amendments to the bill. Yesterday, not satisfied with the government's position on two outstanding matters in this bill, Labor pursued improvements to the bill through amendments we moved in the Senate.

To give context to the improvements to this bill achieved by Labor it is useful to consider the scope of the bill and the original form in which the bill was first introduced into the Senate. The bill was introduced into the parliament on 24 September. It contained a broad range of measures designed to address the foreign fighter threat, and would amend more than 20 Commonwealth acts.

Much of the bill implements recommendations of the March 2013 COAG review, and the second, third and fourth reports of the former Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Bret Walker SC. These measures include a new power for interim suspension of passports, merging the Crimes (Foreign Incursions and Recruitment) Act into the Criminal Code and harmonisation with the code anti-terror provisions, changes to the law of evidence to facilitate the use of overseas evidence in prosecutions of foreign fighters, a new evidence-tampering offence, lowering the legal threshold for arrest without warrant for terrorism offences, a new power to seize bogus travel documents, providing information-sharing between AUSTRAC and the Attorney-General's Department to help combat terrorism financing, and the introduction of delayed-notification search warrants for terrorism offences.

The bill also includes other proposals which have attracted more controversy—a new offence for advocacy of terrorism and the introduction of advocacy of terrorism as a ground for proscription of a terrorist organisation, a new offence for entering and remaining in an area declared by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and expansion of the power to collect biometric information on Australian citizens at airports.

In its original form, the bill provided for the extension, by 10 years, without review, of the sunset clauses for legislation empowering the AFP control orders due to expire in December 2015, the ASIO questioning and detention powers due to expire in July 2016, and the AFP preventative detention orders regime due to expire in December 2015. The bill was referred to
the intelligence committee, where it was thoroughly scrutinised and debated. The committee sought public submissions and held several public hearings. Labor members worked tirelessly with their government counterparts to apply the level of scrutiny and oversight Australians expect their representatives to bring to bear on legislation of such consequence. That process culminated in the committee's production of a substantial report that made 36 recommendations, many of them calling for significant changes or clarifications. It is important to stress the significance of these changes and of the work done by Labor to achieve those changes.

The Australian community, well accustomed to the cut and thrust that characterises so much of our politics, should not think that just because the debate over this legislation has risen above the rancour of day-to-day political competition there has not been serious disagreement over the provisions of this bill. Though, rightly, both Labor and the government have handled these debates with care and respect, no-one should be in any doubt as to the strength at times of the disagreement amongst committee members and between the government and the opposition. The sober deliberations of the intelligence committee did not share the colour and movement—some might say, the political theatre—of question time but there should be no doubt that this was a rigorous process. There was robust debate over a number of issues. The government's case for every part of the bill was diligently tested. The committee was able to arrive at a raft of changes to the substance of the bill when this process revealed problems, gaps and weaknesses in the bill as originally presented.

That the committee was able to produce a unanimous report of such high quality and that the opposition and the government are now able to largely agree on this bill as amended is not for lack of serious debate. It is because we were able to hold serious and constructive debate that the committee came to the conclusions that it did and that the bill as amended to implement those recommendations is now able to be agreed to on a largely bipartisan basis. I note that in each and every case Labor has insisted that the committee's recommendations be accepted and necessary amendments brought forward by the government.

Extraordinarily, as I said, the bill in its original form provided for the extension by 10 years without review of the sunset clauses for legislation empowering control orders, ASIO questioning and detention powers, and preventative detention orders. Incredibly in fact there were reports in the press that the government initially wanted to remove any sunsetting arrangements for these powers and confirm them as a permanent part of our law. Senator Brandis confirmed yesterday in the Senate that this had indeed been the government's intention, an intention completely at odds with how Labor sees these powers.

Control orders, preventative detention orders and the ASIO questioning and detention powers are each extraordinary and unprecedented powers introduced in the mid 2000s in response to the September 11 attacks and the Bali and London bombings. Their extraordinary nature is reflected in the fact that the Howard government saw fit to subject those powers to review and have them lapse after 10 years of operation if no legislation was passed to extend them. I note that the then Labor opposition sought amendments limiting this sunset period to five years and those amendments were unsuccessful.

The intelligence committee after robust debate concluded that these provisions should sunset two years after the next federal election. It is right and proper that the next parliament be obliged to grapple with these powers again and to decide on its own account whether their
continuation is justified. Labor was not satisfied that the case had been made for a much more lengthy extension. It is not acceptable that these extraordinary powers could operate for two decades without being properly reviewed by the parliament.

As I said earlier, this bill is aimed at a present threat. Labor will resource our agencies appropriately to deal with that threat but we will not abandon scrutiny of agency powers properly considered special or emergency measures. I consider holding the government to a four-year sunset period for far-reaching powers they had originally intended to extend for all time to be a significant achievement. It is consistent with our view that, unless evidence is shown to the contrary, these must only ever be temporary measures.

Importantly, Labor has ensured that these sunset provisions are accompanied by mandatory reviews ahead of time. As was noted in evidence given to the committee, the whole purpose of sunsetting provisions is undermined if appropriate reviews are not conducted. The committee recommended that the PJCIS review of the preventative detention orders, control orders and ASIO powers be mandated by statute. What is more, it has recommended amendment of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act to mandate reviews of the powers by that agency also.

It is worth remembering that it was only due to pressure from Labor that this body was retained. Earlier in the year the Abbott government described this critical oversight office as red tape and sought to repeal it. We vocally opposed that short-sighted cut. The bipartisan support the committee expressed for the position in its report on the first bill was vindication of Labor's consistent support for proper oversight mechanisms.

I want to again say on the record that the first and so far only occupant of the office of independent monitor, Bret Walker SC, performed an invaluable public service in that role. I thank him for his hard work during his tenure as independent monitor, which ended in April this year. Conscious of his busy practice in Sydney, I am also grateful that Mr Walker made himself available to give evidence to the intelligence committee during its hearings on this bill. Speaking on the first bill I pointed out that the position of monitor had then been vacant since April, at a time of substantial change to our national security laws. The office is still vacant, and this is simply not acceptable. Labor calls on the government to appoint an appropriately credentialed and experienced independent monitor immediately. By insisting on dramatically shortened sunset periods and on statutory reviews by the independent monitor and by the committee, Labor has ensured that, no matter the attitude of the Australian government in the next parliamentary term, there will be a sober and considered review of these powers ahead of their scheduled sunset.

Labor has improved key human rights protection in the bill's provision for the use in terrorism prosecutions in Australian courts of overseas evidence. As we did in regard to the first bill, we have demanded amendments that clarify that torture can never be accepted in any way under our law. As originally presented to the parliament, this bill excluded foreign evidence obtained as a result of torture only where that torture was carried out by public officials. There is no reason why the exclusion should be constrained in this way, especially when we are particularly concerned with regions which may have no readily recognisable state authorities. The committee recommended the exclusion be expanded to cover torture by anyone. It also recommended the expansion of the definition of evidence obtained under duress to cover situations where evidence is obtained from a person by dint of threats to their
person, their family, their associates or their property. In its original form, the bill only covered circumstances where a person or their family was threatened.

Though we strongly support making foreign evidence easier to use—a critical part of enabling successful prosecutions under foreign incursions offences—Labor also wants appropriate safeguards for the accused. The committee recommended that judges be obliged to warn juries about the potential unreliability of foreign evidence, an important way of making sure that trials are fair.

The foreign fighters bill includes provision for expanded collection of biometric data on Australian travellers. While the legislation expressly provides only for the collection of photographs, the bill as originally drafted and presented to the Senate allowed the government to expand this to other forms of biometric data, such as fingerprints or iris scans by mere regulation, without seeking parliamentary approval. Labor voiced its objection to this during the committee process. It is not acceptable that such an expansion of power with serious consequences for the privacy of ordinary citizens could be achieved without new legislation. Indeed, it is worrying that this aspect of the bill only became apparent during committee scrutiny, and it is a vindication of that scrutiny process that it did. We welcome the committee's recommendation to remove the ability of the government to prescribe further biometric collection by regulation. We also welcome the recommendation that the Privacy Commissioner oversee both the biometric database that is provided for in this bill and any future legislative proposal to extend it to other forms of data.

The bill makes a number of changes to Australia's existing foreign incursions legislation which were recommended by the independent monitor. Appropriately, the bill will roll the Foreign Incursions Act into the Criminal Code and update its provisions specifically to deal with the foreign fighter threat. We welcome those changes, alongside the improved ability to use foreign evidence. We hope that these improved provisions will allow for successful prosecutions of Australians who engage in lawless conduct in conflict zones abroad.

However, the bill as originally presented was drafted in a confused way. It did not simply implement the independent monitor's recommendation that the definition of engaging in hostile activities overseas be updated to include terrorist activity as currently defined under Australian law; rather it included a new concept, 'subverting society'. As was pointed out in evidence to the committee, this expanded the operation of the foreign incursions provisions well beyond what the foreign incursions provisions are meant to address. It could have seen these provisions address private disputes or petty criminal activity. Labor welcomes the committee's further recommendation that the definition of 'engage in hostile activity' be amended so that it only captures conduct which would be a serious offence under Australian law. The strange legislative language of 'subverting society' was likely to mislead or confuse the public as to what was intended. As the former independent monitor Bret Walker pointed out during the committee process, there is no need for this sort of florid language in Commonwealth statutes, which should be drafted in clear and calm terms. A loaded legislative term like 'subverting society' would cause completely unnecessary community agitation when the substance of the provision is aimed simply at terrorist conduct. Labor welcomes both the substantive change, which faithfully implements the independent monitor's recommendation, and the removal of this poor drafting technique. We are pleased to see the government agree to produce a more tightly constrained provision drafted in clear language.
Across all parts of the bill, Labor has sought improved oversight and accountability mechanisms. Labor believes that our security agencies can only continue to do their important work if Australia's political leaders are willing and able to reassure the community—and I refer here to every part of our diverse, multicultural community—that our security agencies are not only appropriately empowered, but also appropriately accountable.

Of key importance is that the committee recommended that it have the power to oversee not just the Australian intelligence community agencies but also the Australian Federal Police in its counter-terrorist capacity. Labor supports this; it is right and appropriate for the committee to be able to hold all agencies involved in counter-terrorism activities to public account. This is especially so given the extension in this bill of AFP powers, including preventative detention orders and control orders.

I want to turn now to some more controversial aspects of this bill. The new offences for entering or remaining in a declared area and for advocating terrorism have aroused some disquiet among legal experts and community groups. Neither arises out of recommendations made by the independent monitor or the COAG review processes and so they deserve close scrutiny. Labor has made it clear that it is uncomfortable with the reversal of the evidential burden which is the defining feature of the declared area offence. It is a very significant step to make it incumbent on a defendant to disprove the key element of a criminal offence attracting a serious term of imprisonment. The bill as currently drafted provides only a very confined list of exceptions to the offence which a defendant must make out to avoid conviction. That the bill provides for further exceptions to be added by regulation does not provide much comfort. Ideally, key features of an offence provision should not be defined by executive regulation.

Labor's difficulty with this drafting was recorded in the committee's report. In the Senate yesterday we moved an amendment which would have addressed that difficulty. Labor's amendment provided for a general legitimate-purposes exception which would have ensured that no innocent person is convicted under this offence. The government opposed this amendment, guaranteeing its defeat. I urge the government to reconsider its opposition to that amendment.

No matter the intransigence of the government in the Senate yesterday, though, Labor worked hard in the committee process to improve this offence. The committee made a range of recommendations tightening up what is a potentially overbroad set of provisions, including: removing the express ability of the foreign minister to declare an entire country a declared area, a prospect which has caused significant community concern; providing for declarations to be disallowable; and providing for review of each declaration by the committee within the disallowance period.

Crucially, and reflecting our concern that this too is an extraordinary and unprecedented offence, Labor has insisted that the declared areas offence be sunsed two years after the next federal election. Again, this is a significant achievement and reflects our conviction that extraordinary measures like this offence must endure no longer than the immediate threat at which they are aimed. To make sure that this sunset is properly accompanied by a rigorous review process, we pushed successfully for statutory review of the offence, and particularly the list of exceptions, by both the committee and the independent monitor.
The bill also creates a new offence of 'advocating terrorism' and makes the advocacy of terrorism a new ground for prescription as a terrorist organisation. The bill defines 'advocacy' to include 'counselling, urging, promoting or encouraging' terrorism. Labor accepts the need to broaden the criminal law's coverage of the advocacy of terrorism beyond existing offences for incitement, but we are concerned, as are many legal experts and community groups, that this definition is drafted too broadly. We are worried in particular that the ambit of 'promote and encourage' is uncertain and might capture conduct that no free society should criminalise.

This concern was noted in the committee's recommendations. The committee asked the Attorney-General to amend either the bill or the explanatory memorandum to satisfactorily explain what is meant by these terms. In response, the government intends to amend the explanatory memorandum to explain that 'promote' means to 'advance, further or launch'; and 'encourage' means to 'inspire or stimulate by assistance or approval'. Labor is not satisfied that this resolves our concerns. We do not think that the government's explanation that 'encourage' can mean 'stimulate' or that 'promote' can mean 'launch' clarifies matters sufficiently. We are not satisfied that the ambit of these terms is certain, and the parliament should not legislate for serious criminal offences when their ambit is open to question.

In our consultation with the Australian community and especially with representatives of the Muslim community, we have heard concerns that this new offence might capture quite legitimate speech on controversial political matters or that it might capture legitimate religious discussion, debate or preaching. Labor agrees with the need for an offence addressing conduct which might cause others to engage in terrorism, but we know that there is a line to be carefully drawn. We would never want to criminalise legitimate religious conduct or to cause the Muslim community to fear that honest religious activity would be criminalised. That would be completely contrary to our purpose.

Labor proposed an amendment yesterday in the Senate which would expand the existing good faith defence in section 80.3 of the Criminal Code as it applies to the new advocacy of terrorism offence. Our amendment would make it clear that those who engage in good faith in public discussion of any genuine academic, artistic, scientific, political or religious matter will be protected from liability. Again, the government voted this amendment down in the Senate yesterday. Senator Brandis said it was unnecessary to extend the defence. His glibness belies the seriousness of this issue. I note that the Attorney-General is a declared devotee of religious freedom. In a recent speech, a version of which was published in the Bible Society's Eternity magazine, he said:

One of the fundamental freedoms of which we have heard far too little when we speak about human rights is the right to religious freedom. In fact not only is religious freedom being neglected, it has actually been the subject of open attack from those who dominate much of our political discourse, and particularly in [the ABC] and the Fairfax media. Almost invariably their targets have been the Christian faith ...

Perhaps I do not need to point out that this is a very quixotic view of the world, but for an Attorney-General of Australia it is also a deeply worrying view of the world. Religious freedom is not some political football with which to wage an imagined culture war against the ABC. If Senator Brandis is serious about religious freedom in any real sense, serious about addressing the actual concerns of religious people of good faith who feel this law might
unduly target them and their community, he should do something to reassure the community that this law will not stretch too broadly. If anyone can be said to ‘dominate’ political discourse in this country, it must surely be a cabinet minister in the Commonwealth government. Live up to your principles, Senator Brandis. Let your actions live up to your lofty rhetoric.

As I said, Labor has approached this legislation as a responsible opposition should. We have offered the government our bipartisan support for measures to ensure our national security, but that is a constructive bipartisan support. Labor did not, and never would, offer the government a blank cheque on this or any piece of legislation. We have worked hard to improve this bill. We want to make sure that it both operates as intended and actually serves to protect our security, and also that it is subject to limits and accountability appropriate to the sort of free society that Australia is and must remain. We have worked hard in pursuit of these ends in the committee process. We have worked hard in pursuit of these ends in negotiating with the government. And when our concerns have not been satisfactorily resolved, we have moved amendments in the parliament, which we again urge the government to consider and to adopt.

Mr NIKOLIC (Bass) (11:28): I listened carefully to the member for Isaacs and I must say that I agreed with much of what he said. I also note that the member for Isaacs conducted an extensive review of the deliberations of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which he must be getting second hand because, of course, he is not a member of that committee. My recollection—and I will defer to the member for Berowra—was that what we engaged in was thoughtful, comprehensive and bipartisan discussion resulting in a unanimous report.

As a member of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, I rise to speak in strong support of this bill, which is of great importance to Australia. What we discuss now and decide very soon will have flow-on effects well beyond our shores. In the very least, it will demonstrate both tangibly and practically to both friend and foe alike our national resolve to protect what we enjoy and value in Australia. This includes hard-won democratic freedoms, the rule of law and human rights. Ours is a fully functioning and even flourishing multicultural society which presents to the rest of the world as a model of what is both highly desirable and also socially attainable in the early 21st century. This priceless amalgam, itself somewhat rare, can also be too easily taken for granted.

Our consideration of this matter today is also unique in another way. Only occasionally does what we debate in this House mirror and complement that which has seized the world's attention. The last such occasion was perhaps the global financial crisis of 2008-09. We see that in the extent of leader representation at the 24 September meeting of the United Nations Security Council. As President Obama noted, it was only the sixth time in 70 years that the Security Council had met at such a level. And now this foreign fighters bill constitutes an important Australian domestic subset of our nation's support to, and for, the ongoing international global war on terror. As leaders, this challenge is a true test of our collective generational mettle.

It is most important that this parliament, and Australians in general, face the problem presented by brutal terrorism and that we face it squarely, no matter how unpalatable the facts. Only then can we define, as best we might, the actual full nature of the threat and give
strong support to an appropriate international response to it. The unpalatable truth is this. The threat which the world now faces from Daesh is clear, present and pressing. I use the term 'Daesh' intentionally to describe the stateless and barbaric terrorists operating in Iraq and Syria. We must act urgently to stop Daesh, including its domestic and regional effects. Our need for constructive action is heightened now because the wider Western world was, frankly, late in identifying the true nature of the threat posed by the emergence of Daesh and its relatively rapid growth.

It is undoubtable that this murderous group is in the top tier of dangerous enemies that Australia has ever faced. Two factors lead me to this grim conclusion. Firstly, unlike other enemies we have confronted in the past, Daesh is not clearly definable in objective or absolute terms. Rather, this group is inchoate, or formless, in nature. This makes combating it very difficult indeed. Rather, ongoing containment, including significant force reduction, is a more practically achievable goal. It is true that Daesh does possess a range of diverse and even sophisticated military hardware and equipment, which a united global military coalition is now striking hard at every opportunity, with literally hundreds of aerial sorties already conducted. But military hardware is the lesser part of the Daesh threat. Its lifeblood is hate-filled ideology, a more powerful force than military formations that can be identified, engaged and destroyed.

Daesh's twisted ideology includes an innate and possibly long-lasting ability to draw disaffected and wayward individuals, both male and female, from around the globe to it and thereafter to potentially unleash these so-called foreign fighters back home, even more damaged, brainwashed and malevolent than when they left. Alternatively, Daesh seeks to inspire and ignite violent uprising by disaffected individuals or groups among the diaspora of its diverse members. Recent arrests in Australia and attacks in Canada, the UK and elsewhere highlight that a single individual can have strategic effect. But Daesh is made still more threatening because it eschews any prospect of negotiation with anyone. Its default option is to kill and destroy. The Prime Minister's description of Daesh as a 'death cult' is most fitting and apt. Such obdurate evil is rare in modern times. Even the Taliban leadership was open, eventually, to negotiation and compromise.

So there we have it. The Daesh dilemma, and the real danger it poses to humanity, is its ability to harvest, enrage and export malevolence and poisonous disaffection and mayhem, without regard for borders or boundaries. Daesh has been described variously as a disease or cancer. Perhaps a more fitting analogy is of a parasite feeding off and sheltering behind an unwilling host, one of the world's great and legitimate religions, which is Islam—overwhelmingly a faith of love not hate, peace not war and enlightenment not terror. Daesh is to Islam as night is to day. What is certain, however, is that this parasite is hell-bent on killing and barbarity, and this is precisely what this bill is designed to help prevent in Australia.

Notwithstanding the coalition's intention, the need for heightened vigilance by all Australians must inevitably increase immediately and be sustained over the longer term. Whether they know it or not, homeland security is now, more than ever, the business of every individual Australian, regardless of where they were born or their individual pathway to citizenship. We are all in this together, and by our collective Australian multicultural unity—one made better, richer and even more resilient by our national diversity—we must, and we will, prevail.
Let me now briefly touch on this bill's key threads. Singly and in unison these measures represent a major step on the road to making all Australians safer. I know that some have expressed the view that key elements of this bill are excessive, but, against the backdrop that I have just presented, the government rightly considers them to be both necessary and essential to protecting our way of life. These are exceptional and urgent circumstances, requiring greater unity of effort and agility in our responses. There are approximately 60 Australians fighting with Daesh on the ground in Syria and Iraq, with 100 or more acting as enablers in Australia, through funding, recruiting or other facilitation. There are those who have fought with Daesh who are now back in Australia, and other regional countries, with new skills and knowledge, and they are at the vanguard of Daesh's efforts to decentralise the mayhem and export their brutal, hate-filled ideology.

I congratulate our Prime Minister for his composed leadership in response to these matters. I congratulate the Attorney-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs for their efforts. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his bipartisanship. The measures in this bill fill those most pressing gaps in our current legislation, and the key features of the bill include: a series of new offences for 'advocating terrorism' and for entering, or remaining in, a 'declared secure area'; broadening the criteria and streamlining the process for listing of terrorist organisations; extending the circumstances under which a control order may be sought, and sunsetting provisions for preventative detention order and control order regimes; ensuring selected law enforcement agencies have the additional tools that they need to investigate, arrest and prosecute those supporting organisations like Daesh; limiting the means of travel for foreign fighters or support for foreign fighters; and strengthening Australia's overall border protection regime.

There are safeguards in place, and we heard the member for Isaacs talk about some of those—safeguards which were unanimous recommended by the parliament's Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security—which in my view, finds an appropriate balance between civil liberties and giving our security agencies the means they need to keep us safe.

It was a 200-page report, and had 37 carefully-considered recommendations. I thank our chair, the member for Wannon, and all 11 members of our committee for their thoughtful and bipartisan deliberations. It is important to note that law-abiding Australian citizens who enjoy the relative tolerance and freedoms of our unique civil society need not fear any of these changes, either individually or collectively.

Through this bill, the government intends to achieve or support the following six broad effects: firstly, to support and protect our sovereign national borders; secondly, to support our security agencies, including not least our Commonwealth and state police forces; thirdly, to identify at the very earliest opportunity possible domestic terrorist threats to Australia, including both individuals and terror groups or cells—and as we have seen in recent weeks and months those lone wolf attacks—those single attacks—are becoming very hard to pick up; fourthly, to prevent, to detain or to at least constrain the movement of would-be foreign fighters both from or to Australia; fifthly, to reinforce the need for heightened national vigilance by all Australians to the threat posed by relatively few destructive elements in our otherwise peace-loving communities; and, lastly, to support our nation's counter-terrorist agencies at the front line as they work in close collaboration with allies and partners. The
intent of all this is to restore civil normalcy at home and abroad or, in the very least, to
contain the ongoing threat posed by the Daesh menace.

Notwithstanding the grim background of this bill, including the barbarity which has been
repeatedly demonstrated by Daesh and its craven acolytes globally, I will now conclude on a
more positive note. Australia and the wider world are now responding practically to the
urgent need to degrade the Daesh forces wherever they are—whenever they are foolish
even to concentrate in the field. This kinetic engagement is and will remain the province of
military attack aircraft, of unmanned aerial vehicles and of international special forces for
some time. This direct action is now being further complemented as quickly as legislatively
possible by policy designed expressly to safeguard homeland Australia. Most encouragingly,
all Australians—Christian and Muslim alike—are almost universally united in their complete
abhorrence of Daesh and its perverted creed of wanton terror and human rights suppression.

But already in Australia we are seeing welcome signs of heightened communal vigilance
and social cohesion. The fact that this is happening across different ethnic and religious
communities is the strongest possible repudiation of everything for which Daesh stands. It
represents a ray of hope in an otherwise grim story.

On this small positive note, I ask this House to endorse the government's domestic counter-
terror initiatives with conviction and to give them widespread bipartisan support. I
wholeheartedly commend this bill to the House.

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (11:41): To make this country safe we should be doing
everything that we possibly can to ensure that members of our community—many of whom
were born here and grew up here—do not think it is a good idea to do Australia harm, and that
you do not think it is a good idea to travel overseas to learn how to do Australians harm.
Distressingly, we have in recent times seem too many people decide, for whatever reason—
influenced by whatever people, many of whom may not even live here in this country—that
they dislike what is happening in this country so much that they want to do us harm, including
doing innocent people harm; not just those who are engaged in combat but doing harm to
innocent Australians.

And so the question that we have to grapple with is: what is the best thing to do to ensure
that people in Australia feel that they have a place here and that they identify with this
country, and that the last thing they would ever want to do is to do us harm? That is the
national conversation that we need to have. We need to ask the hard questions about why it is
that people, including those who were born and bred here, want to hurt Australia.

But that is not the conversation that we are having. And this Counter-Terrorism Legislation
Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014 does not do the things that would be needed to be
done in order to stop people deciding that they want to do us harm. This bill does not do the
things that are needed to stop people becoming radicalised in the first place. What this bill
does to is to remove a number of freedoms and rights that Australians have enjoyed for some
time. And it is within some incredible irony that we hear the government say to us, 'Well,
what the terrorists want to do, because they don't like our way of life, is to make us live
differently.' Now, that is what this government is making us do, because this bill removes
many of the rights and freedoms that define us in the first place. What this bill will do is affect
people who have done nothing wrong and how they live their lives.
It is incredibly disappointing that it is being rushed through parliament, with only one speaker from the Labor opposition, and that it is left up to the crossbench and to the dissenting voices who do not have a voice on the two-party club that is the joint intelligence committee to raise some of these things. It is left to the crossbench here and in the other place to offer the real alternative view about how you would make Australia a more inclusive and safer place. You would expect, especially from a government that calls itself Liberal, if there were bills that were taking away peoples' rights and freedoms, that they would be subjected to the maximum scrutiny. And you would expect from an opposition that says they oppose everything that this government stands for, that in their desperation to hold to account the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, so tightly on national security, they would not forget how to be an opposition. But that is what is happening.

I want to talk to the parliament and to the people about how this is going to affect peoples' lives. In Melbourne and around the country, given that we are now a country where a quarter of us have a connection with being born overseas, there are many people who regularly travel to other parts of the world to visit people who are close to them. Thanks in part to the refugee program that Australia has had over many years, we have people who have fled war-torn countries who have come here seeking a peaceful life for themselves and their families. Many of them are trying to bring those close to them out of harm's way to join them here. They are often unsuccessful and all that they can do to look after the people they have had to leave behind is go back to visit them. What do you do if you are here, now an Australian, and you want to go back to visit your close relative, your friend, or someone you grew up with who is now potentially in harm's way or who is in a difficult situation and needs a bit of advice? You want to go back to check they are alright, but they happen to be in one of those zones from where, because it is so bad, you fled. Under this bill, just the fact that you go back to check up on them means that you are presumed to have committed an offence because a longstanding principle of the rule of law is now reversed. You do not even have to have an intention to do anything wrong; if you just happen to have been in a particular place at a particular time, you are presumed to have committed an offence unless you can demonstrate that you had a good reason for being there.

Many of the countries that people visit do not have systems of authority or the rule of law that we would respect. In fact, that is why we have let people come here as refugees, or it might in fact be why we are supporting other governments or our own government in taking action against dictators or governments that are overstepping the mark. What do you do if you have been over to visit your grandmother, who might be illiterate in her own language let alone being able to speak English, and when you come back you are asked to prove why you went there. What do you do? Do you need a statutory declaration from your grandmother to satisfy this new provision in the legislation? Do you need to bring your grandmother over to appear in an Australian court to justify why? What if you cannot find those you went to visit? What if the authorities in the place that you are coming back from have no interest in helping you, especially given that you have been a refugee? You are now presumed to have committed an offence and you could go jail under this legislation.

If you go to another country on a religious pilgrimage, there is no exemption in this legislation for you. That does not count as a bona fide reason. You are presumed, if you have gone to a place that is now declared to be a no-go zone, to have committed an offence. As I
alluded to before, one other new thing that this bill does which should be incredibly scary is that it is now an offence that does not have a mental intention element. In other words, whereas with most offences under our criminal law you have to have had an intention to do the wrong thing, or at least to be reckless in doing the wrong thing, now it does not matter. Your intention could have been purely innocent in that you just went over to visit someone, to a wedding or to see an old friend, but it does not matter. Now, just by being in a particular place, even if your intention was pure, you are presumed to have committed an offence.

What is worse is that going overseas to do something harmful to Australia is already covered by our criminal law. There are already provisions under our criminal law that would cover precisely these kinds of activities by people who are wishing to do us harm. The case has not been made for a new wide-ranging offence that cannot but catch people who have done nothing wrong. So it is going to have an effect on how people who have done nothing wrong will live their lives and choose to travel overseas. For many people in my electorate and also for many people right around this country, including those who regularly go on pilgrimage, who visit family or friends or do business with family and friends overseas, this is going to change how they live their lives.

Secondly, it is going to include an extension of control orders and preventive detention orders. The Independent National Security Legislation Monitor, that previously existed and is now in abeyance, had said that these provisions should go. They were extensive provisions that allowed governments, even when you had not committed a crime, to detain you. You can be detained in secret without any rights, even though you have done nothing wrong, just on the basis of suspicion. The Independent National Security Monitor said, 'Don't keep these provisions because they are not compatible with a society that is based on rule of law and let us look at how they have been used.' But, no, this government wants to extend them and the opposition is going along with it saying, 'Oh well, we have extended it only for a little bit less longer than the government wanted to'. So we are now having extension of provisions that allow governments in our society to detain you even when you have done nothing wrong.

Thirdly, we are going to have an expansion of biometric material that is going to be kept by authorities and, because this bill has been so rushed, there is an incredible lack of definition about what is going to be captured by this. No-one has had the time to carefully consider what this change might mean and what impact it will have on the privacy rights of all Australians leaving on international departures, including those who pose no risk to Australia's national security. It is those people who should be at the forefront of our consideration of this bill—people who have done nothing wrong. What does it do to them? This bill makes their situation worse.

There are two sets of amendments that I will be moving to try to address some of these issues, and I will come to those in the moment. But it is worth noting before this passes that the Human Rights Committee that scrutinises these bills said that these bills are incompatible with some fundamental human rights and made the point that a person could commit an offence without actually knowing the area they were in was declared, and without any intention of engaging in or supporting terrorist activity. They also said that a person accused of entering or remaining in a declared area would bear an evidential burden—that is, that they would need to provide evidence that they were in the declared area solely for a legitimate
purpose, and that that would place defendants in the difficult position of having to prove a negative.

When a parliament's own Human Rights Committee says, 'There are problems with this,' we should listen and we should not rush this legislation through. This legislation deserves proper scrutiny—and more than just a cursory roll-the-arm-over debate in this place and in the other place. So I will be moving two sets of amendments and if these amendments are supported it will at least in part allow the government and Labor to avoid having to cry crocodile tears afterwards and say, 'Perhaps we pushed things through that we shouldn't have,' because now they have an opportunity to fix up at least some of the worst parts of the bill.

The first amendment we will seek to move is to allow journalists to report on what might count as recruitment activity. This is something that was raised in Herald Sun this morning. They made the point very clearly—and I agree with them—that we need more openness and honesty and discussion about what is driving people to radicalisation. We should be able to discuss it in detail, in public, so that people know what is going on and people know what tactics are being used so that they can steer their kids away from them. People deserve to be able to have a discussion about why people are being radicalised and the tactics that are being used so that we can stop it. If we stop our media from discussing what is going on under our noses, it is only going to help it continue. It is only going to keep the culture of secrecy alive. We need to shine a spotlight on these offensive recruitment tactics so that we know how to stop them, so that we can have a serious discussion about what is driving people to radicalisation in this country and how we can stop them from getting there.

Secondly, I will be moving amendments that remove or at least tone down some of the parts of the no-go zones provision, so that it will be required that someone intends to do harm before they can be convicted of having committed an offence. In other words, what we will do is remove the provisions that mean someone is guilty until proven innocent and that someone can be sent to jail just for being in the wrong place at the wrong time because they did not have a stat dec in their pocket to prove why they were there. In other words, it will be just like other aspects of the criminal law, where you have to prove that someone wanted to do something wrong—not that hard and something that everyone should agree with. So let us avoid having the crocodile tears after this bill goes through, and I hope that these amendments are supported.

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (11:56): The counter-terrorism bill that seems likely to pass today will be very different to the version tabled a few weeks ago. That is because of the work that Labor has done. Labor is a very different party with very different values to the Liberals and The Nationals. The type of leadership and the type of government that you get from the coalition will always be very different to the way that Labor governs and leads. Labor leads through a commitment to social cohesion where everyone feels welcome. We promote inclusiveness, not fear. We promote fellow feeling, not division.

For an example of the differences between our parties and our approaches look no further than this government's corrosive and unnecessary attempt earlier this year to weaken hate speech laws. I am so pleased that those attempts were abandoned after a strong community backlash. So we will stand up against the Liberal and National policies that we believe harm our nation and its people. The fact is, though, that we are in opposition. I do not like that fact. I would prefer that the nation had a Labor government, because the fact is when you have a
coalition government, when you have a Liberal-led government, you get Liberal policies. The only way to get a fair, outward-looking, inclusive government and leadership in this country is to vote Labor.

Having said that, we will not sideline ourselves in opposition. We will not relegate ourselves to being a party of protest. So we have acted on our concerns about this bill as originally tabled and we have fought hard to make this bill better. It is still a Liberal bill but it is better. This bill, as originally tabled, contained provisions about which any reasonable observer would have had misgivings. Australia's security laws, for example, contain some provisions that are intrusive and coercive which are presently due to stop operating in 2015 and 2016. Those laws include preventative detention orders, questioning and detention warrants, and control orders. The government originally wanted to extend those coercive powers indefinitely. Then they wanted, in the original draft of this bill, to extend those laws by 10 years. So even when they compromised it was to extend them for 10 years. Labor demanded change and we got it. The sunset provisions will now be much shorter. We have also secured through our work and our advocacy safeguards in relation to the operation of preventative detention orders.

The bill limits free speech. It provides for a new offence of advocating terrorism. The offence as drafted is broad. It seems to leave a grey area that the courts will have to interpret. Labor has fought for and secured amendments to the explanatory memorandum to deal with this problem. Labor has also fought for and won greater parliamentary oversight of the counter-terrorism activities of the Australian Federal Police. We have fought for and won a change to remove the vague and uncertain new concept 'subverting society'.

One of the most controversial aspects of this Liberal legislation is to criminalise the act of travel in and of itself to declared areas. Under the bill as originally drafted, whole countries could have been declared no-go zones. Like others, I am concerned that if you criminalise travel to a country or an area then you are encouraging suspicion and division when it comes to people connected with that area.

I have spoken before about division, about people who call Australia home being treated terribly because they wear a headscarf, about women who do not feel safe, about the woman whose arm was broken, about the man who threatened to set a woman's headscarf on fire in my electorate. We must be very careful not just of the operation of these laws but of the perception they promote and the messages these new Liberal laws send.

Labor has fought back on the declared travel provisions. We have won a change that means whole countries will not be able to be declared no-go zones. We have introduced greater and stronger oversight. We have got an expiry date for the no-go laws. And we have nipped in the bud the idea that somehow Customs just by making a regulation could start taking fingerprints and retina scans at airports. The Australian people would not have known of the government's intention to start collecting this data if it were not for Labor's work.

We have had a lot of other wins—36 recommendations in total—if you read the PCJIS report. I congratulate Labor's leadership on their work and their achievements and I say that I will always, in this challenging debate, which is challenging for all of us as lawmakers, bear the responsibility that this debate imposes as a leader on our community, reflect on and critically analyse national security laws and be a voice for social cohesion at every opportunity in our community.
Mr WILKIE (Denison) (12:01): Given the global security environment, I think it is fair to say that many Australians have been prepared to cut this government a bit of slack. Many Australians, it seems, accept—albeit reluctantly—the need for Australia to be part of a genuinely multinational military intervention against Islamic State in Iraq, and I think many Australians would agree that our security legislation should be constantly monitored and updated from time to time as and when required. For instance, as technology changes there is a good argument to be made that we should make our legislation technology-neutral so it does not have to be amended every day with each new gadget that is invented.

But, rather than understanding the limits that should be imposed on these sorts of changes, the government is overreaching. The government has betrayed the trust that is being put in it by the community to look after our security. The first tranche of security changes that went through this place some weeks ago was a breathtaking demonstration of how this government is betraying the trust that has been put in it by the Australian community. This bill today, the second tranche of the so-called security reforms, is another breathtaking betrayal of the trust that has been put in the government by the Australian community.

This bill today is unwarranted, it is recklessly prepared, it is being rushed through and it is not needed. There are so many problems with this bill, many of which have been very well described by my colleague the member for Melbourne. I will single out a few things that jump straight out at me—thematic concerns I have with this bill. For a start, it lowers the threshold for the arrest of individuals from a belief that a terror crime is about to be committed to a suspicion that a terror crime is about to be committed. Heavens, what's next? Are we going to have a bill next week if there is a hunch, suspicion or worry that one day someone might change their mind and dream of committing an offence?

This lowering of the threshold from belief to suspicion fundamentally undermines our approach to justice in this country. Since when is it or should it be an offence to jail someone potentially for life because we suspect them of something? It is an absurdity. There is very good reason why up until now it has been the law that someone would only be charged and only be prosecuted if there were solid grounds to believe they had committed an offence. To charge them and jail them out of suspicion is patently absurd.

And the punishment that might be awarded is completely and utterly disproportionate. If this bill becomes law—and heaven hope it does not become law—someone could be jailed for life because they are suspected of something. This is the making of a police state. It is a very alarming decay of our justice system and our approach to justice in this country that someone could be punished in such a disproportionate way. They could be jailed for life for being suspected of intending to do something wrong or even just hanging out with someone—perhaps sharing a room in their house with someone who is doing something wrong.

Mr Hutchinson: That is simply not true. That is misleading the parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): Order! You may not like what the member for Denison has to say, but he has the right to say it in this parliament without interruption.

Mr WILKIE: A third concern is the way this bill seeks to move power from the judiciary to the executive. It does that in two fairly obvious ways. One is the fact that certain punitive measures would be taken by the minister or someone appointed by the minister. This idea that we could remove someone's entitlement to Centrelink not because they have been found to
have committed an offence but because the minister or someone appointed by the minister decides someone is not worthy of receiving Centrelink benefits is just as much a punitive measure as putting someone in jail. But why on earth would you allow a punitive measure to be taken out of the hands of the judiciary and given to a minister or someone that minister appoints? It is patently unjust, unfair and should not be supported.

And the fact that, if this bill becomes law, it then will be an offence to be suspected of something, that alone removes the burden of proof that is required to find that someone is guilty of that offence. Again, it is taking power away from the judiciary, because how is the judiciary going to disagree with the authorities when all they have to do is say, 'We suspect someone'? There will be next to no burden of proof to prove that they are suspected of something. Again, it is taking the power away from the judiciary.

Also, what is this overturning of the whole presumption of guilt and innocence? Up until now, our justice system has been based, quite rightly, on a presumption of innocence. But this bill—as quite ably described by my colleague the member for Melbourne—rests on a presumption of guilt. It is up to the person that is accused to prove that they have not done something that they are suspected of doing. This is just turning our whole justice system on its head. It is crazy.

And why are we going to have these laws, anyway? The fact is, it is already a serious criminal offence to go over and to fight in a foreign war. It is already a very serious criminal offence to kill someone. It is already a serious criminal offence in Australia, because of reforms over the last decade or so, to be found to be intending to commit an act of terror. So, the case has simply not been made that we need new and additional laws and even stronger punitive measures. That is what makes me think that the government is not only overreaching, but is seeking to exploit the current security environment. And that is a terrible breach of trust, because governments must always be measured. Governments must only ever diminish the rights and the freedoms of the members of the community when there is the most compelling case to make. But at times like this, where no case has been made at all that there is a need for new, stronger laws, we find these laws coming into the parliament. This is a breach of faith with the Australian community. The government is overreaching. It is trying to exploit the security situation, and it is failing to keep the security agencies on a short leash. Because, clearly, the government has gone to the security agencies and said, 'What do you want?' And the security agencies have said, 'We want a list this long.' And the government has said, 'Not a problem, you can have the lot. We will tinker with them a little through the security community and make a few amendments, but, basically, come to us with your wish list and you can have the lot.' That is wrong, because, of course the security agencies will want the world. It is up to politicians to keep them on a short leash and to give them only what they genuinely need.

This bill is clearly unsatisfactory, and I will not support it. Part of the issue is the problems with the bill, but I am just about equally alarmed by the behaviour of the Labor Party and the opposition here. This is the second security bill in a row, in a couple of sitting weeks, where the opposition is just rolling over. Now, what on earth is the role of an opposition? Surely, it is to cast a critical eye over everything the government of the day wants to do, to point out the problems in it in the most effective way, and to oppose anything the government wants to do when the government's intentions are clearly unsatisfactory. But quite frankly, when it comes
to security, the Labor Party is gutless. The Labor Party is scared stiff of being seen to be weak on national security. It is so scared stiff, when the government says 'jump' the opposition asks 'how high?'

A government member: They are being responsible.

Mr WILKIE: They are not at all being responsible. A responsible opposition takes the fight up to the government and highlights problems when there are problems to be seen and to be dealt with. I think this is a case where the Labor Party is letting the Australian community down terribly, and it has been left again to the crossbench to be the opposition in this place. This is what happened a couple of weeks ago with the first security reform bill. It was left to the member for Indi, the member for Melbourne and me to oppose it and to be the opposition in this place.

I call on the Labor Party to act like an opposition. Be prepared to fight the good fight. Be prepared to make the case in the court of public opinion when a case needs to be made. Because I tell you what: in my own electorate, I have lost count of the number of people who used to call themselves Labor supporters, who are sick and tired of the Labor Party not standing for anything anymore. I have got a lot of time for the Labor Party, and the Labor Party has a proud history and has done a lot of good things for this country. But the way it is rolling over at the moment, I think, is downright appalling. No wonder the Labor Party has so much difficulty with so many of its supporters.

We do live in dangerous times. There does need to be a constant watch kept on our security agencies and on our security legislation, but dangerous times should not—must not—give a government license to do whatever it wants and to bring in the sort of security reforms that we have seen in this place coming through in this bill today, and a few weeks ago with its first tranche of legislation. There is no doubt that the government is exploiting the heightened security environment, and is taking the opportunity, quite cynically, to do whatever it wants. That is not good enough. This is a time for a government to show leadership. It is not a time for a government to exploit opportunities. It is not a time for a government to overreach in the way it is doing now. I will not support this bill. I will support the amendments by the member for Melbourne, and I wait, like the rest of Australia, to see whether the government is going to go ahead with this madness of mandatory data retention in its third tranche of reform—perhaps today or perhaps in the next sitting week. But I tell you what: the government, with the way it is going with these reforms, is completely and utterly out of step at the moment with majority public opinion. The case has not been made that we need these reforms. I make the point again: it is already a serious criminal offence to go and fight in a war in another country. It is already a serious criminal offence to plan an act of terror. It is already a serious criminal offence to kill someone. The case has not been made for the need for the sort of reforms that are likely to go through this House today, particularly with the spineless behaviour of the Labor Party.

I make the point again that I am concerned about the lowering of the threshold; the disproportionate way punishment is going to be applied; the way power is being shifted from the judiciary to the executive; the way the presumption of innocence has been turned on its head and now we live with a justice system based on a presumption of guilt; and the fact that we are going ahead with a whole raft of laws which are not needed—laws which seek to deal with problems that either can be dealt with through existing laws or problems that do not
exist. I lament the fact that it is left to the crossbench to be the opposition in this place. Hopefully the Labor Party will find its voice again on these sorts of matters in the future. I see the shadow Attorney-General sitting there. Hopefully Labor will at least find its voice and its strength when it comes to the mandatory data retention reforms that will come into this place very, very soon. I can but hope.

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice) (12:15): I thank all members for their contributions to this debate. The bill provides important measures that will enhance the capability of Australia's law enforcement, intelligence and border protection agencies to protect Australia from the threat posed by returning foreign fighters and those individuals within Australia who support foreign conflicts in general.

Make no mistake: the risk posed by returning foreign fighters is one of the most significant threats to Australia's national security in recent years. We have had a clear indication of this, and that was evidenced on 12 September when, on advice from security and intelligence agencies, the Prime Minister raised the national terrorism public alert level from medium to high. This is the first time in Australia's history that the alert has been raised to high.

The Syria and Iraq conflicts have changed the terrorist threat environment, providing a significant opportunity for Australians to travel overseas and develop the necessary capability to undertake terrorist acts. In addition to this increased capability, operational agencies are concerned that Australian foreign fighters will return further radicalised and hardened by their experiences in fighting overseas conflicts. The government has an obligation to the Australian community to prevent the creation of a group of Australians who are willing and able to engage in terrorism in Australia, to prevent the recruitment of others to travel overseas to engage in hostile activities, and to prevent revenue raising for terrorist organisations.

As I noted in my opening remarks, this bill has been the subject of extensive scrutiny by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which was excellently chaired by the member for Wannon and supported by his fellow committee members. I thank all members of that committee for their thorough, constructive and bipartisan approach to this task. The government supports each of the committee's recommendations and has moved amendments in the Senate to implement them. Further, in line with the committee's recommendations, the government tabled a replacement explanatory memorandum, further elaborating on the various measures in the bill.

I note the report tabled yesterday by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, which in part dealt with the committee's consideration on the bill. The Attorney-General responded to a number of issues raised by the committee during the debate in the Senate. Government amendments made to the bill, as well as an elaboration in the revised explanatory memorandum, also addressed a number of the matters raised by the committee. The government is steadfastly committed to protecting the human rights of all Australians who are threatened by home-grown terrorism. The measures contained in this bill are a necessary, proportionate and accountable response to that threat.

I turn now to some of the issues that have been specifically raised in the debate. I thank the opposition for their stated support for this bill and, of course, for the way that they have engaged with the government on it. I want to address some of the issues that were raised by the member for Melbourne, who stated that the bill does not prevent radicalisation. His view seemed to be overall that it takes away from people's rights. But elements of this bill are
designed to prevent radicalisation. For example, extending the control order regime to allow controls to be placed on persons who have engaged in foreign fighting is designed, if passed, to disrupt radicalisation. It will do this in a number of ways, including by preventing a foreign fighter from associating with others in a recruitment group and by preventing them from doing certain things.

In addition, enhancing Australia's border security will assist in disrupting radicalisation. It will do this by ensuring recruiters, facilitators and others of security concern cannot enter or, in cases, leave Australia. But the member for Melbourne is correct if he means that this bill is not the primary means of disrupting radicalisation of vulnerable youth. The government has committed millions of dollars—in fact, $13.4 million—to design programs that prevent radicalisation and assist in the community. We believe this is the most appropriate way to deal with the victims of radicalisation.

The member for Denison echoed some of the same concerns that were raised by the member for Melbourne. Specifically, this bill does not change the criminal prosecution or court process. The courts must be satisfied to the same level that has been the case forever within our judicial system.

I would like to specifically address the allegation that the member for Denison made that somehow the government are using the deterioration in the security environment to achieve certain ends—that somehow we would be using this heightened security threat to change and reduce freedoms in Australia in a way that would be negative to the Australian population. I can assure the member and everyone in Australia that that is not the case. We think very carefully about expanding the power of the state. We think very carefully about it indeed. Most members on this side of the House—in fact, I suspect, most members in this House full stop—have not come into the parliament to expand the powers of the state unnecessarily. But I think that all Australians expect their federal government to respond as appropriate to what is a deteriorating security situation. We are doing that, and we are doing that following the advice that we get from the Australian Federal Police and other law enforcement agencies, and we are doing that following the advice we get from ASIO and other intelligence agencies. Contrary to what seems to be the case in some of the opposition to this bill, the idea that these agencies somehow want rampant powers to go about doing their job, and trampling on the rights of Australians, is just not true.

My experience with the intelligence community and certainly with the law enforcement community is that they are very judicious about what they ask government to do and are very conscious of trampling on the rights and freedoms of Australians. This bill and the prescriptions within it are based on their advice. I assure you they do take these matters into account. It is not my experience since we have come to government that these agencies somehow just want to consistently expand their powers. They are very conscious of their role and of the need to have appropriate oversight of their functions. I can assure members that the government and the agencies take that into account when formulating legislation such as this.

I thank all members who have participated in this debate. In particular, I thank my colleagues for their support for these important reforms and I thank those in the opposition who have expressed support for these important reforms. This bill has a direct impact on the ability of our law enforcement, intelligence and border protection agencies to protect the Australian public. That remains one of the most fundamental roles of the Commonwealth. It is
one that we will continue to take seriously. If we believe that the security situation warrants it we will change the legislative environment to ensure the security of all Australians.

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

A division having been called and the bells having been rung—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As there are fewer than five members on the side for the noes, I declare the question resolved in the affirmative in accordance with standing order 127. The names of those members who are in the minority will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

Question agreed to, Ms McGowan, Mr Bandt and Mr Wilkie voting no.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Bill—by leave—taken as a whole.

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (12:28): by leave—I move amendments (1) to (6) on sheet ABCTLAFF1, standing in my name, together:
(1) Schedule 1, item 110, page 82 (line 1) to page 85 (line 10), omit sections 119.2 and 119.3.
(2) Schedule 1, item 110, page 92 (line 32), omit "or 119.2".
(3) Schedule 1, item 110, page 82 (line 13), at the end of subsection 119.2(1), add:
; and (d) the person enters, or remains in, the area with the intention of engaging in:
    (i) a terrorist act; or
    (ii) a hostile activity; or
    (iii) an activity prescribed by the regulations.
(4) Schedule 1, item 110, page 83 (line 5), after "family member", insert "or friend".
(5) Schedule 1, item 110, page 83 (after line 5), after paragraph (3)(g), insert:
    (ga) making a bona fide visit to a personal or business associate;
    (gb) providing legal advice;
    (gc) performing a bona fide business, teaching or research obligation;
(6) Schedule 1, item 110, page 83 (line 6), at the end of subsection 119.3(3), add:
; (i) any other purpose that a court determines is legitimate in all the circumstances.

A number of people that I have spoken to since these laws were first raised are very concerned about the effects of these laws on their legitimate travel plans. If this bill passes as is, it will be a criminal offence to travel. This bill criminalises travel to another country. There are many people in this country who regularly travel overseas to visit acquaintances, to do business, to visit their family. They may be going over to help others who are in strife. They will often go to areas where their family members, friends or business associates live that are areas that they themselves have fled from. These may be countries in Africa, instances of which I and people in my electorate are very familiar with. They will regularly go back to check on people who are in much grimmer situations than us. And that is why they fled in the first place. It may be that they are going for a religious pilgrimage, that they are visiting someone to give legal advice or that they are visiting a business associate. Or it may be that there is some other reason that might be determined to be legitimate in all the circumstances.
If this bill goes through, the onus of proof is on them to prove that they have done nothing wrong. If they cannot establish that, they are presumed to have committed an offence.

These amendments put this bill back in line with the ordinary principles of criminal law. It will do so by doing two things. Firstly, these amendments will require that someone who has travelled overseas has done so with the intention to do harm. If someone who has gone overseas for an innocent purpose does not have that intention then they are not presumed to have committed an offence. So it introduces a mental element, as most other crimes have, so that the prosecution will be required to prove that someone went over there with the intention to do us harm. That is simple, fair and something that exists in relation to just about every other offence in this country, as it should in any country that says it cares about the rule of law and that says that the prosecution should have the burden of proving that someone has done something wrong.

These amendments will also extend some legitimate protections to people who go overseas, for example, to visit a business associate, to provide legal advice to someone or to perform a bona fide business, teaching or research obligation. They will allow a court to determine that, in certain situations, the reason for going overseas might have been legitimate in all the circumstances. That is what we should do. We should put the power back in the hands of courts to be able to determine in an individual instance whether or not someone has done something wrong.

The reason this is so critical is that there will be people in this country in their tens of thousands who regularly go overseas to visit someone close to them but who may, when they come back, not have a statutory declaration in their pocket from their business associate or their illiterate grandmother to prove why they went there. If they do not, if they cannot discharge that onus, then at the moment they are presumed to have committed an offence. All of those people who travel innocently and legitimately overseas to areas that, when they leave Australia, they may not even know have been declared a conflict zone—it may happen when they are over there—deserve to have their rights protected.

I do not want to see any more hand wringing from the Labor Party about this, because now you have an opportunity to support our amendment and preserve the rights of people who go overseas for legitimate reasons. The bill is going to pass—we know that—so let's carve out some protections for people who are not doing anything wrong. Let's not make travelling overseas a criminal offence, which is what will happen if these amendments are not passed. I urge the government, who knows that this bill is now going to get through, to protect the right of innocent people by supporting these amendments.

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice) (12:34): The government will not be supporting these amendments. If we were to do so, it would essentially render what we are trying to do completely useless. The purpose of these parts of the legislation, where we would proscribe a particular area within a conflict zone, is to act as a deterrent for people to go to those areas and also to make sure that, if you were to go into a proscribed area, you would be committing an offence unless you could provide a legitimate defence, of which several have been listed.

The purpose of this bill is not, as the member for Melbourne has suggested, to somehow restrict people from travelling. Proscribed areas will be limited in scope. They will be declared by the foreign minister and they would be presumed to be declared for areas within a
conflict zone that would be under the control of a terrorist organisation. If you were going to those areas, firstly, you would be doing so at great personal risk; secondly, I think it is legitimate for us to ask why you would be going to areas which are under the control of a vicious terrorist organisation.

Of course, this is not going to be something that is going to be used extensively; we would expect it would be used in very limited circumstances, subject to the discretion of the foreign minister, over parts of the world that are under the control of these sorts of organisations. There are already plenty of safeguards within the legislation to make sure that, if, for a legitimate purpose, you did go to an area that had been proscribed, that is an appropriate defence. Other safeguards are the fact that any prosecution would need to be agreed by the Attorney-General. And of course it is still at the discretion of the prosecutor, who would need to make a judgement that that prosecution would be in the public interest.

We do not seek to restrict the rights of Australians to travel anywhere in the world that they would like to travel to. If the foreign minister deems it appropriate, she will proscribe certain areas within a conflict zone that would be, for example, controlled by a terrorist organisation. If you were going to these areas—if you were going somewhere in Syria or northern Iraq that were under the control of ISIL, for example, I think it is perfectly legitimate that we would question your motives in going there. There are significant safeguards to make sure that, if somebody were in these areas doing something legitimate, they would not be subject to prosecution. Clearly we do not seek to restrict the ability of Australians to travel overseas. I can assure the member and the Australian people that this bill will not do that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta):** The question is that the member for Melbourne’s amendments be agreed to.

_A division having been called and the bells having been rung—_

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** As there are fewer than five members on the side for the ayes, I declare the question resolved in the negative in accordance with standing order 127. The names of those members who are in the minority will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

Question negatived, Mr Bandt and Mr Wilkie voting aye.

**Mr BANDT** (Melbourne) (12:37): by leave—I move amendments (1) to (4) on sheet ABCTLAFF2, standing in my name, together:

1. Schedule 1, item 110, page 91 (lines 10 to 13), omit paragraph 119.7(2)(a), substitute:
   (a) the person publishes an advertisement in Australia; and
2. Schedule 1, item 110, page 91 (line 15), omit "or item of news".
3. Schedule 1, item 110, page 91 (lines 20 to 23), omit paragraph 119.7(3)(a), substitute:
   (a) the person publishes an advertisement in Australia; and
4. Schedule 1, item 110, page 91 (line 24), omit "or item of news".

We need to have an open discussion in this country about why people are radicalising, because it is a threat to our safety. One of the first things we need to do is understand what tactics are being used by those who would do us harm and allow that to be reported and discussed so that we can stop it, so that every family who is worried that their child may be lured to go overseas and join the kind of terrorists that we are seeing at the moment knows

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**CHAMBER**
what to look out for. Collectively, as a society, we need to have a discussion about what we need to do to ensure that Australia is a place where everyone feels that they have a place and where no-one wishes to do us harm.

But there is a broader principle here: we have a right to know what is going on and to discuss it. The Herald Sun this morning made clear in its editorial—not usually a paper that is known to line up with the Greens—that what is at stake is a question of freedom of the press, of the Australian right to know and doing what we should to ensure that all Australians are safer. It said:

The unarguable right of Australians to know what is done in their name is being torn down by security laws being rushed through Parliament.

The laws that make it a criminal offence to publish what are loosely called ‘news items’ about the way terror suspects are recruited is only one arm of an arsenal of restrictive legislation affecting the media.

But it is the public who are to be denied what they should be told. The community at large should know how young men are radicalised. Parents have every right to know how their sons are turned into willing recruits for Islamic State terrorism. They should be made aware of the pitfalls awaiting them, whether on the internet with its hate preachers, or in associating with the shadowy groups who will lead them astray.

That is why I am moving amendments that will continue to make it an offence in this bill that is obviously going to pass this parliament to publish recruitment advertisements but will remove the reference to news items so that we can have legitimate discussion in this country about what is going on in this country without risking sending journalists to jail.

The first set of security bills that went through this parliament in an unseemly rush with Labor and Liberal agreement had the effect of saying that a journalist could go to jail if they reported on a security operation that had gone wrong and resulted in an innocent person being killed. Labor signed up to that. We made the point here in this chamber and elsewhere in this parliament that that would stifle freedom of speech and deny Australians the right to know what is going on in their name. Labor could not pass the law quickly enough. Now they are out there wringing their hands at press conferences and saying, ‘We didn't mean it.' Well, you were put on notice. You knew and you did it anyway. Now you have the chance to stop it with these amendments.

The government have the chance to stop it as well. I understand the Attorney-General has been out there saying, ‘We never had any intention of sending journalists to jail.' Well, then, do something about it. Do not vote one day to send journalists to jail and then give a press conference the next day saying, ‘We didn't mean to.' Vote with us now to change the law to protect freedom of the press and to protect journalists. That is what these amendments will do if you pass them. These amendments will ensure that this loosely defined and newly created term of 'news items' does not appear in the bill anymore.

Labor, enough with the hand wringing: support us and change the bill. Coalition, enough with asking us to take the Attorney-General on faith that at sometime in the future he will never prosecute a journalist: change the law so that it is impossible. Let's protect freedom of the press and let's protect the right of people in this country to know what shadowy recruitment tactics are going on so that we can have an informed debate about how to stop it. Quickly passing laws that threaten to send journalists to jail is not something that this parliament should be doing. I commend the amendments to the House.
Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice) (12:47): The government will not be supporting these amendments. I will go to the specifics of why that is the case in a minute. I just want to address the general point that the member for Melbourne made in his contribution, and that is that somehow the government do not believe that every Australian has their place in this country. That is absolutely not true. The government have been at pains at all stages of introducing and discussing our new security legislation to ensure all members of the Australian community that this is not about targeting an individual community and that this is not about targeting an individual religion. We have been at pains to point that out. To say otherwise in this place is irresponsible. It is not a true reflection of this government's values. The idea that we would not stand side by side with every Australian is completely untrue. All of these laws in every case target a very small criminal element. As I said in my earlier contribution to this debate, I think that is exactly what the Australian people would expect their federal governments to be doing.

I want to address the second general point the member for Melbourne made about freedom of the press. I think everybody in this chamber understands that freedom of the press is an essential foundation point of our democracy. We would not do anything that would willingly undermine that freedom. This bill does not do that. Hyperventilating and saying that it does does not make it true. I can assure the member and all Australian people that this does not undermine freedom of the press in any way, shape or form.

If we accepted these amendments, we would be opening up the offences to exploitation by allowing people not limited to journalists to recruit vulnerable individuals to engage in foreign fighting and to facilitate the travel of recruits to a place where that fighting is occurring on the pretext of reporting the news. On the pretext that you are a journalist and reporting the news, you could go about this insidious behaviour of recruiting young people to fight in these foreign conflicts. These offences do not capture the proper reporting of the news. They do not capture proper and legitimate journalism. What they are designed to do—and what they will do—is deter and punish those who recruit or facilitate the recruitment of young Australians, or sometimes not-so-young Australians, to fight in these wars.

I am not sure if the member for Melbourne is aware of this, but this is not a new offence. This has been part of our legislation since 1978. Since 1978, not one journalist has ever been charged under this offence. So the idea that somehow this will restrict freedom of the press is nonsense. All we are doing is modernising the language from an existing offence that has never once been used to prosecute a journalist. As I have said, freedom of the press is vitally important. This government would not do something that undermined it. But we will continue to undermine the criminal element that is going around and recruiting vulnerable young people to go and fight and often die in foreign conflicts.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (12:51): I want to make it clear that Labor will be voting against this amendment and also make it clear that the member for Melbourne has wholly misconceived the purpose of what will become section 119.7 of the Criminal Code. As the minister has said, the Crimes (Foreign Incursions and Recruitment) Act, which is being incorporated here in the Criminal Code, has contained a prohibition on publishing an advertisement to recruit people to fight in foreign conflicts since 1978. What this legislation does is to incorporate that prohibition on publishing an advertisement for the purpose of recruiting persons to serve in foreign conflicts or to take up
arms in foreign conflicts. This legislation adds to it this provision, which is what the member for Melbourne's amendments are directed to, but adds to it something that is designed to capture something that was perhaps less common or non-existent in 1978: the well-known concept of an advertorial—something that appears in the media looking like a news item but which has in fact been paid for. That is all that this provision does. The member for Melbourne has represented it quite falsely as an extraordinary attack on press freedom. It is nothing of the kind. We need to see this amendment for what it is: it is masquerading in some way as a defence of press freedom, which it is not. The provision does not attack press freedom and amending it is not a defence of press freedom.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Vasta): The question is that the member for Melbourne’s amendment be agreed to.

A division having been called and the bells having been rung—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As there are fewer than five members on the side for the ayes, I declare the question resolved in the negative in accordance with standing order 127. The names of those members who are in the minority will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

Question negatived, Mr Bandt and Mr Wilkie voting yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question now is that this bill be agreed to.

Question agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (12:57): by leave—I move:

That the bill be read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister) (12:59): I move:

That Notice No. 3 of Government Business be postponed until a later hour.

BILLS

Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (12:59): I rise to speak on the Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 currently before the House. This bill is designed to clarify and refine certain aspects of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007. The proposed changes in this bill represent the first update of the new Citizenship Act introduced in 2007 and contain a series of amendments that will deal with the acquisition and revocation of citizenship.
These amendments also provide an increase to the discretionary powers of the minister with respect to assessing the character of an applicant for citizenship. We recognise that the government must be able to manage the citizenship program appropriately and, where current deficiencies exist in the system, we understand the government's desire to resolve these issues. The opposition agree with this logical premise. However, the subject of these changes relates to the most central aspect of our migration program: the opportunity to call oneself an Australian.

The privilege of being part of our national identity and family comes with significant responsibilities and so too must the administration of the program. This government has ignored that responsibility in seeking this House to pass this legislation without providing adequate time for consideration of this bill. The changes contained in this bill are not driven by any urgency nor do they have any implications for the national security situation we are currently facing. Rather this bill is a tune-up of the Citizenship Act after its first seven years of operation.

There is no good reason why we should not allow just two more weeks until the next sitting fortnight to permit a more fulsome debate on this matter before we deal with this bill in the House, so that the opposition and indeed all members may have the chance to properly scrutinise this bill. The fact is, beyond the government, none of us saw this bill nor the explanatory memorandum—some 100 pages of legislative material—until last Thursday, when the bill was introduced into the House.

The government's attempt to ram through this legislation without providing an opportunity for proper and careful consideration shows a lack of respect for our citizenship program. This is not an area of policy with which the opposition are prepared to be so flippant. It is on this procedural basis that we will be opposing this bill in the House, because there has simply not been enough time allocated to properly consider this very important piece of legislation. This is not our substantive position on the bill. Labor's substantial position on this bill will be reflected by the way in which we deal with the bill in the Senate, having had the opportunity to fully and properly consider the bill over the next two weeks.

In conclusion, it is important that we deal with matters relating to citizenship with the highest diligence. It is the greatest gift a nation can bestow on a migrant. The rich fabric of our wonderful country is because of the terrific migration program this country has. Labor will not rush down the path of passing legislation that affects this policy area until we are wholeheartedly satisfied it is appropriate in all respects and will bear no unintended consequences or impact on matters of citizenship.

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell) (13:02): It is a privilege to support the Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. These amendments are absolutely necessary for strengthening program integrity. It is interesting that the opposition are copping out on taking a position in this chamber. If they took the time to examine these amendments in the same way that they examined the counter-terrorism foreign fighters legislation, they would see these are necessary amendments to strengthen the immigration program and to ensure that we have some flexibility and available benchmarks to deal with some of the different situations that have arisen with immigration and Australian citizenship acts over the years.

I am speaking about three basic things. There is strengthening program integrity, underlining the importance of connection to Australia and improving decision making.
Through the various amendments to different bills we see in this place, the Labor Party continue to rail against the idea of ministerial discretion and giving ministers the available tools to make flexible and correct decision in relation to our immigration program. Why would the Labor Party want a legislative instrument rather than the available minister with ministerial discretion, with flexible legislation and with more ability to make a judgement? We are dealing with human nature. Given that we are dealing with the capacity of human beings to be all possible things that human beings can be, there is not really a set of laws, or an inflexible set of rules, that you can use to govern character. Allowing the minister to have more capacity for judgement, subject to the appropriate scrutinies of the parliament, the media and other forms in our democracy, is an improvement to the regime of Australian citizenship.

The member for Greenway would know, as I know, there are many issues with character when people migrate to Australia. Even this week, I was approached about a constituent matter. A person had obtained permanent residency and had done something I regard as very duplicitous in character and wrong by Australian standards. Once obtaining permanent residency, there is no way of winding back the clock and assessing that wrong act or that wrong character. All of us in this place know what I am talking about. As local members, we have it all the time. There are people who come here and do the wrong thing to obtain citizenship. It is just a fact. It may be a small proportion but it happens. Currently, there are not many ways of dealing with that, often to the detriment of other citizens here who are the victims of much of this activity.

Within the group of things I have outlined, you will see there are some important reasons why the government is moving these amendments. I hope the opposition in the Senate come to a sensible position and understand that ministers do need more discretion and more capacity to exercise reasonable and flexible judgements about character.

In relation to strengthening program integrity, the measures we are putting forward in this bill allow the minister to revoke citizenship on the grounds of an individual's engagement in fraud or misrepresentation in the migration or citizenship process—there would barely be a member in here who could argue against such a thing. This provision is without the requirement, of course, for a prior conviction of relevant criminal offences. In the past, a relevant criminal offence had to be proven, but a fraud or misrepresentation in this process can now be used by the minister to revoke citizenship on these grounds. That would be a big strengthening of the program's integrity. It is a good measure. There are not going to be mass revocations of citizenship on these grounds, but it is going to give that extra flexibility to the minister when there has been proven fraud or misrepresentation by a person of poor character to revoke citizenship. That is a good thing.

There is the provision to extend the good character requirement to include applicants under 18 years of age. This takes note of the fact that people under 18 can also be of bad character or do the wrong thing. This provision gives the minister some flexibility to deal with situations whereas at the moment that does not apply. There is the provision to include the bar on approval for criminal offences in all citizenship streams—that is self-explanatory—and to include references to contemporary sentencing practices in the bar on approval for criminal offences. Importantly, this area of amendment enables the minister to cancel approval of citizenship by conferral prior to commitment if the applicant is no longer eligible. It is a small thing but, once again, enables the minister to use that discretion and judgement in a situation
that cannot be defined, or a multiplicity of situations that cannot be defined, in every single statute or piece of legislation.

The legislation will also allow the minister to defer the applicant taking the pledge of commitment for up to two years and align the grounds for deferral with the grounds for cancellation of approval. It also requires those who automatically acquire citizenship on adoption in Australia to have commenced the adoption process before turning 18 years of age—something which I think would have widespread community support. It is a reasonable standard—a standard that we can all support and something that I think the opposition could also see their way to supporting. Importantly, strengthening program integrity will bring consistency to the resumption of citizenship by requiring a standardised 12-month waiting period—again, bringing standards and consistency to this important area of law.

The second area I mentioned was underlining the importance of connection to Australia. This bill will clarify the residence requirements by specifying when the four-year lawful period commences and that the 12-month permanent residency must be continuous. Making this continuous and dealing with these loophole situations where the 12 months required for permanent residence could be dealt with in another country or a person who was not actually a permanent resident in practice is very, very important.

The bill also clarifies who is covered by the partner discretion in the residence requirement and inserts a minimal physical presence requirement for those claiming the partner discretion for absences from Australia. In my view, tightening these areas is particularly important. As local members, one of the most tricky areas in citizenship and permanent residence is where people who have been of bad character have entered a relationship deliberately just to obtain permanent residency or citizenship. In situations where we see people taking advantage of loopholes in our law to obtain permanent residency—those who come here and then turn out to be of bad character or badly treat an Australian citizen—we really do need to be more realistic about the complexity of relationships and the complexity of human nature. That is why I support these provisions, which remove some of these loopholes, and, particularly, clarify who is covered by the partner discretion in the residency requirement.

This bill will also provide the power to make a legislative instrument setting out when a period of unlawful presence may be treated as lawful presence. That gives the minister the power to make a legislative instrument and gives the minister more discretion, which I support. It does not really matter which immigration minister you look at over the years—ministers for immigration in the Keating era, in the Howard era and right through to today—I think you would find that they would argue in favour of these sorts of abilities for the minister to deal with very complex and difficult situations. For the minister to have the ability to outline when a period of unlawful presence could be treated as lawful is just dealing with the realities of a modern immigration system where people can end up being unlawful here for any range of reasons but may be required to have a lawful presence to obtain permanent residency or citizenship.

The bill also puts beyond doubt that children born in Australia to parents with diplomatic privileges and immunities are not eligible for Australian citizenship. I think it is important that we clarify these things. It is an improvement to our Australian Citizenship Act. There is no automatic right for the children of people with diplomatic privileges and immunities who are not eligible for Australian citizenship to be eligible. That clarification is common sense.
You will also see in this bill improved decision-making—that is, making holders of prescribed visas eligible for citizenship by conferral before entering Australia and enabling the use an disclosure of personal information about a client under the Migration Act 1956 to be used for the purposes of the Citizenship Act and vice versa. When you look through the provisions in this area of improved decision-making, you see that the personal decisions made by the minister in the public interest are not subject to the Merits Review Tribunal. We have seen some cases in this regard where the minister does need power to set aside decisions—whether they be from the Merits Review Tribunal or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal—concerning character and identity if it is in the public interest. Again, giving more ministerial discretion, subject to parliamentary and public scrutiny, is going to benefit our ministers, our democracy and the administration of this act. I think if any shadow minister here thought about this and thought about the powers they would need in administering this area as a minister, they would see that this is the kind of flexibility and improved arrangements that any minister for immigration needs to ensure that they are dealing with the complex human situations that arise in immigration. I strongly support these improved decision-making powers.

The changes to the act proposed in this bill are necessary to uphold the value of Australian citizenship and preserve the integrity of the citizenship program. It is the government's view that the amendments to this act will improve the delivery of the program. The bill will clarify the residence requirement and the partner discretion for absences from Australia. It will also allow concerns about whether an applicant is truly eligible for citizenship to be fully investigated prior to taking the pledge. There are cases which do need to be fully investigated before any Australian would like potential citizens to be taking the pledge. The bill will bring consistency to the character and criminal offence provisions across all application streams. Having consistent character requirements across all immigration streams will be very important in improving integrity. The bill also allows for consideration of all circumstances when deciding whether a citizen by descent should not have been registered and should be able to remain an Australian citizen.

There have been some queries about what new powers the bill proposes. This is something that I addressed earlier, but I will again spell out a couple of things, because I think they are important. The power to revoke citizenship for misrepresentation or fraud without prior conviction is something that I regard as extremely important because there is not always a prior conviction yet there has been misrepresentation and fraud. Again, I would stress to every member of this House and to people in the Senate—who may not be so engaged with constituents as members of this House—that there is not a member in this House who deals on a day-to-day basis with an immigration caseload through their office who would not be aware of a case of citizenship where there has been misrepresentation or fraud. There would not be one member of this chamber who could come forward and say, 'I'm unaware of a case of this nature.'

Given that we are all aware of them and given that anyone who deals with the immigration program on a day-to-day basis at any length is aware of many of these cases, often in very sad or tragic situations, this new power for a minister—any minister; not only a minister currently in government but also ministers into the future—to revoke citizenship for those misrepresentations and frauds on people is, again, a very defensible and common-sense
implementation of a very big improvement to the integrity of the immigration system. It allows the minister to take the action when the minister is satisfied that fraud has occurred, even if there has been no criminal prosecution. We know that there are often difficulties in obtaining criminal prosecutions in different legal regimes and jurisdictions. Here in Australia there may not be enough evidence to prosecute, and yet we are certain that a misrepresentation or fraud has occurred.

So, I strongly support these provisions that enhance program integrity. These amendments are the next common-sense evolution of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007. They ought to be supported by members opposite, and I note that the member for Greenway was saying that there was no real position in this chamber but that it would be reflected in the Senate. I urge members of the opposition simply to look at this through the eyes of a competent immigration minister seeking to have maximum flexibility to make the right decisions in the interests of all Australians and in the interests of a strong immigration program.

Mr PASIN (Barker) (13:15): I rise to speak today on the Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. I will begin by acknowledging that this year is the 65th anniversary of Australian citizenship. The bill is an omnibus bill, but I want to focus, in my contribution, on one part of the bill and also make some general remarks about the work of the minister in this crucial area.

The bill has a range of amendments grouped broadly into three themes: firstly, strengthening program integrity; secondly, underlying the importance of connection to Australia; and, thirdly, improving decision making. I cannot stress strongly enough the degree to which I agree with the minister's remarks that Australian citizenship is something to be treasured. It is the common bond that unites all of us, whether we are born here or have chosen to make this our home.

Australian citizenship involves a commitment to this country and to its people. It is a privilege; it is not a right. We should only bestow it on those people who honour and accept the values of our society and meet our community expectations. Currently, under the citizenship act, revocation may be considered in cases where a person has acquired Australian citizenship by application and has been convicted of making a false representation in relation to a migration and citizenship application that resulted in them becoming an Australian citizen; or, alternatively, has committed a serious criminal offence prior to becoming an Australian citizen and failed to disclose that in respect to the application; or is convicted of an offence after making an application to become an Australian citizen.

A serious offence is one where a person was sentenced to a term exceeding 12 months. This provision applies to serious criminal offences committed in Australia or overseas, or alternatively where an individual has acquired citizenship since 1 July 2007 as a result of a third-party fraud where the third party who committed the offence has been convicted of the offence.

After one or more of these criteria have been met, the minister must then be satisfied that it would be contrary to the public interest for the person to remain as an Australian citizen. The minister can revoke Australian citizenship where a person acquires it 'by application'. This means through conferral, descent, or adoption in accordance with the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. The bill expands the minister's power to revoke citizenship when the
minister is satisfied that the person became a citizen as a result of fraud or misrepresentation by allowing revocation without a prior criminal conviction or fraud.

Law enforcement agencies and courts have limited capacity to prosecute all cases of fraud, or any other type of criminal behaviour, thereby reducing the ability of government to ensure that high community behavioural expectations are maintained with respect to those that have obtained Australian citizenship. In line with other revocation provisions, it is intended that the minister must be satisfied that it would be contrary to the public interest for a person to remain a citizen.

The citizenship act has two mechanisms for assessing the character of an applicant. There is the good character requirement, which extends to everyone aged 18 and over who applies to become a citizen. The bill amends these provisions to require applicants aged under 18 also to be of good character. I can cite a number of recent examples for the House's benefit, where people who are under the age of 18 would not meet the good character test. They are of poor character—from a national security perspective or another perspective—are living in our community and have undertaken acts of violence.

I had the privilege of having had a professional life before coming to this place. As many have heard, it was a professional life that involved representing individuals who found themselves in criminal strife. I am probably best positioned to make the assertion that I have come across very many people who are under the age of 18 and have committed offences which would make them not of good character. I am pleased to see that this act strengthens the powers of the minister to deal with individuals in that circumstance.

Secondly, the act currently prevents a minister from approving a person becoming a citizen by conferral in circumstances related to criminal offences. In addition, the bill amends the offence provisions to reflect modern sentencing practices—including where a person is subject to a court order or a home detention, or where they have not been sentenced to prison but nonetheless are under an obligation to the court. Sentencing flexibility, I am sure that the Minister for Justice would agree with me, has seen a blossoming of alternative sentencing options for judges and magistrates. The traditional sentencing matrix of a term of imprisonment or no term of imprisonment, no longer applies. We now have in almost every jurisdiction in this country situations where you can have what I have come to term 'fused penalties'—a combination of terms of imprisonment and non-custodial sentences. These changes effectively acknowledge that change and provide the minister with some flexibility around various sentencing regimes so that the minister is no longer stuck in the situation where, if an individual is not sentenced to a term of imprisonment, he cannot activate the relevant arm of the test.

The bill further provides that the minister may cancel approval if satisfied that the person no longer meets other eligibility requirements. The bill extends the maximum period of time when the minister can delay an applicant making the pledge of commitment from 12 months to two years, recognising, most importantly, that investigations of this nature are sometimes complex and require longer than 12 months to be undertaken. The bill introduces safeguards to the provision giving automatic citizenship to those whose adoptions are finalised in Australia, by requiring such adoptions to be commenced before the applicant turns 18. This amendment is concerned with preventing individuals seeking adoption as adults to avoid
being removed from Australia after their visas are cancelled under the Migration Act because they are no longer of good character.

These amendments in just one section of the large bill are common-sense and are consistent with the government's strong stand to protect our communities from the introduced threat from foreign lands of criminal acts and terror related activities. I make the observation that this is very much a measure aimed at further enhancing our sovereign right to control our borders. I commend the minister for his leadership in recent months in this space.

The various sections of the community who are opposed to the government's position are amongst some of the most persistent in our national discourse. This is truly an area where often difficult and unpalatable decisions are required in order to protect not only our lives but also our way of life. The minister has been stoic in his defence of these policies and, I must say, vindicated by events. I imagine it would not be easy to make these tough decisions and I do not envy the minister for the abuse that is often directed at him or at his department. It is important that we have a minister who has the intestinal fortitude to make these often unpalatable and difficult decisions.

If Australia were to lose control of its borders, it would become a magnet for a number of undesirables across the world who would seek to either gain entry into our country for nefarious purposes themselves or exploit those same weaknesses for personal profit and, in the process, lead hundreds to their deaths. Some on the left—and we heard some across the chamber this morning—would suggest that this approach is inhumane or indeed barbaric, but the simple fact is that, when we strengthen our moral resolve and remove the incentives from the hands of those who seek to threaten our society, we also reduce their power over their victims.

There is nothing humane about empowering criminals. It is an insidious trade and there is absolutely nothing powerful about empowering those who seek to profit from that. You have heard in this place, Mr Deputy Speaker, as I have, many times about those who are encouraged to make the dangerous journey by the very criminals I have mentioned. You have heard, as I have, sadly and tragically of the estimated 1,200 people who we expect lost their lives in the course of making that treacherous and dangerous journey. There is absolutely nothing humane about a regime that encourages that outcome. I am sure this is certainly not anyone's aim in this place but, if you establish an architecture and a regime and allow a matrix of events to present themselves so as to weaken our resolve, you effectively create an asset for those who seek to profit from this insidious trade. Importantly, we need to ensure that in the matrix we do not create a situation where we are in some way encouraging that insidious trade.

I began by noting the importance of citizenship. It is ultimately the grand prize that this nation offers and we need at every opportunity to ensure that the structures around its grant are of the highest quality and ensure that the grant is not made in circumstances where misinformation was provided to those making the decision. To the extent that this bill strengthens that framework, I commend it to the House. It is critical to not just securing our borders but the order and good governance of our nation. We need the best-quality citizens and they should only be entitled to the grand prize that we offer—citizenship—in the most appropriate of circumstances.
My parents have lived this journey. I am grateful for the opportunities that this nation has given them and thereby given me. It is a mutual obligation, if you like. We need to make sure that those who do not want to buy into that mutual obligation are not entitled to the grand prize of citizenship. I commend the bill to the House. I am conscious that we have not heard the position that those opposite will take in the other place. I encourage them to think seriously about how important and integral they are to the ongoing good governance of this country.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour. The member will have leave to continue his remarks when the debate is resumed.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Mr BRENDAN O'CONNOR (Gorton) (13:29): Each year, an average of 330 people are killed on our roads as a result of heavy vehicle incidents. That is why, in 2012, the Labor government established the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal to address safety problems in trucking and reduce the number of fatal truck crashes on our roads each year.

Truck drivers are the backbone of road transport. Without them, there would be no food on our supermarket shelves, no construction materials available to builders and no petrol at the pumps. Without trucks, Australia stops. But the safety of truck drivers and all road users is under threat from the Abbott government. The government is sitting on a review of the tribunal's operation. If the government is going to axe the tribunal, the public is entitled to know now.

Let's make one thing perfectly clear: abolishing the tribunal will mean roads will be less safe for all users. No one wants to see people dying on our roads and the facts are, when truck drivers are overworked—literally driven to fatigue—safety for all road users is reduced.

Deaths on the roads are not mere statistics on paper. They are people's lives. They are people's mothers and fathers, their husbands and wives and their daughters and sons. The tribunal must be left alone by the Abbott government to do its job, which is to make the roads safer for everybody in this country.

Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society

Mrs ANDREWS (McPherson) (13:31): On Sunday I had the great pleasure of opening the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society Field Day and I want to speak about this event, as beekeeping is probably one of our least understood and least acknowledged agricultural industries in Australia—yet it is also one of our most crucial.

It has been estimated that honey bees are responsible for pollinating 70 per cent of the 100 crops that provide 90 per cent of the world's food. While the production of honey is an important part of the industry, there is little doubt that pollination services—both contracted and incidental—are crucial to Australia's horticulture industry. And, while beekeeping is a fascinating and rewarding hobby for many amateur beekeepers, I also know that there are enormous financial pressures and demands on commercial beekeepers.

In Australia the honey bee industry includes 12,250 registered beekeepers operating 524,000 hives. An amazing 87 per cent of those registered are small hobby keepers, tending to
around 35 per cent of the total hive numbers. Approximately 65 per cent of the total number of hives are managed by about 1,650 commercial beekeepers.

I very much commend the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society for their work in putting the open day together. Congratulations to president John Polley and his team for coordinating such a great community event, which helps promote awareness of such a vital industry. It's quite remarkable that such a specialist association has grown and gone from strength to strength over the 35 years since its inception.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms MacTIERNAN (Perth) (13:33): The review of the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal has been on the desk of Minister Abetz for many months. We need this report released and we need a commitment to keep the tribunal. We need to be doing more, not less, to address truck safety. As I have said before in this place, the link between trucking accidents and the contract conditions of owner-drivers has been established in report after report. Many owner-drivers have mortgaged their homes to buy their rigs—they cannot afford to turn down unsafe jobs and effectively be black-listed.

Two Western Australian widows whose husbands were killed in a truck accident in 2011, Lisa Sawyer and Lystra Tagliaferri, have pleaded for us to strengthen the law. They say they could easily have blamed the truck driver, but the more they realised the long hours drivers were required to sit behind the wheel, the more they realised the industry needs to change to keep our roads safe—not just for drivers, but for all motorists.

Before the remuneration tribunal was established, research by the National Truck Accident Research Centre showed Western Australia had more than its fair share of crashes. It seems this is in part because of interstate drivers. This is a national problem. It needs a full-blooded national response.

Queensland School of Hard Knocks

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan) (13:34): I recently spent an entertaining morning at the launch of the Queensland School of Hard Knocks, hosted by the remarkable Jonathon Welch and his Queensland chairman, Dr Christian Rowan. We workshopped, we clapped our hands, we stomped our feet, we chanted, we danced and—yes, finally—we even sang.

Colleagues may have seen the inspiring documentary about Jonathon setting up the original Choir of Hard Knocks in 2006 for people experiencing homelessness or disadvantage. From this ongoing commitment, Jonathon has now established the School of Hard Knocks, which runs a number of different arts, cultural and wellbeing programs.

The primary participants of the program are people experiencing mental health issues, addiction, unstable housing, disadvantage or social isolation. The school helps to create a different pathway into mainstream society and another rehabilitation opportunity for those working to recover from substance dependencies. It will help members to reconnect with employment and educational opportunities, and provide social and emotional wellbeing.

The choral program will be the first of four arts programs to be implemented over the next two years. I am proud to be involved with this initiative and look forward to hearing more about the school and its progress. Congratulations to everyone involved. Jonathon, if you are watching: toe knees chest nuts nose eye love you!
Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (13:35): Professional truck drivers play a crucial role in the Australian economy. We know the often unrealistic deadlines that are still placed on truck drivers squeeze them for every dollar they earn and could tragically even cost them their lives or the lives of others. They deserve safe rates.

Each year an average 330 people are killed on our roads as a result of heavy vehicle incidents, and more than 5,300 are injured. As a result, Labor in government established the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal in 2012 to address safety problems in trucking. The speculation that the Abbott government is using its review of the tribunal as a basis to abolish it is, therefore, deeply concerning.

It is highly concerning not only to me but also to the approximately 1,500 professional truck drivers and their families whom I represent in this place. They would be dismayed by the comment from the junior minister, the member for Mayo, that his government 'is very uncomfortable with this regulator'. Well, I am not comfortable with the families of truck drivers wondering if their dads, their husbands and their brothers will come home safely each day.

My friend from the 43rd parliament, the former member for Hinkler, was a strong advocate for the safety of truckies on our roads. He understood the need for serious reform in this sector—reform that was delivered under Labor. His own committee report provided the evidence base for the establishment of the tribunal. I am dismayed by the way in which those opposite fail to respect and uphold his well-grounded and concerned views.

For the safety and livelihoods of some of the hardest-working people in Australia, it is imperative that this government supports the tribunal.

Western Sydney Wanderers

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell) (13:37): The Western Sydney Wanderers are 90 minutes away from the champion league title after a 1-0 win over Al-Hilal. We are all looking forward to this Sunday to see Western Sydney take on the world and potentially go on to play Real Madrid. In what was a fantastic game, I really want to praise all the players—Ante Covic, Daniel Mullen, Nikolai Topor-Stanley, Antony Golec, Mateo Poljak, Matthew Spiranovic, Iacopo La Rocca, Shannon Cole, Mark Bridge, Labinot Haliti, Brendon Santalab and Brendan Hamill—on an outstanding game.

We are very much looking forward to Sunday, but I also want to say to Lyall Gorman, the management, the entire club, the fans and all the people who have made the Western Sydney Wanderers the great success that they are, as someone who is born and bred in Western Sydney that we are very proud of you and the job you are doing on the world stage. We are proud not just because of your soccer and sporting success but because you are representing Australia on the world stage and doing an outstanding job.

Sunday is going to be an amazing match in front of 60,000 very excitable Saudi Arabian fans, with virtually no Australians being allowed to attend. It is, of course, going to be an amazing day not only for Western Sydney but also for Australia. We say to all of those involved: good luck, the wishes of the nation are with you and we look forward to seeing you become the first world champion Australian team.
Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (13:38): Every year an average of 330 Australians are killed from heavy vehicle accidents in Australia. This fact hits particularly hard in my electorate of Gellibrand where our proud manufacturing history and our proximity to Melbourne's docks results in very large volumes of truck traffic.

We have seen at least three serious injuries from track accidents affecting my electorate or residents of my electorate this year. In recent years we have even seen truck fatalities occur on the busy traffic corner in front of my new electorate office, reminding me every day of the human costs that these accidents can have.

Often the root cause of these accidents relates to the workplace conditions imposed on truck drivers. Unreasonable demands placed on our truck drivers mean that they must perform their work even when they are tired, unwell or forced to drive in an unsafe manner. The 2012 Safe Rate survey found that almost one in three of our truck drivers felt pressured to speed, to break the law, just to perform their job.

The previous Labor government was determined to attack the root causes underlying these truck accidents. It established the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal and gave it the power to set minimum rates of pay in related conditions to eliminate the employer pressure felt by drivers, but this independent tribunal is currently under threat from the Abbott government. The assistant to the transport minister is sitting on a review of the tribunal's effectiveness and has recently commented:

… we have always been very uncomfortable with this regulator.

The Abbott government should leave the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal alone and ensure that it continues to make our streets safer. Australians deserve better than a government playing politics with such a serious safety issue.

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (13:40): The amazing feats of some of the constituents who call Lindsay home never, ever cease to amaze me. On Sunday we saw one of the most courageous endeavours of endurance and dogged determination by one of the most inspirational men in our community, if not in the country. For 26 years, John Maclean has sat in a wheelchair as a result of a tragic collision with a truck on the M4. John believed he would never walk again. But on Sunday, John rose from his wheelchair and completed the Nepean Triathlon, the oldest triathlon in our country. For a man who has been sitting in a wheelchair for 26 years, he swam one kilometre, rode 30 km on a bike and completed a 10 km walk. John crossed the finishing line holding the hand of his wife and his son, Jack—such an amazing result!

John is a man who has never been defined by his ability. He has swum the English Channel, he has written a book, he has competed and won many medals at the Paralympic Games and has even competed in international ironman events. John still focuses on how he can help and inspire other people through his foundation.

John, you are an inspiration. John, you are a terrific individual and I am so proud that you are a constituent of the electorate of Lindsay. John, you are the embodiment of courage. Thank you for all you have done.
Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:41): I am on my feet today because the review called by this government into the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal was completed in April and is yet to be released. Despite this, the member for Mayo has said, 'We have always been very uncomfortable with this regulator.' He went on, 'I assure you that we've got more to say in respect of the RSRT.' Well, I have more to say in respect of this regulator. Abolishing this important tribunal would be a retrograde step for all road users. This tribunal was established in 2012 because, on average, 330 people are killed and 5,300 people are injured in accidents involving trucks every year. The member for Mayo might like to note that these tragedies on our roads are what make me uncomfortable. The people of Lalor know first hand what this means—11 fatalities and at least 10 injuries in recent years involving trucks.

This tribunal was established because the relationship between hours behind the wheel and fatigue is indisputable, and rates of pay for truck drivers correlate directly to the hours they work to make ends meet, to earn a decent living. We cannot afford an industry that puts the dollar before safety and this tribunal works to ensure that that is not the case.

As a mother with three sons driving on Lalor roads every day, one of them driving a truck, I implore this government to maintain the road safety tribunal.

Aboriginal Health

Ms PRICE (Durack) (13:43): Together with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Alan Tudge, I travelled two hours from Geraldton by small plane to the centre of Durack to a town called Wiluna, once a thriving gold town of 10,000, now a somewhat desolate community of 800, perched on the edge of the desert in no-man's land between the Pilbara and Geraldton. This is not the first time I have spoken in this place regarding Wiluna, which together with Meekatharra are towns which I feel have been forgotten.

Wiluna's Ngangganawili Aboriginal Health Service, led by veteran Richard Whittington, delivers 36 programs without which the community would wither. Yes, it really is a one-stop shop for programs such as the HACC and aged care, GP, ear, nose, throat and dental services, hearing and vision screening, drug and alcohol support, the night patrol, early childhood education, and they run the ambulance—just to name a few. To quote Richard:

Life is not easy in Wiluna—to find a job, a house—and if you get a job, then you lose your house. Alcohol is the end result, the escape from desolation and desperation.

Getting a job and a house can be a disincentive for getting a job in the first place, because one's income then impacts your eligibility to receive subsidised housing. It is a vicious cycle. I draw this matter to the attention of my parliamentary colleagues, particularly those charged with reviewing and changing the conditions under which our Aboriginal people live.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Dr CHALMERS (Rankin) (13:45): Anybody who knows anything about the trucking industry knows that it can sometimes be a dangerous place to work. Whether you have drivers in your family, as I do or like my great mate the member for Lalor does—wherever your understanding comes from—it is pretty easy to grasp that there are particular stresses and strains associated with a life on the road. Anybody who cares about the safety of truckies and other road users would think that 330 heavy vehicle related deaths is 330 too many. And the same goes for the 5,300 who are injured.
The whole point of the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal was to address the safety issues and try and reduce the number of accidents. That is why it was established in 2012 by the former Labor government, after a dedicated and ultimately successful information campaign from drivers, their industry and their union, the Transport Workers Union. I pay tribute to them for that campaign, because they made our roads safer. It is hard to believe that some in this parliament want to see the tribunal axed and truckies left on their own. It is hard to believe they are sitting on a review of that tribunal while they send out junior ministers to hint at its abolition. But they are, and it is appalling. So, on behalf of Australia's drivers and others who use our roads, we say today that the government should let the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal do its job and keep people safer on our roads than they would otherwise be.

Centenary of Anzac

Mr WYATT (Hasluck) (13:46): Tonight marks the start of the Anzac centenary commemorations in Western Australia. Starting in the member for Pearce's electorate, at Blackboy Hill in Greenmount, there will be a community event and overnight bivouac on the Greenmount Primary School oval. The oval is located where the Blackboy Hill Training Camp tents were erected on the eve of the first troop departure. The cadets will be joined by the 11th Battalion Living History Unit in period costumes and period tents.

Tomorrow morning, there will be a departure service at Blackboy Hill, followed by a special train journey from Midland to Fremantle in specially prepared historic-looking carriages pulled by a C class diesel locomotive. The locomotive is similar to those used for many years by Western Australian Government Railways across Western Australia. In Fremantle, there will be a march and a departure commemorative service.

These events recreate the journey that our troops took 100 years ago. It is shaping up to be a very special start to a weekend of commemorations across the state, most notably in Albany. I encourage all Western Australians to get involved in the commemorations, and I look forward to joining them over the weekend.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (13:47): Road transport is the most dangerous industry in Australia, with workers 15 times more likely to be killed at work than any other worker. This safety crisis is an issue not just for truck drivers but for everyone who uses our roads. My electorate of Newcastle is not immune to the dangers that are posed. In recent years there have been six fatal accidents either in my electorate or involving someone from my community. There have also been three accidents resulting in serious injuries. And, while sometimes lives are spared and injuries avoided, major safety risks remain on our roads when transport workers are pushed to their limits.

A case in point occurred just north of my electorate in September last year. Two B-double semitrailers collided with each other on the Pacific Highway at Heatherbrae in the early hours of the morning. While loss of life and serious injury were avoided on this occasion, both vehicles suffered major damage, and our main east coast arterial road, the Pacific Highway, was closed for three hours.

Labor treats road safety seriously, and that is why in 2012, when in government, we established the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal, to address safety problems in trucking
and reduce the number of fatal truck crashes on our roads each year. But the safety of our truck drivers and road users is now under threat as the Abbott government postures to axe the tribunal. I call on the Abbott Liberal government to put the safety of truck drivers and all road users first and to leave the tribunal alone to do its job. (Time expired)

Macedonian Doctors' Breast Cancer and Research Ball

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (13:49): I recently attended the 2014 Macedonian Doctors' Breast Cancer and Research Ball. The ball was held by the Australian Macedonian Medical Society to raise money for important equipment at St George Hospital. It was great to see the member for Cowan there, who travelled all the way from Perth to Sydney for the event. I would like to congratulate the society for raising $15,000 for breast cancer radiotherapy equipment at St George Hospital and more than $6,000 for the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation.

St George Hospital was without a breast cancer radiation table, and there is now one on site and being used after the success of this event. Until now, patients from across the state have had to travel to the Royal North Shore Hospital for this treatment.

The Australian Macedonian Medical Society works hard to advocate and fundraise for very important causes in the community. In particular, I would like to note the work done by Dr Zoran Becvarovski, who has been a very strong leader of the society over several years. The society was established in 2009 by a group of Macedonian doctors and advocates strongly for the improvement of the health and wellbeing of the local community. In addition to Dr Becvarovski, I would like to thank the other members of the association's board, Dr Nick Cvetkovski and Dr Nikola Mitrev. I look forward to continuing to work with the Australian Macedonian Medical Society and the broader Macedonian community in the future.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (13:50): Every day, across this nation, thousands of truck drivers go to work on the roads that run through our communities—roads that they share with our families, our communities and people either working or taking the time to do social activities using our roads. The reality for too many of those drivers for too long has been that the unconscionable pressure put upon them to do hours that are beyond what is reasonable in order just to make a living is completely unacceptable.

For 20 years the Transport Workers Union, in partnership with its members, in partnership with communities around our nation and in partnership with some very brave victims who had lost family members as a result of truck accidents, have campaigned, under the Safe Rates campaign, to call on governments to take responsibility for ensuring we maximise the safety of the roads in our communities.

As a result of that campaign, in 2012 the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal was established. It was established to do exactly that job. The current Abbott government has had a review. It has been sitting on it since April. It owes it to those truck drivers, their families, our communities and all road users to guarantee the continuation of the tribunal and release that report. (Time expired)
Mr TAYLOR (Hume) (13:52): I welcome news this week of a further rollout of the NBN in Hume. NBN Co will be working with local councils at Goulburn and Yass on the planning of a new set of fixed wireless towers in the broader Goulburn area, outside the city and in smaller village locations, and on proposed new towers around the rural areas outside the township of Yass. This is great news for residents of smaller communities who are struggling to secure reliable internet.

The fixed wireless network uses 4G technology to deliver speeds of up to 25 megabits per second. And these are faster speeds than city based ADSL connections. Access to the fixed wireless network is a leap forward in speed and service and it has huge potential, particularly for small businesses, including farmers around Goulburn and Yass.

We have also heard this week that NBN towers at Bribbaree and Mt Weedalion near Young have been switched on, bringing fast internet to an additional 150 premises in Hume. These connections follow the recent switching on of other towers at Cowra, Cowra West, Koorawatha, Noonbinna, and Young West, allowing access to 1,200 premises.

The coalition is committed to rolling out the NBN. It will do it as quickly as possible and at the least cost to taxpayers. It will prioritise areas of greatest need, and smaller villages in my electorate have a great need for faster internet services.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (13:53): The Bendigo Advertiser on 17 March 2014 had an article which read, 'Man dies in hospital after a truck crash on the Calder Highway, 19 kilometres from Kyneton.' Further, in the Bendigo Advertiser on 24 March 2014: 'Workplace tragedy: man killed in accident in Newham,' another area near Kyneton; in the Bendigo Advertiser on 19 November 2013: 'Truck carrying 800 sheep tips over and explodes: a Deniliquin man in Axedale dies at the scene'; on 28 October 2013 in the Herald Sun: 'Singleton couple killed in a truck crash'; on 2 September 2012: 'Teenager dies in a car-truck crash near Bendigo,' this occurred near Bendigo in Marong; and 'Woman dies in a car-truck collision in Elmore near Bendigo.'

These are just some of the many deaths that have occurred in my electorate—a regional electorate—in the past few years. If we want to ensure that our roads are safe, we need to ensure not just that we have the infrastructure but that we have support for the users.

That is why the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal matters. Safety matters; life matters. These are workplaces and we need to ensure that we continue with this tribunal to ensure that every worker returns home at the end of the day. That is why I call on the government to commit to this tribunal. (Time expired)

Hindmarsh Electorate: Italian Community

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (13:55): I recently attended the 60th anniversary feast day of St Hilarion, a religious, cultural and gastronomic celebration which draws thousands of people from across Adelaide and, in particular, from my electorate of Hindmarsh. As you would expect from an Italian community event, there was plenty of fine food: fine pasta and fine beverages, including that famous Italian beverage, chinotto!
I enjoyed talking to many in the St Hilarion community, including the CEO, Marcia Fisher, and staff at the Fulham facility, Caroline Russo and Rosie Manzella. The Fulham facility in my electorate of Hindmarsh has undergone some upgrades and renovations recently, which will ensure the residents continue to have great facilities now and into the future.

The Society of Saint Hilarion was founded as a cultural and religious body in 1955. Its origins are owed to the passion of a group of migrants who settled in South Australia after migrating from the town of Caulonia and surrounds in southern Italy, either side of World War II. St Hilarion has grown to become a leading multicultural aged-care service provider in the western suburbs of Adelaide.

This year I have been fortunate to support their quiz night and also to donate to their new bus for the residents. In the past I have attended their fundraising events, which were as sensational as last Sunday's feast—always an enjoyable occasion.

As a not-for-profit organisation, they owe a great deal to their fantastic volunteers and I thank them all for their efforts. And, speaking about volunteers, PISA and ANFE are other great organisations that support the Italian community in South Australia.

**Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal**

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (13:57): I urge the government not to abandon the Labor initiative for establishing safer roads in our road transport system and to keep the commitment in relation to the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal.

I am not sure whether everyone here understands that the road transport industry is the deadliest industry of all those operating in this country. Road transport has 25 deaths per 100,000—that is 10 times greater than the average. That means that 330 Australians die each year on the roads as a consequence of the heavy transport industry, as well as the many injuries that occur.

This is about retaining a system that delivers safe rates for truck drivers. I do not know about others, but I spend a bit of time in some of these truck depots and see people negotiate their rates. I saw one fellow at one time take a B-double load from Sydney through to Brisbane, but the only payment he got was the cost of fuel. If you can actually drive the rates down so hard like that, it is no wonder people cut corners, no wonder people falsify their road books, no wonder that truck drivers speed and no wonder that our roads are not safe.

I urge those opposite not to take an ideological view, as they normally do, to tribunals but on this occasion, to think about their constituents.

**Moore Electorate: Clarkson Community High School**

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (13:58): Recently, I had the opportunity to visit Clarkson Community High School for a tour of the campus and to see how educational outcomes have been greatly improved at the school. Under the innovative leadership of long-serving principal, John Young, his deputy principals, Georgina Hall and Justine McNaught-Conroy, and the dedicated team of staff, the learning culture has been positively transformed at one of the most statistically disadvantaged schools in the Moore electorate. Using innovative approaches such as 'invitational education', which is designed to improve students' self-concept, and through the creation of an inviting school that engages students in learning and positive behaviours, the development of key life skills is fostered, which become part of a student's character.
Learning at Clarkson is a meaningful journey that promotes greater wellbeing and provides opportunities to develop life skills as young adults. An example of the innovative approach at Clarkson Community High School is the formation of the first-ever school partnership with the Joondalup Police Academy to provide students with a police career pathway. Years 10 and 11 students were invited to take part in personal training sessions with police recruits.

The SPEAKER: It being two o'clock, I interrupt the honourable member. In accordance with standing order 43, the time for members’ statements has concluded.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Direct Action

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:00): My question is to the Prime Minister. This morning, market analysts RepuTex confirmed that the Prime Minister's $2½ billion dirty deal with Clive Palmer will only deliver 20 per cent to 30 per cent of Australia's target for carbon pollution reduction. The Prime Minister cannot have it both ways. Has he abandoned Australia's carbon pollution reduction target or will he take billions of dollars more from Australian families to give to big polluters?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:00): Our Direct Action Plan is capped, it is costed and it is funded. It is as simple as that. We are confident that Australia will meet our emissions reduction target and we are confident that by far the best way to help reduce emissions is with direct action. The Direct Action Plan is the smart way to reduce emissions. The carbon tax that members opposite still love is the dumb way to reduce emissions and the last thing you are going to do to help our environment is damage the economy. That is what this government will never do. This government will never impose an emissions trading scheme which damages our economy without helping the environment.

National Security

Mr EWEN JONES (Herbert) (14:02): My question is to the Prime Minister. Prime Minister, will you inform the House of the steps the government is taking to deal with foreign fighters returning to Australia?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:02): I thank the member for Herbert for his question. Again, I acknowledge the interest he has in national security matters as the representative of a defence seat. Too many Australians, I regret to say, have succumbed to the fanaticism of the ISIL death cult, which is now terrorising wide swaths of Syria and Iraq and is encouraging attacks against countries such as Australia. As we know, about 70 Australians are known to be fighting with terrorist groups in the Middle East. About 100 Australians are known to be supporting these terrorists with recruitment and funding. Regrettably, at least 20 have returned. The best way to deal with returning foreign fighters is to stop them leaving in the first place. I am able to inform the House that some 70 Australian passports have been cancelled to stop terrorists or potential terrorists from travelling. There are two reasons for cancelling passports: it is to protect other countries who should not have to host Australians intent on mayhem and it is to protect us. Australians do have a right to come back to this country and the last thing we want in our streets are people who have been radicalised and brutalised by participation in terrorist activities overseas.

If Australians do come back from fighting with terrorists overseas, it is the government's intention that they should be detained, they should be prosecuted and they should be jailed.
The foreign fighters bill that has passed the parliament today will mean that it is easier to secure convictions against Australians who have been fighting with terrorist groups overseas; it will mean that it is easier to monitor potential terrorists here; and it will also mean that it is easier to prosecute the preachers of hate who create the potential terrorists.

I know the Leader of the Opposition does not always appreciate my praise, but it is very sincere when it comes to the support that he has given us on national security measures. As always, I want to say to the Australian people that the government will do everything we can to keep you safe. All of our measures are against terrorism and not religion. You should live your lives normally because the terrorists objective is to scare us from being ourselves.

**Direct Action**

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:05): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer again to the Prime Minister's $2½ billion dirty deal to pay big polluters. Eminent economists have said that $4 billion to $5 billion per year will have to be paid to big polluters to reach Australia's emissions reduction target. Given that his dirty deal does not add up, can the Prime Minister confirm how much more he will take from Australian families to pay big polluters to achieve the emissions reduction target?

The SPEAKER: I call the honourable the Prime Minister, but I would say that I hope that the term that is being used to describe the deal as it is put is not a reflection on the member for Fairfax. That would be improper. It did sound a bit like it. I call the honourable the Prime Minister.

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:06): I am delighted to get this question from the Leader of the Opposition because it gives me yet another opportunity to tell the House and to tell the Australian people that this government supports direct action. We do not support carbon taxes. Whether they are fixed taxes or floating taxes by way of an emissions trading scheme, we do not support carbon taxes. The great thing about the Direct Action Plan is that it is incentives and not penalties. We will never—

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs will desist.

Mr ABBOTT: whack the Australia economy with a $9 billion Australian handbrake. We will never whack households with a $550 a year charge. We will never put in place policies that will reduce the steel industry by 20 per cent or reduce the aluminium industry by 60 per cent. We will never put in place policies that would reduce our GDP by a cumulative $1 trillion by mid century. We will never put in place policies that would reduce gross national income per person by $4,000. That is what a carbon tax or an emissions trading scheme, beloved by Labor, would do. There are dumb ways to reduce emissions and there are smart ways. We will support Direct Action—the best way to reduce emissions and that the same time helping our economy.

**National Security**

Mr WOOD (La Trobe) (14:07): My question is to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Will the minister advise the House how the government is starving terrorist organisations of funding?
Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:06): I thank the member for La Trobe for his question and note his experience and deep interest in counter-terrorism. In the fight against terrorism, being able to starve the terrorists and the terrorist organisations of logistics and funding is absolutely essential. Terrorists and terrorist groups cannot operate without logistical support or financial support. So cutting off the money supply undermines their fundamental ability to carry out terrorist activities or acts of violence.

As a member of the UN Security Council and particularly as Chair of the Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee, Australia is taking a lead role internationally to shut down sources of terrorist financing. This year that committee has listed three major new terrorist organisations: al-Nusra, ISIL and Boko Haram. Australia is fully implementing our international obligations and we are certainly helping other countries in our region do the same. It is a serious criminal offence under Australian law to support terrorism, support terrorist groups or to support terrorist organisations of any sort. The consequences are severe. There are penalties of up to 10 years imprisonment for people who are guilty of financing terrorism or terrorist activities; up to 25 years for other terrorist related activities.

Targeted financial sanctions have been imposed on around 400 individuals or entities engaged in terrorism financing under our counter-terrorism sanctions regime. Last month the government suspended the registration of a remittance service in Western Sydney over concerns it was engaged in terrorism financing. This month a Melbourne-based remittance service was suspended for its links to money-laundering and terrorism activities.

A report last month by AUSTRAC, and our agency responsible for tracking illicit financial flows under the responsibility of the Minister for Justice, a report called Terrorism financing in Australia, has shown that, while terrorism financing continues to pose a significant risk to Australia, our security agencies are keeping the flows of terrorism financing to a minimum. But we cannot be complacent about this. We have committed $20 million of the overall $630-million counter-terrorism package for new analysts and for new to intelligence systems so that we can enhance our financial intelligence to detect funders of terrorism in Australia. The government is taking all necessary steps to combat terrorism and to keep Australians safe.

Direct Action

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:10): My question is to the Prime Minister. The Minister for Communications has described the Prime Minister's policy of paying big polluters as 'a recipe for fiscal recklessness on a grand scale.' He also said other things which would be unparliamentary to repeat. Prime Minister, don't the views of the Minister for Communications confirm that your budget is in complete and utter chaos?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:11): That question from someone who promised four years of surpluses? I mean, really and truly. Remember 'The four years of surpluses I announce tonight…'? Really and truly! This question can be dealt with very, very swiftly. We will spend no more than we allocate on this particular policy. It is a good policy, because under this policy we will absolutely achieve our five per cent cut in emissions, but we will not spend any more than is budgeted.

Direct Action

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (14:12): My question is to the minister called the Minister for the Environment. Under our previous clean energy laws—
The SPEAKER: The member for Melbourne will phrase his question correctly.

Mr BANDT: My question is to the Minister for the Environment. Under our previous clean energy laws, polluters had to pay for some of the costs of their pollution, with much of the money raised going to households. Isn't it the case that under the deal you announced yesterday Australia's biggest polluters now have a choice: they can get a handout paid for by households or they can ignore the scheme altogether because there will now be no legal obligation to cut pollution at all?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (14:13): I am delighted to take this question from the member for Melbourne, because it highlights some not insignificant differences between this side of the House and that side of the House. We did an agreement to uphold our election promises: to abolish the carbon tax and to implement our Emissions Reduction Fund. He was at the heart of an agreement to break their election promises. He led the Labor government to break their election promises. We made an agreement to keep our election promises. We said we would abolish the carbon tax, and we did. We said that electricity prices would come down, and they did. We said that we would make life easier for families, and we did.

Mr Thistlethwaite interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Kingsford Smith is warned!

Mr HUNT: They said on that side, 'There will be no carbon tax under a government I lead.' He did the dirty deal with this group of people to break their election promises, to increase the cost of living for families and—do you know what is worse?—it was a failed policy; it did not do its job. There was a less than one per cent decrease in emissions for a $7½ billion a year tax. And where does it go after this?

They talk about how in some way this is a mythical tax on polluters. Let me give you the facts. There were $30 billion of handouts to big companies under their carbon tax—

Ms King interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Ballarat is warned.

Mr HUNT: the all-time money-go-round in Australian political history: $9.2 billion to general industry in the form of handouts to steel, paper, glass, aluminium, zinc and cement; another $300 million for steel where—wait for this—the only qualification was not that they did anything but they had a bank account. There was $5½ billion for an energy security fund. This sounds good. Do you know what the energy security fund was?

Mr Perrett interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton is warned.

Mr HUNT: The energy security fund was cash and payments for Victoria's brown coal generators: an almost $250 million payment to Hazelwood in cash, an almost $250 million payment in cash to Yallourn, an almost $250 million payment in cash to Loy Yang. That is the dirty deal. You were giving almost $30 billion to big firms. Nobody gets anything under us unless they reduce emissions, and overwhelmingly what we are looking at is supporting the rural sector, working with farmers, working with communities, making an absolute guarantee and protection for prime agricultural land and doing this in a way which reduces emissions, improves our economy and supports productivity.
National Security

Mr TEHAN (Wannon) (14:16): My question is to the Minister for Communications. Will the minister inform the House of measures the government is taking to ensure that security agencies have adequate resources and cooperation from telecommunications companies in prosecuting serious crimes and threats to Australia's national security?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Minister for Communications) (14:16): I thank the honourable member for his question and note his chairmanship of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, to which the bill that I introduced into the House this morning has been referred.

In 2013 the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security concluded that there was a diminution, a reduction in the availability of metadata to enable our law enforcement agencies to do their work of protecting us from criminals—criminals in both the run-of-the-mill sort of line of work and also, of course, terrorism. Metadata does not include the content of communications, and it is absolutely critical that we make this clear. For many years—

Mr Perrett interjecting

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton will remove himself under 94(a).

The member for Moreton then left the chamber.

Mr TURNBULL: for decades—the police and the intelligence agencies have been accessing metadata from telephone companies, which have kept for billing purposes for a long period the details of the A party, the B party, the time of call, the duration of call and so forth. And internet service providers have routinely kept details of the IP address that is allocated to users, to subscribers when they go online. Having access to that information is absolutely critical in law enforcement, and what we are doing with this bill is not adding new classes of data that needs to be retained but simply ensuring that those classes of metadata which have been accessed for years will continue to be available; because, as more and more of the telecommunications business goes over the top—goes over IP—less of that material needs to be kept for billing purposes.

So what we are simply seeking to do—one can quote that great Italian writer Lampedusa's novel The Leopard, where the Count says 'everything has to change so that everything can stay the same'. The fact is that, if we want our intelligence agencies to be able to have access to the material they have always had, then we have to have this data retention change. All this is seeking to do is to ensure that those types of metadata will be retained for two years.

I want to stress to honourable members that, while this will include the customer IP address—that is to say the number that your computer is allocated when it goes online—it does not include retaining the details, the IP addresses or the URLs of any of your web browsing or online activity. So the metadata relating to what you are doing online is not being retained for two years. Several years ago that was a matter of very real concern—and legitimately.

So this is a very limited class of data that is going to be retained for two years, and it is absolutely essential that we make those changes to ensure that the police and the security agencies can continue to do their work.
Fuel Prices

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (14:20): My question is to the Prime Minister. This week the Prime Minister ambushed Australian motorists with a $2.2 billion fuel tax increase and cut a deal to pay big polluters $2.5 billion to keep polluting. Does the Prime Minister agree that this chaos is, in his own words, ‘just a giant money-go-round’?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:20): This is the policy that we have taken to two successive elections—

Mr Burke: The petrol tax?

Mr ABBOTT: I am sorry; I misheard him.

Our policy that we have put into place is a budget measure. One thing that we plainly had a mandate to do was to get the budget back under control. We had a mandate to get the budget back under control. I said till I was blue in the face before the election that what we would be doing would be scrapping the carbon tax, stopping the boats, building the roads and getting the budget back under control, and I am pleased to say that that is exactly what we are doing. We have scrapped the carbon tax. We have more or less stopped the boats. The roads are building, to the great satisfaction of the motorists of Australia. And, step by difficult step, we are getting the budget back under control.

And at least the crossbenchers are prepared to talk to the government, unlike members opposite that have dealt themselves into irrelevance. On the most important economic questions facing our country, the Labor Party has dealt itself into irrelevance. So, I say to the Labor Party: join Team Australia. Get on board, and have the kind of conversation, have the kind of constructive engagement, with the government that is necessary if you too are to be part of the solution and not just the originators of the problem.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Member for Parramatta! I call the member for Wright.

Asylum Seekers

Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright—Government Whip) (14:22): My question is to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. Will the minister advise the House how changes in border protection policy have affected the people-smuggling trade, and why it is so important to adopt a consistent approach?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (14:23): It is always a pleasure to get a question from the bighearted member for Wright. I am asked about what impacts changes of policy on border protection have on people smugglers, and there is plenty of evidence on this fact. In August 2008, the Rudd Labor government at that time completed the demolition of the successful Howard government policies when they put through the abolition of temporary protection visas, following their own turn-back on turn-backs, and also going against and shutting down the Pacific solution. We know what happened after that—we went from an average of three boats a year under the last six years of the Howard government to an average of 165 boats a year over the next five years. Some almost 1,200 deaths later, some 800 boats later, and some 50,000 illegal arrivals later, this government has pulled the rug on Labor's people smuggler's picnic. That is what we have done. We have put the policies in place that have ensured people smugglers no longer have a
product to sell, and it was achieved as a result of a change of policy and as a result of a change of leadership.

Critical in all of those policies was turning back boats. Prior to the turn back of boats, in the 10 months before, 300 boats turned up. What happened in the 10 months after? Just one boat. I was pleased that the shadow minister acknowledged that on the weekend. It was a glimmer of light. But that light was shut down so quickly from the captain of 'team idiot' over there. He was so quick to shut that down.

Honourable members interjecting—

Mr MORRISON: They must assume I am referring to the Leader of the Opposition, and I am! There was a glimmer of light shut down by the Leader of the Opposition, and what we have done, when he was—

The SPEAKER: The minister will resume his seat. The Manager of Opposition Business.

Mr Burke: Madam Speaker, you asked for the same comment to be withdrawn a couple of days ago.

The SPEAKER: It would assist the House if the minister would withdraw.

Mr MORRISON: To assist the House, I withdraw. After a few tweets after the shadow minister's acknowledgement of the success of the turn-back policy, the Leader of the Opposition, in response to those tweets, has curled up in a little ball and rolled over on turn-backs. And you know, if you cannot stand up to Twitter, Leader of the Opposition, you cannot stand up to the people smugglers, and no one will ever trust that you can do it. Because it is now the policy of the Leader of the Opposition to turn back border protection policy to Kevin Rudd. That is what we have in front of us. But it is not just the weakness of the Leader of the Opposition, which all of us know now, on border protection. What has happened to the once great Labor Right that used to sit on the Labor Party benches? What happened to those giants of the caucus who have now become minnows and handmaidens of the Left of the Labor Party? They are totally divided between Left and Right on that side of the House. And that is why they cannot be trusted on border protection: they are riven with division.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:27): I would like to advise the house that we have in the Speaker's Gallery Bruce and Denise Morcombe. They are here to promote Day for Daniel in parliament house and spread their message of safety for children. We welcome you very much and salute your courage. We also have with us Mr Tim McCurdy MP, the member for Murray Valley in the Victorian state parliament. We make you welcome as well.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Fuel Prices

Direct Action

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:27): Madam Speaker, on indulgence, before I ask my question, on behalf of the opposition I would like to acknowledge Bruce and Denise Morcombe. In the English language we have a word for our husbands and wives who lose their partner: widow or widower. In the English language we have a word for
children who lose their parents: orphan. We do not have a single word to describe parents who lose their children, and I do not think any word can. It is great that you are here today.

My question is to the Prime Minister. On Monday, the Prime Minister flagged an increased GST. On Tuesday, the Prime Minister ambushed Australian motorists with a petrol tax hike. On Wednesday, the Prime Minister did a dirty deal with the Palmer United Party to give big polluters more money. So after a week of smashing Australians with increased taxes and dirty deals, will the Prime Minister now apologise to all Australians for breaking his election promises?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:28): I should join the Leader of the Opposition in acknowledging Bruce and Denise Morcombe, and I thank them for the campaign that they have run right around Australia, since the tragic murder of Daniel. An unimaginable sorrow. An aching void that we can hardly begin to imagine. Nevertheless, they have done something heroic. They have turned the most awful tragedy into an opportunity to do some good. We thank them for the heroism they have shown and for the spirit they have shown. It is inspirational, and it is good that you are here in the parliament today.

I appreciate what the Leader of the Opposition is trying to do. He is attempting to obstruct at every turn this government's attempts to rescue Australia from the debt and deficit disaster that members opposite created.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Batman!

Mr ABBOTT: They are in denial about the disaster that they created on the budget.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Parramatta is warned!

Mr ABBOTT: They are in denial about the disaster that they created on our borders. The truth is that the Australian people elected us because they knew that the Labor Party was guilty of intergenerational theft. The Australian people elected us because they knew that the Labor Party subcontracted out immigration policy to the people smugglers. They knew that a decent and self-respecting country had to change and that is what has happened since the election. We are getting the budget back under control and we have protected our borders. That is exactly what they elected us to do.

Mr Burke interjecting—

Mr ABBOTT: I hear the Manager of Opposition Business. We took the direct action policy to two elections. I know no-one likes to pay 40c a week more at the petrol station for their fuel. No-one likes that. This Leader of the Opposition is complaining bitterly about 40c a week but he wants to whack people with $550 a year to bring the carbon tax back—really and truly. The Australia people elected us to sort out the debt and deficit disaster. They elected us to sort out the border protection disaster. That is exactly what we have done.

Budget

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra—Chief Government Whip) (14:31): I have a question for the Treasurer. Treasurer, will you outline the ramifications of failing to fix the budget debt and deficit burden left by the previous government? How will the decisions that the government is taking now create jobs and encourage economic growth?
Mr HOCKEY (North Sydney—The Treasurer) (14:31): I thank the honourable member for Berowra for his question. I note the very significant contribution he has made to this parliament over a long period of time. In fact, we are just a few weeks away from the member for Berowra becoming the second longest-serving member of the House of Representatives—

Dr Chalmers interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Rankin.

Mr HOCKEY: Gee, you guys gab on; just be quiet and listen—passing Earl Page in the next few weeks as the second longest-serving member and, potentially, one day, passing my predecessor Billy Hughes if he goes another 10 years in this place. The member for Berowra, being so very wise, is right to ask about the impact on the Australian people if we do not get on with fixing the budget mess that was left by the Labor Party. If we do not get on and fix the budget mess then in 10 years time every single Australian born would begin life with a $25,000 debt. Every single Australian would have a $25,000 debt as a result of what Labor have done in just six years. Their work of course is not finished. They are obstructing $28 billion of savings. Most alarmingly, the Labor Party is opposing and blocking in this parliament savings measures that they announced—

Dr Chalmers interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Rankin is warned.

Mr HOCKEY: including an R&D tax concession to the 20 biggest companies in Australia worth $1.1 billion. Let's get this right. Labor are concerned about 40c a week extra on fuel, but at the same time they are defending a tax concession of $1.1 billion to the 20 largest companies in Australia that they announced was unfair when they were last in government. This is the hypocrisy of the modern Labor Party. This is the true hypocrisy of the modern Labor Party.

They would rather give a tax concession to the 20 largest companies in Australia than get on with the job of fixing a budget mess that they created. I say to the Labor Party: we are getting on with the job of fixing the economy and fixing the budget. That is one of the reasons why we have job creation at the moment three times the speed of the last year of the Labor Party. That is one of the reasons why today we had record numbers in infrastructure coming through in Deloitte Access Economics' assessments. That is one of the reasons why we know what to do to make Australia more prosperous.

**Fuel Prices**

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:34): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to comments the Prime Minister made in parliament yesterday that the $2.2 billion petrol tax increase is a budget repair measure. The government also claims that every dollar raised by the increased petrol tax will go towards roads. Can the Prime Minister confirm how much of the petrol tax collected will go to paying down debt?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:35): If you look at the figures on budget night, we reduced peak debt by some $300 billion, which is exactly what the people elected this government to do, to bring debt down. That is exactly what we are doing. They elected us to fix that debt and deficit disaster that members opposite left us that was going to saddle each and every Australian man, woman and child with $25,000 of debt. I am pleased with our
budget, including the fuel excise indexation, because that is exactly what we need to get rid of the debt and deficit monkey.

**Budget**

**Mr SUKKAR** (Deakin) (14:35): My question is to Minister for Small Business. Will the minister inform the House of the savings that have been passed on to families and businesses in Victoria and elsewhere since the government scrapped the world's biggest carbon tax?

**Mr BILLSON** (Dunkley—Minister for Small Business) (14:36): I thank the member for Deakin. He is so in tune with his electorate. That was a really insightful question about things that matter in Deakin. Scrapping the carbon tax was an important part of the government's economic action strategy and we are already starting to see the benefits filtering through. In the first nine months of this year, we have seen three times the rate of job creation than we saw in the first nine months of last year under the previous Labor government. This is great news for Victoria, great news for Victorians.

Alongside the excellent work of the Napthine government, this has meant 30,900 more jobs in Victoria—nearly 31,000 more jobs. I would have thought that was good news for the members in this place who are interested in the wellbeing and livelihoods of those in Victoria. It is a record that Labor could never have dreamed of achieving—and they certainly never went near doing anything of this quality and this value for job creation and economic revitalisation in Victoria.

A key part of this economic action strategy has been to repeal the carbon tax. We know the carbon tax has hurt and harmed households and small businesses, particularly in Victoria. Yesterday, the ACCC released its third carbon tax repeal monitoring report, which showed that benefits that have been estimated are now materialising and are being passed through to energy consumers in particular. The report revealed the clear benefits of the repeal of the carbon tax and backed up our estimates of saving the average Australian household $550. That is real money in the hands of Australian households, and that is benefiting the businesses that want to work hard to win the opportunity to service those households.

I am talking about people like Tony from Mt Evelyn Super IGA—another Tony—who the member for Casey introduced me to. He has explained that, in his business alone, the savings are about $26,000 a year—that is, his electricity costs, his gas costs and the savings on having to re-gas his refrigeration system. He is delighted about the savings and he is delighted that his customers are also seeing improved household expenditure opportunities.

The Blue Bay Cheese Company, a small family business, have saved more than 12 per cent on their peak electricity costs and have experienced a 21 per cent saving on their off-peak electricity charges. The Bays Hospital in Mornington have saved $3,000 a month off their electricity bills.

We promised that we would repeal the carbon tax, and we did. We promised that we would ensure that those savings are passed through to households and small businesses—and we are.

**Budget**

**Ms O'NEIL** (Hotham) (14:39): My question is to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister's budget will see a family earning $65,000 lose $6,000 of its household budget. At the same time, the Prime Minister has given multinational corporations a tax break and has refused to close tax loopholes, and now the Prime Minister has done a deal to pay $2.5 billion
to Australia's biggest polluters. Why is the Prime Minister taking money from Australian families and handing it to Australia's biggest polluters?

An opposition member: That's a new book!

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:39): It is actually a very good budget book. I say in response to the member who asked the question that—

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr ABBOTT: I have just opened the book randomly at this page to look at a $60,000 family. This particular family is getting $15,000 worth of government benefits under our budget. I could refer to any number of different households—

Ms O'Neil interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Hotham has asked her question and will desist.

Mr ABBOTT: earning $60,000 and all of them are receiving very large amounts of money under our social security system under this government's budget. A single income couple on $60,000 with one dependent under six gets $7,000 from the taxpayer. A single income couple with two dependents gets $8,300 from the taxpayer. A single income couple on $60,000—

Mr Burke: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. To be directly relevant, the Prime Minister needs to say how much less they are getting after the budget compared to before.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat. The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr ABBOTT: A single income couple on $60,000 with three dependents gets $17,900 from the taxpayer. It just goes on and on. People who are earning $60,000 are, as they should be, very significant beneficiaries from our social security system.

But I will tell you what this budget does for people. It saves them from Labor's debt and deficit disaster—and that means that the social security benefits that they receive are sustainable. They are sustainable under us, in a way they never would have been under Labor. That is the problem with members opposite: they were engaging in intergenerational theft. They were stealing from tomorrow's families to pay for their own unsustainable spending and to pay for their own electoral bribes. We will never do that, because that is to betray the Australian people. It will be sustainable under this government. That is what people elected us to do and that is what we are delivering.

Higher Education Reforms

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (14:42): My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister inform the House how the government's higher education reforms will benefit students from disadvantaged backgrounds?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education) (14:42): I thank the member for McMillan for his question. It is a very important question. The higher education reforms of the government will benefit disadvantaged students more than any other cohort in society. That is simply a statement of fact. In three ways, we will ensure that students from low-SES backgrounds and first generation university goers get to go to university in record numbers.
Eighty thousand more students will get to go to university under our reforms than would be the case if there were no changes in the higher education sector. Why is that the case? Because the Higher Education Contribution Scheme is the most generous loan scheme in the world. It has transformed the university sector and has brought more revenue to universities, which means that they can enrol more students. Of course, that means that every student, no matter what their background, can borrow that money from the taxpayer and get a higher education qualification.

But we are going even further: we are not just keeping HECS; we are also expanding the demand-driven system to the sub-bachelor courses, the pathways programs, that low-SES students use to break into the university sector. We are expanding that so more students will be able to use those pathways programs to get to go to university. We are also going to establish the largest Commonwealth scholarships fund in the history of Australia. Sydney University has already announced that their scholarships will go from 700 to 9,000. The Vice-Chancellor has said that at the moment at the University of Sydney, seven per cent of their student cohort is from low-SES background—seven per cent!—and he is going to transform that by making sure those Commonwealth scholarships go to low-SES students.

Therefore, disadvantaged students will have more opportunities to go to university under our reforms than they would have under the Labor Party's proposals. In fact, do not just take my word for it. Margaret Gardner, the Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, wrote this week, 'When we look back on apparently golden ages of Australian higher education, let us all be clear that fewer disadvantaged students got into higher education in those days, when it was free, than they do today.'

There is another piece of excellent writing. Our great friend, the Shadow Assistant Treasurer, has exploded the great canard that is being proposed by the Labor Party about disadvantaged students. He writes in 'Recapturing the nation-building zeal', 'There is no reason to think that deregulated student fees will adversely affect poorer students.'

A government member: Can we hear that again?

Mr PYNE: He wrote, 'There is no reason to think that deregulated student fees will adversely affect poorer students.' Is that the Labor Party's position? As usual, he is right and you are wrong.

Direct Action

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (14:46): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will any companies owned by the member for Fairfax be eligible for funding under the Prime Minister's deal to pay big polluters?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:46): I have not looked at the member for Fairfax's share registry—unlike members opposite, who, I am sure, pore over everyone's financial details, because that kind of class-envy stuff unfortunately is still alive over there! We are going to the market under our direct action policy, looking for proposals that are cost effective that will effectively reduce emissions. They will effectively reduce emissions.

If members opposite really wanted to be constructive contributors to our national debate, they would not say no to everything; they would not deal themselves into irrelevance; they would not turn Clive Palmer, the member for Fairfax, into the real Leader of the Opposition. They would talk constructively to the government.
Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Member for Wakefield has pushed too far. He will leave under 94(a).

The member for Wakefield then left the chamber.

Mr ABBOTT: I say again, if you want to be people who influence the future of this country, join team Australia and start engaging in intelligent discussions with the government on how together we can make this great country even better in the years ahead.

Infrastructure

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (14:47): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. Will the Deputy Prime Minister outline how the government is working with the states to deliver the infrastructure of the 21st century.

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (14:47): I thank the honourable member for her question. It is especially appropriate that we would have a question like this today, after the Prime Minister has delivered the first of his annual reports on our progress in delivering the infrastructure of the 21st century. And what an impressive statement it was—what an impressive record of achievement in our first year in government! The infrastructure Prime Minister is delivering the infrastructure this country is going to need for the century ahead.

We have committed $50 billion towards this program, and it is anticipated that we will leverage at least $125 billion of expenditure from states and other tiers of government to really make a difference in bridging some of the infrastructure gap that we inherited from our predecessors. The states have now all signed up to the national partnership on asset recycling, along with the territories, indicating their intention to participate in this capacity to renew the infrastructure of our nation and to recycle assets in ways that can deliver new benefits to local communities.

The states have also signed the national partnership agreement on land transport infrastructure so that money can flow to those states, now, to deliver on the infrastructure plans that they have submitted to the Commonwealth for funding.

The member for Lindsay would also be noticing that some of this work is occurring in her own electorate. The work around Western Sydney will certainly make a real difference to the lifestyle of people in that region. There has been a $2½-plus billion commitment to the roads of that region—the major roads and also the local roads. Infrastructure is not just about the big national highways; it is also about ensuring that that last mile enables people to get to their workplaces or to the markets as quickly as they possibly can. WestConnex and other projects in New South Wales are also adding enormously to the job creation that this program will deliver to all Australians.

In Victoria the East West Link project, signed by the state government, will revolutionise traffic through Melbourne. It will take 100,000 vehicles each day on a new and faster route through the city. Already this work is beginning and we are seeing the results of a government that is serious about infrastructure and a Prime Minister who wants to be recognised, above all of his other great achievements, for what he has done in infrastructure. That will be a lasting legacy for all Australians that could only have been delivered by a coalition government that cares.
Tertiary Education

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (14:47): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the modelling by NATSEM, an organisation described by the Prime Minister as the most reputable modelling organisation in Australia, which shows that under the Prime Minister's unfair university changes a young man studying to be a social worker would pay almost $335,000 for his degree and take 39 years to repay his HELP debt. Why does the Prime Minister want to saddle millions of Australian students with a debt sentence?

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (14:51): Under the policies of members opposite, people have a $25,000 debt before they even get to university. A debt sentence is what the former government saddled every single Australian with—

Ms Owens interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Parramatta that she is warned!

Mr ABBOTT: to the tune of $25,000 for every man, woman and child.

Government members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There is too much noise on my right.

Mr ABBOTT: Let us be clear who are the debt and deficit champions in this country—it is members opposite.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: And there is too much guffawing on my left.

Mr ABBOTT: On the subject of universities and students, let me make it absolutely crystal clear: no student will pay $1 upfront, all fees will be covered by HECS or FEE-HELP, no-one will have to repay any of this until their income exceeds $50,000 and fully 50 per cent of the cost of their university education will be covered by the taxpayer. Only 40 per cent of the population go to university. On average they earn 60 per cent more income over their lifetime than the rest of us. It is only fair and reasonable—

Ms Claydon interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Newcastle will desist!

Mr ABBOTT: that we free up universities in this way. It will be a better system for universities, it will be a better system for students and it will be a better system for our country.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Again there is too much guffawing on my left.

Ebola

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (14:53): I have a question for the Minister for Health. Will the minister update the House on the steps the government is taking to ensure that we are prepared for a confirmed Ebola diagnosis in Australia?

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Health and Minister for Sport) (14:53): I thank the honourable member for Bowman for his question. I want to pay tribute to the chief medical officer, the chief of defence and the head of border protection—those people who have been advising the Prime Minister and me, other members of the executive and also the health
officers running public hospitals around the country. There has been national collaboration to make sure that our country is at the highest level of preparedness. I am very pleased to say that we have been able to build on the level of expertise of the doctors and nurses that we have around the country in tertiary hospitals that can quickly isolate and quarantine a patient if there is a presentation confirmed of Ebola.

We also have a world-class response at our airports. If people arrive from west Africa at one of our ports, we are able to identify those people, provide the appropriate information to them and investigate their activities in west Africa, particularly whether they have had contact with somebody who has contracted the virus or have been to a funeral in one of the three affected countries in particular. We can, with the support of the state health officers, quarantine those people if appropriate or conduct testing as may be required.

The other great capacity we have in this country is to be able to very quickly trace people with whom an affected patient may have had contact, to conduct tests rapidly on those people and to make sure that we have the appropriate medical response. We also have the assets and the capacity to provide very quick and rapid support to perhaps an island nation within our region. We would not expect healthcare workers to come from the other side of the world—from France or Belgium—to provide support to affected patients in our region. We would be expected to provide that support, and provide the support we will. We have the capacity to provide that out of Darwin. That is something we are able to do, and we would step up to the plate.

We are also providing support through the United Nations and other NGOs on the ground in west Africa. We are working with partners to see what further assistance we might be able to provide. I welcome the contribution of the member for Sydney, who at a press conference just a week ago, said:

We have to do everything that we can to make it as safe as possible for our medical staff.

The problem was that the member for Sydney then realised that she was live to air and quickly turned to camera and said, 'Can we start again?' because up until that point the member for Sydney had been critical of the government's response. It is quite sad that there is not a bipartisan approach. I thank the Leader of the Opposition, who has been able to tame the member for Sydney over the last few days. We will provide an appropriate response. That is the government's charge. (Time expired)

Higher Education

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:56): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to NATSEM modelling that shows that under the Prime Minister's unfair university changes a young woman studying to become a vet would owe over $437,000 for her degree, meaning she would never repay her HELP debt. Why does the Prime Minister want to saddle millions of Australians with a debt sentence?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education) (14:57): I am very pleased to have the opportunity to answer this question about the so-called NATSEM modelling, because I point out that part of the NATSEM modelling has simply assumed that the Commonwealth Grant Scheme reduction will be replaced with student fees—and many universities have already indicated—

Opposition members interjecting—
The SPEAKER: There is too much noise on my left and that includes the member for Hotham!

Mr PYNE: that there will be some courses where the price will drop and other universities, like the University of Western Australia, have indicated that they will have one flat fee across the sector.

Dr Chalmers interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Rankin that he is warned.

Mr PYNE: For some unknown reason, the NATSEM modelling also simply adds 50 per cent to that figure. So there is no credibility to the NATSEM modelling whatsoever. NATSEM is housed at the only university in Australia that has not fulsomely endorsed these reforms. That is the only one—the University of Canberra. Every other university is supporting reform of the higher education sector because they know—

Mr Shorten interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has asked his question. He will desist.

Mr PYNE: that we need to get more revenue for universities. They know that at the moment students are paying about 40 per cent on average of the cost of their education and the taxpayer is paying 60 per cent. University vice-chancellors know that these reforms will simply mean that students will pay, along with the taxpayer, about 50 per cent to get the best Higher Education Contribution Scheme loan in the world. They will not have to pay $1 upfront and not have to start paying back until they earn over $50,000 a year and even then they can only be asked to pay two per cent of their income.

So the Higher Education Contribution Scheme stays. Students from low-SES backgrounds will get advantaged by the expansion of the demand-driven system to more of the courses that they do, like at the University of Western Sydney, and use to get into undergraduate degrees. This is the largest Commonwealth scholarships fund in Australian history. The entire sector has been saying they want to support these reforms in order to have quality universities and to give more students the opportunity to go to university and do courses that will lead to jobs, unlike the current system where they are rewarded for simply churning students into courses, regardless of whether there are jobs at the end of them.

But do not just take my word for it. I am pleased to have the opportunity to repeat a quote from our friend, the shadow Assistant Treasurer. I can see it properly now because I have my glasses on. He wrote, in 'Recapturing the Nation-Building Zeal!':

… there is no reason to think that deregulated student fees will adversely affect poorer students.

How does that sit with the Leader of the Opposition's position? How does that sit with Labor's position? The truth is he has blown a hole below the waterline of the Leader of the Opposition. You know it, and your campaign is going nowhere.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There is too much noise!

Work for the Dole

Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (15:00): My question is to the Assistant Minister for Employment. Will the minister update the House on the Work for the Dole program in my
Mr HARTSUYKER (Cowper—Deputy Leader of the House and Assistant Minister for Employment) (15:00): I thank the member for her question. I can update the House on the Work for the Dole program in the electorate of Macquarie. I was pleased to visit the electorate with the good member recently. As the House is aware, the government's phase 1 of Work for the Dole is rolling out in 18 selected locations around the country, offering Work for the Dole placements to young people aged between 18 and 30 who have been unemployed for 12 months or longer.

I am pleased to advise the House that we visited the Richmond Club organisation in the good member's electorate and saw an innovative Work for the Dole scheme that was benefiting job seekers and giving them new skills. I can advise that, at that particular place, we saw Work for the Dole participants involved in a range of activities such as administration, IT, greenkeeping on the club's bowling greens and golf course, and general maintenance—a wide range of activities that are helping young job seekers move from welfare to work. I know the House will be delighted to hear that a number of job seekers have moved from welfare into work as a result of their placement at the Richmond Club. Also in the good member's electorate, we visited Katoomba and the great Blue Mountains walking trail, a new project just beginning with the support of the Blue Mountains City Council. It is a great project, allowing young people to learn new skills.

Recently I went with the member for Lindsay to visit a St Vincent de Paul store where job seekers were learning skills in retailing and warehousing. I visited the member for Forde and saw in his electorate the Twin Rivers Centre where people were learning hospitality skills, IT skills and general maintenance skills.

Work for the Dole is a great program. It offers young people the opportunity to learn new skills that will assist them on the pathway from welfare into work. Regrettably, as I get round the country, employers are telling me that many young people lack the very basic skills needed to get by in the workforce—simple skills such as turning up on time, being appropriately presented and knowing how to present themselves in the workplace. These are skills that people in the workforce, who have been in the workforce for a long period of time, take for granted; but regrettably, some young people lack those skills.

Work for the Dole is a great program. It gives young people skills. It allows them to demonstrate to a potential future employer the benefits they can bring to that employer's business, and it allows young people to give back to the community. We are all in support of Work for the Dole on this side of the House. I wish members opposite would support Work for the Dole with the same vigour.

Higher Education

Mr GILES (Scullin) (15:03): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to NATSEM modelling which shows that, under the Prime Minister's plan to saddle Australians with a 'debt sentence', a young woman studying to become a dentist would pay over $308,000 for her degree and it would take her 18 years to repay her HELP debt. Why does the Prime Minister want to saddle millions of Australians with a debt sentence?
Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Prime Minister) (15:04): Because we think universities should be 'free to set student fees according to the market value of their degrees'. That means universities 'will have a strong incentive to compete on price and quality' and that:

Much-needed additional funding will be available to universities that capitalise on their strengths and develop compelling educational offerings. The result will be a better funded, more dynamic and competitive education sector.

That, I say to the member who asked the question, is a complete and absolute answer to the question that he posed—and that is the answer provided by the member for Fraser. That is his answer. You do not have many friends over there. Come over here; come on!

They did think, when they heard he had been to the ANU, that was a union. But no: it was a university where he actually learnt—on this issue at least—some good sense. I endorse his words.

Building and Construction Industry

Mr TONY SMITH (Casey) (15:05): My question is to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for Employment. I ask the minister why it is important to maintain the rule of law on construction sites around our country.

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education) (15:05): I thank the member for Casey for his question because this side of the House does believe it is extremely important to maintain the rule of law on building and construction sites. Everyone in the House would have been horrified by the revelations at the royal commission—which have been appearing in the media over the last few months—of links to murders, extortion, bribery, threats to union leaders, threats to workers, and corruption and thuggery on building and construction sites throughout Australia, particularly by the CFMEU in Sydney and Melbourne. We have all been horrified by it and this side of the House believes we should do something about it. That is why we want to bring back the Australian Building and Construction Commission. It is why we want to have a Registered Organisations Commission to protect good union leaders—honest union leaders—from having their reputations tarnished by dishonest union leaders. It is why we set up the royal commission. You would have thought that you would get support for that from all sides of the House, but we have not. It was brought to my attention that there was an attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to get tough. Somebody recently showed me this news article; it said, 'Shorten's tough call on bikies'. I thought: oh good, the Leader of the Opposition is turning over a new leaf, the Leader of the Opposition realises that having a tough cop on the industrial beat is a good idea, but then I read the first paragraph. I was reading about Comancheros and the Rebels being involved with the CFMEU, turning up to building sites and intimidating workers, union leaders and bosses. It says:

Federal Labor leader Bill Shorten has demanded that union leaders outlaw the entry of anyone wearing bikie colours or badges into building and construction sites across the country.

So he is going to stop them wearing their colours at the building sites. That will fix it. That will stop it. They can still engage in thuggery and corruption, they can still do standover tactics on employees, as long as they are wearing the right gear. They have to take off their colours. Plain-packaging thuggery is fine but if they have their colours on, he does not want them there. They are shaking in their boots, Bill!
Mr Abbott: I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper.

QUESTIONS TO THE SPEAKER

Questions in Writing

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (15:09): In accordance with standing order 105(b) I ask that you write to the Prime Minister seeking reasons for the delay in answering a question in writing. The relevant question appears as No. 264 on the Notice Paper.

In accordance with standing order 105(b) I would ask that you write to the Treasurer seeking reasons for the delay in answering questions in writing. The relevant questions appear as Nos. 263, 265, 271, 272, 273, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488 and 548 on the Notice Paper.

In accordance with standing order 105(b) I would ask that you write to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance seeking reasons for the delay in answering a question in writing. The relevant question appears as No. 266 on the Notice Paper.

AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORTS

Report No. 3 of 2014-15

The SPEAKER (15:09): I present the Auditor-General’s Audit report No. 3 of 2014-15—Performance audit—Fraud control arrangements: Across entities.

Ordered that the report be made a parliamentary paper.

DOCUMENTS

Department of Parliamentary Services

Presentation


BUSINESS

Days and Hours of Meeting

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Education) (15:10): I ask leave of the House to amend the notice relating to the time and order of business for the sittings on Monday, 24 November 2014 and Tuesday, 25 November 2014 by omitting the provision for extra sitting time on Monday, 24 November 2014.

Leave granted.

Mr PYNE: I move the motion as amended:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the following:

(1) further debate on the motion moved by the Prime Minister in connection with the death of the Hon. Edward Gough Whitlam AC QC taking place in the Chamber between 9 am and 12 noon on Tuesday, 25 November 2014; and

(2) during the period from 9 am to 12 noon on Tuesday, 25 November:

(a) any division on a question called for in the House, other than on a motion moved by a Minister during this period, shall stand deferred until after the discussion of the matter of public importance; and

(b) if any member draws the attention of the Speaker to the state of the House, the Speaker shall announce that she will count the House after the discussion of the matter of public importance, if the Member then so desires.
Mr PYNE: For the benefit of the House, this will allow the parliament to sit on Tuesday, 25 November 2014, so that members might complete their speeches on the death of the Hon. Edward Gough Whitlam AC, QC in exactly the same way as we did this week. We think it is appropriate that that continue in the House since it started in the House, and that was the arrangement that the Manager of Opposition Business and I had made before. Until that debate is completed, we will continue to do it in the House.

Question agreed to.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Budget

The SPEAKER (15:12): I have received a letter from the honourable member for McMahon proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The Prime Minister's unfair Budget taking money from Australians and handing it to multinational corporations and big polluters.

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 BOWEN (McMahon) (15:12): This week the twisted priorities of the Abbott government have been placed in stark relief, there for all to see. Arguably, more than any other week of this government's life, the twisted priorities of the Prime Minister and the Treasurer, in particular, are there for all Australians to see. On Tuesday we had fuel tax day. The government decided, 'If we can't beat 'em, ambush 'em.' They said, 'If we can't beat 'em, blackmail 'em.' That is what they said about the fuel tax. The government had a very clever plan. They said they were celebrating it. 'We have a very clever plan: if we can't get the legislation through the parliament, we'll do it without the parliament's approval.' So arrogant and so desperate is this government that they have engineered a situation whereby, if the parliament does not submit to their will, they will be required under legislation to refund the tax paid not to Australia's motorists, but to Australia's oil companies.

The Minister for Finance, to give him credit, has been honest about this. The Prime Minister has been asked on several occasions about this and refused to answer and fess up that this is their plan. The Minister for Finance, I acknowledge, has indicated that this is the case. But then he says, 'Well, that's a matter for Bill Shorten and Christine Milne.' Well, no it is not; it is a matter for the finance minister and it is a matter for the Treasurer because they have engineered this policy. The Treasurer was nowhere to be seen on Tuesday. He did not have the guts to turn up to make an announcement about the government's plans here. He might remind people of his views about fuel tax. He might remind people about his views about poor people in Australia. 'We wouldn't want that,' said the Prime Minister's office—I gather. 'We wouldn't want the Treasurer reminding people what he really thinks; we'll just get the finance minister to do it.' But the finance minister had a very clever way of announcing this.

He said, 'No, no, no, this isn't new policy, this isn't a tax increase; these are revised implementation arrangements.' I am surprised he did not call the increase in fuel tax a 'reverse reduction' that they have engineered!
But we had a continuity of this Orwellian policymaking yesterday, with the direct action policy. It would be better known as the direct subsidy policy, but of course under this Orwellian arrangement we have 'direct action'. Direct action is now the climate change policy of this nation. But what they have done is create a great big money-go-round, with winners and losers. If you are a motorist on this money-go-round, you lose $2.2 billion. If you are a polluter, you win $2.5 billion. That is the money-go-round that this Prime Minister and this Treasurer have created. They decide who gets government support and the circumstances in which they get government support! That is the plan that they have cooked up. This Treasurer has not shrunk the state; he has shifted the state. He says he is ending the age of entitlement, but what he is doing is actually deciding who is entitled.

We have got a Treasurer who says, 'If you're a millionaire having a baby, you're a winner; you get $50,000'—no worries from this Treasurer. But, if you are a pensioner looking for fair indexation of your pension, it is 'No Way' Joe. You are a loser if you are a pensioner. If you are a company wanting a subsidy on your pollution, 'No problem,' the Treasurer says, 'Big tick. Cheque coming your way—$2.5 billion.' If you are a potential university student who wants to better yourself and study at university, without a crippling debt for the rest of your life, then it is 'No Way' Joe. You get a bad deal from the Treasurer. You get a big cross. If you are a multinational company embarking on profit shifting and tax evasion, if you are a multinational company shifting profit around the world so that you do not pay your fair share of tax in Australia, well, you have got a friend in the Treasurer, because he has got $1.1 billion coming your way. On the money-go-round, you are a winner. He has got a deal for you does this Treasurer! But, if you are a single parent whose child is over six, then you are a loser with the Treasurer. He is 'No Way' Joe again—because the Treasurer is in touch; he knows that children get so much cheaper when they are older than six! Their school uniforms magically become cheaper! What they need for their schooling is cheaper all of a sudden because they are over six! The Treasurer knows that and he says, 'No; you're a loser on the money-go-round of the Abbott-Hockey government.'

If you have got more than $2 million in your superannuation account and you want a continuation of what is unfair tax treatment, then the Treasurer is your man, because you are a winner on the money-go-round of the Abbott-Hockey government, because this government has continued the tax arrangements which the previous government put measures—modest measures—in place to stop. When this government came to office, it said: 'No. That's unfair. If you've got $2 million in your superannuation account, you deserve the support of the government.' The age of entitlement is over for everybody, but not if you have got more than $2 million in your superannuation account! But, if you are a young person who is unemployed, you are a loser, because you are not going to get Newstart. The Treasurer has decided. It is 'No Way' Joe again. He is not going to pay your Newstart. He says: 'No, no, no. You should become a millionaire and have a baby—that should be your plan—and then the government will step in and look after you.' That is the age of entitlement under this government.

We know that the government are addicted to moving money around, and they are doing it again this week, taking money off motorists and giving it to polluters. If their policy had at least some public policy justification, then we would have at least some respect for it.

*Ms Henderson interjecting—*
Mr BOWEN: Why don't you just have a coffee and calm down? Just have a coffee. If it had some policy justification, then we might have some respect for it.

But let us look at what the Liberal Party feel about their own policy and some home truths given to the coalition by none other than the now Minister for Communications, when he was not Minister for Communications; when he was a backbencher and he could tell home truths. He wrote a cracker of an article. I can see you are pensive, Madam Speaker. I am not going to repeat it, because some of the language is unparliamentary. I would not do that. I have too much respect for the House to do that. I will not repeat the unparliamentary aspects of the article, but there are some that I can repeat. Talking about home truths, he says:

… as we are being blunt, the fact is that—

He refers to the now Prime Minister as 'Tony'—

Tony and the people who put him in his job do not want to do anything about climate change. They do not believe in human caused global warming. As Tony observed on one occasion "climate change is crap"—

That is on the borderline of parliamentary, Madam Speaker, but I am going to let that one through—

or if you consider his mentor, Senator Minchin, the world is not warming, its cooling and the climate change issue is part of a vast left wing conspiracy to deindustrialise the world.

These are the people in charge, and this is what the Minister for Communications really thinks about them and their policy. This is the Minister for Communications speaking home truths.

This is what we know about the government's policy. There are plenty of economists who say it will fall way short of meeting Australia's emissions targets, and they are right. And I suspect the Minister for the Environment knows it. I suspect the Minister for the Environment agrees with them. We know what the Minister for the Environment thinks. He thinks the polluters should pay. That is what he told us many, many years ago. Now he says the polluters should be subsidised, because that is what is happening on the money-go-round. If you are a polluter and you are emitting carbon into the atmosphere, you get a great big cheque—$2.5 billion coming your way. Courtesy of the Prime Minister, the environment minister and the Treasurer, $2.5 billion is coming the way of Australia's polluters. And what do they say, the economists who have looked at this policy in great detail? They say that it will deliver 20 to 30 per cent of the required emissions reductions and that it would take $4 billion to $5 billion a year in extra expenditure from the government to achieve the ambitious target of reducing our emissions. I accept the government is not going to do that, because the government says it is not. What I accept, as a result, is that Australia will not meet our emissions target.

Opposition members: Shame!

Mr BOWEN: That is a shame, as honourable members behind me say, because Australia should be meeting the target which both sides of the House agree on. This government pays lip service to the target, as they pay lip-service to fairness and as they pay lip-service to proper public policy development. What they engage in is prejudice and a money-go-round in which average working Australians are the losers.

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for the Environment) (15:22): If you want to hear about a money-go-round, let me just run through the $30 billion which, when they were in
government, the Labor Party gave as part and parcel of their carbon tax to industry and firms in Australia.

Under us you get no carbon tax but you get tax cuts. Families get a benefit of $550 and they also get the savings of lower taxes. That is the reality. But we have just heard 10 minutes of ad hominem from the former Treasurer of Australia. You remember? Four consecutive surpluses?

**Government members:** Yes!

**Mr HUNT:** Maybe not! So let's just run through this because I think it is very important. They make all this noise about the fact that, allegedly, there are payments to those who produce emissions under the coalition's program. Well, if they reduce emissions—if they are farmers, if they are small businesses or if they are local operators—they will receive a benefit. But they gave $30 billion, no strings attached, to businesses and heavy industry around the country as part of the carbon tax money-go-round.

Let me start with the Jobs and Competitiveness Program. It had no strings attached: $9.2 billion! And these are the people they demonise: firms making steel, paper, glass, aluminium, zinc and cement. These are the very firms they demonise but they gave them the windfall of their lives.

Most interestingly here, there was a question asked—and I really want the House to listen to this, and I would love the member for McMahon to have the courage to face across the chamber—about the member for Fairfax. Yesterday, the member for Fairfax was asked whether or not he would receive any benefit under the emissions reduction fund. His answer was, 'I don't think there are any prospects that I am personally aware of, of that happening in relation to my companies.' However, I thought to myself when that question was asked: did he happened to receive any windfall benefit under the carbon tax? Surely, the member for Fairfax's company would not have received a windfall benefit under the carbon tax?

The advice that I have just received from my office in relation to the figures provided by the Clean Energy Regulator is that last financial year alone Queensland Nickel received $11.6 million. Queensland Nicholas received $11.6 million of free permits under Labor's carbon tax! It was $11 million for the nickel component and $600,000 for the ammonia. They received free permits of $11.6 million—

**Mr Bowen:** It was user pays. They paid the carbon tax.

**Mr HUNT:** Go on—say that again?

**Mr Bowen:** They paid the carbon tax—

**Ms Henderson:** They gave them the money!

**Mr HUNT:** And then you receive—hang on! We have the money go round! They have the money-go-round! And they talk about big polluters—these were the people who gave the big polluters, on their definition, $9.2 billion.

But it gets a whole lot better than that because, as the member for Corangamite has been rightly pointing out, they gave $5½ billion—no strings attached—to Victoria's brown coal generators. It would be one thing to say that we are supporting energy in Victoria. But the whole carbon tax was designed to punish, to demonise, to deride and to destroy, and yet they gave $5½ billion to Victoria's brown coal generators. Before the carbon tax even started, there
was almost $250 million to Hazelwood. There was $250 million in cash—in cash!—to Yallourn, almost. And there was almost $250 million to Loy Yang, in cash. And then it goes on each year after that, until the $5½ billion is exhausted. So one sector in one state, which is the very sector that they demonise, is given $5½ billion.

It is passing strange that one does not hear these words spoken in this House by that side. They were the grand givers of corporate largesse. They are the world champions when it comes to corporate largesse in relation to anything that has happened with regard to carbon taxes. It was a money-go-round on a grand scale. So we did get rid of that carbon tax. We said we would get rid of it. We campaigned to get rid of it. And we did get rid of it. They said they would get rid of it. They campaigned to get rid of it. And then they voted to keep it.

There was a certain press conference at which the member for McMahon was present, and that was in Townsville. He was part of the famous Townsville trio! And who was it who said at that press conference, flanked by the member for McMahon and the member for Port Adelaide:

The Government has decided to terminate the carbon tax to help cost-of-living pressures for families and to reduce costs for small business.

It was former Prime Minister Rudd. There they were, the three of them together, standing up there and saying they were going to terminate the carbon tax.

Well, we did terminate the carbon tax, but we did not do it with their help. They voted against it, not just once, not just twice and not even three or four or five times, but six times: three times in the House and three times in the Senate. Just remember this:

The Government has decided to terminate the carbon tax to help cost-of-living pressures for families and to reduce costs for small business.

They knew it was hurting families. They knew it was hurting small businesses. They declared before the 2010 election that it was not going to happen and they declared before the 2013 election that they would terminate it.

Mr O'Dowd: They terminated Kevin instead!

Mr HUNT: Well, after the 2010 election they did a dirty deal to vote for it. And then they wrapped up $30 billion to try to compensate the industries that they were demonising. Then after the 2013 election they forgot. They forgot something: that they said they would terminate it. Along the way, as the member for Flynn said, they did terminate a couple of leaders but they never terminated the carbon tax, and when we voted and we pledged and we worked to repeal the carbon tax they stood in its way. They stood in the way of Australians receiving lower electricity and gas prices.

And do you know what? They said, 'Even if we did terminate it, these prices would never flow through in lower costs for families and businesses'.

Ms Price: They were wrong!

Mr HUNT: They were wrong! In the September quarter, in the first quarter after the carbon tax was repealed we have had the largest decrease in recorded history in Australia with regard to electricity prices. The biggest drop in electricity prices in Australian history. I am delighted to give you some examples. The member for McMahon happens to be from New South Wales. Residential electricity prices under EnergyAustralia are 8.9 per cent lower; residential electricity prices in New South Wales under Simply Energy are 10 per cent lower;
small business prices under Simply Energy are nine per cent lower; and Origin Energy has said that, in relation to commercial and industrial customers, it is 15 per cent lower. Those are the exact figures which have been given to the ACCC and for which companies are liable under law. That is what is actually happening in the real world. They pledged they would never have a carbon tax and then they delivered one which hit Australian families for six. They also delivered a massive money-go-round of funds of $9.2 billion to steel, paper, glass, aluminium, zinc and cement firms, and to Queensland Nickel. They also delivered $5.5 billion to the largest energy firms in the country, the very firms which they demonised—brown-coal generators in Victoria. By comparison, we said we would repeal the carbon tax; by comparison, we said that we would reduce electricity costs; by comparison, we did what we said and we said what we would do and that is what we should be doing.

Now I want to say something about who is going to benefit under the Carbon Farming Initiative: the Bendigo Landfill Gas Project; the Ballarat Landfill Gas Project, in Wedderburn, Greenfleet and the Loddon Shire Council are hosting environmental projects. And if you go around the country: the Jack Scully landfill project; we have Cessnock and the Cessnock City Council; in Dungog and Port Stephens there are benefits in terms of offset programs; Biomass Solutions in Coffs Harbour; and in the Bourke Shire Council we have environmental improvements. It is the little sector that will benefit from us; it was the big end of town that always benefitted from a hideous carbon tax. (Time expired)

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (15:32): I spent this morning speaking with tax experts from universities and accounting firms in conjunction with the Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Treasurer, the member for Newcastle and other members of the Labor team. We have been talking about the issue of multinational profit shifting. It is a complicated issue which fundamentally comes down to fairness. The question we have, whenever we are considering how to balance the budget in this House, is whether we focus our reforms on those who can afford it or on those who cannot. The problem with this government is that every time they are faced with a choice between slugging someone who can afford it and somebody who cannot, they choose the most vulnerable.

When it comes to superannuation, this government wants to give to people with more than $2 million in their superannuation accounts and has, for the first time in six years, increased the nonconcessional superannuation cap from $150,000 to $180,000. Who is putting more than $150,000 a year into super? Well, probably someone who is a millionaire. So if you have $2 million in your super account, then you have benefited. If you have more than $1 million in earnings, then you have benefited. If you are a millionaire, then this government will put in place not the fair parental leave scheme that we have but an unfair parental leave scheme that will pay you five times as much as a minimum-wage worker. Yet, at the same time, this government is raising superannuation taxes on the millions of Australians who are earning less than $37,000 a year, two-thirds of whom are women.

The government is taking one dollar in 10 away from the poorest single parents. Do not take my word on that; that is an estimate from NATSEM, Prime Minister's number one modelling firm. According to the Prime Minister's number one modelling firm, the poorest single parents in Australia will lose one-tenth of their income. How would the Prime Minister feel if he were in those shoes? We know how he would feel because we know how he reacted,
when he went into opposition, at being forced to live on a backbencher's salary. Yet he thinks it is all right for those earning $60,000 a year to have $6,000 taken out of their pockets while they try to raise a child.

We on this side of the House have a different set of values. We are looking at the issue of multinational profit shifting because we are concerned that multinational firms pay their fair share. Multinational profit shifting is a straightforward problem. It is the fact that firms naturally want to move their revenues to low-cost jurisdictions and their costs to high-cost jurisdictions. Increasingly, as firms are integrating their supply chains and as we have greater vertical integration, the challenge of identifying a market price for items within those supply chains becomes greater and greater. It is a complex area of policy, but the yardstick as to when you are doing something is very simple. If it adds to the budget bottom line, you are serious about multinational profit shifting; if it takes away, you are not serious. Since coming to office, this government has taken $1.1 billion out of the government coffers and given it back to multinationals. It has given it back to some of the best performing firms in the world through measures such as going soft on debt shifting and going soft on offshore banking units.

The government is going to the G20 and saying it is serious about multinational profit shifting. That is music to our ears but, as the old Watergate line goes, 'Follow the money'. Unless they are adding to the budget bottom line, they are not fundamentally serious about multinational profit shifting. We on this side of the House believe that multinationals should pay their fair share and we believe that transparency matters.

The Treasurer in the past has been on the record saying that he supports transparency. On 20 September 2014 the Treasurer told the Financial Review:

Supporting greater tax transparency and information exchange is our best weapon to crack down on tax avoidance and evasion right now.

Well, if the Treasurer really believes that, he has a chance to put his words into action. When parliament resumes my private member's bill to bring forward tax transparency will be debated in this parliament. The Treasurer has an opportunity to support that—to bring forward the tax transparency from 2013-14 to 2012-13, to make clear that when the then Assistant Treasurer told the Financial Review in January that he might not proceed with this that he was making it up and that the government believes in tax transparency. (Time expired)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott): I call the honourable member for Bennelong. No, sorry about that—the member for Fisher.

Mr BROUGH (Fisher) (15:37): We have gone back to where we started from, Deputy Speaker. Sorry for confusing you. You are about as confused as the previous speaker was, it seems. We have just had a discussion on all things other than what the MPI was. I think it was actually more an address designed for his own backbench colleagues to show that he has some credentials in the area of economics, which clearly those who sit on the front bench who purport to be the shadow Treasurer and the shadow finance minister clearly do not at this stage. So we thank the shadow Assistant Treasurer for his insights. He was roundly applauded by the Prime Minister today for the common sense that he has previously articulated in the terms that he has written regarding higher education fees.

But perhaps I should turn my attention, as the members on this side have, to the question of the day: the matter of public importance which was so important that the second speaker on the opposition side did not address it, not one word! Yesterday was a monumental day
because it was yet another part of the puzzle which was the election commitments being delivered on by the coalition. In doing so I want to bring this back to what actually happens on the ground.

During the campaign, like many people on this side, we engaged with the members of our business community that were hurting very badly as a direct result of government policy in the form of a carbon tax—very real life experiences, where people's jobs were in jeopardy, where their mortgages were in jeopardy, where their businesses were in jeopardy. Some of those were trawler operators in my electorate who had to put up with costs not in the tens of dollars or hundreds but in the thousands of dollars for single operations. They would lose their gas out of their refrigerators and find that instead of having to pay a few hundred dollars or $1,000 to have them replaced, they were paying multiples of thousands—tens of thousands of dollars in some cases. As were the IGA operators, as were the butchers. I just want to remind the House of a couple of things that people said at one of those forums that I held. Here is one from Steve Carmichael from Upper Cut Meats up in Palmview. He said:

Most small businesses are struggling to keep afloat due to the high utility costs and the impacts of the carbon tax.

This has always been denied by those opposite. He said he felt as though politicians were not listening. I assured him that Tony Abbott, the Prime Minister today, was listening, and that we would deliver on that commitment—and we have done so. Now we see the biggest reductions in electricity costs since the measures were taken. But he wanted more. He wanted to have a chance to do something to reduce his own carbon footprint and to be rewarded for it. Direct Action will actually deliver that.

Let us just have a quick reflection upon what the Labor Party promised and what the Labor Party did—the actions that resulted in so much money going out of one taxpayer's hand into another and what we got for it was absolutely zero. We heard in question time today from the Minister for the Environment of $250 million cash grants, cash in hand, handed out to specific businesses who had to do absolutely zero for it—zero for the environment, zero measurable. That is so typical of those opposite. Can I bring you back to Pink Batts; can I bring you back to school halls and all of the other debacles which got us into the position that we are in.

Let us put that into absolute contrast—and I would ask the members of the opposition to address this when they get to their feet. You see, if you want to participate in Direct Action, you do not get a dollar until you actually reduce your carbon footprint. Let me say that again—it will be music to the ears of taxpayers and it will not be any surprise to those who have some economic sense: you do not actually get paid until you deliver. There is a notion that the opposition do not get.

So, what occurs? Take the Sunshine Coast regional council, who wants to build a solar farm—admirable. What they are aiming to do is to replace their own electricity needs with solar power. In doing so, if they can prove the case, they can put the money in then they can actually be reimbursed on delivery. There is a difference: get an outcome, get paid. When you start throwing money around like confetti you end up costing every Australian taxpayer more than $20,000 in debt. It is why we are having to borrow so much money today, not because our economy is wonderful, not because we are growing the economic pie, but because those opposite stuffed up. Call it as it is. They got it wrong, they are still in denial. I saw this in
1996 when we came into government and I am seeing it again. It is time for a rational debate, a debate where you participate instead of trying to live the lie that was the last six years.

Just now the shadow Assistant Treasurer talked about trying to get the tax take from multinationals. You did not do it in year one, two, three, five or six and it is highly unlikely that you would if given another chance. (Time expired)

Ms O'NEIL (Hotham) (15:43): Hasn't it been one of those weeks in politics where we have really seen the true colours of the government on display? On Monday the PM flagged an increase to the GST, a tax that will see every single Australian have their tax bill rise. On Tuesday we saw the announcement about the fuel tax hike, where the government has desperately gone around the parliamentary processes in order to increase taxes for every Australian that drives. On Wednesday we had the Prime Minister announce that every Australian taxpayer, again, will be slugged—this time to create a $2.5 billion slush fund that will go to the biggest polluters in the country. Those on the other side may not have a lot of principles, but they are consistent on this one fact, and that is that families around this country have things taken from them and big corporates and multinationals—and now big polluters—are the ones who get the big benefits. The decisions that we have seen this week are just a handful of literally hundreds that we have seen in the last year since these guys have been in government.

I want to go back to the months before the budget, because the budget I think we all agree is really when this government came out and showed us where its priorities were. We had endured months of this ridiculous and fact-less rhetoric about a budget emergency—a budget emergency that no-one other than those on the other side would actually suggest existed, probably because we left Australia with a AAA credit rating from all three credit agencies and one of the lowest levels of debt in the entire OECD. But, if we go back to the budget, again, we have had months of this baseless rhetoric, and under that budget emergency guise the Prime Minister justified what we think is the cruellest budget in a generation. So what did we see? What was the impact on families? We know that, due to changes to the family tax benefit, to things like the payments relating to child care and to the schoolkids bonus, families on low incomes will lose about one in 10 dollars from their family budgets—an enormous amount for those people who really do need to watch every dollar just to stay afloat. All of us have them in our electorates.

We know a family on about a $65,000 income will lose $6,000 of their budget. For a single-parent family it is roughly the same: one in 10 dollars gone. But, when we take the wealthiest Australians—those who probably least need the support of government—lo and behold we find that those in comparison are being asked to pay very little. In some instances it is a few hundred dollars or perhaps $1,000, which you will probably acknowledge in a much larger household budget is not going to make as much difference.

So that was families, but what about older Australians? Surely they would be supported by this coalition? But no; we saw changes to pensions where the indexation has been changed, leaving less money in the pockets of older Australians than they otherwise would have. But it is not just pensioners; any older Australian, like part pensioners and superannuants, has their seniors supplement taken away. So pretty much all older Australians are also under attack.

We have had higher education changes that we have been talking about in this last couple of days—changes that will see Australia revert to a nation of two generations ago, when
families had to make that cruel decision about which of their young children they would send off to university.

Of course we had tax increases associated with that budget; and, as consistent with the themes, those taxes are going to hit people who are worst off the hardest. The GP tax will see the sickest Australians—those with chronic conditions, older Australians, big families—pay the most under that tax. We see the same thing with the fuel tax. We know that all drivers will have to pay that fuel tax, but regional and rural Australians are those who will have to pay the most.

That is the family in the ordinary Australian side; but, when we look at the other side—the corporate and big business side—what do we see? Tax breaks for big miners. We see multinational loopholes that have been left wide open. We see, again, big polluters getting paid $2½ billion by the taxpayer. I really want people to understand exactly what is going on here. Labor tackled climate change by trying to get big polluters to pay; and, using the money that we raised from those polluters, we compensated ordinary Australians for the increasing cost. What these guys are doing is creating a slush fund that takes money raised from taxpayers and gives it to big polluters. It is actually astounding.

Apart from being so profoundly unfair—and I think that Australians will quickly see that this is the case—what we know is that direct action will not even work. Economists like Ken Henry, Ross Garnaut and Peter Shergold have all agreed that this will probably get us 20 to 30 per cent of the way there. So I ask the government: what is the cost going to be to Australian households and how much are you willing to burden them with the cost that will go straight to these big polluters? (Time expired)

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (15:48): I take this opportunity to applaud the government for delivering on two key election promises. We have scrapped the world's largest carbon tax, which has delivered the largest reduction in household electricity prices on record. We are implementing our Direct Action policy—a policy that we took to the election and which achieves emission reductions without slugging families and businesses with higher energy prices.

I also applaud the efforts of the Minister for the Environment. Despite every effort to try to block the mandate we were given by the Australian people at the last election, the minister has negotiated an agreement with the Senate crossbench to secure legislative passage of the $2.55 billion for the Emissions Reduction Fund. This agreement ensures that 170 local farming, waste and revegetation projects are not put at risk. These projects deliver around 10 million tonnes of emission reductions. This agreement also ensures that many more new projects, including energy efficiency in buildings, soil carbon and fuel-efficient vehicle fleets will also be able to benefit.

Whilst on this topic I would like to promote the great work of a company headquartered in my electorate of Bennelong. Hyundai Australia is in the process of trialling its first hydrogen powered vehicles. They have already gained approval to build the first hydro filling station that is solar powered, uses no carbon fuels and emits nothing. As a gesture of good faith the government has agreed to amend the Carbon Farming Initiative Amendment Act 2014 to provide greater oversight powers to the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee, improve access to savanna burning projects. We have also withdrawn the Climate Change Authority
(Abolition) Bill 2014 and funded the authority to undertake a review examining emissions trading arrangements in five of Australia's key trading partners and targets.

This does not mean that the Commonwealth government supports the carbon tax or an ETS. This is simply a review. It is not binding on the government. It is not our policy. The government's policy has not changed. We will not bring back Labor's carbon tax. The government has agreed to the review but not agreed to accept or adopt the findings. The coalition's approach to direct action includes the Emissions Reduction Fund, which is a major environmental program which has benefits for air quality, land management and agricultural productivity; and a program to reduce emissions.

The 2014-15 budget provided for $2.55 billion for the fund. This is available from the commencement of the Emissions Reduction Fund, to be committed in contracts by the Clean Energy Regulator for emissions reductions. As set out in the Emissions Reduction Fund white paper, further funding will be considered in future budget rounds.

Since February 2010 the Emissions Reduction Fund has been the centrepiece of the coalition's climate change policy. The coalition took this policy to both the 2010 and the 2013 elections. The design of the emissions reduction has been guided by three key design principles: lowest-cost emission reductions, genuine emission reductions and streamlined, efficient, low-cost administration. The Emissions Reduction Fund has three elements: crediting and purchasing, which are provided by the bill, and a safeguard mechanism which will be subject to further consultation before finalisation. The safeguard mechanism will ensure that emission reductions are not underdone by emission increases elsewhere.

The Emissions Reduction Fund will not create new government architecture. Instead, it will leverage and streamline existing structures and processes that are understood and supported by industry, namely: the Carbon Farming Initiative, to credit emission reductions; the National Energy and Greenhouse Reporting Scheme, as a basis for data measurement; and the Clean Energy Regulator, to administer the scheme.

The types of projects that could be supported by the Emissions Reduction Fund include: cleaning up Australia's waste sector; emissions reductions from the transport sector; the capture of coalmine gas; using alternative waste treatment facilities to stop the waste getting into landfills; capturing methane from waste water facilities at abattoirs and chemical processing facilities; improving industrial energy efficiency; energy efficiency improvements in the commercial building sector; and improvements in the efficiency of household electricity consumption leading to a reduction in household energy costs. (Time expired)

Ms BURKE (Chisholm) (15:53): I am very pleased to be speaking on this MPI today, because I cannot even begin to count the number of times I have said, 'I don't want to be part of the first generation in history that leaves our planet and environment in a worse state for our children than when we found it.' But sadly, this government is determined to make sure that I am part of the first generation to leave our next generation worse off.

The Prime Minister and his so-called Minister for the Environment—they got rid of the science minister, they probably should have just done away with the Minister for the Environment too, because it is an absolute oxymoron—have sold out our future in a grubby deal that will fill the coffers of large multinational corporations and our biggest polluters, and will do nothing—absolutely nothing—to reduce carbon emissions. Direct Action is a stupid
and reckless policy that will not make a significant impact towards addressing climate change, whilst simultaneously wasting billions of dollars in taxpayers money. Just planting some more trees is not going to save the environment from the actions of climate change. The Hawke and Keating governments succeeded in planting more than seven million trees between 1989 and 1996, but climate change is still happening. It is still real, and it is still getting worse. I know many on the other side do not want to believe that—I have listened to some interesting comments from some members opposite over this—but it is true. The science is in. One particular member lambasted the Bureau of Meteorology for not going back in data. For goodness sake! If you want to win a Nobel Peace Prize or a Nobel Prize for science, demonstrate climate change is not happening. That is my test to you out there: demonstrate it is not happening. You will get the prize straight away.

If the Palmer United Party truly thinks that they can somehow say, with a straight face, that they have saved an emissions trading scheme, then any credibility they may have had—which I think is stretching it—I am afraid, is completely gone.

What we have is a government that has done a grubby deal with the Palmer United Party to waste taxpayers money by giving it directly to big polluters—multinational corporations—paying them to try to do something they should be doing anyway, that they should be doing as part of ethical business standards as their corporate duty. And then they are wasting more money by asking the Climate Change Authority to conduct a scientific review of an effective emission reduction program, which the Abbott government will completely ignore. A great waste of money.

It is of no consolation whatsoever that this will not be the first or even the last time that this government will choose to ignore scientific advice. Malcolm Turnbull accurately described this as, 'A recipe for fiscal recklessness on a grand scale.' And, perhaps even more importantly, it is showing the Prime Minister up as the hypocrite he truly is. Last year the Prime Minister said 'picking winners' is bad for the economy, and he has consistently lambasted industry assistance as 'corporate welfare'. But Direct Action is all about picking winners and corporate welfare. While we watch our car industry go under because we cannot have corporate welfare, we can have it in Direct Action. It is hypocrisy writ large. The winners are the huge multinational corporations who will now receive taxpayers money to undertake pollution reduction measures that are already part and parcel of their corporate responsibility. The taxpayer and the environment are left behind as the biggest losers out of this awful deal as the government rolls out a massive corporate welfare package to big polluters. Former Treasury secretary Ken Henry has confirmed the Prime Minister's dirty deal would almost double the amount he has budgeted for. Ross Garnaut said that the minimum budget impact of Direct Action would be $4 billion to $5 billion per year. And again, the Minister for the Environment wants the Direct Action corporate welfare package to last for the next three decades.

The winners have been chosen, but who are the losers? We are all the losers. We all come last in the Prime Minister's pick for Team Australia. It is the mums and dads and families who are going to be paying, and the next generation into the future, because no action will be taken. We will not be reducing our emissions as we had been doing under the ETS. Every credible scientist and economist out there says that an ETS represents the most cost-effective option to reduce global warming. It is a plain fact that a corporate welfare system cannot
achieve the kinds of emission reductions that are required to tackle climate change. Direct Action, as said ClimateWorks Australia, a reputable organisation, sets a price on carbon and continuation of previous government policy would not contribute anything to the reductions we need. (Time expired)

Ms PRICE (Durack) (15:58): When reading the opposition's MPI today, one expression springs to mind: the pot calling the kettle black—especially when we have heard the detail from the Minister for the Environment about how Labor paid more than $30 billion to some of Australia's big polluters. In contrast, the coalition made a comprehensive range of commitments to Australians at the last election, and we are delivering. We said we would get rid of the carbon tax, and we have kept our promise. Together with those opposite, we all want to protect, preserve and sustain the environment for Australians now and for future Australians. At least we have that in common. Those opposite introduced a carbon tax, and if their intention was to reduce CO₂ emissions, then it has been an abysmal failure. The carbon tax achieved less than a one per cent decrease in emissions. But it did achieve some things. It pushed up the cost of living for Australian families and made it even harder to do business in Australia. Whilst those opposite's intentions were perhaps admirable, their execution was abominable. Why is that? First, we know it was an unpopular tax; second, it was championed by a very unpopular Prime Minister; and third, the plan did not work and the modelling was flawed.

Here are some tips now for Labor. First, learn to listen; second, check the credentials of your leader; and, third, most importantly, do your homework before announcing someone else's light-bulb idea. Yet again, we on this side are fixing the problem. Like everything we have inherited, otherwise known as Labor's appalling legacy, we are fixing it.

The Australian people wanted to get rid of the carbon tax. We got rid of it and we have delivered on our promise. If the other side get a chance, we all know they will bring back the carbon tax. The Australian people wanted lower electricity prices, which soared under Labor. We lowered them—again we delivered. We promised the Australian people an emissions reduction fund, which would lead to real actions, direct actions, to reduce emissions—again we delivered, but we are doing it in a way that is not pulling the rug out from under Australian businesses and families.

With the help of those who can work collaboratively, we shall protect existing projects and we will proceed sensitively. We will continue our record of progress and delivering on promises, and working with the crossbenchers for mutual gain and to build a stronger Australia. We on this side have our eye on the ball, on the ultimate outcome. That is what it is all about. Those opposite are stuck in the swamp and need to lift their heads above the waterline. The carbon tax is gone and direct action will help Australia to achieve the bipartisan, five per cent cut to 2011 emissions by 2020.

Our government have worked hard and have agreed to make amendments to the Carbon Farming Initiative Act 2014 to provide greater oversight to the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee. We have agreed to withdraw the Climate Change Authority (Abolition) Bill. We will fund the authority to review emissions trading schemes of five of Australia's key trading partners. But let's remember: that is just a review; it is not a commitment at this point.
Our side have demonstrated we can work with anyone—big business, small business, anyone—as long as we keep the big picture in sight, and that is exactly what we are doing. It is a shame the Labor Party have dealt themselves out of participating in these important negotiations. But we are not distracted. We will not waiver. Those opposite can rant and rave but it falls on deaf ears. We have delivered on our promises. We know the importance of working collaboratively. We have demonstrated that. We have a proven track record. We keep our eye on the ball and on the main game, and we will not be distracted.

It is worth repeating: we all want to protect, preserve and sustain the environment. We have now got rid of Labor's carbon tax, However, we have the emissions target to achieve, not overnight but we are working towards this carefully, sensitively and in collaboration with others, and guarded by a policy which is costed and capped.

Mr Husic (Chifley) (16:03): In years to come when all those on that side have moved on, shuffled off and left MP life, when they are asked by members of the community what they did to address one of the critical issues that affected the nation—climate change—what will their answer be? On one hand, they had their fingers crossed and, on the other hand, they had a gift of cash for big polluters and just hoped that emissions would be reduced. That is all they can say they did. 'We went from a system where we made polluters pay to a system where we paid polluters, where we handed cash over to them and just hoped that they might be interested in being in a system to reduce emissions.'

That is a false hope and we know it is a false hope because the figures now show it is clear they will not meet the emissions target reduction.

Ms Claydon: Not within cooee.

Mr Husic: That is right, as the member for Newcastle rightly interjects: they will not come within cooee of that emissions target reduction. What they will do is blow a hole in the budget, because billions will go and be transferred to polluters. They will build a drain into the budget through this.

The way they have set up the system tells you everything about this government. What side does this government fall on? Does it fall on the side of average Australians or does it fall on the side of big business? It is never on the side of average Australians. It is always on the side of gifting big polluters or big companies. They had a chance, for instance, when they came into office to deal with profit shifting by multinationals. What did they do? They turned their back on it and they turned their back on $1 billion of revenue. They had a chance, for instance, to deal with wealthy superannuants and change their taxation treatment. They turned their back on it and what did they do? They went to the low-income superannuants. They took way from low-income superannuants the only modest support given to them. They pinched that money off low-income people but made sure the big end of town was protected. Now they are paying the big polluters and subsidising them.

They do not care about any sort of meaningful action. What about subsidies? We heard, for instance, that this government was not into subsidies. So if you are working on a manufacturing line and building a car, you were guilted out of your job by this government. The Treasurer on that side of the House at the dispatch box dared Holden to leave the country, saying that the government was no longer going to support them but that they would support people who pollute; they will give them billions. The 50,000 whose livelihoods depended on a
viable auto industry in this country lost their jobs, but the big polluters will get the money. They will be supported in that endeavour. It is truly heinous that that is allowed to continue.

Again, every time it comes to making a decision in the interest of ordinary Australia, those on that side of the House are not there. They bring in a budget that attacks family tax payments. They bring in a budget that attacks people who have to go to a doctor by making them pay a $7 co-payment to see the doctor. They bring in a budget that will take money away from schools.

In the electorate I represent, $270 million will be lost over 10 years under their budget. The people I represent are the worst affected in Western Sydney—with $270 million taken out with this budget. Billions have been taken out from hospitals. I cannot even get a scanner to detect cancers in people in my local hospital. The money has been taken away. The money that supports those hospitals is gone. When people look for the money that they need in their local community for the things that they really hope will make their lives easier, it ain't there. But, if someone is going to be pumping out pollution and affecting the way in which our climate operates, there will be money there for that. This is the tragedy that is occurring. Average Australians will lose and the big interests win. The decisions of those opposite are basically causing all that. (Time expired)

Mr O’DOWD (Flynn) (16:08): I am pleased to speak on this MPI this afternoon and dispel the mistruths peddled by those opposite—and, believe me, I cannot go through the whole lot this afternoon, because time will not permit me. This government is delivering on two key election promises. The first one was to scrap the carbon tax. In scrapping the carbon tax we have reduced the household electricity prices. Queensland, which is my state—

An honourable member interjecting—

Mr O’DOWD: Pink batts is another story—another sad, sad story. It cost us in the billions. In Queensland, electricity prices have come down since the abolition of the carbon tax. Ergon Energy are down 9.4 per cent; PowerDirect are down 9.2 per cent; Simply Energy are down nine per cent; Energy Australia are down 8.3 per cent; Origin Energy are down eight per cent; EnergyAustralia are down 9.3 per cent; ERM Power are down 9.1 per cent; and AGL Energy are down 8.7 per cent. Need I go on? Gas prices have also come down. Origin Energy are down by four per cent; AGL Energy are down by 3.2 per cent; and AGL Energy and Origin in small business are down 6.4 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively.

We are implementing our direct action policy. Those on the other side do not believe in the direct action policy. Well, I can tell you that the people of Australia know what the direct action policy is, and that is why they voted for us at the last election.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr O’DOWD: They know and you do not know. That is why you are sitting on that side and we are on this side. Just keep that in mind.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr O’DOWD: If you want to keep acting the way you are and sticking with your policies—if you ever announce your policies, but they seem to be the same as they were last term—you will be on that side for a damn long time. There is no risk about that. I would like to be as certain about backing the Melbourne Cup winner next Tuesday!
In my electorate I have a very big company called Boyne Smelters, which is run by Rio Tinto. With the carbon tax, they were paying $15 million a year. For the RET they were paying $25 million a year. Since the GST they have been producing aluminium below cost because the market has fallen away, but these two charges alone—the $15 million plus the $25 million—has not helped their survival at all. I dare any of you on that side to go to the Boyne Smelters site and tell them how your carbon tax and your RET have helped the workers of Boyne Smelters. There are a thousand jobs there and they are all earning pretty good money. Those jobs would have been under a major threat had we not come into power and abolished the carbon tax.

_Opposition members interjecting—_

**Mr O'DOWD:** Come up to Boyne Smelters and tell the workers of Boyne Smelters about your policy.

**Ms Rowland:** You need to calm down.

**Mr O'DOWD:** I need to calm down? I do not need to calm down. I am fighting for the workers in my area—which you on that side should be doing. You say that the Boyne Smelters is a big polluter.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott):** Member for Flynn, it is not me saying that.

**Mr O'DOWD:** I am telling you that for the last two years—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Flynn, order! Member for Flynn, you might direct your comments not to me but through me. The use of the word 'you' is directing them at me.

**Mr O'DOWD:** If you get them to shut-up, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will be able to get on with my speech.

**Ms Rowland interjecting**—

**Mr O'DOWD:** There she goes—she is like a parrot; like a cockatiel!! Boyne Smelters have spent $500 million on a carbon bake, which has reduced their emissions enormously, and they intend to spend further money under our direct action policy. That will happen under our policy—not your policy.

_Opposition members interjecting—_

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Flynn has the call.

**Mr O'DOWD:** What I am saying is that you on that side robbed $40 million from that company.

_Opposition members interjecting—_

**Ms Rowland:** You are using taxpayers' money to subsidise polluters.

**Mr O'DOWD:** You are a joke!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The time allotted for this discussion has expired. I remind all members of this chamber that the use of the word 'you' is a direct reflection on the chair—and I might remind the member for Flynn that I am not joke. But he might give me the winner of the Melbourne Cup if he has a clue about who might win that next week—just a bit of levity as we end this sitting fortnight.
COMMITTEES

Australia Fund Establishment

Membership

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott): Madam Speaker, has received a message from the Senate informing the House that Senators Reynolds and Seselja have been appointed members of the Joint Select Committee on the Australia Fund Establishment and that Senators Back, Bernardi, Bushby, Canavan, Edwards, Fawcett, Heffernan, Macdonald, McGrath, McKenzie, O’Sullivan, Ruston, Smith and Williams have been appointed participating members of the committee.

BILLS

Dental Benefits Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Amendment Bill 2014

Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation (Abolition) Bill 2014

Returned from Senate

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

Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (16:14): Since this government’s election, a little over a year ago, we have set about restoring integrity and public confidence in immigration and border protection. We have done so on the overwhelming demand of the Australian people to ensure we retain sovereignty over our borders and hold the tightest possible control and grip on national security. The Australian Citizenship and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 is another stone in the foundation of this objective. As the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection has said, ‘When successfully managed, a strong border yields key dividends for our nation—in national security, economic, social and humanitarian terms.’

In relation to border protection, as a government, we have done what we said we would do. We are obtaining the results we said we would achieve. As a nation we are constantly confronted with many challenges. We are now facing challenges from those who wish to do us harm and from the terrifying concept of home-grown terror. The enemy within—who was born and raised in this great nation, who benefited from our education system, who may have been part of a local sporting team, who has now turned their back on the freedoms and privileges afforded to citizens of this great nation—is now prepared to promote extremism and bring harm to their fellow countrymen and countrywomen, probably the same men and women who they grew up with and went to school with.

Recent events within Australia and overseas demonstrate the evil of an enemy who are recruiting young Australians to fight abroad in war zones including Syria and Iraq. For me and other members of this parliament this a truly frightening and confronting reality that we
must all address. For this government this is a real and serious risk that we must combat. To do so this government is introducing a suite of measures to ensure that we are as well prepared as possible. We must remain vigilant. As a government we must be prepared to arm this nation, its security agencies and law enforcement officers with the necessary tools to protect our citizens.

In short, our ambition and our objective is for Australia to remain a welcoming nation to those who seek to come here legally to share in our prosperity, freedoms and beliefs. Our willingness to welcome new migrants to our shores is one of our strongest legacies. One of the most joyous occasions afforded a member of this parliament is the opportunity to attend citizenship ceremonies and to welcome our newest Australians to this great land. On these occasions we are humbly reminded why men, women and children from all nationalities and backgrounds choose to make and call Australia home. I join with the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection in saying, 'Australia is the most successful immigration nation on earth.'

Those who come here to pursue the great Australian dream have much to offer. Overwhelmingly, we are a welcoming country that enjoys the broad range of cultural diversity which shapes modern Australia. This year we celebrated the 65th anniversary of Australian citizenship. In this time we have welcomed more than 4.5 million new citizens from some 200 countries. This year alone, we welcome 5,000 new citizens.

By and large, these people come to join us, not to divide us, and to contribute with us, not take from us. From those who come here we ask for loyalty to Australia and that they demonstrate a commitment to share, respect and uphold our laws, beliefs, rights and liberties. And we should expect nothing less from new Australians or even from those who have called Australia home their entire lives.

We owe it both to our newest Australians and Australian-born citizens to be ever vigilant and diligent in our approach to national security. Prior to my election as the member for Dobell, I made a commitment to my constituents to be a member of a government that was serious about securing our borders. I did so knowing that previous coalition governments achieved strong border controls, and that we could do so again.

Securing our borders and keeping Australia safe remains one of the highest priorities for the people of Dobell. Within Dobell and across Australia people want assurance that their families, homes and communities are safe. In fact, community surveys received by my office from constituents indicate that one in two people identify securing our borders as their single highest priority. But, sadly, prior to the election, over a six-year period we experienced the Labor government relinquish control over who came to Australia to the people smugglers. The Labor government ultimately outsourced immigration to the people smugglers, who, in turn, decided who would call Australia home.

I have often conversed with local residents as to the merits of the coalition government's border protection policies. People agree that the most humane thing we can do as a government is to stop men, women and children from boarding unseaworthy vessels and making the dangerous voyage across the ocean in the hope of making it to our shores. Unfortunately, under Labor's failed outsourced immigration policy we saw the tragic loss of 1,100 people at sea. This is the number that we are aware of. Tragically, it is believed that there are many others not accounted for.
Recently, I was very privileged to participate in Operation Resolute, the ADF’s contribution to border protection operations through the Australian Defence Force parliamentary program. Participating in this program provided me with a unique opportunity to obtain a practical understanding of the workings of the military and the Customs and Border Protection Service and the implementation of policies such as Operation Sovereign Borders. Having observed and been part of Operation Resolute, I am in awe of the professionalism, commitment and dedication of the men and women tasked to protect our borders. It was during this experience that I heard directly from our men and women on the front line about their experiences when dealing with illegal boat arrivals. For some, the experience was quite harrowing. They found it confronting to be dealing with human desperation.

I commend to the House the men and women protecting our borders, for their unwavering commitment and their service to our nation. On behalf of all Australians, I thank you.

Our policies are not only saving lives and keeping men, women and children safe from toxic people smuggling, but also minimising the risk and harm faced by our border protection agencies. Australians want to know that our border security measures are contributing to our economic recovery, rather than draining and undermining our economic prospects. Australians want to know that those who receive Australian citizenship are decent and honest people willing to contribute to our great nation and play a leading role in forging a cohesive and welcoming community. We want all Australians, new and old, to embrace mateship and to live by the ideals promoted by generations before us. This government is immensely proud of taking the tough and necessary steps to secure our borders and equally proud of our contribution to multicultural Australia.

It was the Holt government that introduced the Migration Act in 1966 that dismantled the White Australia policy and increased immigration for non-European migrants. It was announced at that time that:

… applications for migration would be accepted from well-qualified people on the basis of their suitability as settlers, their ability to integrate readily and their possession of qualifications positively useful to Australia.

These guiding principles remain in place today. It was only when the Fraser government reviewed immigration laws in 1978 that selection of migrants no longer required the consideration of place of origin.

This bill amends the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, otherwise known as the citizenship act, to strengthen program integrity, underline the importance of connection to Australia and improve decision making. Currently under the citizenship act revocation may be considered in cases where a person has acquired Australian citizenship by application and meets one of the following criteria: one, where a person has been convicted of making a false statement or misrepresentation in relation to a migration or citizenship application or, two, where a person has committed a serious criminal offence prior to becoming an Australian citizen and fails to disclose it on their application and is later convicted of the offence after they have made an application to become an Australian citizen. If one or both of these criteria are met, the minister must be satisfied that it would be contrary to the public interest for the person to remain an Australian citizen.
This bill expands the minister's power to revoke citizenship when satisfied that a person became a citizen as a result of fraud or misrepresentation, by allowing revocation without a prior criminal conviction for fraud. Identity fraud is a major concern for the Australian government. Unfortunately, law enforcement agencies and the courts have limited capacity to prosecute all cases of fraud and in some cases, after having approved a person becoming an Australian citizen, new information may come to light questioning the legitimacy of the person's identity.

The amendments before the House allow the government to ensure that high community expectations of behaviour are maintained in respect of those who obtain Australian citizenship. Specifically, the measures include extending good character requirements to persons under 18 years of age. Unfortunately, there are instances occurring where the department of immigration holds concerns regarding the character of certain applicants under the age of 18. Age should not be a reason for citizenship to be granted where these concerns exist. These changes will allow the department to obtain police clearances for 16- to 17-year-olds and assess the character of people under this age. This amendment seeks to ensure that only people who demonstrate good character are eligible to be approved as Australian citizens.

As previously discussed, we are faced with the new challenge of home-grown terrorism and lone wolves. The government must be equipped to tackle this challenge. This bill provides that approval for citizenship will be cancelled if the minister is no longer satisfied of the applicant's identity or if they present a risk to national security. Furthermore, we are extending the maximum period of time by which the minister can delay an applicant making the pledge of commitment from one year to two years. This time period is a more realistic representation of the time taken for investigations into serious matters and ensures the integrity of our citizenship process. It will also ensure that decisions to cancel the approval of citizenship are not brought about by an inadequate time period.

Australian citizenship is one of the greatest gifts we possess. Australian citizenship represents the greatest freedoms in the world and along with it the most important of responsibilities. We all have a part to play in strengthening this nation and ensuring that our children and future generations live in a prosperous, secure, welcoming and tolerant society. The gift of Australian citizenship should never be abused or taken for granted. Those looking to join foreign conflicts and do harm to their fellow citizens in the name of terrorism should never be permitted to do so under our coat of arms. Those who have achieved Australian citizenship with improper motives should not be entitled to retain it.

Amendments concerning general residence requirements aim to strengthen the character test of those applying to become citizens, including the requirement to clarify exactly when the four-year period of a person's residence commenced. This bill also provides the minister with the power to set aside certain decisions of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in circumstances where the minister is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so and provides the minister with the ability to specify certain matters in a legislative instrument made under the citizenship act or citizenship regulations.

This bill contributes to a stronger and safer Australia. It strengthens the citizenship program's integrity and reinforces the importance for new citizens to assimilate and connect to Australia. As a welcoming and tolerant society I am sure all law-abiding citizens would join
me in saying that the amendments proposed by this bill strengthen our national fabric. We must remain resolute and stand together in the face of threats to our freedom and way of life. Every element of our national security regime, including citizenship, must defy attempts to damage and hurt us by those who despise our freedom and our tolerance. This is why I support a more sensible and flexible decision-making process in the granting of Australian citizenship.

I would like to conclude my contribution by quoting the father of the Liberal Party, Sir Robert Menzies, who in 1950 when addressing the Citizenship Convention stated:

…it is our duty to present to the world the spectacle of a rich country with a great people …

We are a rich country with a great people. This bill strengthens this position and ensures that we have a citizenship system with the integrity to uphold this message to the rest of the world. With this we can build upon our nation's success and triumphs and continue to welcome new friends to our Australian family.

As I mentioned previously, one of the honours of being a member of parliament is attending citizenship ceremonies. I am privileged in Dobell that I get to attend both Wyong Shire Council and Gosford council citizenship ceremonies. Nothing gives you as much joy as seeing the pride and gratitude on the faces of those who are taking the affirmation or oath to pledge their loyalty to Australia and become new Australians. We are seeing in my electorate of Dobell more people applying for Australian citizenship. They are coming from all over the world. In Dobell on the Central Coast we have a strong Filipino community and a Chinese community.

At these citizenship ceremonies we see politicians from both sides coming together. I attend a few citizenship ceremonies with the member for Shortland. We both sit there with smiles on our faces watching everyone becoming Australians. The pride shows, especially with the young children with their parents who are becoming Australians. They are all so grateful to become Australians. It reminds me of the song: 'I am, you are, we are Australian.' I commend this bill to the House.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER (16:30): Order! It being 4.30 pm, I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal

Safe Rates Campaign

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (16:30): Earlier today a number of members in the House made members' statements about the importance of the Safe Rates campaign and the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal. But 90 seconds is not really enough to do the importance of this campaign justice.

Government members interjecting—

Ms CHESTERS: To make the case for safe rates, and to educate those in the chamber who are heckling: road transport is the most dangerous industry in Australia. Our roads are a workplace.
Mr Frydenberg: It's not about safety!

The SPEAKER: The parliamentary secretary will desist.

Ms CHESTERS: I will repeat it for a third time for those opposite: our road networks are a workplace—just like this workplace or any other workplace—and it is important that all of us ensure that workplace is just as safe as any other. Statistics from 2012 show that road transport workers are 15 times more likely than any other worker to be killed at work. If this was a ratio that existed in a childcare centre, in a university or in any other industry there would be outrage and radical reform. Yet, because this is on our roads—because it is a hidden workplace, which many do not see as a workplace—it is not being addressed adequately.

That is one of the reasons the previous government worked with the industry—not just with the Transport Workers Union, but with the industry—to introduce the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal. Remuneration related pressures—particularly payment by results—and low pay rates force drivers to drive while fatigued, skip breaks, speed, overload and undertake other dangerous behaviours. Drivers quite often reported being under pressure from clients: clients are putting pressure on drivers to get to their destination more quickly than is safe. Economically powerful industry clients have commercial influence, and they demand cheaper and more efficient contracts from transport companies. Quite frankly, some of the contracts these drivers are being forced to drive are simply unsafe from the beginning. That is why there is a need for such a tribunal in our trucking industry.

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: There is too much chatter across the chamber.

Ms CHESTERS: The key to solving the industry's safety crisis is to look vertically through the transport supply chain and focus on the role of powerful and influential clients. That is why it is so important to bring industry, clients and the workforce together, through the union, to discuss this issue constructively.

Road safety is a major issue. It is a big issue particularly in country areas. Roads are the workplace of so many people in my electorate. Look at the tragic media reports of so many people who have lost their lives in road incidents involving truck drivers. The Calder Highway, unfortunately, has a number of black spots. Earlier this year, in March, a 33-year-old man was taken to hospital after a truck he was driving collided with a semitrailer. In Singleton, a couple in their 80s were killed in a crash after they collided head-on with a truck.

In September 2012, a victim who was only 19 collided with a truck near Bendigo at Marong, an area that is increasingly populated with more and more homes. This creates a conflict between residential drivers and commercial truck drivers. An elderly woman died after her car collided with a truck just north of Bendigo; this woman died just near Elmore. These are some of the many tragic stories that feature in our newspapers too regularly and too often. This is why it is so important that there is action.

Our roads are workplaces for thousands of truck drivers and TWU members and, like all workers, they deserve the right to go home at the end of the day. That is why it is so important our government work with industry and its members. (Time expired)

Parliamentary Friends of Forestry and Forest Products

Mr PASIN (Barker) (16:35): Two nights ago I had the pleasure of witnessing the beginning of a new parliamentary friendship group. Along with my fellow convener, the
member for Hunter, and the shadow spokesman on regional affairs and agriculture, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon, I was heartened to see the Parliamentary Friends Of Forestry and Forest Products reach to all corners of this chamber and, indeed, the other place. Members of parliament and senators, representing taxpayers from rural as well as urban areas, came along and showed they all—or most of them, at least—share the same view of the forestry and forest products industry.

It is a carbon-positive industry—an industry with enormous potential to meet regional and local demand for fibre, timber and paper products and one that will provide the economic backbone of many communities Australia wide. It was also pleasing to see acknowledgement that while the forestry and forest products industry is Australia's fifth largest manufacturing sector, directly employing over 77,000 Australians and contributing a whopping $22 billion in sales to the Australian economy, it can do so much more—but only if we get two things right. The first of those is that the policy settings must be right in order for the industry to grow and continue to transform to meet the demands of the future.

At the moment Australia does have advanced manufacturing capabilities. Making various grades of lightweight and coated paper for catalogues, newsprint and office paper, as well as cardboard and tissue, is not a simple backyard operation. These massive regional players have invested millions in reducing their reliance on both energy and water to produce vastly transformed products that are essentially made from wood fibre. As the future beckons, more and more uses for these natural, long chain polymer fibres are being found.

The forestry and forest products industries are central to two of the five pillars of Australia's economic growth: agriculture and manufacturing. It may come as a surprise to learn that over 200 common car parks can be made using wood fibre. In fact, when transformed into bioplastic almost the whole interior of a car can be made from a renewable, biodegradable and recyclable wood fibre. The fuel in your tank can also be the product of a tree.

I am proud to be part of a government that is working to get the policy settings right. The recent meeting of the Forestry Industry Advisory Council, established by Senator Colbeck, the parliamentary secretary for forestry, and the drive towards a long-term comprehensive industry plan with input from members of the Australian Forest Products Association are important steps in getting the policy right.

The second element that we need to get right is to take the political sting out of forestry policy, to find a path that all members of this House and the other place can feel comfortable with so that industry can plan and invest for the future without the shocks that can come from a short electoral cycle. The establishment of a parliamentary friendship group has shown that this is possible and I look forward to working with any member of this place or, indeed, the other place who wants to be part of the solution, not the problem.

In my electorate of Barker in South Australia the forest industry is one of the major economic drivers and employers in an area that we know as the green triangle. There are five major plantation owners tending around 150,000 hectares of plantation timber. There are several major processors including sawmillers TimberLink, Carter Holt Harvey and NF McDonnell; particleboard and laminated veneer lumber manufacturers Carter Holt Harvey; and tissue paper manufacturer Kimberly-Clark. Plantation management and forest product manufacturing employs around 4,200 people directly and a further 6,700 indirectly.
In towns such as Mount Gambia, which is South Australia's second largest town and my hometown, the industry provides almost 11 per cent of total employment or 1,225 jobs. The share of employment in smaller towns is even higher—Tarpeena, 25 per cent; Nangwarry, 22 per cent; and Millicent, 15 per cent.

The purpose of the Parliamentary Friends of Forestry and Forest Products group is to raise awareness of the issues facing the industry. I hope that this will be a vehicle for forest related groups to speak directly to members and senators, but more importantly it represents a chance to help get the policy settings right and take the sting out of the often turbulent political cycle when it comes to forest policy.

**Racial Discrimination Act**

Mr Giles (Scullin) (16:39): For me, the iconic, optimistic representation of modern Australia is that famous photo of Gough Whitlam and Vincent Lingiari. It captures a moment of great practical significance, especially to the Gurindji people. It is also a powerful and enduring symbol of how, as the member for Sydney said in this place last week, Gough Whitlam made room for all of us in our nation. So too, the Racial Discrimination Act, a significant achievement, a signature achievement of his government. Its birthday is tomorrow.

In passing this law, the Australian parliament made clear the standards by which we should treat one another. Forty years ago Senator Murphy, in his second reading speech, said: The purpose of this bill is to make racial discrimination unlawful and to provide an effective means of combating racial prejudice in this country.

Forty years on this should be celebrated, this should be supported and this should be reinforced. There is work to be done and leadership required to be shown.

While the impact of the Racial Discrimination Act has been transformative and enduring, significant challenges remain. In acknowledging the anniversary and especially in the shadow of Gough Whitlam's passing we would do his legacy a great disservice by resting on our, or rather his, laurels. Of course, only a few months ago this government was planning on removing vital protections from the act. Forty years on we are not yet a racially equal society and this is not good enough.

A few days ago a young woman was assaulted in Lalor, in my electorate. It appears she was attacked by reason of how she chose to dress. Many Muslim Australians are feeling victimised at the moment. Of course they should not be victimised and marginalised in this way or at all. This week, research released by the Scanlon Foundation highlighted this and other challenges to multiculturalism, while containing many positive findings, it should be noted. Today the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia has called for focus to be placed on fostering social inclusion and building community harmony for continued development of a strong, resilient and inclusive Australian society. I agree. In this context, in a speech given in August, the Race Discrimination Commissioner said all that needs to be said about the proposition that protections against hate speech be weakened. That is: If Australian society is committed to racial tolerance, this commitment should be reflected in our law. The law should set some civil standards of acceptable behaviour. The law should provide remedies for public acts of racial vilification. There should be no legal right to be a bigot.

Indeed though I think we can, we should and we must aspire to more than tolerance, I also believe now is a good time to think seriously about the extent to which the present provisions...
meet all of our aspirations towards equality. I ask myself: can we do better? In this regard I take heart from the spontaneous visceral rejection of attempts to license bigotry in the communities in the electorate of Scullin and around the nation.

This reaction can mean something more than simply a negation, and instead be a marker for a positive restatement of our values towards racial equality—cultural and legislative. Today is not simply the eve of the anniversary of the Racial Discrimination Act—that powerful statement of what Australia should and could be. It is a day on which we must, all of us, turn our minds to how we can best support social cohesion in Australia. Just as the Racial Discrimination Act enabled there to be room for all of us in our nation, today we must recognise that barriers remain to achieving both racial equality and social cohesion.

As lawmakers and as community leaders, this is pressing work for us to attend to in these challenging times. Let us ensure that our laws set the standards we should aspire to. Let us be heard, without equivocation, in standing up for a society in which everyone feels they have an equal stake.

Tamar River Recovery Plan

Mr NIKOLIC (Bass) (16:44): Can I say how pleased I am to be here today to update the House on the coalition's Tamar River Recovery Plan.

Mr Frydenberg: Hear hear!

Mr NIKOLIC: Thank you. The member for Kooyong says 'Hear, hear' and so he should because this project will make a real difference to my home city of Launceston and the broader north-east of Tasmania. In my view it is one of the most important promises we made at the 2013 election. So I was very pleased on 10 October to host the Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt, in Launceston. It was exciting to show him what we had achieved in the first year of what is a three-year, $3 million recovery plan for a healthier Tamar River. And what a contrast that is after so many years of Labor inaction.

Sadly, my two Labor predecessors in Bass had ignored the needs of our river, which is a tidal estuary. Some form of removal of silt has been a feature of the river's management strategy for over 100 years. Just five days before the 2010 Tasmanian state election, the Bartlett Labor government promised $6.65 million for a dredging program, a promise that was, sadly, never delivered. Labor had 16 years at state level to strategically address this worsening problem, but they failed to do so. Sadly, again, it is one of many promises that were not delivered. Labor Premier David Bartlett said he would not do a deal with the Greens Party before the 2010 election because:

… a back room deal with the Greens is a deal with the devil, and I'm … not going to sell my soul for the sake of remaining in power.

As history records, however, he promptly formed government with the Greens, in fact with two Greens members in his cabinet. And it was a cabinet that continued to ignore the beautiful Tamar River.

On 10 October, I very proudly took Minister Hunt up and down the Tamar on the Karmin, a boat owned by Karl Krause, in my electorate. I was able to show him some of the real improvements that we had made. Greg Hunt has been a strong supporter of the Tamar. He came to see me in winter 2011, when I was still a full-time candidate, and I took him for a run early on a freezing cold morning in Launceston, at 5.30. We stopped at Cataract Gorge, and I
knew he could not make his own way home from there, so I put a challenge to him to come up with $2½ million for the Tamar if we were to win the election! And, two years before that election, when he really did not need to be making such commitments, he made the commitment, and it is going to be wonderful for my home city.

During the 2013 election campaign, we added $500,000 to that promise, to have a look at the ageing sewerage infrastructure in the Launceston region. I was able to show the minister, on 10 October, what we had achieved. Much of the unsightly silt build-up in the Tamar basin, from two years earlier, had gone. We shifted 200,000 cubic metres of silt at the end of last year and another 100,000 cubic metres this year. What a difference that has made. The rowing course is once again cleared. We can run regattas on the Tamar River. The tourist boat operators can get into Cataract Gorge. They do not need to be giving money back to tourists because they cannot get the boats into the gorge. I was able to show the minister some of the riverbank stabilisation work we had done, work which means we do not need to redirect roads, at millions of dollars of extra cost—all from that promise he made back in that winter of 2011.

At the lowest tide this year, which was on 21 June, I was able to show the minister Seaport. Normally at low time what you see is a stinking mass of mud. Now, at the lowest of low tides, there is three metres of water above the mud. It is a beautiful area of our city that tourists can enjoy and operators can promote to tourists. I showed the minister the site of the two Green Army projects approved in Launceston—from King's Bridge to the Tailrace and from King's Bridge to Duck Reach. These projects will enable young people to gain much-needed skills and will make a real difference to the environmental values of these areas. So I say a sincere thank you to Minister Greg Hunt for his interest in and commitment to the Tamar River. I also thank Karl Krause, the skipper of the Karmin. I am grateful for the leadership of Mr Alan Birchmore, the Chairman of the Launceston Flood Authority, who said this on 10 October:

I'm thrilled with how we are proceeding and the allocation from the Federal Government is exactly the right amount of money and it came at exactly the right moment ... so we must thank the Federal Government through you, Minister, and also the Member for Bass, Andrew Nikolic, who gives me no rest.

We are making outstanding progress with the Tamar River that will restore not only its environmental values but its recreational, social and business amenity.

**Charlton Electorate: Domestic Violence**

**Mr CONROY** (Charlton) (16:49): It is a tragic reality that domestic violence continues to plague our communities. And, whilst efforts to bring the topic into the open are having a positive effect, our work is not done when it comes to stamping out this terrible crime. There are some individuals and organisations in my electorate of Charlton making a difference. Anita Barker, from the Toronto Aboriginal Community Justice Group, is a renowned activist within the local Indigenous community. She tells me that, some years ago, she realised family violence was not being spoken about enough within the Aboriginal community. Anita says:

When I realised we weren't talking about this, I felt that this was part of the crime.

So she created the Koori Love Shouldn't Hurt domestic violence forum, which is now in its fourth year of delivery. The one-day forum features panel-style discussions and guest speakers, some of whom are perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Community and service providers are also involved, raising awareness of support services available and the
process around reporting domestic violence. Each year, ambassadors are appointed, such as Aboriginal sportspeople and prominent local identities. They talk about how young men can become good partners and spread the message that violence against women has no place in the Aboriginal community or our society more broadly. Anita describes it as a 'having a conversation' within the Aboriginal community about domestic violence. She says that, when the aunties tell their survival stories, there is not a dry eye in the house and so many say that they simply 'accepted the violence as part of love'. Anita's goal is to change this acceptance—hence the name 'Koori Love Shouldn't Hurt'. It is a tribute to the Koori Love Shouldn't Hurt program that the Toronto Aboriginal Community Justice Group was nominated in the 2014 Aboriginal Justice Awards, which were presented at a ceremony in New South Wales Parliament House last night. I congratulate Anita on this deserved recognition, and I take this opportunity to express deep appreciation for the work she does in making our community a better place.

Of course, this is just one initiative that is helping raise awareness of domestic and sexual violence against women. The White Ribbon Day and Reclaim the Night events are familiar to us all, and the Westlakes Domestic Violence Committee is actively involved in both these annual activities. I will be proud to join the committee again this year to take part in their annual Reclaim the Night march, which will take place tomorrow at the Warners Bay foreshore. I spoke about the activities of this group in this place last year, and, in conjunction with White Ribbon Day, I took the pledge to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women. This was more than a personal sentiment. As members of parliament, it is incumbent on us to ensure our response to this issue is both strong and unwavering. Our laws must provide the most appropriate framework within which we can tackle this problem. When they do not, we must not remain silent about it.

Recently, I met with a young woman who fled a violent relationship, moving interstate to escape the abuse. Like many in her situation, she maintains contact with the father of her children in order to satisfy access arrangements. When her partner's intimidatory behaviour continued, she found that the legal safety net that is supposed to protect her—an apprehended violence order—could not be adequately enforced across state borders.

In the civil system, there are mechanisms to serve subpoenas outside of the jurisdiction in which the matter is going to be heard, and I have written to the Attorney-General to ask about extending similar exemptions to a situation like this. Policy decisions such as these, made both here and by our counterparts at a state level, have perhaps the greatest effect for organisations working in the social and community sector.

The New South Wales government has embarked on the Going Home Staying Home reform package, which seeks commercial tenders from organisations to deliver specialist women's domestic violence and homelessness services. Whilst the extra funding tied to these reforms is indeed commendable, the unfortunate consequence is that smaller organisations—such as the Warlga Nguurra Women and Children's Refuge in Wallsend—will miss out on funding because they simply cannot compete with larger organisations. The changes also stipulate that services are to be delivered across the board to women and children, as well as men. When so many women at risk of homelessness are fleeing a domestic violence situation, eliminating women-only services could be a very real barrier in a woman's choice to seek
help. I note the state government has made concessions in this area, and I applaud that, but, 
unfortunately, they do not extend to the Hunter yet.

Speaker, as lawmakers we have a responsibility to make sure our laws and our policies are 
helping stop the terrible crime of domestic violence. We must support the work of those 
organisations on the front line in our community. As the recent father of a daughter, I know 
how important it is to raise not just daughters but sons in domestic-violence-free 
environments so that they can go on and set fine examples for their children.

As Anita Barker says, not to speak about these issues is dangerous. But not to act, when we 
have an opportunity to, is unforgivable.

Bonner Electorate: Small Business

Mr VASTA (Bonner) (16:53): I wish to update the House on what the government has 
achieved for small business in my electorate of Bonner, what we are further doing to help 
local businesses and what services and initiatives are now available to businesses in Bonner.

I am pleased to report that my Small Business Forum, which I hosted with the Minister for 
Small Business, the Hon. Bruce Billson, on 14 October, was a great success. A number of 
business owners and representatives turned up on the night and it was a pleasure to make the 
acquaintance of so many new people. I also caught up with so many of my old friends and 
saw many in the room forge new connections over their shared passion for business. With my 
own small business background, managing and operating a chain of restaurants, I know the 
hard work and long hours involved in running a small business. It is easy to empathise with 
the daily predicaments business owners face.

One of the major talking points of my Small Business Forum was the need to protect small 
businesses in cases of misuse of market power and unethical conduct. Attendees on the night 
responded positively to Minister Billson's overview of the current competition review chaired 
by Professor Ian Harper, the first comprehensive review of Australia's competition law, policy 
and institutional framework in 20 years. I thank Minister Billson for his update on the Harper 
review, and for encouraging attendees to ensure their important voice is heard by making a 
comment or submission on the Harper review panel's recently released draft report. I look 
forward to seeing the outcome of the Harper review and for more positive outcomes for small 
businesses in my electorate.

Other important issues that Minister Billson and I addressed at the forum included cutting 
red tape for small businesses and helping employers grow their business and create jobs. The 
government's first red tape repeal day back in March was a major win for small business. And 
I note that the honourable parliamentary secretary is here in the chamber today. We removed 
more than 50,000 pages of unnecessary government regulation and legislation as part of our 
commitment to cut $1 billion a year in red and green tape costs. Our second repeal day took 
place yesterday and will mean even more savings and benefits for small business.

Of course, I must also mention the biggest win for the small businesses in my electorate of 
Bonner this year, and that was the repeal of the carbon tax. At my Small Business Forum I 
was extremely pleased to hear from business owners who have seen significant savings in 
their power bills since the carbon tax was abolished in June. Treasury has estimated that with 
the carbon tax gone, retail electricity prices should be around nine per cent lower and retail 
natural gas prices should be around seven per cent lower in 2014-15.
This is a great win for small businesses, particularly those who rely on cold storage. As Minister Billson shared at the forum, refrigerant gas prices went up by an incredible 400 per cent after the carbon tax was introduced. What a relief that this giant impost on small business is now dead and buried. Minister Billson also informed attendees at the forum, some of whom expressed reservations about the thousand-dollar GST low-value exemption on imported goods, that the GST threshold was a key focus at the inaugural small business ministers' meeting earlier this month. I eagerly await further progress on discussions over lowering the GST threshold, which will help many small businesses in Bonner against fierce overseas competition. I am pleased that small businesses in Bonner are also benefitting from new, existing and upcoming services available to them that are continuing to evolve and improve.

I thank the Wynnum & Districts Chamber of Commerce for coming out to the forum and inviting attendees to register with their Small Business Advisory Service. Through this free service, local businesses can access experienced mentors with strong business expertise, business and marketing planning advice, a referral service and a small business think tank and Q&A panels on selected business topics. I also thank those from the Manly Chamber of Commerce and Bayside Women in Business, who attended the forum. Manly Chamber of Commerce also does great work for small businesses in Bonner, while Bayside Women in Business provides local women in business with networking opportunities as well as assistance with building and running a small business. I have also been involved in plans for a new community oriented business hub in Wynnum that will be another great boost for Bayside businesses.

Many thanks go to Minister Billson for attending my Small Business Forum and to those who turned up on the night. I very much appreciate those who took the time out of their busy schedules to discuss with me and the minister the issues that are most important to them. I will continue to fight on behalf of all small businesses in Bonner and to assist them in any way I can.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the House do now adjourn, and it being virtually 5 pm, the debate is interrupted. The House stands adjourned until Friday 14 November 2014 at 11 am, in accordance with the resolution agreed to on Tuesday 28 October 2014.

House adjourned at 16:59
CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Petition: Casey Cardenia Community Legal Service

Mr BYRNE (Holt) (09:30): I rise to present an approved petition signed by 469 people. The petition read as follows—

The petition of the Casey Cardenia Community Legal Service draws to the attention of the House the concern about the federal government's decision to cease on 30 June 2015 the additional funding the centre was meant to receive. This cut in funding will lead to a loss of 1,144 hours of managerial work per year and would undermine the current assistance it provides to over 1,500 local people—mainly women—with family violence issues per year. We therefore ask the House to reinstate the funding of $100,000 per year for four years to continue all of its current operations including maintaining an office at the Fountain Gate shopping centre in Narre Warren.

The electorate that I represent and the immediate constituency is what is known as a growth belt area. It is an area that has many people from different walks of life who choose to make the area around Fountain Gate their home. The Casey Cardenia Community Legal Service services somewhere in the order of about 370,000 people. Many of those people are women. Many of those women are women who have been the sufferers of domestic violence.

I can recall the shadow Attorney-General was here before last year when we announced a four-year funding increase for this community legal service of $100,000 per year. The current location of the Casey Cardenia Community Legal Service centre in Doveton is not the most salubrious of places, I can assure you. What occurred through that funding from the previous federal government was that they were able to access better offices in Fountain Gate around Victor Crescent—it is a very good office—to provide the services that women desperately needed in my constituency. So imagine my horror when I learnt, particularly given that this area has the highest rate of domestic violence or close to it in Victoria, that a service that is desperately needed by women that have been abused—and effectively that is why they are there—to seek legal representation has the funding stripped away from them. It is quite extraordinary. This would then lead to a loss of 1,144 hours of managerial work per year and would undermine the current assistance it provides to over 1,500 local people who are predominantly women.

I cannot believe that a service that is so desperately needed in my constituency has had its funding cut so cruelly. We will continue to lobby until we get this funding reinstated to give the women the service and the protection they need in my area.

Parkes Electorate: Green Army

Mr COULTON (Parkes—The Nationals Chief Whip) (09:33): I would like to address the House today about the Green Army program, in particular the RiverSmart nature links, which is improving river health from Narromine to Warren. This project aims to control weeds and feral animals on adjoining public lands. It also means habitat continuity, overall river health is improved, the area is available for feral animals to seek refuge are reduced, wild fire risks are
reduced and areas set aside for public amenity are made more welcoming. Activities include weed control, plant identification and biodiversity surveys.

This project is being overseen by RiverSmart under the direction of Dr Bill Phillips. RiverSmart has done a wonderful job over the last few years in the Macquarie Valley. They have lifted the profile of the river, they have instigated programs to improve the health of the river and they have had some activities that have engaged the local community into what is one of the great natural assets of the Macquarie Valley—that is, the river.

The Green Army will also do a project at Tiger Bay Wetlands in Warren, which is a very innovative wetland on the edge of the town of Warren. They will extend the paths there and improved the signage. Warren really is the gateway to the Macquarie Marshes. This is another project that will give the general public, locals and tourists alike access to the river at various public reserves between Narromine and Warren; and, with that extra scrutiny from the public access, the ongoing health of the river is assured.

Another Green Army project that is in the pipeline in the Parkes electorate is at Boggabilla and Toomelah. Work is being done now in conjunction with the Moree Council and the communities of Boggabilla and Toomelah. That project will include some vegetation control and management issues around the Boobera Lagoon—where our two electorates meet, Mr Deputy Speaker. For those of you that do not know, the Boobera Lagoon is the resting place of the Rainbow Serpent and is one of the most sacred and well regarded places for the Gamilaraay people who live in that area. A Green Army project where some of the younger members of the Gamilaraay community can be involved in vegetation control and other work in that area will be very worthwhile.

Such, Hon. Dr Robert Bruce 'Bob'

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (09:36): I rise to speak with much sadness about the recent passing of the state member for Fisher, Bob Such. Robert Bruce Such was born on 22 June 1944 in Adelaide, South Australia. He grew up in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide and then attended Coromandel Valley Primary School and later Goodwood Boys Technical High School. Dr Such had a real passion for education and, despite having his first job at 14 years of age, he went on to gain a Bachelor of Arts with honours in economics and politics, and a Diploma of Teaching and a PhD in environmental politics at Flinders University. He lectured in politics, economics and environment at the South Australian Institute of Technology, or UniSA, as we now know it. His commitment to education was often very evident in his role in the state parliament, but before he even entered state parliament he had served as a councillor with the City of Mitcham, part of his commitment to serving his community.

Dr Such entered the South Australian parliament when he won the seat of Fisher in 1989. He was a member of the Liberal Party at that time. He resigned from the Liberal Party but continued to retain his seat of Fisher as an Independent in 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014. He was a formidable opponent, as I know firsthand, having run against him in the 2006 state election—although I have to say that, while elections can get very tense, every time I came across Dr Such he was a true gentleman and someone that had respect for all people. Indeed, we helped each other take down our corflutes, which does not often happen but certainly did in that campaign. During his time as the member for Fisher, he served as shadow minister for further education, employment and youth affairs, which allowed him to continue his passion for education. He also served as Speaker of the House of Assembly.
Dr Such was a very thoughtful and kind person, and someone who was very much respected by his constituents. He had a passion for his local area and a passion for South Australia. It was very sad to hear the news that he passed away on 11 October 2014, after being diagnosed with a brain tumour earlier this year. To his wife, Lyn; his sons, Derek, Darren and Adrian; his electorate office staff; and the people of Fisher, I send my sincere condolences. He will be sadly missed by so many people and he made a huge contribution.

International Brain Tumour Awareness Week

Mr RANDALL (Canning) (09:39): I rise to talk about an issue that is seldom talked about. As some of you may know and some may not, this week is International Brain Tumour Awareness Week. Certainly there is no known cause of brain tumours nor are there any proven prevention measures. The reason I rise to speak on this issue is to help spread the awareness of the devastating impacts that brain tumours can have.

I recently met with my constituent, Mr Keith Francis, who brought this matter to my attention. Mr Francis was diagnosed with a stage 4 brain tumour on his way to work one morning and by the next day he had been operated on and was set on a course of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. For the benefit of the House, a stage 4 brain tumour is the most aggressive stage of brain tumour a person can be diagnosed with. Naturally, Mr Francis's world was turned upside down within a matter of moments. To make matters worse, after taking some time off work to recuperate, Mr Francis was served his resignation papers and told he could not even go back to his office to collect his personal belongings, including photographs of his family. While Mr Francis's dismissal was deemed legally correct, it is arguable that it is morally wrong to dismiss someone who has just gone through such a life-changing experience, especially when that person has remained at work whilst undergoing their treatment as Mr Francis did.

I stand here today to represent my constituent at a time in his life when he has experienced little representation as he navigated his new path in life. Not only that, but I stand here today to represent all of those people who have suffered or whose loved ones have suffered at the hands of this terrible illness. Brain tumours are the leading cause of child deaths in Australia and kill more adults in Australia under the age of 40 than any other cancer. Despite increases in survival rates for sufferers of other cancers, the survival rate for those with brain cancer has barely increased in the last 30 years in this country.

Not only does brain cancer carry a high personal cost; it also bears a significant financial cost. Brain cancer is the most expensive cancer to treat per patient as it affects our most important organ. However, there is little known about brain tumours and only a small portion of cancer funding is allocated to brain tumours. Thankfully, there are weeks such as this International Brain Tumour Awareness Week to help raise the profile of this illness and to start the discussion.

Today that is my aim: to help start a discussion about brain tumours in the hope that one day we will know more about their causes. In addition, I hope to start a conversation about how to assist those in our community who have had this misfortune of dealing either directly or indirectly with this horrible disease. I speak on behalf of Mr Francis today when I state that he would have been lost without the understanding, compassion and commitment of a small group of volunteers who have also found themselves in similar circumstances. Just as we
associate the pink ribbon with breast cancer, I encourage everyone to wear a hat for brain tumour awareness between now and 1 November.

**Medicare Locals**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (09:42): I stand to condemn the government on its abject failure to keep its pre-election promise to maintain and support Medicare Locals as a deliverer of primary healthcare services across Australia. I also condemn the government for its failure to provide staff of Medicare Locals with sufficient guidance or information about the future of Australia's primary healthcare services sector and about the employment prospects in the primary healthcare sector once the government closes the 61 Medicare Locals next year.

Earlier this month I met with Anne Peek, the CEO of the South Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local, to discuss the future of primary healthcare services in my electorate. Anne and her staff, like so many Medicare Local staff around the country, have been hung out to dry by this government. Just before last year's election, Tony Abbott said in a televised leaders' debate, 'We are not shutting any Medicare Locals.' Unfortunately for Anne Peek, her staff and the many Australians who rely on programs run by Medicare Locals, this promise, like the government's many promises not to make cuts to education, health care and the ABC, has been broken.

The South Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local has, in just a few short years, become a key part of healthcare delivery in Melbourne's south-east. It provides a variety of services and programs in the region, including offering programs targeted to improve the health outcomes of refugees, Indigenous Australians, diabetics and elderly residents. The South Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local only has funding until June 2015. Beyond that time, what primary healthcare services will be offered to my electorate is unclear.

The government's treatment of Medicare Local staff and clients has been atrocious. It has cut the jobs of good staff and has failed to articulate a plan about what primary health services will be provided from July 2015. You would think that, for a government to cut a primary healthcare service provider like Medicare Locals, it would have a plan to replace them, but it is clear that this government's plans for primary healthcare in Australia are first to cut and then to work out the rest later. The services this government is cutting from South Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local will worsen health outcomes in my electorate and ultimately hurt residents of Melbourne's south-east. I call on the government to offer security to the staff and clients of Medicare Locals around Australia and reveal its plans, if it has any, for primary health services in my electorate and across Australia.

**Boothby Electorate: Sturt Baseball Club**

Dr SOUTHCOTT (Boothby) (09:45): I would like to speak on a commitment I took to the 2013 election for my electorate of Boothby. During the 2013 election I announced that a coalition government would provide $75,000 in federal funding to the Sturt Baseball Club to help pay for fly ball nets. I remember phoning the president of the club, Phil Robinson, and giving him that news, and he was delighted to hear it. Today I am pleased to say that commitment has been delivered.

The Saints have a long history, both in terms of South Australian baseball and also at Norman Reserve. This club was one of the earliest baseball clubs in South Australia and is
now over 100 years old, having its genesis back in 1908. After a long run in the South Parklands, it moved to the Norman Reserve in 1961 and has been there ever since. Sturt Saints have a strong reputation as one of the dominant clubs and they also have a few claims to fame under their belt. They run a great T-ball competition, one that my family have been part of on Sunday mornings. It is also a home for the Bridgewater Bulls, which are involved in a winter baseball competition and do a lot of great work in the area of men's health. The first Australian to be signed to a professional contract in major league baseball came from the Saints. He was signed by the famous New York Yankees, and four other Sturt Saints have followed in his footsteps.

I think that it is fair to say that in recent years the risk of fly balls at the Norman Reserve has been somewhat of a contentious topic. The field's close proximity to local residences and roads raised concerns about the possibility of fly balls being hit out of the ground and causing danger to local homes and traffic. Equally, I think residents were concerned that the $150,000 needed to raise those nets would be coming out of their council rates. However, the coalition federal government felt that it was worth stump up $75,000 and partnering with the South Australian government to fund those nets.

Being able to support local community and sporting groups is one of the great pleasures as a member of parliament. The coalition government is delivering on a range of its election promises for my electorate, both large and small. I have banged on long and hard about the need to upgrade South Road. That is the largest commitment, but there are a number of other ones in the area of the former Blackwood Hospital site and also the Kauri Parade Reserve. The new nets will reduce the risk of fly balls, deliver on the coalition government's commitment and allow the Sturt Saints to continue at Norman Reserve for many years to come.

Online Harassment

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (09:48): Last week I spoke in this chamber about the new ways that many are using technology to perpetuate violence against women—how men who want to control the women in their lives were now using smartphones and computers to monitor, threaten and intimidate the women in their lives. But technology does not just make it easier for abusive men to target the women they know; we are also seeing a clear trend in which the internet and social media are being used to perpetuate the community attitudes of gender inequality that enable violence against women to persist in our society. In the past few months we have had an ever greater visibility of misogynistic and abusive communities targeting women through online campaigns and social media.

The 'Gamergate' controversy has shone a spotlight on the abusive behaviour that women are routinely subjected to online. It is now routine for women who are outspoken on issues of gender to be subjected to abuse and threats of violence and rape, accompanied by the new and noxious practice of ‘doxing’, in which the home address and other intimate details of women are published online in a way that is designed to threaten and intimidate these individuals. The women who are subjected to this kind of behaviour are often left with little practical recourse. Social media sites are often slow to acknowledge that this material is problematic and even slower to take it down. In one situation a site argued that a victim reposting the abusive pictures and texts to draw attention to her situation had done so without the written permission of the author and so suspended the victim's account for intellectual property
infringement. It is appalling that, at present, intellectual property infringement claims seem to attract more prompt and serious attention from online businesses and communities than threats, harassment and misogynistic abuse.

Victims also face further barriers when taking complaints to more formal levels of our justice system. Caitlin Roper has recently written about the problems that many women face when taking evidence of their abuse to the authorities. She wrote that, despite her being subjected to violent abuse, threats and identity fraud from members of online communities, police trivialised her concerns and suggested that she change her approach by shutting down her online accounts, as though it were her behaviour, and not that of the cowardly perpetrators, that needed to change.

We should be clear that this kind of response is no better than 21st century victim blaming and no better than blaming women who are physically assaulted for provoking the attack through their dress or actions. We urgently need police and policymakers to accept that women are no more responsible for the threats and attacks that they are subjected to online than they are in real life.

To stop violence against women, we need to confront the community attitudes of gender inequality that enable it, wherever we see them. The first place we can do this is by calling out abusive behaviour, both at home and online, for what it really is. We need a justice system that is experienced and equipped to deal with the most extreme cases, and business and community members committing to tackling misogynistic attitudes and behaviours online more generally.

This week we saw the member for Bradfield provide new detail of the operation of the Children’s e-Safety Commissioner, a worthwhile initiative. But one needs to ask why our commitment to dealing with abusive behaviour towards Australian women stops when they turn 18. To tackle violence against women, we need to do it on all fronts of our society.

**Day for Daniel**

**Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan) (09:51):** Tomorrow across Australia we should all be thinking about Daniel Morcombe. Tomorrow is Day for Daniel, a national day of action to raise awareness of child safety protection and harm prevention. This year, its 10th anniversary year, the focus is on online safety.

We all know Daniel's story and that his parents are determined that no other family will have to endure what they have been through, so on this day we honour the memory of Daniel and acknowledge the Morcombes' effort to keep other children safe from harm. Everyone is encouraged to wear red and educate to raise awareness, promote a safer community, educate children and empower them to recognise, react and report. By recognising, children are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings; reacting gives them choices to keep themselves safe, such as running away; and reporting means telling an adult why they felt unsafe and establishing a safety network.

In 2011, Daniel's parents, Denise and Bruce, were engaged by the Queensland government as child safety ambassadors. Since then, they have established a child safety program currently offered in schools in both Queensland and Victoria. The program focuses on teaching children about personal safety and awareness, including cyber and phone safety.
In July this year, Denise and Bruce visited federal parliament to speak with members of parliament from across Australia on the importance of having the program recognised in the national curriculum. They believe it is vital for all children, teachers and parents to have access to this information. I was very pleased to have that opportunity to talk with them in person and lend my support to their plans. I am delighted that the program has since been backed by the Minister for Education and recommended for the national curriculum. This guarantees children will be taught how to deal with uncomfortable or unsafe situations, and encourages them to speak up about such issues.

The Morcombes have visited a number of schools in my electorate of Ryan, and indeed more than 300 schools and 100 community events in Queensland, to share their message of child protection. The foundation not only raises awareness of child safety but also provides free safety and education material to schools and families. The Daniel Morcombe Foundation has also been instrumental in bringing legislation for Daniel's law to the Northern Territory. When passed, they will become the first jurisdiction in the country to introduce a publicly accessible website which will include an image, physical description and regional whereabouts of convicted serious sex offenders living there.

Denise and Bruce Morcombe are truly an inspiring couple. They have been tireless in their dedication to child safety and awareness in our country. I, and I know all of Australia, cannot praise them enough for their perseverance and commitment to keep Daniel's memory alive and future generations of our children safe. Day for Daniel is an important day for all of Australia as we wear red and educate in his memory.

**Data Retention**

Ms MacTIERNAN (Perth) (09:54): The member for Ryan will note that on this side we are supporting your case by wearing red today. Over the last month, as I have been travelling around my electorate people have been raising with me their concerns on data retention, and I think many people will be horrified at the pre-emptory way in which these laws are being introduced into the parliament today, very much as we speak. To give you one example, Chris McCormack, who is a constituent, writes to me saying, 'I'm the owner of a successful small business of 10 years. I am a husband and I am a father. I oppose mandatory detention in Australia. The concept that innocence is presumed until guilt is proven is the cornerstone of our nation. I value my digital privacy. When I use the internet I want secure, private communication; I don't want to be surveilled and spied upon when I am not suspected of a crime. Mandatory data retention will be costly to internet service providers and the other technology oriented businesses such as mine. These measures are bad for business and bad for the economy.' He goes on and, quite rightly, says 'Stronger surveillance does not make us safer; it makes us less safe. The presumption that entities tasked with surveilling will not make mistakes with our data or face any type of corruption is not correct. As you know, corruption exists and mistakes and data often happen. They are, unfortunately, inevitable.'

These comments are very much reflected by people across the board in Australian society. Yesterday I went to a very interesting briefing with various industry and consumer leaders. They were absolutely worried about the potential for this legislation to fundamentally change our way of life and they point to the irony that, supposedly, under the justification that we need to preserve our way of life we are taking action that potentially will undermine our very culture and that very freedom that we hold so precious. Presentations were made by people
like Clinton Fernandes, from the Australian Centre for Cyber Security, who showed us the very great reach of this data and that this goes well beyond just preserving the phone and email records. Indeed he made reference to the potential for the Internet of Things to monitor every part of our lives. *(Time expired)*

**Eden-Monaro Electorate: Tourism Forums**

**Dr HENDY** *(Eden-Monaro)* *(09:57)*: On Tuesday, 7 October I co-hosted a tourism forum at the Cooma Council chambers with my colleague Senator Richard Colbeck, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, who was representing the Minister for Trade and Investment. I want to thank the Cooma-Monaro mayor, Dean Lynch, for the venue and thank Snowy Mountains Tourism CEO, Neil Thew, and the chairman, Peter Cochrane, for assisting in gaining a roll-up of over 40 participants. These included the mayor, Dean Lynch, and Cooma Shire Council officers Stephen Molloy and Donna Smith; Bombala mayor, Bob Stewart, and Bombala Council's economic development officer, Karen Cash; Snowy River Shire Council mayor, John Cahill, and general manager, Joe Vescio, and councillors Peter Beer and Colin Stewart-Beardsley; Palarang Council mayor, Pete Harrison; and Eurobodalla council's divisional manager, Andrew Greenway. Cooma Chamber of Commerce and Industry was represented by Kath Kelly, and Jindabyne Chamber of Commerce and Industry was represented by Christina Anderson. Among the business operators were Chandra Singh, Brian Coyte, Joe Bird, and Peter Cochran.

We had a robust discussion on the issues facing the tourism sector. If there was one take-home message, it was that the Australian operators face very tough competition from their foreign rivals and red tape, and that all levels of government must work to smooth the way rather than build impediments. Regulation continues to drain away the time and energy of operators, which should be put more towards devoting to their businesses. The impediments to employing people at weekends and on public holidays were raised. There is a big concern that they hold many businesses back. Operators also raised the seemingly out-of-touch culture of the Australian Taxation Office as well as transport issues and access to adequate communication services. I am working with the local community on all these issues.

The very next day, Wednesday, 8 October, I had the pleasure of attending the tourism industry summit organised by Bega Valley Shire Council Mayor Michael Britten in conjunction with Sapphire Coast Tourism. In this case, the government was very ably represented by my colleague the member for Riverina and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance, again formally representing the Minister for Trade and Investment. He spoke about the challenging yet exciting tourism environment, both domestic and international, at the pre-summit networking dinner. As I said, the summit was organised by Bega Valley Mayor Michael Britten, and I congratulate him and his team on putting together a very worthwhile get-together of enthusiastic, expert participants. One was Noel Whittem, manager of the Bundian Way project—a project that promises to deliver just the sort of natural environment project we are looking for. *(Time expired)*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Randall):** Order! In accordance with standing order 193 the time for constituency statements has concluded.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms HALL** *(Shortland—Opposition Whip)* *(10:00)*: I move:
That the Federation Chamber do now adjourn.

Breast Cancer

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (10:01): Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting women. It is estimated that 15,270 Australian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2014. However, it is important to remember that most women survive breast cancer. Breast cancer in men, while it is very rare, does occur, with 113 Australian men diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008.

Breast cancer symptoms can include lumpiness or thickening; changes to the nipples, such as a change in shape, crusting, a sore or an ulcer, redness, unusual discharge or an inverted nipple; changes to the skin of the breast, such as dimpling of the skin, unusual redness or other colour changes; an increase or decrease in the size of a breast; a change in the shape of the breast; swelling or discomfort in the armpit; and persistent, unusual pain that is not related to normal monthly menstrual cycles and that remains.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Australian women, representing 28 per cent of all cancers in women. About one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85. Although it can occur at any age, breast cancer is more common in older women. More than two in three women—that is, 69 per cent of women—are diagnosed between the ages of 40 and 69. About one in four—that is, 25 per cent—are diagnosed at age 70 and over. Nearly 80 per cent of women diagnosed with breast cancer have an invasive ductal carcinoma, while 11 per cent have a different type of breast cancer.

I think it is really important to reflect on breast cancer in this last week of October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I put on the record my support for all the work that is being done in that area. Tomorrow I will be hosting a breast cancer morning tea at Windale in my electorate and I have invited a number of women from throughout the electorate to attend.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of Professor John Forbes AM, who is the Director of Research of the Australia and New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group, which is based in Newcastle. The research that has been done by this group is cutting-edge. Professor Forbes has been referred to many times in this place—the previous member for Hume was a great advocate of the work that he does—and he has been given the title ‘Mr Breast Cancer’ because of the fine work that he has done. At my morning tea, we will have guest speakers from the breast cancer trial and Dr Susie Smith will be speaking at the event. I am asking people to donate a gold coin. In addition, we are going to have raffles and a lot of activities and the funds will be donated to breast cancer research.

Breast cancer is not something we can take lightly. The rate of cure of breast cancer and the number of women surviving after five years have increased. This will only continue if we have more research and people become more aware. The reasons survival rates have increased vary from the treatments to the fact that women are more aware of the symptoms and with early detection through regular mammograms. I encourage women to have their mammogram once every two years. For people in my electorate, come along and hear Dr Susie Smith speak and also hear speakers from the Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation. It will be a great morning and there will be lots of information.
Australian National University: Divestments

Mr RAMSEY (Grey) (10:06): Equities are traded every day of the week. It is the right and proper thing to happen. Institutions do not normally make grand statements as to what equities they have bought and sold. However, if they do, we can only assume they are making some kind of political statement, which raises the ANU’s very curious actions in announcing it has divested itself of a range of stocks for ethical reasons, without informing the Australian public as to what those reasons are. As I say, I applaud their ability to buy and sell whatever stocks they choose, but if they are going to slam someone they should have the decency and the strength to come out and say what those unethical transgressions were by the particular companies.

Two of the companies have significant investments in my electorate. One, Santos, is South Australia's only top 20 company and is highly regarded as a company. Santos has good environmental credentials, supplying most of south-eastern Australia's domestic gas and making a huge contribution to reducing national and global CO₂ emissions. Santos is one of the state's largest contributors of the arts. It is a major sponsor of the South Australian Art Gallery and a major contributor in the sports field. Santos is the most significant sponsor of The Tour Down Under, which is a wonderful sporting event held in South Australia. As most of the world know, the tour draws thousands of people to our state and should be celebrated.

Santos is a huge investor in tight gas in South Australia, discovering new supplies of gas now that we could never have imagined even 10 or 20 years ago. There are some who believe the Cooper Basin may be 50 per cent depleted after 40 years, and there may be 12 times as much tight gas in the form of shale gas as we have already taken out of that basin. We have to work out how to access it and Santos is expending significant amounts of money in developing the processes. Santos also has investments in tight gas in Queensland and New South Wales, where it is recognised as the most environmentally disciplined operator in the coal seam gas industry. It is not only underwriting Australia's future, but as I said, is significantly reducing CO₂ gases worldwide. While gas emits CO₂, it does so at about 50 per cent of the rate of coal, which largely is what it is replacing. It does not matter where the gas is used, it does not have to be burned in Australia; it still makes the same contribution to reducing CO₂ around the world. In fact, this is an argument I could take a little further except that I will run out of time. The company has good relations with traditional owners and is a significant employer of Indigenous labour. I am unsure what ethical transgression Santos has performed in the ANU's opinion.

Its decision to publicise its divestment of Iluka equities is perhaps even more puzzling. Iluka is a large producer of mineral sands including zircon. Zircon is used to line glass furnaces and to build high-temperature engines. It is used in electronics and is essential for space travel. I am not sure what is unethical about these products. Iluka is also one of the world's biggest suppliers of rutile, which is essential for the manufacture of modern optical equipment. Rutile is, in turn, primarily produced from titanium, which is used to make lightweight knee and hip joints, desalination plants, dental implants and medical implants. In 2013 Iluka won the Premier's award for social inclusion for its Indigenous employment program. In 2014 it won the Premier's award for environmental excellence for its work in rehabilitating the mine site at its Jacinth-Ambersia project.
I cannot find the missing link. What makes Iluka unethical? Unfortunately, the ANU have not deigned to inform us, even though they have announced to the world that Iluka is unethical. We are, as I said, all free to trade equities, including the ANU. I applaud them for doing so. Good on them. But, if they are going to accuse others of being unethical, they should have the intestinal fortitude to say why. Otherwise, they are simply bullies and cowards to boot.

Moore, Mr Brian ‘Chicka’

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (10:11): It is with sadness that I rise to speak of the passing of Brian ‘Chicka’ Moore and to pay tribute to his enormous contribution to Rugby League in this nation and particularly in the inner west of Sydney. Brian passed away this week at the age of 70, after a long illness. Brian was very much a passionate Rugby League man. Many people know that I am passionate about my support for South Sydney. Brian was just as passionate about his support for and participation in the Newtown Rugby League Football Club. When he began playing for them they were, of course, the 'Bluebags'; they were later known as the Newtown Jets.

Brian was a devastating player. I never missed a Newtown versus South Sydney game on the hill at Henson Park. One of the great experiences for kids was old-school footy at Henson Park in Marrickville, in my electorate. The King George V stand fitted hundreds of people, but there were thousands standing around and sitting on the grass watching Rugby League when Newtown had a home game.

Brian was a tall, hard-running centre with strength and speed. He did play for Australia, but many good judges argue that he would have been a permanent fixture in the test team were he not a player in the same era as people like Reg Gasnier, Graeme Langlands, Paul Sait and a range of very good players who kept him out of the test team. But he did play for New South Wales between 1963 and 1970, and he toured with the Kangaroos in the 1967-68 tour. He did not play any tests on that tour, but he was Australia's top try scorer—a remarkable feat, given that he did not play in the test. Later he became Newtown's last first grade coach in 1983 when they left the main competition. Newtown still play in the New South Wales Cup and are still followed by many loyal supporters. It is still a good day at Henson Park watching Newtown go around.

Brian was also a police officer, as many of the Rugby League greats of that era were. They did not get paid well enough to have Rugby League as their full-time job—so they had other jobs. He was a police officer and he was a mentor of many younger people coming through. Indeed, in 2008 he was inducted into the New South Wales police team of the century and in 2009 he was awarded the New South Wales Police Medal for diligent and ethical service during his time in uniform. One of the obituaries on the Newtown website says:

Arguably the finest moment of his career came in 1973 when he almost single-handedly helped Newtown to a remarkable comeback win over St George in the final of the 1973 Wills Pre-Season Cup. 'Newtown were down 15-2 at halftime and the heat was horrendous,’ says respected rugby league historian Terry Williams.

'They won 17-15 and that was largely on the back of Chicka. He basically took St George on on his own. In attack he cut the Dragons to pieces out wide and when they had the ball he became a road block.'
Chicka Moore was a great character. He very prematurely, at a young age, became bald and his figure stood out on the field. As a young man in his 20s he played 173 games for Newtown and scored 90 tries, and he was a great player and a great character in Newtown. I pay my respects to his family and all of his friends.

**Early Childhood Education**

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (10:16): What started in this place as a lone voice calling for us to focus on zero- to five-year-old children and battle against vulnerability is now growing in momentum. This year we formed the Parliamentary Friends of Early Childhood group, which identifies the important role of policy in the zero to five space. Why are we doing it? Because society's long-term economic benefit lies in our ability to maximise social development, and from social development comes, obviously, physical and economic capital.

We need all hands on deck in a high-wage, developed economy to be able to compete against lower-wage economies and to make sure that we can preserve the quality of life that we have in this country. We need all hands on deck and, figuratively speaking, all minds on deck. In a nation where we produce around 150,000 Australians every year without the skills to enter the workforce, we need to be looking with laser-like focus at the zero to five space.

I recognise that at the moment we choose a different path. At the moment we choose areas like pre-employment training, increasing school attendance, increasing incarceration capacity and working on adult literacy, but it is all too late and way too expensive. We need, as other developed economies need, to not just look at how much money we spend on 'parent care', where we put children somewhere while we can go to work, but look genuinely and intensively at childhood education from the age of 18 months.

Some children never go to school; they are homeschooled in highly capable families. The rest of us send our children to school at the age of six and, increasingly, to preschool at five. But there are 20 per cent of Australians with vulnerable children who need some form of educational intervention earlier than this chosen figure of five years of age. A biopsychosocial check of every child in the AEDI at the age of five is an important improvement by the previous, Labor government on what we were doing prior to that. But, honestly, we know now that when children are 18 months of age we need to be looking for vulnerability and to support parents in their complex lives where they are unable to give their children what you and I take for granted.

This is not about the state taking over. This is about recognising that, for every welfare dependent Australian, we face a $3½ million bill in health, pensions, incarceration, public housing and income replacement costs—$3½ million per person. The Minderoo Foundation and the Challis model in WA have shone a light on what can be achieved in outer metropolitan Australia. Teams work in a multidisciplinary fashion to identify kids struggling early and give them the top-up that they need in what is called a light-touch intervention. Let us be honest: when these kids are born, there is only a five per cent rate of disadvantage in this country, a five per cent rate of vulnerability. What do we do to our children to get it to 27 per cent in those following five years? It is what we are not doing as a community for those first five years of life.

We need to make this a welcoming additional service that people want to opt-in to. We have $30 billion of childcare money being spent in the forward estimates but, increasingly,
the increase in quality of training of staff is only the first step. Ultimately it is about what we can do to help these families who need that help most. Some of the most needy families never consider child care. I am sorry; it is not good enough to leave your child with grandma or extended family if by the time they get to school they do not know how to hold a pencil or which end is the front of a book. These children will start off on a 12-year school career of basically hiding their vulnerability through poor behaviour, and that is what rips apart classrooms. It makes it impossible to teach 28 children when three of them are throwing furniture through the windows or abdicating education the minute the parent drops them off.

This is such an important issue. The Minderoo Foundation today in Armadale in Western Australia has Peter Collier, one of their senior ministers, visiting and doing a case study analysis of the great work they do in Challis. Challis will not work everywhere. It will not work in remote Australia where we do not have the actual capacity to get those people on the ground for long enough.

The future is upskilling our childcare workforce. This has been agreed by both sides of politics as a really important area and the professional development fund this week is sending out up to $50,000 to every childcare centre that applied. We can do better in early intervention and we can make the zero-to-five space a great success in the OECD table rather than where it lies at the moment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Randall): I thank the member for Bowman for his contribution and point out that the Challis Primary School is in the electorate of Cannings.

High-Speed Rail

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (10:21): Australasian Railway Association held its high-speed rail bring it on conference on Monday in Parliament House. The major and most exciting recommendation was that a high-speed rail project linking Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne is affordable and practical. This would have huge opportunities for the cities and regional Australian towns on its corridor. It is a nation-building project and it has the sort of scope a government could be committed to with a bit of vision and leadership.

The project would not only bring improved connectivity between capital cities but it would also create realistic and exciting relocation and commuter opportunities for decentralising the population right along the seaboard. Imagine living and raising a family in Wodonga with parents working in Melbourne or Sydney and the kids attending schools or universities where ever they choose to and coming home regularly. This would grow communities that I represent in Albury-Wodonga, in Wangaratta, in Benalla. It would spur regional development that we absolutely need and it would make regional capitals grow to be the hub of rural and regional Australia.

This strategic project will make our large country smaller and it will reduce isolation. But unless we have a commitment to decentralisation and associated connectivity, we will only see further growth of our megacities and smaller disconnected rural populations in between. So this project requires us to think outside the budget cycle and requires a bigness of thinking. It is about infrastructure on a major scale and this should appeal to my colleagues opposite and to the ministers relevant. It is an infrastructure project.

To be successful, what we need to do is bring all levels of government, all persuasions of government and all our communities along the eastern seaboard to come and work as one. I
would like to refer to a recently released commission discussion paper which focuses on the potential impacts of high-speed rail to regional Australia.

I applaud the work undertaken by Regional Development Australia in the Hume region. Its chairman, Mark Byatt, gave a fantastic presentation at the conference. He focused on the benefits of high-speed rail to north-east Victoria and southern New South Wales and talked about high-speed rail stations in Wodonga and in Shepparton. But the really important statistics are these: major social and economic benefits outlined in the discussion paper include: $800 million in construction expenditure per year; $500 million in maintenance expenditure per year; improved accessibility with travel time from Melbourne to Wodonga of 70 minutes and to Shepparton 46 minutes; and 260,000 additional tourists moving up and down the sea coast. By 2065 there will be so many fewer traffic accidents and they estimate saving $12.5 million per year in costs. By 2065 there will be an increase of 2.7 per cent, or $948 million, to gross regional domestic outcome and all LGAs in the region will benefit. The figure that I have is an increase in domestic regional productivity in excess of $3,000 per head for my community of Wodonga, where the railway line is going to be, and $1,000 per capita outside of that, so an enormous increase in productivity.

High-speed rail has enormous productivity gains at so many levels, but it is going to take us working together. It is going to take the member for Western Sydney, it is going to take my colleagues from Victoria and it is going to take my colleagues from Queensland. South Australia, you could be part of this as well. We could have spur lines working here. What it is really going to do is say, 'Let's not make our cities bigger and more dense. Let's make our regional capitals strong and vibrant.'

The call to action by the Australasian Railway Association is clear: government to commit to high-speed rail, finalise and protect the corridor and establish a high-speed rail authority. But we need to work together. I call on all my members of parliament—Melbourne, I forgot that you were there—to work together in a really concerted effort so that by the next election there is cooperation from all sides of parliament, including us independents, saying, 'Yep, it's the way to go and we are committed to it.'

Wannon Electorate: Centenary of Anzac

Mr TEHAN (Wannon) (10:26): I would like to inform the House of a wonderful day I had the week before last in my electorate. On a beautiful, sunny day I drove to a very small rural community called Tahara and it is a historical old community. It is a little community which is surrounded by wonderful farmland and there is a strong community present in this little town. I went there to give them a grant to celebrate the Anzac Centenary. We had a wonderful morning and the grant will help them restore their avenue of honour. They have planted lovely claret ashes, and each claret ash is going to stand as a memorial to the servicemen who gave their lives in the First World War. They also are replanting a Gallipoli oak. One of the community members had it down near his shearing shed for a very long time because his grandfather fought in the First World War and brought a cutting of a Gallipoli oak back with him and it has been planted on the residence. Marcus Winter-Cooke has kindly donated this Gallipoli oak to be moved from near his shearing shed up to the Tahara recreation reserve.

The head of the recreation reserve, Howard Templeton, was there, Johnny Pepper, whose family have long been in the community, was there, and Marcus Winter-Cooke, also a long-term member of the community, was there. We had a wonderful discussion about how these
servicemen and servicewomen had made a wonderful contribution to the spirit of Anzac Day. We went inside the little community facility they have there and up on the wall was a commemoration which still hangs there from the servicemen, in this instance, who served our nation in the First World War. Prominent there, along with Sir John Monash, was Sir Cyril Brudenell Bingham White, who is buried at Buangor, and his memorial is a also a recipient of our Anzac Centenary grants. For those members who do not know, Sir Brudenell White was a formidable military historical figure of the First World War and the Second World War. He was very sadly killed in a plane crash not far from Canberra which took away an outstanding Australian life far too quickly and far too early.

I wanted to commend the Tahara community for what they are doing to play their part in ensuring that the Anzac legacy continues in that small community. Members of that community have come together to make sure that there will be a proper commemoration and a proper avenue of honour, and that the Gallipoli oak, which is a direct descendant of a Gallipoli oak, will continue to survive and flourish and will continue to be a lasting reminder to this small country community of the history of Anzac. That is something that that community should be extremely proud of. I say to the community: well done.

I also point out that we are undertaking a history, in the south-west of Victoria, of all those people who served in the First World War. As part of that, we will be recognising and commemorating those people from this tiny community of Tahara who gave their lives for our country, our way of life and our values—values that we still see cherished in this parliament today. To the Tahara community: keep up your outstanding work. You are a community that I, as the member for Wannon, am very proud of.

Social Cohesion

Mr Giles (Scullin) (10:31): This week in the parliament, we have some especially important reasons to be concerned about questions of social cohesion. We saw the release of the Scanlon Foundation's 2014 report in that regard. That paints a mixed picture, which shows there are real challenges facing many in our community. There have been significant experiences of discrimination and there has been some concern that elements of our multicultural fabric are not as strong as they have been or as they should be. Today, the House will shortly be debating significant provisions in relation to national security, which also gives reason for all of us to think about how we maintain a socially cohesive society in which all members have a real and equal stake.

In that regard, I rise to draw the attention of the House to the important work undertaken by settlement service providers in my electorate. Australia has a proud history of resettlement—a very proud history. While we have had difficult and fractious debates about immigration—and asylum policy generally—it has been pleasing to me, and I know to many others, that we have maintained a humane and decent approach to resettling people in Australia. We have well integrated programs with a very high level of cooperation between agencies and services, and we have wonderful, caring workers and volunteers who support people in need.

But this system, its workers and volunteers, are under significant strains. In that regard I was very pleased to welcome the member for Corio, the shadow minister for immigration, to my electorate to meet with a group of service providers at Whittlesea Community Connections, a service organisation in Epping. These issues are particularly important to the Scullin electorate because in the City of Whittlesea, most of which is contained in Scullin,
there are 960 humanitarian entrants and 4,353 family visa holders eligible for settlement services. This is a very large number of people. Service providers also estimate there is the better part of 1,000 people on bridging visas or in community detention. Again, this is a very large number of vulnerable people in need of support.

I am particularly conscious of highlighting the needs these people have. I was fortunate to be visited yesterday in my office in Parliament House by Timothy Martin, a representative of the Australian Medical Students’ Association, a group which has been doing some terrific work highlighting the health impacts of people who have had the experience of immigration detention. He drew my attention again to the very significant mental health issues for people, even when they are released into the community, and the challenge of supporting these people so that they can contribute to the community as they wish to. That is why think it is particularly important for people like me and the shadow minister to listen to the actual experience of those providing these services and to understand the real impact these services make on people's lives.

The case studies we were talked through were both challenging and inspiring, where we saw the workaday struggles of people—often with very limited English, often women with young children feeling very isolated, having a limited understanding of the social security system and often an inability to drive a car, which is difficult in many areas of my electorate where public transport provision is limited—and we saw the way in which volunteers, of whom there are over 250, many of them former asylum-seekers, are able to support them in navigating their way through their lives.

I spoke briefly about the challenges. A big challenge is that, within this community of people being helped, there are now two classes. There is also the very significant issue of the denial of family reunion. This is an issue of concern to mental health experts. It has been highlighted as a particular concern, as something which is particularly damaging to people's ability to find their feet and to resume their lives in Australia, in the community. From listening to these people's stories, I developed a much better understanding of how the system has been working, how it has been engaging volunteers and how it has been building social cohesion and social integration. It is of concern to me that this work has not been sufficiently highlighted. So I am pleased to have had this opportunity to raise some of the work that has been done by Whittlesea Community Connections and its many volunteers, and to take this opportunity to say thank you to all at that organisation, in particular Kate O’Sullivan, Peta Fualau and the wonderful volunteers. Your work is vitally important and deserves to be better understood and better supported.

4Tracks4Kids

Mr LAUNDY (Reid) (10:36): If you are in any way interested in horseracing—and let's face it, next week there are not many of us who are not—you would know the Callander name. The Callander family have been involved in horseracing in this country for a long time, predominantly through the pioneering work of Ken Callander, and of late his son Richard has followed him into the TVN TV arena. The Callander family and my family go back a long way and Richard lives in my electorate.

Four or five years ago he was on a panel on TVN, and he got an email from a New Zealand viewer when the soccer World Cup was on asking his opinion of whether New Zealand could draw or beat Italy. Richie, being Richie, said that if they beat Italy he would retire from TV
for good and if they drew he would walk between the four racetracks in Sydney—Warwick Farm, Rosehill, Canterbury and Randwick. Lo and behold, New Zealand drew with Italy. Richie, being Richie—he not only has a big heart, but a big girth to go with it, so you do not understand what a challenge this would be, 57 kilometres on the odometer—set about honouring his word. But he took it one step further: he started a charity. With the help of his amazing wife Kaye, his two beautiful daughters Brooke and Jess and some other close mates, he formed 4Track4Kids.

Later that year he commenced his first walk—and he made it. I did not think he would, but he made it. He got the help of TVN, Toyota, the Australian Turf Club and some high-profile personalities. I have now done this with Richard and the team three or four times and my father has very kindly donated to all these wonderful causes. He had people of the ilk of Daniel Geale, the world middleweight boxing champion—who obviously walked the 57 kilometres a lot easier than Richie and myself—and Johnny Ruffo, who would be known to a lot of our younger female members of parliament and to my daughters especially as a famous Home and Away actor, a singer, you name it, a lovely, lovely guy. And a heap of jockeys and trainers put their shoulders to the wheel.

So far, in the years that he has done it, he has raised $3 million—and the best thing about this charity is that every cent goes to the front line. Through the hard work of Kaye, his daughters, Richie and his board nothing goes to administration costs. The money goes predominantly to the children's hospital networks throughout New South Wales.

This year it will be particularly important and, with next week fast approaching—obviously a big week of horseracing—the walk has been renamed 'A Walk for Nathan', in honour of Nathan Berry. Nathan Berry tragically died in April. He got married in February and two months later, while he was jockeying in Singapore, died of Norse syndrome, a very rare form of epilepsy. In fact, he is the first ever to die from it in this country. He leaves behind his beautiful wife of two months, Whitney, as well as his twin brother, Tommy, who is also a jockey and was also walking for us on this day.

We raised $500,000 on the day. Richard had it well organised: the ATC gave us the finishing straight at Randwick racecourse and we walked down it in between races and did a big cheque presentation. We did some media and then, when we thought we had the 57 kilometres nailed, we turned around and walked up this never-ending hill, because the children's hospital is at the top of the racecourse, beyond the back straight. What you do not need after stopping at the end of 57 kilometres is to restart and walk another kilometre up a hill, but we did it. The people at Darley opened up their doors afterwards for a big barbecue, all at their cost. It was well and truly a great place to be to have a beer with a lot of other wonderful personalities.

To Tommy Berry, a special mention. Next Saturday is obviously Derby Day. It will be a very emotional week: last year he and his brother were both riding in the big races of the week but this week he will do it alone. I know we have seen some amazing scenes in racing—cast your mind back to Damien Oliver crossing the line and winning the Melbourne Cup a few weeks after his brother had been killed—and this will be another one of those occasions.

I would like to pass on my best wishes to Whitney, his beautiful wife; I hope that this week holds many fond memories for you. To Tommy: I wish you good luck. To Richard, Kaye, Brooke and Jess and to all involved with 4 Tracks 4 Kids: it is a wonderful initiative; long
may it last and long may you raise truckloads of dollars. If anyone is interested in the story of Nathan Berry, I know that Tara Brown is doing a story on it this Sunday night on 60 Minutes.

**Lalor Electorate: Lalor Heroes**

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (10:41): Recently, I had the honour of holding my inaugural Lalor Heroes awards night. In my own history, I owe an enormous debt to people who volunteer in our community. Since becoming the member for Lalor, my knowledge and understanding of those who provide service to our vibrant community is deepening.

There is an incredible breadth and depth of community activities supported by passionate people. In Lalor, there are many hundreds who give of themselves to create interest in worthwhile pursuits that ultimately create our great community spirit. I think it is fitting that these people be recognised for their valued contributions, without which our community would be so much poorer in many ways. That is why I decided to initiate and dedicate an award to those very giving people who value community spirit enough to make a considerable contribution.

There was an overwhelming response from sporting and community groups nominating their heroes. The event was well attended by the recipients, their families, friends and by those who nominated them. I paid tribute to each and every recipient on that night and I pay tribute to them again today in this chamber. The sporting and community Lalor Heroes for this year are: Angela Broadbent, for services to the Werribee Softball Association; Ed Cachia, for services to Werribee Centrals Sports and Youth Club; John Campbell, for services to the Wyndham Rotary Club; Peter Gavaghan, for services to the Wyndham Track and Field Club; Brian Geary, for services to the Werribee Plains District scouts; Errol Hart, for services to the Wyndham Track and Field Club; Sharon Jurisic, for services to the Wyndham Community and Education Centre; Jordan Morgan, for services to the Werribee Warriors BMX Club; Bev Morrissey, for services to the Point Cook coffee group; Mario Piovesan, for services to the Werribee Orchid Club; Helen Powley, for services to the Point Cook Evening VIEW Club; Daniel Ramadu, for services to St Thomas Anglican Church; Pat Scanlon, for services to UnitingCare support and housing; Robert 'Bob' Stevens, for services to the Iramoo Softball Club; Vince Taylor, for services to the Wyndham City Swimming Club; Kerry Tuxworth, for services to the Glen Orden Sports Club; and Mae Sie Win, for services to the Wyndham Community and Education Centre.

Each and every one of these people are impressive and worthy recipients of the Lalor Heroes award. The interesting thing that I have observed in my community is we have so many active members who do not seek acknowledgement, so I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to pay tribute to their great work.

As the school year draws to an end, I will be paying tribute to the Lalor Heroes of our school communities as well. As a past teacher and principal, I have seen firsthand how valuable volunteers are to our schools. The evening went surprisingly well, given it was the first time we have pulled off such an event, and I made a special appeal that evening to the local community to ensure that we have local nominees in the Australian honours. Last year there was one recipient of an Australian honour from the electorate of Lalor. I think it does our community a disservice that there were so few nominated and I have made a general call to the population to ensure that we change that—that we go from our Lalor Heroes awards and our local government awards for citizenship and ensure that those people are put forward...
to the higher level of the Australian awards. Of course, I look forward to hosting the Lalor Heroes awards again in 2015 and would ask people to bear in mind this award as they travel across the year in their community groups, whether they be about community action, sport or the schools in my electorate.

**Medical Research**

*Mr IRONS (Swan) (10:46):* As members of this place know, investment in our health system and in particular in medical research to cure those diseases that are currently incurable is the centrepiece of this government’s health policy platform and is a policy that I fully endorse. In the federal budget, this government developed a framework that will enable an unprecedented $20 billion Medical Research Future Fund to be established, which will build a better future for Australian medical researchers and for better health care. Yesterday I also welcomed the announcement by the Minister for Health, Peter Dutton, that there will be a review of independent medical research institutes. The aim of the review is to make recommendations for improving the viability and competitiveness of these institutes and to determine their ability to respond to the opportunities presented by the implementation of this future fund. As a member of parliament, I support ensuring that government-led research via the future fund and other funding measures is targeted towards those diseases that have been identified as being responsible for a high death rate in Australia and those diseases where investment in preventative strategies could help stop people from getting these diseases in the first instance.

I recently met with and toured facilities of one organisation that is developing vital research initiatives to help unlock the health challenges of every Australian, including cancer, diabetes, obesity and neurological diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. The institute I visited was the Garvan Institute of Medical Research in Sydney, which has one key goal: to develop genes and molecular and cellular processes to prevent, treat or cure some of Australia’s major diseases. It is institutes such as this that will continue to pave the way in Australian medical research, and their initiatives should be supported by both the government and the medical community. The Garvan is home to 10 state-of-the-art genomic mapping machines that have the capacity to generate 20,000 comprehensive human profiles each year. It is the first research facility in the Asia-Pacific region and one of the first in the world with this technology—and again demonstrates the world-leading research being undertaken right here in Australia.

All members in this place either would know someone who has been impacted or would have been impacted personally by a serious disease, and share the desire we all have to better identify, treat and survive it. This is central to the health of our families and our nation. At the heart of the genomic mapping is identifying and understanding diseases that could be more effectively treated. Genome sequencing can diagnose existing diseases and offer an insight into a person’s predisposition to other diseases, prompting a more effective monitoring and healthy lifestyle outcome. Currently genome sequencing is having its greatest impact in providing information about an individual’s likely response to cancer treatment—particularly for pancreatic cancer, which claims over 2,500 lives per year. While I was at the Garvan Institute, I met with their CEO, Andrew Giles, and executive director, Professor John Mattick. They updated me on how their insights into genomic mapping are already helping to save lives and their potential for future research initiatives. Currently, genomic mapping is already...
being used to assist doctors to quickly and accurately diagnose the genetic causes of disabilities and to decide treatment strategies that have the potential to save patients from costly and complex procedures. This will not just improve outcomes but direct health expenditure to where it can be most effective.

In the longer term, genomic information is expected to dramatically change the testing and use of medicines through understanding diseases better and avoiding adverse drug reactions, which constitute 7.6 per cent of all hospital admissions in Australia. This will also lead to better patient outcomes and provide enormous savings to the health system and the economy. According to Professor Mattick, the research being undertaken at the institute will also allow health professionals to map genomes, possibly at birth, to help identify genetic conditions that currently impact about 1.4 million Australians and to identify risks for complex diseases that constitute the bulk of our health burden.

It is clear that the ability to conduct groundbreaking medical research that could potentially save thousands of lives is not limited to countries such as the United States or the United Kingdom. Researchers in Australia are working every day to lead the way in scientific and medical breakthroughs, and as a government we have a responsibility to support these initiatives. To achieve this, though, investment in medical research needs to be at the forefront of Australian health policy. I am pleased to be part of a government that not only recognises this but also acts upon it.

Chifley Electorate: WentWest Medicare Local

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (10:51): I have previously noted within this place the critical health challenges that confront the people I am proud to represent within federal parliament. Those challenges are not met by people from our area on their own; they are assisted ably by the dedication and support of medical professionals and practitioners across the electorate. I am particularly impressed with WentWest, our Medicare Local. They have been around since 2002 and have responsibility for trying to improve health outcomes for nearly a million people living in Sydney's west. They have operated as a Medicare Local and a regional training provider, and they shape health services with a focus on patient centred care led by general practice. They work with doctors, allied health professionals and the local health district. I have seen firsthand what they do. They have actually helped me with some programs to try to boost diabetes awareness because diabetes, heart disease and obesity are particularly problematic in Western Sydney.

Despite saying that it would not touch Medicare Locals, the Abbott government has now told 61 Medicare Locals that they have to re-tender for 30 spots, and that has caused me great concern. Further, the anti-red-tape government will now make Medicare Locals wade through hundreds of pages of red tape just to get the chance to do what they are already doing.

WentWest have a record of success, and I am deeply concerned that their record and their work will be disrupted. These are professionals that want to do the right thing. They will continue to do the right thing and focus on the task at hand, but I am concerned about the prospect that someone from outside the area will now have to restart and reset the task of addressing health needs within our region. I would be deeply worried if WentWest were
prevented from carrying on their vital work to deliver better health care. Quite frankly, the Abbott government’s broken promises should not hurt the people of Western Sydney.

I also rise again to voice my continued objection to the treatment of animals subjected to the live export trade. We see continuing shocking pictures of the treatment of those animals. Last year I called for a transition away from live export. I did so because I was on a journey where I had seen on repeated occasions the abuse of animals that were supposed to have benefited from adequate protection, but the passage of time reinforced in my mind that that protection is an illusion.

In this country, all industries are required to operate in a way that ensures there is minimal environmental impact. We would not tolerate the treatment of animals on our soil in the way we have seen overseas. Why we continue to turn a blind eye to this is a matter of profound shame and should not be tolerated. This government has made a virtue of beating its chest about championing a trade that has a demonstrated track record of failing to guarantee animal welfare. I certainly will not turn a blind eye to this and neither will many of the constituents who continue to press for us as a nation to do better.

Finally, I also want to reflect on another issue that will cause communities in my area some concern. I represent a very diverse range of communities that have a very big heart, and many of them work their hardest to provide the best care and support for their families here, but they also recognise that, with the opportunity to personally prosper, they should share a slice of that prosperity with families overseas that might not be as fortunate as them. As a result, many of them will send money back to relatives from where they came to ensure that their lives are a little bit better.

The money remittance system has been brought into the view of law enforcement, understandably, due to the misdeeds and dark intent of a few. However, while I understand that we need to support strong measures to clamp down on those who seek to misuse the remittance system, I am genuinely concerned about innocent families being shut out from this platform and therefore preventing the support for families overseas who need that support. I would urge the government to be very mindful of this and to balance security responsibilities in a way that ensures good decent people can continue to help those in need overseas.

I am prompted to say this because I understand the justice minister is going to announce a new head to the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre. I hope that this person does engage widely with multicultural communities across our region. I am particularly mindful of the Filipino community in my area along with the Pakistani and subcontinent communities that use remittance to help support families overseas. I hope that the government will be mindful of this.

**Brisbane Electorate: Institute of Urban Indigenous Health**

*Ms GAMBARO* (Brisbane) (10:56): I have the absolute pleasure this morning of recognising and bringing to the attention of the House the wonderful work that is being undertaken by the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health, which is based in Bowen Hills in my electorate of Brisbane. The institute was established in 2009 to unite and strengthen the four major Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health services—Kalwun, Kambu, Yulu Barri Ba, and ATSICHS Brisbane in South-East Queensland.
The institute acts very much as a hub for the provision of health, employment and education services in the South-East Queensland corner. The House would be surprised to know that we have the largest and fastest-growing Indigenous population in Australia where an estimated 50,000 Indigenous Australians reside. Since its establishment, the institute has significantly increased access to culturally appropriate primary health care services for the region. Regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island patients have more than tripled to over 16,000 across the institute's network. The number of health checks delivered annually has also increased, jumping from 600 in 2008-09 to well over 8,000—an increase of more than 1,300 per cent. Care planning has also significantly increased. In essence, this means that all patients in South-East Queensland are getting a more comprehensive patient journey than ever before. And these activities are further supported by the institute's mobile care services which deliver eye, ear and dental services across the region.

Underpinning these efforts is the institute's model of care, which encourages the use of Indigenous-specific Medicare item numbers by GPs which maximises the generation of Medicare income. Not only does this support the comprehensive patient care but it is has also resulted in the establishment of eight new community controlled health care services during the last four years, taking the total one of clinics for the region to 16.

I would like to praise the placement of more than 800 students from a range of disciplines across the institute's network as of last year. This is of particular significance because these are the students of today who will continue to build and grow the primary care sector of tomorrow.

Another example of the institute's good work is the Deadly Choices campaign, which targets positive messages and images at individuals, families and communities to encourage the adoption of a healthier lifestyle choices. The campaign rewards individuals who make 'deadly healthy' choices by providing them with branded merchandise such as the lovely jersey I am wearing today. I have the great pleasure of promoting their services today. Another element of Deadly Choices is the education program that supports participants to be positive role models and mentors for their families, peer group and community in leading a healthy lifestyle. I am told that there are 73 primary and secondary schools that participated in the program last year, as well as nine community groups.

I understand that, in key areas such as renal failure, stroke and amputations, the institute is outperforming findings on the national reform agreement. Furthermore, I understand the national gap to non-Indigenous life expectancy has narrowed by nine months for men and over one month for women. In contrast, the institute has added another six months in life expectancy for all patients and nine months for diabetics, a truly amazing achievement and one really worth celebrating.

In this regard, I am very pleased to advise that the institute is one of the top eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that have been selected from a pool of 113 nominees in the prestigious 2014 Indigenous Governance Awards, which are being held in Melbourne this evening. I would like to acknowledge and thank my parliamentary colleague the Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash, who I know has been very, very supportive of this program. I want to congratulate the institute's board and the CEO, Adrian Carson, and I want to thank them for their wonderful achievements to date. Regardless of the outcome of tonight's awards, the institute is delivering groundbreaking work on Indigenous health,
education and community services, and I believe that the institute has hit upon a game-changing model for the future. It has my support, and I encourage Indigenous communities around Australia to follow its lead.

**Education: Disability Services**

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (11:01): In the wake of the passing of former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, there has been much reflection on many of the positive reforms that the Whitlam government introduced and the progress and new opportunities that the Whitlam government presented for many Australians. One of those little-known reforms, not often reported, is the fact that the Whitlam government removed segregation of children with disabilities from our education system. The Whitlam government allowed kids with disabilities to attend mainstream educational systems—in particular schools—throughout our country, opening up a wealth of new opportunities for kids living with disabilities in our community.

Labor believes in greater opportunity for kids with disabilities. That is the basis on which Labor did the research behind the Gonski reforms. We worked out that our system of education was broken when it came to delivering the necessary resources to support the needs of kids with disabilities in our schools. The most thorough review of our educational system and the needs of kids with disabilities was undertaken by the Gonski panel, and they came up with a series of thorough recommendations on a needs-based funding model that the Commonwealth and the states would be involved in to rectify the deficiency of support for kids with disabilities in our schools.

Labor in government committed to the Gonski plan for school funding, which included loadings for students with disabilities to ensure schools received additional support to address their needs. To do this, whilst the disability loading was being negotiated and worked out amongst the states, the schools and the Commonwealth, Labor put in place a $100 million interim loading for 2014, while the true level of need and consistent national methodology were worked out in consultation with the states and territories.

Before the election, the Liberal opposition promised to implement the Gonski plan. Christopher Pyne said:

If elected to Government the Coalition will continue the data collection work that has commenced, which will be used to deliver more funding for people with disability through the ‘disability loading’ in 2015.

The Prime Minister also committed to that. He said:

On schools, those loadings will be fully delivered …

Not only has the government failed to deliver on the expected increase in funding for students with disability in the recent budget but it has also failed to extend the More Support for Students with Disabilities program. What a betrayal of kids in our community living with disabilities: to go back on the commitments that the Prime Minister, no less, made to kids living with disabilities in our community just prior to the election; to abandon all of that work in respect of the Gonski loadings; and to remove from the budget that $100 million relating to support for kids with disabilities as an interim measure. It is betrayal of kids with disabilities in our community.
Labor believes that students with a disability should have an equal opportunity to access education and that schools should be adequately funded to support those students’ needs. I support more resources for students with disabilities in our community. I support the full funding of students with disabilities irrespective of their school or school sector. I urge the federal government to commit substantial and adequate resources to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities in the next budget.

Despite the promises they made before the election, the Abbott government backflipped on schools funding at the end of last year. They have been caught out looking into how to dismantle the core Gonski needs-based funding model. This is unacceptable. I think that those opposite really do not believe that the Commonwealth should be involved in addressing disadvantage in schools; they believe that that should be left to the states. That is unacceptable, because the Gonski review discovered that the current funding model, predominantly from the states, is not delivering for kids with disabilities in our schools. This government needs to recommit to full funding of the Gonski disability loading.

**Maranoa Electorate: Coal Seam Gas**

Mr BRUCE SCOTT (Maranoa—Deputy Speaker) (11:06): I rise to speak about the future livability of regional towns in my electorate in coal seam gas country—that is, in the Surat Basin. That is the Dalby, Chinchilla, Miles, Roma corridor, including Wandoan and Tara. During the peak of the construction phase, which is rapidly coming to an end, there was a significant investment from companies like Santos, Origin, QGC and Arrow to provide affordable housing and other infrastructure to cater for the shortfall in available resources due to the exponential growth in demand that we were witnessing, which was driven by the CSG industry’s rapid expansion.

From 2012 to 2013, the annual population growth rate was some 3.5 per cent, more than double that of the previous five years. The industry is now moving from construction to production, which means a loss, just from one project, of some 3,500 workers—mainly fly-in fly-out, but there are other pressures on the community—and 1,500 from another project, making a total of 5,000 workers from just one of the companies that will not be there by this time next year. The other three companies are in a similar situation as they move from this big construction phase into production. Population predictions for the area estimate the annual population growth rate will now slow to less than one per cent for the forward consecutive years, from now through till 2036—from a 3.5 per cent growth to less than one per cent. So we have had the spike, we have had the boom, which is rapidly ending, but in its aftermath it leaves many legacy issues that we have to deal with. I know that the companies want to work with government, and I am certainly working with those companies and local government, on how we can deal with this.

Santos has invested some $6 million in rental subsidy and affordable housing projects in the Roma region specifically targeting low-income workers not associated with the CSG industry—because that was one of side effects: it was the existing population, the workers in shops, schoolteachers and other locals, who were massively affected by this rapid escalation in the coal seam gas industry and the pressure put on rental properties. The numbers speak for themselves. The civil trends are not slowing down at the same rate as the CSG industry. In other words, what is happening is that there is a risk of oversaturation in the housing market, which I am already witnessing, and discussions I have had with real estate people confirm my
concern. Santos invested another $6 million in associated projects across the Maranoa Regional Council, including $2½ million in the Roma Airport upgrade, $1.5 million in the Roma Hospital and half a million dollars each to construct some public wash-down facilities and community services as well as bushfire equipment for people on the land.

There is no denying these companies have been good corporate citizens. They have tried to do their best to mitigate the boom, which has impacted in a positive way but also in a negative way on many aspects of daily life in my own home town of Roma and the others in Dalby, Chinchilla, Miles and, to a lesser extent, Tara and Wandoan. But what I am wanting to see now is that these companies look at future-proofing these towns to ensure that the social infrastructure can sustain long-term population growth. For instance, if we are going to keep the population there—young people particularly—we could look, in my own home town of Roma, at the netball courts. The children there actually play on a car park, a bitumen sealed car park. We can do better than that. But I would like to see some of the money that may have been channelled into more affordable housing going into that sort of sporting infrastructure. Upgrades to the PCYC would be a great investment in people, and young people particularly, to help retain these people as we go through this phase.

The Maranoa Regional Council, for instance, has developed an extensive plan for an upgrade of Bassett Park, which is our showground and racecourse. Now the CSG industry may be interested in partnering with the Maranoa Regional Council to see some of these plans that they have become a reality. I once again say we now have to look at the livability of our towns. We have been through the construction. It has been a massive boom, but behind it there are legacy issues we need to deal with to make sure we can retain our population and particularly do something for young people and livability post the boom of the CSG industry in the electorate of Maranoa.

24 Hour Fight Against Cancer Macarthur

Mr LAURIE FERGUSON (Werriwa) (11:11): A decade ago a small group of people met at the Court Tavern, Campbelltown. They had attitudes that characterise the Macarthur region in general. There has always been, I think, a sense of identity which is not found in most parts of Sydney. They were very disturbed that patients had to travel vast distances for cancer care. It fitted in to a wider perspective, I guess because Campbelltown had always been on the fringe, with a semirural surround, and a very historic city. That common attitude reinforced their need to establish a new organisation.

But I do not think they had any recognition of what they would accomplish over the next decade. About a month ago I attended this year's culmination of that activity when thousands of people gathered at Campbelltown stadium for the 24 Hour Fight Against Cancer event—and I say thousands of people. They have raised $2.3 million and believe that by April they will reach $3 million, in a period of 10 years in a local area. It is accomplished through a variety of events each year: this walk itself, a car show, a golf day, a wheelchair push and an iconic annual ball.

The main driving force, of course, has been Councillor Fred Borg, an independent on the local council who throws himself into a wide variety of other community affairs. But I want to talk about the committee as well, more particularly Sue McGarrity, the deputy chairperson, and Dr Stephen DeLa-Fiorentina, the hospital representative on the board. Although Fred has been the guiding force, as he says, 'A good general does need a good army,' and this is a very
cooperative effort. Although people advertise for a commercial purpose, it is characterised by a large degree of cooperation amongst all of the sponsors, who themselves tend to be involved in the activities as well. It is not just, ‘Look, I'll pay a few thousand bucks, put my name on the brochure.’ A lot of them attend the events. They have a presence, and they support it in many other ways.

This has been, as I say, a major accomplishment. On the day, survivor Ken Stonestreet and his wife, Liz, were the people who opened the event, stressing togetherness of the community, what they had sensed from their tribulations and the community support they had received. Ken mentioned in passing his knowledge of the lack of care in the United States, compared to Australia, for people suffering from cancer.

Over that period of time they have accomplished much. They have purchased a bus—their driver. They have staff training for specialist paediatric care nurses. They have purchased mattresses, chairs and cushions and provided digital TV access to cancer patients. They have provided iPads and iTunes vouchers. They have purchased a highly specialised laser machine to treat bladder stones. Currently, they have provided $300,000 towards a wellness centre at Camden.

On the night itself, 800 people—it is a full day of events, but, even by evening, 800 people were still there—were walking around the Campbelltown stadium with candles and lights, remembering lost partners and family members but also very much celebrating survival.

I have only mentioned a few of the things that they have accomplished. They have actually spent in the area of $2.2 million, I think, of that $2.3 million raised. This is a tremendous effort at a local level. I represented a very different electorate for nearly two decades, and I did not have this sense of community, this sense of involvement, at any stage. It is something that should be very strongly recognised. The Campbelltown council is extremely supportive—as are the local Rotary clubs throughout the Macarthur region.

To Fred, to the committee, to the sponsors, to the people who have gained from this and to the hospital system locally: I commend a very seminal effort which is such for the whole of the Sydney community.

**Gilmore Electorate: Royal Australian Navy**

**Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (11:16):** Last week I welcomed the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon. David Johnston, and the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, to my electorate to announce that Defence's new $700 million JP9000 phase 7 Helicopter Aircrew Training System—or HATS for short—facility will be entirely located on our fantastic local Navy base, HMAS *Albatross*.

This announcement represents an investment of approximately $200 million in new and renovated facilities at HMAS *Albatross* alone, as well as substantial upgrades to the Jervis Bay airfield at HMAS *Creswell*, with a total investment of $700 million by 2018. It is expected that the project will create 380 short-term jobs during construction, with an additional 80 full-time, highly technical, non-Defence jobs once construction is complete. This equipment and investment means that, from 2018, all Navy and Army aircrew will complete their initial helicopter training in Nowra. For many, this is the final training stage to transition from fixed-wing aircraft to rotary, after learning basic flying skills at Tamworth.
The phase 7 HATS project is all about preparing Navy and Army aircrew for conversion to new generation, operational helicopter types including the MH60 Romeo Seahawk, the Army multirole and the Navy maritime support helicopter. As HMAS Albatross is the Navy’s only major air base in Australia, I am especially excited about the arrival of these helicopters. They represent a massive boost in capability for our Navy personnel both at home and abroad. The Navy’s first ever MH60 Romeo helicopter arrived last week, only the third off the USA’s first Romeo production line. If that is not a sign of the close relationship between our two great countries, I do not know what is.

Our Navy is a significant and important part of our community. HMAS Creswell, with Captain Hussey at the helm, and Captain Bateman at HMAS Albatross are constantly involving our service men and women in official duties such as our catafalque parties and also as mentors for local youth programs.

Albatross is an amazing support in another way with the annual Tour The T fundraiser, which will be held on 5 December, raising money for our local Shoalhaven charity Slice of Life Australia. The Navy are completely closing down their runways for the day, allowing locals to walk or run the distance, for a dollar fee, to support the local group. Members of our Navy, particularly Commodore Vince di Pietro, also abseil in extraordinary places to raise money for the Sir David Martin Foundation, which in turn supports our local youth facility at the Triple Care Farm.

HMAS Albatross has an intriguing history. It was originally an Australian Air Force field. It began in May 1942. In 1944 the base was transferred to the British Royal Navy and was commissioned as the Royal Naval Air Station HMS Nabbington. Thank heavens that name changed. The base reverted to RAAF control in 1946 and in 1948 it was commissioned as HMAS Albatross, as we know it now. Our base is unique in that we have valleys and dense bushland to the west, coastal and cliff conditions to the north and south, and clear oceans to the east. It is an outstanding training location. What better conditions could you ask for for a helicopter training school. At HMAS Albatross we also have construction under way for hangars and aprons for the new Romeo helicopters.

As exciting as this development is—and it is very exciting for our region, due to the economic and employment benefits it will bring to Gilmore—there have been some issues that have caused us some grief. The construction of the facility is nothing short of magnificent. However, as I have explained to the House previously, the process of completing payments going right down to the smallest supplying subcontractor has not always been successful. Mark Nelson, a senior contractor, has been working constantly to recover payments that were missed on the way through. That situation simply is not good enough.

I will be pursuing our defence minister and the assistant minister, and our ministers for finance and small business as well, to ensure that the situation that we saw with Hewatt’s and our Albatross subbies can never happen again. What has happened in this situation is appalling, and it has happened over time under the supervision of different governments. Government contracting and procurement must absolutely ensure that supply and end contractors receive their payments, that no-one in the chain is trading insolvent, and that due diligence is done not just by the department doing the initial contracting but through the entire process, from the primary sublevel contractors right up to the main ones. Ethics and
responsibility are critical. It is time to look forward and think about what we can do to stop this ever happening again. This will be the focus of my energy.

**Chisholm Electorate: Ashwood Reserve**

Ms BURKE (Chisholm) (11:21): If you are going to run for any level of government, be it state, local or federal, you should have some connectivity with the community you are seeking to represent. If you do not, you should at least get to know them. It is with a feeling of great tragedy, almost comedy, that I rise today to speak about Ashwood Reserve in my electorate. I am not going to have a go at the Liberal candidate in the last federal election, John Nguyen—a very nice guy—but if he had not got to know his local community he should not have made a funding commitment without consulting the groups concerned and the local council that would be impacted upon. John made an announcement in respect of Ashwood Reserve. Now the state election has come along and Graham Watt, the sitting member for Burwood, has made another campaign announcement in respect of Ashwood Reserve. What is more galling about Mr Watt's statement is that he has been the local state member for the last four years and still he has no idea about the communities involved in this reserve. Again, he did not consult with one individual about the announcement he was about to make. Most particularly he did not speak to the local government area that has authority over the site, the Monash City Council, about the announcement.

So what has been announced? John Nguyen announced $150,000 under the Community Grants Program to upgrade a pavilion at Ashwood Reserve—the pavilion used by the Victorian Sikh Association. The Sikh Association has been using the pavilion and one of the grounds at Ashwood Reserve for 20 years—they have an affiliation with the ground. Next door to the ground is the Waverley Hockey Club. John Nguyen comes along and offers $150,000 during the federal election campaign—that is currently being honoured and contracts are now with Monash council. The state election is happening in four to five weeks time, so Graham Watt comes along and says to the Waverley Hockey Club—opposite the Sikhs—that he is going to give them $1.5 million to upgrade the same reserve. So who wins? Who now has control of the ground—a ground needed in my community?

Sporting facilities are needed everywhere, and in areas like metropolitan Melbourne we do not get regional grounds, we do not get money and we do not have access to things, so when a grant like this comes along the community goes 'Yay!' So the Waverley Hockey Club were really excited—they desperately need a second pitch, they have one magnificent pitch; next door to them is a field—not used much and not covered by turf in any way, shape, size or form. State government comes along and says: 'If we win, we're giving you $1.5 million. You can build your pitch.' Terrific! Nobody has consulted with anybody.

So the Victorian Sikhs have written to the local council and to everybody, including the state government, and said:

The federal Government … via then Shadow Minister and now Hon Minister Mr. Kevin Andrews had made an announcement to grant $150,000 to rebuild the current clubrooms of the Sikh Community at Ashwood Reserve. A further $650,000 was confirmed from the Monash City Council. The plans and designs were finalised in Feb/March … The committee of VSA and thus our community were made to believe that the tender process would commence in July—

and that they would be able to be in the facility by April 2015. The committee were absolutely astounded, then, when they learned:
The bombshell agenda item then slowly came to light. We were asked if we knew of the announcement by the State coalition—an election promise to give the Waverley Hockey Club $1.5M (should they win the elections) to build a second hockey pitch at the grounds used by our community for soccer and other sports activities. This therefore puts an indefinitely hold on the VSA community pavilion …

So the Sikhs, who thought they were going ahead with their pavilion and the use of the ground, now find: no, another level of Liberal government says, 'No, we are giving money to the hockey pitch.' Waverley Hockey Club do not want to seem ungrateful and they want their pitch, but they also do not want a brawl with their neighbours in the Sikh community, so they have been trying to resolve who gets the ground. It is the council's ground. It is crown land. Somebody should have consulted. We now have two groups at each other's throats that did not need to be. Some common sense and some understanding about the area and the needs of the community were needed. Waverley Hockey Club is a huge club. It has over 500 players. It has over 500 players. It has one of the largest junior groups in the country. A pitch is needed. We desperately need that second ground there. But the Sikhs also have rights. Somebody should have talked. We have supposed community candidates out there making different offers, throwing money around without consultation and without knowledge of how this is going to work—or consulting with anybody. It is an absolute disgrace and Graham Watt stands condemned.

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia) (11:27): There is a major issue impacting on Capricornia at this point in time, which is costing jobs, placing enormous pressures on regional business and causing small communities to virtually die a slow death. I refer to the complex issue of 100 per cent fly-in fly-out work contracts in central Queensland's coal fields, which comes on top of a huge downturn in mining. One hundred per cent FIFO workers are flown in directly from Cairns, Brisbane or the Gold Coast and not hired from local coal towns or the nearest regional city. Tomorrow the member for Dawson, George Christensen, and I will meet with key business owners in Mackay—particularly in the construction industry—which are hard-hit by the downturn in the coal sector. They say the impact of 100 per cent FIFO at some central Queensland mines—Daunia and Caval Ridge—is killing business confidence in the region. One builder reports that his building business has gone from employing nine people down to three. He usually has a whole year of work in front of him, but he has not had a home inquiry for 18 months.

In the town of Moranbah this sign appears at the Drovers Rest Motel and Camp Oven Restaurant:

Joan & Evan Hartley, owners of the above restaurant, regretfully advise residents of Moranbah that we are forced to close the sit down meal section due to the downturn in the mining industry; contractor's employees having to stay in the camps; and the reduction in the requirement of motel accommodation. According to Mr Hartley, it has become untenable to continue to trade when he is losing $10,000 a month. Mr Hartley told me:

… because the mining companies are building their own camps for their FIFO employees, all town businesses have been brought to their knees.

I quote again directly from Mr Hartley:

When the demand for motel accommodation was at its highest, BMA approached us to rent all our rooms 52 weeks a year.
He claims that now mining companies are forcing new contractors to house their FIFO or DIDO employees in work camps instead of motels or rental houses, which previously stimulated the local economy. Stories like this are disturbing for our coalmining towns. I have continued to campaign against 100 per cent FIFO work practices. I have provided Mr Hartley's letters to the Queensland Premier and Deputy Premier. It is time the Queensland LNP state government worked together with these communities. I will continue open dialogue with coal company BMA and urge BMA to assist in alleviating the impact that 100 per cent FIFO contracts are having on local business confidence in central Queensland. This includes filling any vacancies that occur on these mines as a result of 100 per cent FIFO workers resigning from their jobs through natural attrition with local people from local towns.

Meanwhile, it is important not to forget who are allowed 100 per cent FIFO contractors to occur in our coalfields in the first place. The Labor Party and former Queensland Labor Premier Anna Bligh opened the floodgates and allowed the practice of 100 per cent FIFO at Moranbah in the first place. State Labor MPs and the Labor government approved workforce arrangements for BMA's Caval Ridge mine in September 2011.

Many people know that I have been advocating for an end to 100 per cent FIFO since before the last federal election. Earlier this year, I distanced myself from state LNP colleagues over the adverse impact of 100 per cent FIFO when the state government continued the practice. I took the issue to the state LNP convention in Brisbane. The current state government eventually conceded and announced it would no longer approve 100 per cent FIFO for future coalmining projects. But more needs to be done to alleviate the harm already being done in our local towns and our regional cities.

More recently, I spearheaded two successful motions at the National Party federal council in Canberra on the impact of 100 per cent FIFO and a fairer tax system for people living in remote mining towns. Federal National Party delegates endorsed the motion, calling on the state governments to ensure that all mining contracts, including requirements to employ locals, prohibit 100 per cent FIFO workforces where a local workforce is available. What we need now is for the state government to engage more with our small communities on this subject and have open dialogue with federal MPs. Local people must have the opportunity to apply for local jobs.

Question agreed to.

Federation Chamber adjourned 11:31.
QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Department of Social Services: Staff Transfers
(Question No. 254)

Ms Rowland asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 26 August 2014:
Have any staff transferred from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to the Department of Social Services to work on the Building Multicultural Communities Program. If so, how many and what proportion is full time?

Mr Andrews: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
Twelve staff from the Settlement Grants team transferred from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to the Department of Social Services (DSS) under Machinery of Government changes. The work of the team included Building Multicultural Communities Programme. It is not possible to distinguish the specific elements of this work.

Department of Social Services: Freedom of Information Requests
(Question No. 256)

Ms Rowland asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 26 August 2014:
(1) Has his Parliamentary Secretary actioned any of the freedom of information requests made by me in 2014, pertaining to the Building Multicultural Communities Program; if so, (a) on what date, and (b) did his department provide a copy, if so, (i) on what date, and (ii) when will I be provided a copy.
(2) Did his department seek any advice from the (a) Attorney-General's Department, (b) Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, or (c) Australian Government Solicitor, in respect of any of my freedom of information requests; if so, (i) which one(s), (ii) on what date(s), (iii) on what date was the advice received, and (iv) did any of this advice relate to freedom of information processing times and costs.

Mr Andrews: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(1) (a) and (b) FOI request 13/14-078 relating to the Building Multicultural Communities Programme (BMCP) was received by the Department of Social Services on 20 February 2014. A decision was notified to the applicant on 6 June 2014 and documents were sent to the applicant on this date and also on 10 July 2014 after third party review rights had expired.
(2) (a) to (c) The Department did not seek any advice from the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet or the Australian Government Solicitor in regard to FOI request 13/14-078. The FOI decision was made by a Principal Legal Officer in the Department's legal area.

Department of Social Services: Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook
(Question No. 294)

Ms Rowland asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 1 September 2014:
(1) Did his department send him a brief in respect of the Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) cut of funding for the Building Multicultural Communities Program (BMCP); if so, (a) on what date was it sent to his office, and (b) was it signed by him, if so, on what date.
(2) Did his department send a brief to his Parliamentary Secretary in respect of the MYEFO cut of funding for the BMCP; if so, (a) on what date was it sent to her office, and (b) was it signed by her, if so, on what date.
(3) Did (a) he, (b) his Parliamentary Secretary, or (c) any member of his Department or the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, instruct his department, in any forum or by any means of communication, to delay or refrain from executing any of the funding agreements.

(4) Did his department refrain from executing any funding agreements whilst waiting for any Cabinet decisions or decisions of the Economic Review Committee.

**Mr Andrews:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(1) (a) and (b) No.

(2) (a) and (b) No.

(3) (a) to (c) No.

(4) Please refer to the responses to Questions on Notice 590 and 591 relating to Additional Estimates hearings in February 2014. From 4 October 2013, while the whole of government review of grants was undertaken by the Department of Finance, no funding agreements were entered into or executed.

**Commonwealth Grants**

(Question No. 295)

**Ms Rowland** asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 1 September 2014:

In respect of the cross government process for reviewing grants, as referred to on 5 June 2014 in Senate Estimates, (a) what is the process, (b) when did this process (i) start, and (ii) finish, (c) was the process led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; if not, who led it, and (d) did his department receive written direction to review all grants; if so, can he provide a copy.

**Mr Andrews:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) to (d) Please refer to the response to Question in Writing 590 relating to Additional Estimates hearings in February 2014.

**Department of Industry: Drinks Cabinet for Ministers**

(Question No. 339)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Industry, in writing, on 3 September 2014:

Since 7 September 2013, has the Minister's department paid for or stocked the drinks cabinet for (a) the Minister, and where applicable, each (b) junior Minister (including Assistant Ministers), and (c) Parliamentary Secretary; if so, at what cost.

**Mr Ian Macfarlane:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Please refer to Question on Notice SI-190 available at:

**Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development: Commonwealth Grants**

(Question No. 415)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 22 September 2014:

In 2013-14, how many Commonwealth grants were approved by the Minister's Department, and at what cost, and of these, how many recipients have (a) signed funding agreements, and at what cost, and (b) received payment, and at what total cost.
Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Information on approved grants in the 2013–14 financial year can be found in the completed Senate Order on grants tabled for that period.

(a) Information on grants awarded by the Department are available on the website:


(b) The Department's total expenditure on grants payments in the 2013–14 financial year is $3,321,213,000

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development: Staff Overseas Travel

(Question No. 433)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 22 September 2014:

In respect of departmental staff overseas travel since 7 September 2013, what (a) was the total cost, (b) is the breakdown of this cost, i.e., airfares, accommodation, hospitality, official passports, and minor incidents, and (c) was the travel for.

Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a), (b) and (c) This information is available from previously answered Senate Estimates Questions in writing.

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development: Corporate Credit Cards

(Question No. 452)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 22 September 2014:

Since 7 September 2013, how many corporate credit cards have been issued to departmental staff, and what is the total cost of all transactions made on them.

Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

202 credit cards issued.

$1,080,033.73.

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development: Consultants

(Question No. 523)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, in writing, on 21 October 2014:

Since 7 September 2013 can the Minister provide details as to the use of all consultants within his/her department, including reasons for engaging their services, and the costs involved

Mr Truss: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

A list of consultancies valued at $10,000 or more can be found on the AusTender website.

China: Australia Week

(Question No. 543)

Mr Albanese asked the Minister for Trade and Investment, in writing, on 21 October 2014:

Will Australia Week in China take place in (a) 2015, (b) 2016, and (c) 2017.
Mr Robb: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
The next Australia Week in China is planned for 2016.