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SITTING DAYS—2015

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FORTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—SEVENTH PERIOD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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<td>Wilkie, Mr Andrew Damien</td>
<td>Denison, TAS</td>
<td>IND</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Division</th>
<th>Party</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Williams, Mr Matthew</td>
<td>Hindmarsh, SA</td>
<td>LP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, Mr Richard James</td>
<td>O' Connor, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood, Mr Jason Peter</td>
<td>La Trobe, VIC</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyatt, Mr Kenneth George AM</td>
<td>Hasluck, WA</td>
<td>LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zappia, Mr Antonio</td>
<td>Makin, SA</td>
<td>ALP</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### PARTY ABBREVIATIONS


### Heads of Parliamentary Departments

- Clerk of the Senate—R Laing
- Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
- Acting Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—D Heriot
- Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Minister</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Senator Hon Nigel Scullion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Women</td>
<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Digital Government</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter Terrorism</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>Hon Alan Tudge MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister</td>
<td>Senator Hon James McGrath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Productivity</td>
<td>Hon Dr Peter Hendy MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Cabinet Secretary</td>
<td>Senator Hon Scott Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Deputy Prime Minister)</td>
<td>Hon Warren Truss MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia</td>
<td>Hon Josh Frydenberg MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects</td>
<td>Hon Paul Fletcher MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister</td>
<td>Hon Michael McCormack MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Trade and Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for International Development and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Tourism and International Education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorney-General</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Vice-President of the Executive Council)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>Minister for Small Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Finance (Deputy Leader of Government in the Senate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Minister of State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science (Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</td>
<td>Hon Peter Dutton MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs</td>
<td>Senator Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for the Environment</td>
<td>Hon Greg Hunt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Cities and the Built Environment</td>
<td>Hon Jamie Briggs MP</td>
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<td>Minister for Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Hon. Ken Wyatt MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Sport</td>
<td>Hon Sussan Ley MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Rural Health</td>
<td>Senator Hon Fiona Nash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Defence</td>
<td>Senator Hon Marise Payne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister for Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of</td>
<td>Hon Stuart Robert MP</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Darren Chester MP</td>
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<td>Senator Hon Michaelia Cash</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>(Deputy Leader of the House)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senator Hon Richard Colbeck</td>
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<td>Senator the Hon Kim Carr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader on State and Territory Relations</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Michael Danby MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Hon Ed Husic MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Assisting with Digital Innovation and Startups</td>
<td>Senator Sam Dastyari</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Manager of Opposition Business (Senate)</td>
<td>Terri Butler M</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<tr>
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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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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Regional Development and Local Government</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 Manufacturing</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Justice</td>
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<td>Graham Perrett MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Education</td>
<td>Hon Kate Ellis MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Early Childhood</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry</td>
<td>Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Resources</td>
<td>Hon Gary Gray AO MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Catherine King MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Ageing</td>
<td>Hon Shayne Neumann MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Mental Health</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Sport</td>
<td>Dr Jim Chalmers MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Assistant Minister for Health</td>
<td>Stephen Jones MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health</td>
<td>Tony Zappa MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Aged Care</td>
<td>Senator Helen Polley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Families and Payments</td>
<td>Hon Jenny Macklin MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Disability Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness</td>
<td>Senator Katy Gallagher*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Human Services</td>
<td>Senator the Hon Doug Cameron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Carers</td>
<td>Senator Claire Moore</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Payments</td>
<td>Senator Carol Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Child Safety and Prevention of</td>
<td>Terri Butler MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</td>
<td>Hon Richard Marles MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Michelle Rowland MP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Hon Brendan O’Connor MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Minister for Employment Services</td>
<td>Hon Julie Collins MP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.

* Senator Katy Gallagher’s appointment to the Shadow Ministry is effective from 1 November 2015. Senator the Hon Jan McLucas will serve as Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness and Shadow Minister for Mental Health, and represent the Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, the Shadow Minister for Health, the Shadow Assistant Minister for Health, the Shadow Minister for Sport and the Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs in the Senate until 31 October 2015.
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The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 10:00, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

PETITIONS

Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (10:01): On behalf of the Standing Committee on Petitions, and in accordance with standing order 207, I present the following petition:

Access to Electoral Roll: St Georges Terrace

To the Honourable The Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives

This petition of Concerned Citizens of Western Australia draws to the attention of the House our concerns at the accessibility of our private addresses, without our knowledge or permission, to any member of the general public from the computers based in the foyer of the Electoral Commission situated on the 13th Floor - 200 St. Georges Terrace Perth. The privacy, welfare and safety of ourselves and family is greatly jeopardised. This is unacceptable to us.

We therefore ask the House to act on having the computers removed from the foyer of the Electoral Commission and that anybody asking for information to complete a form providing photo identification and reasons for the request. A strict guideline must be met before this information is handed over by authorised staff. The completed form is to be registered and also forwarded to the citizen of whom the request was made against, so that they are aware their privacy and safety has been jeopardised.

from 230 citizens

Petition received.

PETITIONS

Responses

Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (10:01): Ministerial responses to petitions previously presented to the House have been received as follows:

Climate Change

Dear Dr Jensen

I refer to your letter of 19 October 2015 concerning petition 1007/1593 on the issue of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

On 11 August 2015, the Government announced that Australia will reduce emissions to 26-28 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. This target is strong and responsible. It is in step with the efforts of other developed countries, and takes into account Australia’s national circumstances.

Australia’s 2030 target builds on our 2020 target of 5 per cent below 2000 levels, which is equivalent to 13 per cent below 2005 levels. Australia is on track to meet this target.

The Government will meet Australia’s targets through direct action approaches that provide positive incentives to reduce emissions, while enhancing productivity. The Emissions Reduction Fund will be central to this effort, complemented by the Renewable Energy Target, measures to improve energy and vehicle efficiency and action to reduce emissions from harmful hydro-fluorocarbons.

from the Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt
Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter of 19 October 2015 (reference 1095/1591) on behalf of the Standing Committee on Petitions, regarding the proposed commercial development at 4499-4651 Mount Lindesay Highway, North Maclean, Queensland.

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) sets out a rigorous and comprehensive approach for the assessment of projects that may impact on threatened plants and animals. The assessment process under the EPBC Act includes the preparation of assessment information, the public exhibition of this information, and the rigorous assessment of this information before a decision is made under the EPBC Act.

The project that is the subject of the petition you have received is currently undergoing environmental impact assessment under the EPBC Act. Community consultation on this project has occurred twice as part of the EPBC Act assessment process.

The first public consultation was carried out between 22 July 2013 and 6 August 2013, and no public comments were received.

More recently, the draft assessment information for this project was exhibited for public consultation between 23 February 2015 and 9 March 2015. Fifty one (51) submissions were received on the draft assessment information. Since the formal public consultation, I have received a number of other comments and additional information from members of the public.

All of this information will be subject to rigorous evaluation, and will be taken into consideration when considering this proposal under the EPBC Act.

The role of the Australian Government is in relation to nationally protected matters, which in the case of this proposed commercial development, includes threatened plants and animals. It is important to note that matters relating to land use zoning and impacts on noise, water, air and light are primarily the responsibility of state and local governments.

I take my responsibilities under the EPBC Act very seriously. The timeframe for a decision on this project has been extended to 8 December 2015. This is to ensure that all information is thoroughly considered and that all potential impacts on nationally protected matters are adequately addressed.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

from the Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt

Infrastructure

Dr Dennis Jensen

Thank you for your letter dated 22 October 2015 on behalf of the residents, ratepayers and supporters of the Shire of Towong, regarding the Shire of Towong’s application for the National Stronger Regions Fund (NSRF) “Destination Tallangatta” project.

As you may be aware, applications for Round Two of the NSRF closed on 31 July 2015. Applications are now being assessed by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. Following the assessment of all applications, the Department will make funding recommendations to the Australian Government for decision.

Similar to Round One, we have received a large number of applications for Round Two and I expect that applicants will be notified of the outcome of the assessment process later this year.

I appreciate you bringing this project to my attention and also the views of the petitioners on the impact it may have on the Shire of Towong community.

from the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Mr Truss
Lymphoedema Services

Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 October 2015 (1097/1594) seeking a response to a petition that has been submitted to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Petitions regarding lymphoedema services in the electorate of Robertson.

The Government is committed to the provision of high quality health care in Australia and recognises that to have sustainable and accessible services to all communities, Australia needs to fully utilise the skills of our well-educated health professionals, with an emphasis on client-centred, multi-disciplinary health care.

Physiotherapists, occupational therapists and community nurses are part of the health care team that can provide lymphoedema management services. This can be either in the public or private sectors. With states and territories being responsible for the delivery of public hospital and community health services, I would recommend that the constituents of Robertson, who are understandably concerned about waiting times, raise this matter directly with the New South Wales Minister for Health, the Hon Jillian Skinner MP.

Minister Skinner may be contacted via email at office@skinner.minister.nsw.gov.au or by telephone on (02) 8574 5700.

I hope that the constituents of Robertson's concerns are resolved to their satisfaction. Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

from the Minister for Health, Ms Ley

Asylum Seekers

Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter of 19 October 2015 concerning a petition recently submitted for consideration by the Standing Committee on Petitions (Petition Number 1098/1595), concerning the Australian Government's asylum seeker policies.

The petition requested the closure of regional processing centres; an end to the detention of asylum seekers in Australia; an end to the detention of children; and the fast-tracking of protection claims.

The Committee would be aware that, in recent years, the number of illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) to Australia has significantly increased. This increase has undermined the integrity of Australia’s migration and humanitarian programmes. People smugglers profit from the trade of people across borders throughout our region. It is for these reasons that the Government is committed to working with other countries throughout our region to stem the flow of irregular maritime travel and to end people smuggling.

As a result of Operation Sovereign Borders, there has been a very substantial and sustained reduction in maritime ventures attempting to reach Australia. By focusing on detecting and intercepting IMAs, and supporting regional processing and resettlement of asylum seekers, people smugglers have been denied a product to sell, dramatically reducing the number of lives being lost and restoring integrity to the migration programme. The Government remains committed to its asylum seeker policies, including regional processing and the use of temporary protection visas rather than permanent protection visas.

Following its decision to expedite the processing of refugee claims, announced on 5 October 2015, the Government of Nauru anticipates that most transferees, including children, will receive a refugee status determination shortly. The remaining cases will be resolved as soon as practicable, such as for transferees who are temporarily out of Nauru for medical treatment.

In regards to immigration detention in Australia, the Government views this as an essential component of strong border control. Detention is not limited by a set timeframe but is dependent upon a
The Government has reduced the detention population by approximately 90 per cent by placing eligible IMAs in the community on bridging visas or in community detention while they await the resolution of their status. Those who are granted bridging visas will, in most cases, have permission to work.

As at 30 September 2015, there were fewer than 97 children who arrived as IMAs in held detention in Australia, compared with a peak of 1,992 children in July 2013. The Government is working to reduce this number even further, although in some cases there are national security or character issues that might be a barrier to the placement of their family in the community. Cases are reviewed regularly and further releases into the community are anticipated. The current figure also includes children who have been brought from Nauru to Australia temporarily so they or a family member can undergo medical treatment. These children and their families will be returned to Nauru for regional processing once that treatment is concluded.

The Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation Amendment (Resolving the Asylum Legacy Caseload) Act 2014 establishes a process for assessment of protection claims for IMAs who arrived on or after 13 August 2012. The new Fast Track Assessment Process will allow protection claims to be assessed more efficiently and ensure a more robust approach to protection assessments. IMAs who arrived on or after 13 August 2012 but before 1 January 2014, who have not been transferred to Nauru or Papua New Guinea, will be assessed in Australia under the Fast Track Assessment Process and, if found to engage Australia's protection obligations and to meet other criteria, will be granted a temporary protection visa. Resolving the immigration status of the IMA legacy caseload of almost 30,000 people in Australia who arrived under the former government is expected to take several years.

All asylum seekers processed onshore will continue to receive a comprehensive and thorough assessment of their protection claims in accordance with Australia's non-refoulement obligations. It is the Government's position that there are sufficient procedural safeguards in place for ensuring asylum seekers are afforded an opportunity to have their claims determined in an open and transparent assessment process. People who are affected by these measures will still be able to access judicial review. Thank you for bringing this petition to my attention.

from the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Mr Dutton

Multiple Sclerosis: Sativex

Dr Dennis Jensen

Thank you for your correspondence of 19 October 2015 regarding access to Sativex® (containing nabiximols) on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

I wish to acknowledge the petition (reference number 1094/1590) on the subject of Sativex that you referred to in your correspondence. As you are aware, Sativex is currently not available on the PBS for the treatment of any condition, including multiple sclerosis.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC), an independent, expert advisory body, makes recommendations to the Australian Government about PBS listings. The PBAC considers each PBS listing submission having regard to the safety, clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness (value-for-money) of the medicine for the intended use, in comparison with other available treatments. By law a medicine cannot be listed on the PBS without a recommendation from the PBAC.

In July 2013, the PBAC considered the listing of Sativex on the PBS for the treatment of moderate to severe spasticity due to multiple sclerosis. The PBAC rejected the submission on the basis of insufficient evidence to establish comparative effectiveness and safety compared with standard care alone in patients who are intolerant to anti-spasticity medication; and no evidence of efficacy and safety.
provided in comparison with high dose baclofen alone, or in combination with dantrolene or diazepam as the second-line therapy.


The PBAC would accept a new submission to list Sativex on the PBS at any time. However, sponsors cannot be compelled to apply. A patient's treating doctor may wish to contact the sponsor of Sativex, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia Pty Limited, on their behalf to determine their intention of reapplying to the PBAC. They may also be able to provide patients with compassionate access to the medication.

The contact details are as follows:
Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia Pty Limited
54 Waterloo Road
NORTH RYDE NSW 2113
Telephone: +61 2 9805 3555

In addition, the Government provides funds to the states and territories to assist with the costs of providing public hospital services. Patients may wish to discuss with their treating doctor whether an application could be made to a local public hospital for assistance with the cost of any treatments which are not available through the PBS.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

from the Minister for Health, Ms Ley

Medicare Benefits Schedule

Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter of 19 October 2015 regarding petition number 1092/1588, "Medicare Benefits Schedule optometry items and reinstatement of optometric Medicare Benefits Schedule indexation". The petition was considered by the Standing Committee on Petitions and presented by the Hon Anna Burke MP, Member for Chisholm, to the House of Representatives on 19 October 2015.

The petition was provided by the peak professional body for optometry, Optometry Australia in relation to changes to optometry services which were introduced as part of the 2014-15 Budget.

The Government is committed to ensuring all Australians have access to high quality, appropriate eye care. As part of this commitment, the Government believes that reforms to Medicare rebateable optometry services are necessary but cannot be achieved in isolation. To that end, the Government has established a Medicare Benefits Schedule Review Taskforce and a Primary Health Care Advisory Group to consider how Medicare services, including optometry services, can be aligned with contemporary clinical evidence and improve health outcomes for patients. These reforms are an ongoing process.

The Government believes that the Budget changes to optometry services will not impact significantly on patient access or the affordability of services. My department will continue to monitor Medicare claims and work with optometrists and consumers to evaluate the impact of the changes and consider future reforms as necessary.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

from the Minister for Health, Ms Ley
Intercountry Adoption Programs

Dear Dr. Jensen,

Thank you again for your letter of 18 August 2015 (Your reference: 1067/1558), referring me to the petition of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Australia requesting that the Australian Government establish an intercountry adoption programme with Ukraine.

As you may be aware, my department has responsibility for establishing and maintaining Australia’s intercountry adoption programmes. In April 2014, the Interdepartmental Committee on Intercountry Adoption recommended that my department investigate the viability of establishing new intercountry adoption programmes with a number of priority countries. Ukraine was not listed as a priority country in that report. As such, my department is not in a position to actively investigate a programme with Ukraine at this time.

My department is also responsible for ensuring that Australia meets its obligations under the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. Ukraine is not a signatory to the Convention. While Australia does have intercountry adoption programmes with countries that are not signatories to the Convention, we only do so where practices and procedures comply with the Convention's standards.

I am also conscious of ongoing political conflict within Ukraine. The Australian Government shares the view of UNICEF and other international organisations that in times of conflict, family tracing and reunification of children who have become separated from their usual caregivers should be prioritised. While children are often separated from their families and communities in times of conflict, this does not necessarily mean that these children do not have living parents, relatives or other carers. In these situations, it is in the best interests of the children to remain with their family and country as further separation from their extended families and country may compound the trauma these children have already experienced.

The Australian Government is committed to continuing work to strengthen and improve Australia's intercountry adoption system. Further information about my department's work is available on its website at:


Thank you again for writing on this matter.

from the Attorney-General, Senator Brandis

PETITIONS

Statements

Dr. JENSEN (Tangney) (10:03): Today's chair's presentation of petitions and responses is the last to occur in 2015. The next chair's presentation is scheduled for the first sitting Monday next year, on 8 February 2016.

I will be brief as I reflect on the past year's committee activities.

In last week's statement I provided the House with a statistical overview of petitions and ministerial responses presented during the 2015 calendar year. This week's single petition presentation and the additional member presentations since the committee's meeting last week have remarkably resulted in identical absolute numbers of petitions presented in 2014 and 2015. The ratio of chair to member presentations is also very close to that of last year. The near ideal ministerial response rate has also been reinforced today with a further eight responses presented.
During 2015, the committee received, the secretariat processed and the committee considered 135 petitions. A small percentage of initial petitions received (this year, 22 per cent) are unable to be presented as a petition because they do not meet one or more standing order requirements. In cases where non-complying petitioners have supplied contact details, their out-of-order petition is returned, along with advice on the petitioning process. Interestingly, this regularly results in the petitioner contacting the secretariat and the submission of a new and in-order version of their original petition.

The committee referred the majority of petitions presented in 2015 to the executive for a ministerial response. It received and noted 79 ministerial responses, which were presented by the chair and published to the committee's website.

Community engagement on petitions and the petitions process was conducted interstate and in Canberra through public hearings. The committee conducts hearings to enable further discussion with petitioners on petition matters. These hearings provide an opportunity to further—and publicly—examine the matter raised in a petition; but they are not avenues for recommendation or resolution by the committee.

In April, the committee travelled to Sydney, conducting a hearing on a petition and educational discussions at Hornsby Girls' High School; followed by hearings with petitioners on seven different petitions. In September, the committee met with petitioners in Melbourne on six different petitions from that region.

Other notable petitions-related matters included the presentation of a number of petitions exceeding 20,000 signatures, and a presentation—in August—of a petition attached to a bark panel decorated with Indigenous artwork. The 'bark' petition was actually on paper and met all the House's petitioning requirements—but it was notable for its unique artistic framing, similar in style to the Yirrkala bark petitions of 1963. The Yirrkala bark petitions, even though they are now over 50 years old, still attract a lot of interest from the public. For example, the 'thumbprints' of support for the petitions (which were not presented with the petitions in 1963) have been exhibited at the Istanbul Biennial this September.

I will finish up on an administrative note—any petitions received from now on will be considered by the committee in February next year.

Overall it has been a productive year which shows that the House's framework for petitioning, and its support functions, are robust and effective.

On a final, personal, note, I would just like to express my thanks to the secretariat for the absolutely sterling work they do in examining the petitions and doing all the background work that, quite frankly, goes without thanks for too long.

**BILLS**

**Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Amendment (Strategic Assets) Bill 2015**

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by Mr Katter

Bill read a first time.
Second Reading

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (10:09): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

In writing my history of Australia, there was an interesting anecdote when Laurence Hartnett was trying to convince everybody that cars should be made in Australia; we should not buy them all from overseas. One of his key backers—they were talking in an American context at the time—said that when they were building the Brooklyn Bridge, they proposed that they would have to get the English to build the bridge, because they were the world's greatest bridge builders and it was a great challenge in engineering. The American Secretary of State said: 'I know this: if we, Americans, build the bridge, we will have the bridge and the money.'

The sale of Darwin Port—we will not have the port and we will not have the money. We are doing the double: we will have neither. If the House could reflect upon the fact that half of the entire coastline of Australia lies between the Port of Townsville and the Port of Port Hedland. There is a big indent with the Gulf of Carpentaria but, if you stretch that indent out, it is half the Australian coastline. The American fleet, which has protected us and stopped the invasion of our country, needs deep water. Darwin is the only port in the South Pacific, and the only port has now vanished and the Americans are not happy.

I cannot remember in my 41 years as a member of parliament a President of the United States giving a pointed, direct slight to a head of government except where they were in a position of conflict in the Cold War. You have got to understand, when they were proposing that the Queensland government sell the Port of Townsville, I said, 'You can forget about development up here, because no-one is going to develop where someone has a toll over the only road leading out of the area. If you've only got one way that you can get that product, whatever it might be, out, and there is only one tollgate there, then you would be a damned fool to open up any industry at the back of Townsville.' The people of that area listened to us, and the LNP were slaughtered throughout that area in the next election.

They talk to us about free trade agreements as if there is something free there. It is not free. What it is doing is fettering the power of the Australian people to be able to make laws and regulations for the government of this country. You let a mining company in and they propose to mine in a certain way, and we find out that that mining is very detrimental to the health of the workers or the people living in the surrounding areas. It might be enormously destructive of our river systems but, if you let them in under certain agreements, then you cannot pass laws after those agreements are in place. That is the nature of the free trade agreements that we getting here. We are not giving freedom to someone to trade; what we are doing is fettering the sovereign powers of the Australian people—that is what is really going on.

As for foreign acquisitions, the FIRB did not back Woodside Burma. I have got to admit that that did occur, but now that Woodside Burma is going to be sold to overseas interests anyway, it would appear that all they were doing was just asking for more money. It was rejected.

The dairy factories of Australia, before the brilliant and clever deregulation of the industry undertaken by both parties in this place, were almost all then owned by the Australian people and by the farmers themselves. They are now almost all owned—with the exception of
Murray-Goulburn—by foreign corporations. On the Friday we were on 60c; on the Monday we were on 40c. It happened a little bit more slowly in Victoria, but it was worse there.

The sugar mills were all Australian owned before deregulation. Once again, the removal of the tariffs and the deregulation of the sugar industry took us a for a ride of about 20 per cent—and that is your profit margin, so you are now operating at a loss. Both side of this parliament—and, I might add the crossbenches, both here and in the other place—have refused to go ahead with ethanol. Our sugar mills, after all this wonderful free trade and deregulation, are now all owned by foreigners, with the exception of Mackay—and the New South Wales mills are still holding out, God bless them, under the great leadership of Manildra and Ian Causley, formerly a very excellent member of this parliament.

This is not lightweight stuff. These are two of our 11 biggest industries—and they are now all foreign owned. Food processing in this country is over 80 per cent foreign owned—when, again, our big factory in Queensland, Golden Circle, used to be Australian owned. So what has the success of your policies been? Do you not think they should be judged on their outcomes? You are selling off Australia. We all know that. There are people here of no conscience and no country. They know no allegiance to our country and they know no allegiance to their conscience. These outcomes have been diabolical for this country. The latest asset they have sold is the Port of Darwin, seriously putting at risk the ability of the Americans to help us. I do not want to go into the precarious nature of Australia's future defence-wise.

In mining, if you go back 17 years, over 80 per cent of the mining industry of Australia was Australian owned. BHP, the biggest company in the world, was Australian owned. Mount Isa Mines, the fourth biggest mining company in Australia, was Australian owned. Over 80 per cent of our resources were then Australian owned. From the last report I saw, however, 83 per cent of our mineral resources are now foreign owned—and that does not include coal seam gas, which is one of the biggest ones.

Let us have a quick look at coal seam gas. It bears looking at. It has taken all the water from inland Queensland and left us with a pin cushion of poisoned pins through our aquifers. What have we got out of it? We got a quick sugar hit of $50 billion or $60 billion of capital investment. But that is gone now. It was just there for four years. What do we have? The coal seam gas industry is almost completely foreign owned. It employs virtually nobody—I doubt whether there would be 2,000 jobs in the whole industry. We have had $25 billion of capital investment come in from overseas—this is our biggest area for capital imports outside of coal and iron ore—and it has just boomeranged straight back out again to the owners overseas, with no tax having been paid and nothing much at all left behind. We are giving it away and with it we are giving away—and this is where sovereignty comes in—our ability to say, 'Those holes you have drilled are poisoning the Great Artesian Basin, upon which our beef and our wool industry depend.'

The free trade agreement allows the Chinese to bring their own people in to man the Port of Darwin. They will be new initiatives, so it comes within the terms of the FTA. So you now do not own the only outlet for your product. It is now owned by a monopoly gatekeeper—a Checkpoint Charlie who can charge anything he likes. The Australian people are fed up and they are going to express that at the polling booth. (Time expired)

**The SPEAKER:** Is the motion seconded?
Mr Wilkie: I second the motion of the honourable and indeed indefatigable member for Kennedy and reserve my right to speak.

Debate adjourned.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Eureka

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (10:20): I move:

That this House recognises:

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

I do thank you for being in the House today, Mr Speaker, for a very important motion. I rise to speak on the importance of the Eureka Stockade—a significant moment in time that unfolded in the space of just 15 minutes in the early morning of 3 December 1854 on Eureka hill at Ballarat. It was 15 minutes that became legendary in Australian history. In those 15 minutes, what unfolded was a grassroots community revolt—a protest—against government policies that were holding back the development of the free market, individual enterprise and representative democracy. These principles that I, as a Liberal, hold dear are ones that it is clear the events of 161 years ago sought to establish.

Democracy, by its very nature, is not something that can be owned by either the Left or the Right. It is owned by the people of a nation. Yet, unfortunately, there have been attempts by various political and ideological movements over the past 161 years to redefine and mythologise this significant historical event. There have been efforts to force it to align to various political agendas, tying it to the same proverbial tree that the Victorian police chained those diggers who were found to be without a mining licence in those months leading up to the Eureka Stockade—so much so, that today the Eureka legend has largely been captured by those on the Left of politics, who seem to be very good at mythology but not so good at celebrating reforms of free market enterprise, small government and capitalism. These are very principles fought for by the diggers and on which the success of Australia is based today.

I am pleased to be able to present an alternative view—one born from our great former Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, who said, in 1946, that if the Eureka Stockade meant anything at all it indicated a 'fierce desire to achieve true parliamentary government' and, through it, 'true popular control of the public finances.' So, far from being some sort of triumph of the collective over the establishment, the story of Eureka is a story of a revolt against excessive taxation and overregulation. It was an uprising against an aggressive mining levy by hardworking entrepreneurs and individuals in search of financial opportunity to create a better tomorrow for themselves and their families than what they enjoyed at that time. For, as history tells us, many diggers would take the money they made from the goldfields to start a farm, a new business or, perhaps, to purchase a home for themselves and their family. Their stand on Eureka hill was a fight for opportunity and a better standard of living.
The gold rush, while creating opportunities, also created a headache for Australia's squatters and businessmen, who found themselves short of labourers and workers. This was why the hefty mining licence fee, and the excessive regulatory burden of compliance that went with it, was such a clear example of a government more interested in framing policies to engineer a social and economic outcome than enabling enterprise and free market to continue to shape Australia. Some of the historical accounts I have read—stories of twice-weekly paper checks with fines, if the paper on which the miner's licence was printed was found to be damaged in any sort of way—simply smack of overregulation. These were excessive burdens which our Eureka men so rightly opposed.

But it was the impact of Eureka that ultimately frames this issue and outlines why today's conservative political parties can rightly claim the Eureka Stockade as much their own as those on the Left do so willingly and so well. As a result of Eureka, we saw taxation reform, less regulation, greater democratic participation and the election of the leader of the Eureka Stockade, Peter Lalor, to the Victorian parliament just a year later. He was later to become Speaker. As the ultimate sign of the impact of the Eureka Stockade in Australia's economic and social history, there remains a thriving tourism industry in that place.

This event became etched in the psyche of Australia, capturing in a few short moments our history, our values our identity and helping frame our future too. They were 15 minutes which ultimately defined a generation and captured our nation's imagination and identity. Eureka belongs to all of us. We cannot change history but we can and must, at least for the sake of the men and women of Eureka, change the interpretation of the Eureka flag as a symbol of representative democracy. Perhaps today we should have a discussion about whether, come the next major event here in Canberra, the Eureka flag should be flown in an appropriate way.

I commend the motion to the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Irons):** Is the motion seconded?

**Ms Henderson:** I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

**Ms King** (Ballarat) (10:26): It is a pleasure to speak on this motion focusing on a pivotal and significant moment of our history, the Eureka Stockade. What we see demonstrated in this debate, which we have around this time every year, is how Eureka continues to be a subject for political debate and discourse. I am delighted that the member for Robertson has again brought this on for debate in this chamber.

The third of December is certainly a date we should know much better in this country. Eureka is a moment of history very close to my own heart and very close to home. It occurred within my electorate of Ballarat in Victoria. The site of the stockade itself is just a few kilometres from my electorate office. The troopers were stationed a mere block away, in Camp Street. The Southern Cross still flies proudly on buildings in the town. What remains of the original flag rests behind glass at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka. And I note that the Prime Minister’s wife, Lucy Turnbull, is a patron of that centre.

The Ballarat Reform League fought for equality, honest representation and a fair go. It was a remarkable body pulled together from the will of 10,000 diggers across the Ballarat goldfields. The charter, a copy of which rests in my office, called for equal rights. League members swore to stand truly by each other to defend their rights and liberties. The member for Robertson raised the issue of taxation; but, in fact, the diggers fought first and foremost
for the right for representation—which they were denied, even under a system of oppressive taxation. So ‘no taxation without representation’ was really one of the themes. They were scathing of the unelected paid officials who made laws that suited their selfish ends and narrow minded views. It is clear that the Ballarat Reform League was incensed by inequality. Of course, the league came very much out of the Chartist movement in the UK and other such movements internationally. They saw the abolition of the diggers and storekeepers licence tax—which had an immense impact on those who worked on the goldfields and very little on those outside it—as a matter of great importance. Even they could see that the Goldfields Commission and the Legislative Council held no concern for the poor, those who worked on the diggings or the large number of people who had come to Ballarat in search of a better life.

Between 1851 and 1860 some 500,000 people migrated to the Australian colonies. Sixty per cent of those went straight to Victoria to join the gold rush. The diggers came from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. They came from Germany, Italy, North America and China. They came from New Zealand and a number of the South Pacific nations. Ten thousand diggers of more than 20 nationalities took an oath under the Southern Cross to fight for their representation and a fair go. Their fight, both at the stockade and, afterwards, through the courts, grew into a wider struggle that formed the freedoms that all Australians now hold dear—personal liberty, a national identity built around mateship and a great ideal of community. They understood that political action leads to universal empowerment and a more equal society for all.

They understood that the press was a vital part of that process and that parliament needed to be structured as an accessible body. They knew that a body representing the full political rights of the people needed a solid and open platform as a base and fashioned the diggers charter with that in mind. The significance of their efforts cannot be overstated. This charter represents an incredible first step towards a democratic Australia—a measured, thought-out building block of a more equal future, the solid expression of an idea that would see each and every Australian empowered to take control of their future and through that shape the future of our nation.

While the situation is not purely black and white, and even today there are very different interpretations and perspectives that can educate us and help us understand such an integral part of our history, and while the charge on the stockade itself may have only lasted some 15 minutes, the 27 dead from both sides have left a legacy that has carried down 161 years since.

In my hometown of Ballarat there are a number of groups dedicated to the remembrance of the Eureka Stockade. I encourage everybody to attend the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka, which is a fantastic way of seeing all of the democratic expressions from Eureka to modern day, including things like a display about the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Eureka is a proud part of our history and I am proud to join this motion commemorating it here in this chamber today.

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (10:31): I rise to second the member for Robertson's motion on the importance of the Eureka Stockade in Australian history. As we have heard in this debate this morning, there is no doubt that the Eureka rebellion played a very significant role in one of the underpinnings of Australian democracy. As a Victorian, and coming from Corangamite, the seat adjoining the seat of Ballarat, I am very proud that we are having this debate this morning. This Thursday, 3 December, is 161 years since the uprising.

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CHAMBER
On that fateful day, 33 miners and five soldiers were killed. It was, as we heard so eloquently put by the member for Robertson, a battle against oppression, a battle against authority, a battle like no other that we have seen in our community. It was a battle over goldmining licences. The miners, led by Peter Lalor, believed that the licences were being imposed unfairly by Governor Charles Hotham. Lalor led hundreds of miners who formed the Eureka Stockade. This followed a rally of some 10,000 five days earlier. Following the Eureka Stockade, a group of 13 diggers were charged with treason and, very symbolically, they were found to be not guilty.

I want to reflect on the career of Peter Lalor, who, as we have heard, was elected to the Victorian legislative council in 1855. He went on to serve in the legislative assembly as the member for North Grenville, now known as Ballarat. He was a member of the Victorian parliament for over 20 years and he also served as Speaker for a period of seven years. According to Lalor, and I know you would be personally very interested in this, Mr Deputy Speaker:

The first duty of a Speaker … is to be a tyrant. Remove him if you like, but while he is in the chair obey him.

Mr Lalor was considered to be a wonderful local member. The Argus at the time described him as ‘a bluff, straightforward gentleman who blurs out plain truths in a homely, matter-of-fact style’.

As we have heard from the member for Ballarat, the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka was opened in 2013, supported by the then Victorian government and the federal government. There was also a significant contribution from the City of Ballarat to establish this important museum. It displays the Eureka flag on a rotating basis with the Art Gallery of Ballarat. I want to fully commend and support the suggestion by the member for Robertson that the Eureka flag be brought at the appropriate moment to this chamber, because it is a very important symbol of our democracy. It is a very important symbol of so much that was achieved and of so much that changed in the way that people sought to be governed at that time.

It may not in fact be known that when writer Mark Twain visited Australia he actually spoke about Eureka. He said:

It was a revolution - small in size; but great politically; it was a strike for liberty, a struggle for a principle, a stand against injustice and oppression. It was the Barons and John, over again; it was Hampden and Ship-Money; it was Concord and Lexington; small beginnings, all of them, but all of them great in political results, all of them epoch-making. It is another instance of a victory won by a lost battle.

I also want to reflect on the comments made back in July 1946 by Robert Menzies. Robert Menzies said:

Arms were used by working men in the most important historical struggle that this country has known—the struggle at Eureka Stockade—and arms will probably be used by the workers in this country again.

The attempt to connect the Eureka Stockade incident with communism is ridiculous, he said:

Insofar as the Eureka revolt indicated any general movement at all, it [was] a fierce desire to achieve true Parliamentary government, and … true popular control of public finances.
Peter Lalor, the leader of the revolt, went into the Victorian parliament and became its speaker. The communists are antiparliament, antirepresentative government, and for all their own brand of dictatorship. *Time expired*

**Ms Ryan** (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (10:36): I rise today as the member for Lalor, named after Peter Lalor, the leader of the Eureka Stockade. I welcome the opportunity to join what I note to be four female members speaking today in this debate. I would of course put on record that I forgive the member for Robertson not knowing how to pronounce Peter Lalor’s name, as many in this place need a reminder. It is one of the reasons I am here today—to say it as many times as I can in this important debate.

My electorate of Lalor was named after Peter Lalor, the leader of the Eureka Stockade rebellion that called for democratic representation in the colony of Victoria. We have heard from other speakers that beyond the Eureka rebellion Lalor was then elected to the Victorian Legislative Council and into the Assembly, and he for some time acted as speaker. More importantly, for me as the member for Lalor and as I have reflected in this place before, the Eureka rebellion is noted not just as the birth of democracy of Australia but also as the birth of multiculturalism. It was our only armed struggle for change in Victoria.

The spirit of the oaths taken under the Southern Cross still lives in the seat of Lalor today. I would link that to the multicultural nature of my electorate that reflects again the diaspora that was there in Ballarat on the goldfields. Twenty nationalities were represented by or involved in the Eureka Stockade rebellion. I think that is an important point we should all understand—it was not an Anglo revolt. There were 20 nationalities. Of course, we should note that many of those rebels were Chinese. We should also note that many of the members of the Ballarat Reform League were Chartists wanting workers’ rights acknowledged in their new country. The member for Ballarat has very eloquently outlined the Ballarat Reform League’s charter.

What is not so well known about Eureka is the women who were involved in this rebellion. The names that are not as well-known as Peter Lalor’s are those of the women who stood together with the men to fight to defend their rights and liberties. Women played a critical role in the Eureka Stockade, yet the story has always been told as if half of the participants were not there. In 2013 I was pleased to attend the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka to witness the launch of Clare Wright’s book, *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*, a groundbreaking book that documents the role of women within the Eureka Stockade and the remarkably unbiddable women of Ballarat.

Wright spent the last decade researching the thousands of women who were in Ballarat in 1854; identifying and documenting the remarkable women who were leaders in the people’s movement against government corruption and taxation without representation. It is also worth noting contributions of the women who were on the goldfields that day. One was Ellen Young, the self-proclaimed ‘Ballarat poetess’, who gave voice to the collective grievance of her community by publishing politically charged poetry and fiery letters to the editor in *The Ballarat Times*. Another was Clara Seekamp, an Irish single mother of three who became the de facto wife of Henry Seekamp, editor of *The Ballarat Times*. Clara, with her husband, ran a profitable printing and publishing business until Henry was jailed for sedition after the stockade, making Clara Australia’s first female newspaper editor. She continued to fire off blistering editorials, prompting one startled Melbourne journalist to fret over ‘the dangerous influence of a free petticoat government’.
I am proud to be the member for Lalor, to carry the traditions of the Eureka Stockade in this place and every day to ensure that I am the voice for the people of my electorate. And to ensure that women are never forgotten again in this country's history, to ensure that the fact that the four female members who spoke in this debate today are acknowledged. I recommend to everyone in this chamber a trip to Melbourne, a trip to Ballarat. Standing in the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka, below that Southern Cross flag, is an incredibly moving thing to do—to stand on that spot and remember that multiculturalism and democracy were born that day.

Debate interrupted

National Security

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (10:41): I move:

(1) notes the threat of violent extremism to Australian society;
(2) further notes the:
   (a) acts of terrorism committed by violent extremists within Australia against Australians;
   (b) specific terrorism incidents:
      (i) the attack on police officers at Endeavour Hills Police Station in 2014;
      (ii) the siege at Sydney’s Martin Place which resulted in the death of two Australians; and
      (iii) most recently the murder of Mr Curtis Cheng at Parramatta Police Station; and
   (c) significant number of ISIL recruits coming from Australia;
(3) commends the Australian police forces for their efforts in countering terrorism;
(4) notes the numerous acts of terror which have been prevented because of police efforts, in particular the:
   (a) attempt by the 'Sydney Five' to commit acts of terrorism in the city of Sydney in 2005;
   (b) Benbrika Group's planned bombing of various sporting events in 2005 and 2006 as well as a plot to assassinate former Prime Minister the Hon. John Howard; and
   (c) 2009 plot to storm the Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney;
(5) praises the Prime Minister for his statement in response to the recent terrorism incident in Parramatta, that it is not compulsory to live in Australia and if one finds Australian values unpalatable then 'there's a big wide world out there and people have got freedom of movement'; and
(6) calls for continued action in countering violent extremism and in particular, radical Islam within Australia in order to prevent further acts of terrorism within our borders.

This motion concerns the threat of violent extremism, particularly in the form of radical Islam, in Australia, a threat that has been borne out in this country. This is not violence for the sake of violence; it is violence driven by an extreme ideology, a jihadist ideology that does not accept the Australian way of life.

The ideology of Islamism despises our freedom, hates democracy and rejects our values—Australian values—which are very clearly defined. They are no state secret. When someone applies for a provisional, permanent or temporary visa, applicants must sign a statement that they have read and understood about the following Australian values: respect for freedom and dignity of the individual; freedom of religion; commitment to the rule of law, parliamentary democracy, equality of men and women, and the spirit of egalitarianism; and embraces things
like mutual respect, tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need in pursuit of the public good. These are the values that new citizens and new entrants to Australia sign up to, but not all citizens—or, indeed, their children—agree with these values in practice. In practice, some people hate these values. Those people can be found in Paris, they can be found in Europe, they can be found in the Middle East. Sadly, they can be found in Australia.

We would be kidding ourselves to think everyone in this country subscribes to our common set of values, and we would be foolish to think that there are not jihadists in this country who wish to do us harm because of who we are and the values that we hold dear as a nation. We have witnessed the violent extremism inherent in radical Islam in this country. We have witnessed the attack on police officers at the Endeavour Hills police station last year by a person who brandished an Islamic State flag while dressed in military gear in a photo posted to social media, where he also attacked or vilified police and security forces in this country online. We witnessed the siege at Martin Place in Sydney where two Australians were killed by a man who wanted police to bring him an Islamic State flag, a man who was a self-styled imam with thousands of Facebook followers. We witnessed the murder of Curtis Cheng at the Parramatta police station by a man who repeatedly chanted 'Allahu Akbar' after the killing. And we have seen a significant number of Australian citizens recruited by Islamic State—hundreds, in fact—who have left this country to go over and fight for that terrorist organisation.

The Australian police forces and security services have done a magnificent job combating radical Islamic terror plots—not just in their handling of the examples I listed but also in the prevention of others that have not gone ahead. Numerous acts of terror have been prevented through diligent police efforts and the efforts of security services, including the attempt by the 'Sydney Five' to commit acts of terrorism in Sydney in 2005. The Benbrika group's planned bombing of various sporting events in 2005 and 2006 was diverted, as well as the plot to assassinate former Prime Minister John Howard that the Benbrika group came up with. There was also a plot to storm the Holsworthy barracks in Sydney in 2009—again foiled by security and police efforts.

The disturbing thing about these foiled jihadist terrorist plots, and the ones that were actually enacted, is knowing that people walk amongst us who are both willing and able to commit these atrocities. Many of the people who hate Australia, Australian people and Australian values are not forced to live here. Some have dual citizenship and can just as easily go and live in another country. Others have the ability to gain citizenship of another country because their parents came to this country, often under the guise of seeking asylum or something like that. I would acknowledge the message the Prime Minister gave to those people when he said in his response to the terrorism incident in Parramatta:

It is not compulsory to live in Australia. If you find Australian values unpalatable, then there's a big wide world out there and people have got freedom of movement. They should exercise it.

The government is taking the issue a step further, with a bill stripping citizenship from dual citizens who join with foreign fighters such as Islamic State soon to go to the vote in the Senate. I note that Labor is now talking about opposing that, and that is concerning. I believe the message should go further than that. We should strip citizenship from those who have the ability to become citizens of another country when they join foreign fighters or threaten this
country and its people with terrorism. It would be a fair assumption that, if someone truly hated this country and everything it stood for, they would leave if they could—and they should leave. I say: goodbye to them, good riddance, and don't let the Customs gate hit you on the way out.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Irons):** Is the motion seconded?

**Mr Matheson:** I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

**Mr DANBY (Melbourne Ports) (10:47):** I commend the member for Dawson for raising this serious issue. I do not agree with all of the arguments that he makes, but it is a very serious issue. The terrible events that have taken Australian lives in Martin Place, Endeavour Hills and Parramatta are certainly things worth focusing on. The basic chronology of events that he outlines in paragraphs (4)(a), (b) and (c)—the attempts of the 'Sydney Five' and the Benbrika group and the plot to attack Holsworthy barracks—are all very serious incidents which could have gone a lot further.

The opposition wants and has achieved bipartisanship on national security legislation. We have so far supported four tranches of legislation which have been sent the Intelligence and Security Committee for refining and ensuring they strike the right balance between the need for security and the rights of the individual and, above all, the safety and security of the Australian people. Bipartisanship and the need to balance the rights of security and privacy are what we are examining now in the citizenship amendment legislation. We dealt very effectively with it by sending the metadata legislation back.

The entire world faces the threat of violent extremism outlined by the member for Dawson. It is not unique to Australia, to France, to Israel or to the United States. The proliferation on the internet particularly of violent jihadism has enabled some deluded young people to be radicalised in privacy, in their own bedrooms, all around the world—sometimes without even their parents being aware of it.

In response to the Paris attacks, some people said they were caused by the West victimising members of the Islamic faith. I do not accept that, but I would note the words of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Sydney, when she said yesterday:

... it's important for all members of parliament to be leaders and to bring our community together. I think we by our own actions and words need to set an example of unity for Australia. Of course there is today a genuine security threat in Australia and the best way that we can reduce that security threat is to support our intelligence and security agencies but support community building too.

She said the most important partners we have in that fight against violent extremism are among the Muslim community, as was outlined by the former Director-General of ASIO.

I support the comments of the Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews, who said he would not have a bar of the notion—he was talking about the violence in Israel—that, if a mother or father is randomly attacked in the street, then, so long as you go back far enough in time, cast your net wide enough of draw your bow long enough, it is somehow the victim's fault. This is a very important point to understand.

Rabbi James Kennard, one of the leading rabbis in Melbourne, in a wonderful article outlining the ethics of this issue, wrote:

Explanations are not justifications. But sometimes they come dangerously close …
In this search for the political motivation behind terrorism, some have crossed the line between explaining and excusing—

arguing that—

... "curtailing freedoms", "duplicitous foreign policies" and "military interventions" are the causes of terrorism ...

The danger that flows from legitimating terrorism by acknowledging the justice of the grievances that "provoke" such actions, is that violent actions are then rewarded when those grievances are addressed. The message is clear, terrorism achieves results. Those who tell us that only by understanding terrorism's political causes and alleviating them will we see a more peaceful world could not be more wrong; such "understanding" only encourages more to seek the benefits of violence.

... portraying terrorism as the inevitable consequence of external factors is not just dangerous and incorrect. It is morally wrong. It denies that the terrorist has his or her own human ability to make choices ... Every child knows that killing innocent people is wrong—whether it is done here in Australia or anywhere else.

We all have to work together. We have to ensure the security of Australia, but we must never say that some cause, this or that cause, justifies people killing people in Australia or anywhere else in the world, whether it is Paris, Melbourne or anywhere else. (Time expired)

Mr MATHESON (Macarthur) (10:52): I commend the member for Dawson for this important motion highlighting the threat of violent extremism to the Australian community. Since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001, we have all had to accept that terrorism poses a threat to everyone's safety, no matter where they are in the world. The very term itself captures the intent of these groups to strike fear into our hearts by inflicting death and destruction on the population indiscriminately. Civilians are not collateral damage in these campaigns; they are the target. It does not matter whether you are a Christian or a Muslim, a pacifist or not, young or old, every one of us is a target of this ruthless, opportunistic death cult emanating from the Middle East.

According to expert opinion, violent extremism is becoming more diffuse and harder to tackle. The recent attacks in Paris once again proved that we are dealing with an enemy devoid of compassion or any form of humanity whatsoever. As Janet Daley wrote in the UK Daily Telegraph:

All the things that make an enemy – however evil and malign – predictable, analysable, and intelligible are missing here. The actions make no sense in any terms that are within common understanding. This is not to say that we give up hope or in any way change how we live our lives. In fact, quite the opposite—defiance is the perfect response to this hideous ideology. Football fans proudly singing the French national anthem as they left the Stade de France in Paris amid the attacks proved in my mind that this barbaric ideology cannot withstand the joy and reason of our way of life. What we are seeing with these attacks on innocent people, as they enjoy dining out with family and friends, watching football or listening to a concert, are the final desperate acts of a group of fanatics with no future or place in the modern world.

I have no doubt that terrorism will be defeated. We will win. However, until that point, we must show solidarity and take every precaution to ensure our citizens and those that who serve to protect them are safe from harm. Last year's attack on police outside Endeavour Hill police station in Melbourne illustrated the threat posed to law enforcement officers in...
Australia. The attacker, Numan Haider, who had been known to police and counter-terrorism officers but was not considered a significant threat at the time, lashed out at two officers, stabbing one officer in the arm and the other, who was lucky to survive, in the neck, stomach and head. Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner Luke Cornelius said the man had been asked to come to the police station to discuss his behaviour, which had been causing some concern. When the man pulled up at the station, he stabbed the two officers as they went to greet him.

In October, the police community was again under attack: this time by a radicalised 15-year-old teenager, a naturalised Australian of Iraqi-Kurdish background who arrived with his family from Iran. He walked to police headquarters in Charles Street from his home in North Parramatta before opening fire on a civilian police employee.

The victim was Curtis Cheng, a 17-year veteran of the police finance department who had received medals for long service and who was admired and respected by his colleagues. Mr Cheng, a father of two, was shot at point-blank range by the teen as he left work. The day he died he had been working late on the police annual report. He was a dedicated, trusted and loyal employee of the New South Wales Police Force. He had stayed back longer than usual.

At Mr Cheng's funeral, an executive guard of honour was presented by the highest-ranking police officers in Australia, lining both sides of the steps of St Mary's Cathedral, including New South Wales Commissioner Andrew Scipione, along with deputy commissioners Catherine Burn, Nick Kaldas and David Hudson.

St Mary's Cathedral was filled with 1,500 mourners, near capacity for the funeral service, surrounded by tight security throughout. All states were represented, as well as New Zealand, the Australian Federal Police and Fire & Rescue New South Wales and the ambulance service.

Although these terrible attacks highlight the difficult and dangerous environment police are made to operate in, it is important to remember that Australia's law enforcement officers are having a significant impact on terrorism in our communities, foiling a number of planned terrorist attacks in recent times.

As Prime Minister Turnbull said yesterday, while paying tribute to 747 fallen police officers at a service to mark National Police Remembrance Day:

Our democracy depends on many things. But none is more important than the daily heroism and commitment of the police forces of our nation.

On behalf of all my parliamentary colleagues, I would like to thank the police community and their friends and families for your bravery and service to our community, keeping us safe from violent extremists and the threat of terrorism.

Finally, as a community, we should all heed the words of French President Francois Hollande:

We will not give in either to fear or to hate …

He said France would respond to the attacks with 'more songs, concerts and shows'. 'We will continue to go to stadiums.' Our love of life will defeat our enemies. Thank you.
Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (10:56): Australians watched with horror as 130 people were murdered in Paris last month by sadistic criminals driven by perverted delusions. It was a tragedy, yes, but it was also an atrocity—a deliberate act of barbarity and cruelty. We know all too well that we are not immune from this kind of barbarity in Australia.

In light of this, this motion calls for:

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

This is welcome and timely, yet, today, Australians woke up to a front-page article featuring a picture of an Australian MP in the uniform of his former life as a member of the ADF under the headline 'Islam must change'. The member for Canning is quoted in this article as saying:

Modern Islam needs to cohere with the Australian way of life, our values and institutions. In so far as it doesn't, it needs reform.

He wants an 'honest debate' about the links between Islam and extremism.

The mover of the motion, the member for Dawson, is also quoted in the article as saying:

It's got everything to do with Islam. The terrorists say as they are doing it that it is in the name of Allah.

A number of other coalition MPs and ministers are quoted in this article. Articles like this are utterly counterproductive to the effort to counter violent extremism in Australia.

The mover of this motion, and others like him, praise the work being done by Australia's excellent and dedicated police forces in combating violent extremism but they do not listen to what our police forces are saying. They are unanimous in their recommendations: the best way to curb religious extremism is through cohesive communities.

Assistant Commissioner Steve Fontana, the leader of Victoria Police's anti-terrorism response, has previously emphasised how reliant we are on information about radicalisation from the Muslim community and how anti-Islamic sentiment makes their job of talking to communities and countering radicalisation harder. He said:

Any sort of groups like that—

like Reclaim Australia, which the member for Dawson has been associated with, and the anti-halal movement—

whatever their intentions are, can create tension and intolerance, and that intolerance can lead to racism, and it can further marginalise young people … it's inappropriate … People really need to think about what cause they're going in for.

Australian Federal Police Commissioner Andrew Colvin echoed these comments recently, noting:

Both my organisation, Duncan's organisation (ASIO) and state and territory police around the country work very hard to make sure there isn't misrepresentations of those actions by police. Words matter, as does narrative and we work very hard … to make sure the community understand that we are trying to work with them and that we need their cooperation.

There are almost 500,000 Muslims in Australia and a bare handful of perverted fanatics in this country who would seek to hijack this religion to commit criminal acts in its name. The problem here is not a religious text; it is how individuals interpret it. The more we marginalise and vilify the Muslim community in Australia, the harder our job will be to tackle the real
problem: the vanishingly small number of perverts who use the text as a justification for barbarity.

Modern Islam is not the fevered dream of bigotry and paranoia that is inside the minds of some conservative MPs; it is the individual life choice of half a million Australians. What is it about the way that Ahmed Fahour, Bachar Houli, Waleed Aly, Fawad Ahmed, Captain Mona Shindy, Usman Khawaja, Ed Husic, Nazeem Hussain and Aamer Rahman live their lives that is a problem for these people? There are 99 per cent of this community who are not choosing terrorism, child marriages or female genital mutilation. Those who do ought to face the full force of the law, but the rest, who do not, should not be tarred with the brush of religious bigotry.

If those opposite believe that ‘modern Islam’ is the problem, and they want an honest debate, I challenge them to be specific. If Islam is the problem, when was the last time they visited a mosque in their community, and what was it that they heard or saw there that threatened our society? Do they want a religious test in our migration program? What do they propose to do about the largest Islamic nation in the world on our northern border? The Prime Minister ought to show some leadership on this important national security issue and call his ministers and his party room members into line with the strategy of our police forces for dealing with this threat. That is the policy—

Mr Christensen: You are an appeaser!

Mr WATTS: I take the interjection from the member for Dawson that I am an appeaser. I am advocating the policy being pursued by the Premier of New South Wales, Mike Baird; by the Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews; by Steve Fontana, the Victorian police assistant commissioner in charge of counter-terrorism; by Andrew Colvin, the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police—

Mr Christensen: You are an appeaser of radical Islam!

Mr WATTS: I take these interjections. I would like them in Hansard because, while the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, is advocating a bipartisan approach to this issue, an approach of cohesion in our society, this approach is being utterly disregarded by his backbench. These people need to get in touch with what we are trying to do in this nation. It is an important national security issue that is being hijacked by irresponsible, ignorant members of a minority group within the coalition. It is about time it stopped. (Time expired)

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (11:01): It is interesting to speak after such an outlandish outburst from the member for Gellibrand. This is a difficult and sensitive debate, but it is a debate that we must have without the type of rabblerousing, accusations of racism and Islamophobic statements we just heard from the member for Gellibrand. As the member for Dawson’s motion notes, we have had serious terrorist incidents in this country over recent years. One of those occurred in my electorate, in Holsworthy. In 2009, there was a plan to attack the Holsworthy Barracks with automatic weapons. The perpetrators’ plan was to murder as many people as they possibly could until they themselves were shot and killed by security forces. When Justice Betty King sentenced three individuals to 18 years imprisonment, she added that they were all unrepentant radical Muslims who would remain a threat as long as they held those extremist views.
These terror plots that have recently occurred in our country have all had one thread in common: they have been undertaken in the name of a radical interpretation of Islam. If we are going to have this debate—and it is a debate that we must have—we must do it without being bogged down and censored by the tyranny of political correctness. I believe we are slowly turning the corner and overcoming that tyranny of political correctness.

I will give you one example. Earlier this year, there was a T-shirt being sold in Woolworths that had the words, 'If you don't love it, leave.' Somehow, the politically correct found this offensive and carried on a massive song and dance until Woolworths removed those shirts, called them 'the offending T-shirts' and apologised. Several months forward, we can see how things have moved on. Our Prime Minister said only recently:

It is not compulsory to live in Australia, if you find Australian values are … unpalatable, then there's a big … world out there and people have got freedom of movement.

That may be a little bit more verbose, but it is exactly the same as saying, 'If you don't love it, leave.' I wonder if, next Australia Day, Woolworths will be selling T-shirts quoting the words of our Prime Minister.

The other reason that we need to have this debate is that, if we continue on our current path, we know what the future will be. The future will be what we see in the town of Molenbeek in Brussels. I think Mark Steyn summed it up correctly. He said, 'The barbarians are inside, and there are no gates.'

This generation of politicians cannot allow this happen to our country. What do we need to do? We need to tighten our migration policies. We need to admit that we have made mistakes in the past by allowing people who hold values completely contrary to everything that most Australians hold dear to migrate to this country. We need to say that if you want to migrate to this country and if you oppose democracy, if you have some sympathy for Islamic State, if you seek to advance sharia law, if you are against equal rights for women and if you do not share the Western freedoms and values that we enjoy, then Australia is not the country for you to migrate to. As our Prime Minister says, there is a big wide world out there, and people have freedom of movement.

Secondly, we need to tackle this anti-Western ideology that permeates many sections of our society. It is too easy to malign our Australian Defence Force and many people do so. We, every member of parliament, need to be crystal clear: when our Australian Defence Force personnel fight overseas, they are only there to protect innocent civilians from murder and rape. We need to talk up the principles and the liberal values that have created the wonderful society that we enjoy and that people from all around the world try to migrate to. (Time expired)

**Mr Lauriye Ferguson** (Werriwa) (11:07): If, like the member for Dawson, you represent an electorate where only three out of every 1,000 people are Muslim, you will have a different level of interaction and, I dare say, knowledge of these issues than a person like me, who lives in an electorate with 22.7 per cent of the population being Muslim and, nationally, represents an electorate which is 9.8 per cent Muslim, where, for the last decade, at least one of your neighbours is a Muslim family or your friends have children who go to the same school that Farhad Jabar, the murderer of that public servant in Parramatta, did. Quite frankly, sloganising and hatred are counterproductive.
Today, the member for Dawson conveniently takes one quote from the Prime Minister of this country to cloak his extremist position. I will quote further comments made by the Prime Minister of this country. As far back as 28 February 2011, he said:

It is important for us that we promote and encourage Islam … Islamic traditions which are moderate, which support freedom, which support democracy and which support Australian values not in the sense of Aussie values but in the sense of democracy, rule of law, tolerance, freedom. That's what we're talking about and they are universal values.

Further, on 8 July, he said:

Now, just as it's important not to underestimate or be complacent about the national security threat … it is equally important not to overreact to that threat.

In this same speech, he also said:

The Islamic terrorist seeks to provoke the state to overreact because it creates a more receptive environment for the extremists' recruiting efforts …

He further added that the government had the right balance in its national security laws.

On 3 October 2014, the Prime Minister said:

Can I just say again as I have said here before, the terrorists want us to demonise and alienate the Muslim community in Australia. The Muslim community is part of Australia, they are Australians. We have to pull together.

The member for Dawson has tried to be moderate in his motion today in contrast to his own performance. Today, he described the Lindt Cafe murderer as a 'self-styled cleric'. However, on 11 December 2014, he described him as a 'cleric'. He did not reveal to the Australian people that that murderer had been rejected as a preacher at 10 Sydney mosques, including one mosque a kilometre from my home. Today, he has used the term 'extremist Islam'. However, on 19 July 2015, in one his many twitters, he talked about Islam itself 'coping' with Australia.

The situation here today is that we have to make sure that these extremist elements, these psychopaths, these murderers and rapists, these people with a very obscure interpretation of Islam, are not able to recruit people. It is interesting to note a very timely article in The Saturday Paper this weekend, which quotes Dr Joshua Roose, a research fellow at the Institute for Religion Politics and Society at the Australian Catholic University. Dr Roose made this assessment of Australian Muslims:

As best we can assess … only about 30 per cent of Australian Muslims are practising. Seventy per cent are not particularly engaged with their faith. They may have a basic respect for religious leaders, much as many people consider themselves Christian but don't go to church, or maybe at Christmas.

They are the silent majority, who are just not engaged, not on the political spectrum. They are neither radical extremists nor moderates out there encouraging any particular view of Islam.

He went on to say:

Somewhat ironically, what we are seeing is the generation that has grown up in the post 9/11 context, now in their teens or early 20s, in a quite politically hostile atmosphere, where everything to do with Muslims is scrutinised and suspected …

Similarly, in The Herald this morning were once again some very timely comments in relation to Mr Christensen's motion. Professor Kevin Dunn—who actually knows a few things about this subject, unlike the member for Dawson; he has actually done research—from
Western Sydney University, following a survey of Muslims came up with the following conclusions:

Most Muslims surveyed ranked education and employment as issues most important to them; identified themselves as Australians and felt a sense of belonging to Australia; frequently mixed with non-Muslims; and felt Islam was consistent with Australian norms and society.

Ninety-seven per cent agreed that it was a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures …

In conclusion, I refer to an article in the latest edition of *The New York Review of Books* where Max Rodenbeck makes this distinct comment:

The very shrillness of today's zealots may reflect an underlying fear that conservative orthodoxies are under threat as never before, facing a growing backlash not so much from the outside world as from within the faith.

What he is essentially saying is that ISIS and Boko Haram are making a desperate, last-minute attempt to enforce their interpretation, their narrow beliefs, on a world in which Islamic belief is changing. We are seeing that in surveys in this country and internationally.

Debate interrupted.

**World AIDS Day**

**Ms BUTLER** (Griffith) (11:12): I move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

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

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

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

(3) affirms its commitment to support actions which will reduce stigma, prevent new HIV transmissions, and work towards a cure.

Tomorrow is World AIDS Day. This year's theme is getting to zero—zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS related deaths. Australia will not get to zero without effort and focus. Our country must continue to strive to stamp out AIDS and HIV, and getting to zero is a task that is part of a much broader project of getting justice for the LGBTI community.

I acknowledge and remember those who have lost their lives to AIDS. I also thank those who have cared for others as they have died. It is the height of love to care for someone who is dying. I remember those HIV and AIDS experts who died when MH117 went down. They were traveling to the International AIDS Conference in Melbourne. Losing them was a tragedy.

I think most people hoped that, by 2015, new HIV cases, discrimination against positive people, and AIDS-related deaths would be a thing of the past here. But, according to the Kirby Institute, there were 1,081 cases of HIV infection newly diagnosed in Australia in 2014. It is estimated that there are now 27,150 people living with HIV in Australia. In addition, there has been an increase in syphilis over the past 10 years and a worrying spike in
this disease in northern Australian communities this year. These facts go to show that AIDS, HIV and STIs will not just decrease naturally with time. It takes effort, resources and commitment to meet this public health challenge.

So I acknowledge the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and, from my home state, the Queensland AIDS Council. QuAC runs HIV prevention programs, provides services and support and is a strong voice on HIV and gay issues. For example, when the Newman Liberal-National government closed the Biala Sexual Health Clinic the year before, QuAC opened Clinic 30. It is staffed by two section 100 prescribing doctors. The clinic provides testing and immediate treatment for all STIs.

I also acknowledge my good friend and constituent Phil Carswell, who was this year awarded an Order of Australia for his significant contribution over many decades to the development of the Australian response to HIV. Since the mid-1980s, Phil has championed peer delivered health and ensured that the voices of gay men have been heard nationally. I saw Phil over the weekend and he told me that he had joined the QuAC board. I am not at all surprised to hear that he is continuing his advocacy and his work. I am sure that he and a lot of other Queenslanders will attend QuAC’s World AIDS Day Candlelight Vigil at Reddacliff Place tomorrow night from 6.45pm.

I mentioned Clinic 30. The doctors there provide scripts for the importation of pre-exposure prophylaxis, which is known as PrEP. As the name suggests, HIV-negative people can take PrEP to prevent HIV transmission. PrEP has been described as a game changer for HIV and HIV prevention. It gives gay men and other men who have sex with men the ability to take greater control over their own sexual health. PrEP is not yet available domestically. Labor recognises the importance of renewing efforts to reduce the spread of HIV-AIDS, including adopting prophylactic treatments, subject to the approval of independent regulators and any recommendation from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee. Like all new prevention measures, PrEP has its limitations. Because it will not protect you from all STIs, taking PrEP is not a reason to stop using condoms. It is important to make sure PrEP use does not lead to complacency about protection from STIs.

As I mentioned, there has been an outbreak of syphilis in Northern Australian communities. In urban communities, syphilis is predominantly transmitted between men who have sex with men. So, although there are a lot more prevention measures coming onto the market and coming into the community for HIV, it remains very important that people take other measures to protect themselves from STIs like syphilis. It is an absolute shame that in 2015 we are seeing babies being born affected by syphilis. It is a tragedy, and it is something that our community needs to continue to work against.

As I said earlier, getting to zero is an important task in the project of justice for LGBTI people. Marriage equality is another important part of that. In the Queensland parliament, LNP members are being given a free vote on civil unions. That should happen here on marriage equality. The Prime Minister should show leadership and deliver a free vote. Though getting to zero in respect of HIV and AIDS and delivering marriage equality are both important, neither is enough. I want Australia to be a country where LGBTI people no longer face discrimination, where your sexuality is not a basis for harassment, where there are no hate crimes, where you have access to the health care you need and where no-one feels like a
second-class citizen—a just society. I urge each of my colleagues to recognise World AIDS Day.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Irons): Is the motion seconded?

Mr Giles: I second the motion and I reserve my right to speak.

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan) (11:17): I am wearing a red ribbon today to show my support for people living with HIV and to commemorate those who have died, especially those who have helped change public attitudes and made HIV a disease people can live with. The global World AIDS Day theme for this year continues on from last year's theme: 'Getting to Zero: Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths'. In order to achieve this, we need a clear plan and strategy. The Seventh National HIV Strategy sets a direction for Australia to reverse the trend of increased HIV diagnoses and to work towards eliminating HIV transmission in this country.

The AIDS 2014 Legacy Statement commits the Australian government and the eight states and territories to taking all necessary action, in partnership with key affected communities and sector partners, to remove barriers to testing, treatment, prevention, care and support across legal, regulatory, policy, social, political and economic domains. In this regard, the coalition has also announced a number of practical measures to support the early testing and treatment of HIV. Restrictions preventing the manufacture and sale of HIV home self-tests were removed and, from 1 July this year, PBS subsidised HIV antiretroviral medicines can be dispensed and accessed through a pharmacy of the patient's choice.

Australia has a strong record of nonpartisan leadership in responding to the HIV epidemic, resulting in one of the lowest prevalence rates in the world. The member for Griffith is no doubt proud that Queensland was the first state in Australia to sign up to a new HIV treatment program which promises to eliminate the transmission of HIV by 2020. The former Newman government last year signed a memorandum of understanding with Canada's British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS.

Australia has come a long way since we first heard about HIV and AIDS. The 1980s was a time when we knew so little about HIV and AIDS that, in the absence of scientific knowledge, ignorance, intolerance and fear replaced reason. Who can forget those confronting 1987 grim reaper advertisements? While the grim reaper successfully scared us about the dangers of HIV and AIDS, it also divided and polarised the Australian community. It made the healthy fear the sick and sick-looking. Friends were scared of touching friends. Sick people were traumatised. Australia's gay community were blamed and vilified, sometimes in public acts of aggression and violence. But the public health awareness campaigns did have the desired effect. We have learned a lot since then. Thirty years along that journey and here we are on the eve of World Aids Day 2015, and we are now talking about eliminating new HIV infections within five years in Australia.

Australia is rightly proud of its leadership in the response to HIV and AIDS. We have contributed more than $1 billion to the international HIV response in the past decade. Bilaterally, Australia is supporting HIV-AIDS activities and programs in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. At the global and regional levels, we support UNAIDS so as to ensure global efforts to address the disease capture needs in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as in Africa. However, we cannot be complacent. We must be vigilant in our ongoing action to address the
remaining challenges in Australia and our region: weak health systems, stigma and discrimination, laws and policies that inhibit marginalised populations' access to services, and persistent barriers for women and girls to claim their sexual and reproductive health rights.

I acknowledge the significant roles played by people living with HIV, their friends, family, and supporters and activists and researchers—past and present—in making HIV a disease with which people can live. For many Australians and their families, the journey to get to this milestone has been long and painful. Countless men, women and even children have died along the way. Others have suffered long-term incapacity or tenuous health. Today, because of them, we are implementing a plan to virtually eliminate new HIV infections in Australia. I thank the member for Griffith for her motion today.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (11:22): I rise today in support of World AIDS Day, which falls tomorrow, as the member for Griffith has mentioned. I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this subject, and I thank the member for Griffith for moving this motion.

I have spoken many times before about the story of AIDS and how, through the incredible work of scientists, researchers and medical professionals like my sister, HIV and AIDS can now not only be prevented but be treated. I can recall a time—it seems not so long ago, Mr Deputy Speaker, and you are about the same vintage as me—when the threat and fear of AIDS gripped this nation. I am talking here about the 1980s. It was a great, unknown terror. Nobody knew what it was or what it meant. All it meant, essentially, was certain death. It was an epidemic. In Melbourne, where I was living, it seemed almost every person my age, including me, had lost a friend or loved one to this disease.

The result of this fear, of this trauma, of this lived experience was that people became informed, they became vigilant and they protected themselves. In the eighties my sister, who is a scientist, worked in AIDS research at the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne. I remember talking to her about her work as we went from being totally in the dark about this disease to knowing it, to gradually getting an understanding of it and, through that, to being able to control it. HIV is now a manageable infection and no longer a gradual progression to AIDS and then death. Treatments not only control the virus; they can reduce its infectiousness. The progress that has been made in tackling this disease in what seems like a relatively short couple of decades is nothing short of remarkable.

However, there seems to have been, unfortunately, an unintended flip side to this progress. As treatment has progressed, fear has subsided and so too, it would seem, has our vigilance. It is alarming that over the past 15 years the number of new HIV diagnoses has gradually increased—from 719 diagnoses in 1999 to 1,081 in 2012. It is estimated that 27,150 Australians are currently living with HIV, and around 350 Canberrans are living with HIV. This reiterates the need for vigilance. Those of us who were there in the 1980s particularly remember and reiterate the need for vigilance.

The theme for World AIDS Day this year is the same as last year: getting to zero—zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS related deaths. The elimination of HIV is something that the UN's Secretary-General's Special Envoy for AIDS believes is achievable in the Asia-Pacific region within the next 15 years. However, it will only be achieved if we are vigilant and avoid complacency. I cannot underscore that enough. We have to be vigilant and we have to avoid complacency.
I believe it is the responsibility of those of us who lived through the birth of the HIV-AIDS epidemic in this country to keep the younger generations informed. I say to them: sit down with those of us who went through that living hell in the eighties, those of us who, like me, lost friends. My husband lost friends. We lost friends who died in only their 20s and went blind and were incredibly traumatised before they died. Anyone who lived through the eighties knew someone who was touched by this disease, and most of us know someone who died. So I encourage the younger generation to sit down with those of us who are just a bit older to listen to our experiences and the horror of watching that unfold and the great sadness of losing friends in their 20s who had so much to give and who lost their lives so early and, quite often, in very, very difficult, challenging and painful circumstances, covered in sarcomas. It was tragic.

We must be vigilant. We must avoid complacency. I say to people: always practice safe sex. When travelling overseas, be prepared. Take protection with you as it might not be available where you are going. Do not share syringes and other personal items like razors. Also, get tested regularly.

In closing, I want to congratulate Philippa Moss from the AIDS Action Council of the ACT who was recently awarded the Telstra ACT Business Woman of the Year—(Time expired)

Ms GAMBARO (Brisbane) (11:27): I wish to rise today to also speak on the motion on World Aids Day. I thank the previous speakers for their contributions as well. Tomorrow marks World AIDS Day, held every year to raise awareness about the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS. It is a day to show support and also to commemorate, sadly, those people who have died. The HIV epidemic is one of the largest epidemics our world is facing, and Australia is working bilaterally, regionally and globally to address the threat. Australia remains committed to supporting an effective, equitable and sustainable HIV response in our immediate region, the Indo-Pacific.

We should also acknowledge the substantial progress that has been made in expanding access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services and particularly the focus on achieving epidemic control. We hope to end AIDS as a health threat. With more people receiving treatment now more than ever before, we have seen a decline in new cases globally.

The Australian government pledged $200 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for 2014-2016, supporting its efforts to eliminate the three diseases. The benefit of this commitment can be seen in the statistics: 2.9 million people living with HIV in the Indo-Pacific region have been receiving antiretroviral treatment from global fund support; globally, 423 million people have received HIV counselling and testing through global fund grants; and 5.1 billion condoms have been distributed through the global fund to prevent the spread of HIV. While Australia is stepping up the battle against the worldwide spread of the disease, we must also acknowledge that we have not been completely successful domestically either.

Tomorrow is a great reminder that much more needs to be done in Queensland, which is one of the states that has witnessed a gradual increase in the number of new HIV notifications. Combined with its size and widespread population centres, Queensland faces its own unique problems. My own seat of Brisbane has also seen a growing number of HIV cases, for which I will continue to fight for more funding and resources. We, as the federal government, can and must do more to reverse the spread of this dreadful disease.
Another goal of the day is to affirm the commitment to support actions which reduce the stigma surrounding HIV infection, prevent new HIV transmissions and work towards a cure. I, like the member for Canberra, also saw the terrible stigma in the 1980s—the fear, scaremongering and discrimination. I experienced it every day in my own family's restaurant. It is an episode that I am sure that many of us never ever want to go through again. It really did not need to be that way, but it certainly elicited a great deal of fear in the community at the time.

I want to pay tribute to the many dedicated and committed local organisations and volunteers who provide invaluable and much-needed support, particularly the great work that they do in providing guidance to those affected by HIV and their families. In the electorate of Brisbane, the Queensland AIDS Council does a fantastic job—and I want to particularly acknowledge CEO Joanne Leamy. I also want to acknowledge Queensland Positive People; Rapid; the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, which reaches out to the many communities that it represents by providing greater education and counselling; the Gay and Lesbian Welfare Association; and, particularly, a new foundation that has only been in existence for a few short years—HIV Foundation Queensland. I also want to pay tribute to the health minister at the time, Lawrence Springborg, who announced free HIV testing and ensured that that was expanded, particularly as part of AIDS Awareness Week back at the end of 2013. That was very much appreciated, particularly the after-hours HIV testing clinic.

Tomorrow is not just about taking stock of what has been achieved and what is yet to be achieved; it is also about the realisation that real lives are at stake. Tomorrow is not just to mark the fighting of a disease; it is also to remember the toll that has been taken, and is still being taken, on those who have that battle.

Ms King (Ballarat) (11:32): I am proud to join with other members here in the chamber to speak on this motion that not only celebrates how far we have come in the fight against AIDS but also, sadly, highlights how far we still have to go to change attitudes, stop new infections and, above all, put an end to AIDS-related deaths. In the HIV Foundation Queensland video, HIV stigma—I have judged ... other people are going to judge me, the mother of a man with HIV says: 'When somebody tells you my sister has got cancer, you go "ohhh" and "I'm very sorry to hear that". They do not react in the same way about HIV-positive people.' It is that stigma which remains the biggest barrier today towards meeting the World Aids Day theme—'Getting to zero. Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths'. It is this stigma that the Hawke government tackled head-on with its landmark Grim Reaper campaign in the 1980s that helped change the mindset here about how best to protect all Australians from AIDS. It was Labor that established Medicare and the PBS which, in tandem, ensure that no-one with HIV-AIDS is denied medical care or the retrovirals that now mean HIV is no longer a death sentence.

Indeed, the vast majority of patients with HIV will no longer go on to develop AIDS and will be able to successfully manage their condition and remain relatively healthy for the rest of their lives. But there is still a huge way to go. Just over a decade ago, when it was hoped we were on the brink of zero new HIV infections, infection rates started to rise again and have now levelled off at just over 1,000 a year. The Kirby Institute's 2015 annual surveillance report found that there are an estimated 27,150 people in Australia who are HIV positive and
there were 1,081 new diagnoses of HIV, which is very similar to the 1,028 new cases in 2013 and the 1,064 new cases in 2012.

While there is some relief that the surge in new HIV cases that began around a decade ago appears to have been capped, it is obviously deeply disappointing to see the return of a disease that many had hoped—even predicted—would be eliminated by now. Clearly, complacency has set in, with many Australians obviously believing the great success we had in previous decades in dramatically reducing the numbers of Australians with HIV meant that HIV-AIDS was no longer the threat it had once been and that precautions could be abandoned. All Australians must continue to be made aware that HIV remains a very serious threat and that the transmission of HIV can be halted by safe sex practices and through harm minimisation with intravenous drug users. But we must also ensure that those living with HIV remain free from discrimination.

While absolutely nothing will ever take the place of prevention, in the meantime the PrEP pharmaceuticals do offer the hope of a daily drug that can help prevent the vast majority of new infections. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that daily PrEP can reduce the risk of getting HIV from sex by more than 90 per cent and by more than 70 per cent amongst those who inject drugs. It was this evidence that drove this year's ALP national conference to specifically back the introduction of PrEP in our national platform. In February this year, drug company Gilead began what is expected to be a 12-month process with the TGA to license Truvada for use as a PrEP in Australia. Even then, it could be months—even years—before the drug can be listed on the subsidised PBS, which would make it available for no more than $37.70 per script.

Labor accepts the need for proper processes to ensure Australia's health system is both safe and secure. But we will be closely watching this process to ensure that, should the experts recommend it, the government acts swiftly to ensure that PrEP is made available on Australia's PBS. But, as I said at the outset, our greatest emphasis must be on redoubling our efforts to educate all Australians about the risk of HIV-AIDS and to work together to eradicate this terrible disease, while supporting those who continue to live with HIV. Our aim must remain, absolutely, as it has been in the global World AIDS Day theme for the past five years: zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths.

Debate adjourned.

Domestic and Family Violence

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (11:37): I move:

That this House acknowledges the work of:

(1) community legal centres in tackling domestic violence;
(2) the United Nations and its 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign to end domestic violence;
(3) journalist Ms Sarah Ferguson for her ongoing efforts to educate the public on the key driver behind domestic violence—control;
(4) the Leader of the Opposition for appointing a Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Child Safety and Prevention of Family Violence; and
(5) the Victorian Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, for her work on Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence.
I rise today to talk once again about domestic violence—the national scourge that has attracted our attention so poignantly this last week. As we all know, domestic violence is not restricted to one suburb or one part of our society. It transcends all cultural, class and religious boundaries. It is about control, it is about violence and it is born from gender inequity. The result of domestic violence is the undermining of one's self worth, and it has always been with us. As I said last week on White Ribbon Day, the conversation, however, has changed. We are finally having a serious national conversation. We cannot go back from this point. We must keep shining a light on this epidemic.

To that end, I commend journalist Sarah Ferguson's two-part series *Hitting Home*. Sarah has spent six months on the front line, documenting the terrible realities for so many families. She followed women as they went through the court process seeking AVO's. The pressure and difficulty of going to court has been highlighted in this documentary series—the formality of the court process and the absolute humiliation of having to attend a court to have that court seek to protect you from someone who purports to love you. I also commend the work of community legal centres and women's refuges in ensuring women are not alone facing their worst day and not alone when making decisions about what to do when they find themselves in these situations. I must stand here today and condemn this government for its cuts to funding these services, and for the cynical way it pays lip-service and makes announcements about new funding which still represents real cuts in real terms.

The statistics are alarming: 650 domestic violence incidents nationally each day; one every two minutes; 240,000 a year. But it is not the statistics that will change behaviour; it is the stories. We could stand here for hours detailing these horrific statistics; we have all heard them before. But the real stories make those statistics more stark—the individual stories that we are seeing on our televisions will, we hope, carry the change in behaviour. To that end, I commend the Victorian state government, led by Daniel Andrews, and Minister Fiona Richardson for the royal commission that is occurring in Victoria and for highlighting those stories and sharing them across our society, because they do merely become a statistic if you take away the individual stories.

Again, the statistics and data are important. To that end, I commend Bill Shorten and the Labor opposition for their announcement that the victims of domestic and family violence will be eligible to take leave as a universal workplace right. This is an important thing to occur in this country. It supports victims and ensures their rights under the law. It shines a light. It names and shames, in workplaces, those perpetrators. It ensures that workplaces will support the victims of domestic violence. It will also do a really important job and that is that it will accumulate the data; it will tell a story about the economic impact of domestic violence in our workplaces. As we all know, we measure those things that are important to us. So in measuring this and putting this domestic violence leave, as we are calling it, into our workplaces, we will, therefore, be collecting important data on the economic impacts of domestic violence.

I also want to commend the Victorian state government for joining the United Nations and its 16 days of activism. It was a proud moment when Spring Street was lit up orange last week. I have followed closely the work of Minister Richardson as every day so far of these 16 days she has made a point about domestic violence and carried it in our mainstream media. I hope that in this place the issue remains constant, that we mark the damage and the actions set
to change those underlying factors, and we mark the changing behaviours that we hope come from this. But make no mistake: it is about gender inequity and it is about control. I am proud to be a part of the Labor Party that sets target for equal representation of women in our parliament. I am proud to stand here today with my sisters.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): Is there a seconder for the motion?

Ms Butler: I second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Ms PRICE (Durack) (11:43): I am indeed very pleased to rise to speak in the House today on this very important issue regarding domestic violence. I start by commending the Prime Minister's comments made in Parliament on White Ribbon Day last week. Like the Prime Minister has said on a number of occasions, violence against women and children is one of Australia's greatest shames. I acknowledge the United Nations 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign which will run until 10 December.

The Turnbull government, I am very pleased to say, is committed to addressing this issue, with the $100 million women's safety package announced in September. This is a comprehensive package and will go a long way in addressing domestic violence in Australia. This package will boost front-line support and services, improve technologies to keep women safe, and provide education resources to help address community attitudes to violence and abuse. The package also includes $20 million for specific measures for Indigenous women, as Indigenous women, as you will know, Deputy Speaker Broadbent, are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of family violence. Innovation will be at the heart of this government, and domestic violence will be no different. Under the package, there is a pool of $12 million to trial, with the states, the use of innovative technology—such as GPS trackers for perpetrators—with funding matched by state and territory governments.

The e-safety commissioner will develop a resource package regarding online safety for women, under the $5 million set aside for safer technology, which includes working with telecommunication companies to distribute safe phones to women in need. Women will be safer in their homes, as we commit $17 million to expand the Safe at Home program—installing CCTV cameras and other safety equipment—together with a grant to the Salvation Army to work with security experts to conduct risk assessments in victims' homes. It is important to keep victims in their homes where it is safe and possible to do so. The government will expand the national telephone and online counselling service, 1800RESPECT, which will ensure that there is someone there to talk to at the time of need. We have also increased funding to MensLine by $2 million, for tools and resources.

I had the honour of launching the Aboriginal Family Law Services' Sparkle and Grow program in Kununurra, in October. The Sparkle and Grow program builds confidence and self-worth for teenage girls. The program is made up of five two-hour sessions over five months and is designed to raise awareness around family and domestic violence and to develop an understanding of living healthily and building and maintaining respectful relationships, targeting 12- to 16-year-olds. This program will be a great addition to the east Kimberley, and also other regional areas in Western Australia, and I commend the work of the Aboriginal Family Law Services with their creation and tailoring of this program.

Mr Deputy Speaker, it goes without saying that domestic violence is an incredibly serious issue, which is why we are talking about it again here this morning. As you can see, the
Turnbull government is committed to tackling one of our national shames. We all have a responsibility to call out domestic violence when we see it, but we also need to make sure our husbands, brothers, friends, neighbours and, especially, sons know that domestic violence, No. 1, is a criminal offence but, No. 2—and more importantly—is never acceptable.

I would like us all to spare a thought for the women and children who live in fear for their lives. Please reach out so that they know that they are not alone—especially at this time of the year, when most of us will be enjoying time with our loved ones, friends and neighbours. When you become aware of an incident of domestic violence, please do not ask, ‘What did she do wrong?’ or, ‘Why does she stay?’; please ask, ‘How can I help?’

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (11:48): I thank my good friend the member for Lalor for moving this important motion before the House today. Too many Australian women experience domestic violence every day, and the emotional, physical, social and economic cost of that is just enormous. Ending violence against women is a challenge that belongs to the whole community, not any one individual or group. In meeting that challenge, it is vital that we have adequately funded support services in place, that justice and protection for victims is readily available and that awareness programs are ongoing, monitored and assessed for their effectiveness. We must also insist on quality reporting in the media, to help build awareness of the impacts of gender stereotyping and inequality. We have to demand a whole-of-government approach, across multiple jurisdictions, to really address the structural inequalities in our society. Each of these issues is identified in the terms of the motion that is before the House.

Today, my contribution to the debate will focus on two issues in particular: the work of community legal centres and the activities in my electorate of Newcastle as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Community legal centres provide much-needed advice to some 200,000 disadvantaged Australians every year, including women who are fleeing domestic violence and abusive relationships, but, because of the actions of this Liberal government, community legal centres are at breaking point. Last week, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the chairperson of the National Association of Community Legal Centres, Ms Rosslyn Monro, acknowledged that, while the shift to raising broad awareness of family violence was happening, without a reversal of funding cuts into their services, increased awareness would mean nothing. She said that community legal centres:

… see first hand on a daily basis the toll Australia’s family violence crisis is having on women and children across Australia. However, CLCs face a 30% cut to their funding nationally from 2017 under the new National Partnership Agreement for Legal Assistance Services. Similarly, other frontline family violence services, including the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, face funding cuts and uncertainty.

To date, the government is in denial about these cuts and refuses to acknowledge or give reason as to why it will not commit to renewing desperately needed funds. Labor’s $70 million package to address family violence commits $50 million to frontline legal services—it is time this Liberal government did the same.

It is also noted in the motion that the 16 days of activism for the elimination of violence against women started last Wednesday, on 25 November, and will run through to 10 December. Events and activities are occurring all around the world as part of the 16 days of
activism. Today, I would like to recognise some of the activities taking place in my electorate of Newcastle. Last Wednesday, 25 November, the 16 days of activism was launched in Newcastle, with a White Ribbon breakfast and community function hosted by the lord mayor. On Friday, men and boys from Newcastle took part in the Walk a Mile Koori Style—a walk led by Aboriginal male youth—taking the White Ribbon pledge and raising awareness that society must change the beliefs and behaviours that excuse, justify or condone violence and inequality. Also on Friday, the Newcastle community attended the Sista Code White Christmas Party to raise funds to help women start their lives again after escaping domestic violence.

There was also a gathering at St Johns Anglican Church, hosted by the Victims of Crime Assistance League, called the Christmas Tree of Angels, which brought people together to remember those touched by or lost to violence. There was a flash mob held by NOVA for women and children and there will be another next Saturday, in a surprise location in Newcastle. Last Saturday, I was honoured to take part in a ceremony of tying white ribbons to trees to commemorate the lives of the 78 women who have been killed through acts of violence this year alone. That event was hosted by Timeless Textiles, and I commend them for their ongoing activism in this space.

There are many more events happening across Newcastle in coming days, and I congratulate all involved not only for raising awareness but also for their efforts working on the front line, day in and day out, to support women and children in our community.

Debate adjourned.

BILLS

Crimes Legislation Amendment (Powers, Offences and Other Measures) Bill 2015
Education Legislation Amendment (Overseas Debt Recovery) Bill 2015
Student Loans (Overseas Debtors Repayment Levy) Bill 2015
Fair Work Amendment Bill 2015
Health Legislation Amendment (eHealth) Bill 2015
Social Services Legislation Amendment (No Jab, No Pay) Bill 2015
Social Services Legislation Amendment (More Generous Means Testing for Youth Payments) Bill 2015

Assent

Messages from the Governor-General reported informing the House of assent to the bills.

Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015

Second Reading

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

Dr JENSEN (Tangney) (11:54): Potential threat nations are objectively testing the evidence and have come to a very different conclusion compared to us about fundamentals of air combat. Noted defence commentator and presidential candidate Senator John McCain
believes the Joint Strike Fighter is a 'great national scandal' and 'worse than a disgrace'. I echo the venerable senator's words.

Some of the current European fighters better meet the definition for fifth generation than Joint Strike Fighter, which lacks two of the critical measures. It is very interesting to note that, when the F22 first came out, Lockheed Martin defined 'fifth generation' as having the following characteristics: stealth, sensor fusion, supercruise or the ability to cruise at supersonic speed without using afterburner, and supermanoeuvrability. Unfortunately, the Joint Strike Fighter lacks two of these fundamental capabilities—supercruise and supermanoeuvrability. So, when a few years ago, in 2012, I asked Lockheed Martin at Fort Worth, 'How do you define fifth generation now?' they came up with a ridiculous definition of 'networks and survivability in contested airspace'. What the hell does that mean?

The unfortunate reality for Lockheed Martin is that Lockheed Martin does not define a generation; the generation is defined by the market. When you have a look at what the market says, when you have a look at the Russians, with their PAK FA aircraft, and when you have a look at the Chinese, with their J20 and J31, the simple fact is that those aircraft meet Lockheed Martin's original definition of fifth generation. In other words, they view supercruise and supermanoeuvrability as important. Problematically for the Joint Strike Fighter, in an era when, for the first time since the 1960s, tactical speeds in air combat are going up, because aircraft will more routinely be cruising at supersonic speed because of the ability of supercruise, the JSF needs to use afterburners to get to that speed, which lights up the sky in infrared and burns fuel at an incredible rate. But here is a further problem: the Joint Strike Fighter cannot open its weapons bay doors at supersonic speed. So, to shoot its missiles, it would have to decelerate to subsonic speed, then open the bay doors—and note that when the weapons bay doors are open the thing is not stealthy—and then fire its missiles. That is a great tactical disadvantage. The simple fact is these missing capabilities cannot be put into the design by modifications or upgrades; they are absent forever.

The term 'strike fighter' is little understood. In globally accepted terminology, the JSF would be a light bomber with some self-defence capability, which is why it was originally designed only carrying two AMRAAMS. Indeed, that was its design brief. For Australia there has been no defined strategic requirement for the Joint Strike Fighter, no identified capability gap, just a wish by the aficionados. This is no way to ensure that Australia's defence requirements are met and offer the best value for the taxpayer's dollar.

The correct way to come up with the best Defence Force structure is first to define your strategic requirements, or what you expect the Defence Force to be able to achieve against known capabilities of strategic competitors or potential adversaries. Then the focus must be on the capability you require, not platforms. So, once the capability requirements have been drafted, there should be consultation with industry. More particularly, there should be detailed analysis conducted to compare various options to fill the capability gap which compare various capabilities and contenders to fill that gap.

Fast forward 50 years, and we find the lessons of Vietnam have been forgotten. We now have a fighter similar to the original F4 Phantom which has excellent radar and all sorts of other sensors. It also carries four longish range air-to-air missiles internally, but no short-range missiles are carried internally. We are again being assured that dogfights are history and that the missiles will do the manoeuvring.
What has recently been found is that the JSF was comprehensively outperformed by the F16, designed 40 years ago. Indeed, the JSF was holding no weapons whatsoever; the F16 was carrying some external weapons and an external fuel tank. What happens when the JSF comes up against peer threats, and the missiles and stealth do not perform as advertised? They will not even have heat-seeking missiles, as they are carried externally; either they will carry those heat-seeking missiles, which will significantly degrade the JSF's stealth, or they can carry those missiles externally and not significantly decrease the stealth, then the stealth of the JSF is not what it is cracked up to be.

Sun Tzu, in *The Art of War*, stated that 'war is deception'—the idea is to deceive the enemy. Self-deception, almost by definition, aids and abets an enemy. Given Defence's capability gap on the issue of energy manoeuvrability of the JSF—and in this, they are either complicit or ignorant, and I am not sure which is worse—how do we believe them in terms of the 'secret' capabilities the JSF has? After all, anyone with even a small amount of technical ability in analysis would have been able to see that the JSF would not cut it in terms of energy manoeuvrability.

I welcome the recommendations of the First Principles Review to 'establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top-level decision making' in Defence. I also welcome the fact that the committee responsible for the First Principles Review has committed to oversee the implementation of the First Principles Review.

**Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (12:01):** The Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill of 2015 is seen by many as an essential step to achieving stable Defence capability and a confirmed chain of command and responsibility. In speaking today, I would like to acknowledge the work of the research team in the Parliamentary Library. Primarily the purpose of this legislation is, quite naturally, to amend the Defence Act established in 1903, which now has sections that are both cumbersome and redundant. A brief overview includes a recognition of the Australian Defence Force as a single entity, a formal articulation of the authority of the Chief of Defence Force, and the role of the Vice Chief of the Defence Force as Chief of Defence's deputy. There is a removal of the statutory authority of the service chiefs in order to clarify the command and authority of the Chief of Defence.

We need to clarify of the status of our Defence cadets and we need to recognise the role of Defence Force Reserves. Over the past two years I have had the honour to meet members of our cadet units, including the Airforce Cadets—No.330 Squadron Shoalhaven, TS Jervis Bay and TS Albatross, our two local Navy cadet units. The young men and women in these groups are absolutely fantastic. These voluntary youth organisations are owned and sponsored by the Australian Defence Force. They participate in activities around the Shoalhaven, learning the skills and discipline associated with being part of such a group. TS Shoalhaven is now a unit of some 70 such wonderful young people. There are some amazing adults who mentor these young people, and I take this opportunity to thank the leaders John and Toni Huisman, Bill and Danielle Carter, Sharon and Andy Muzzell, just to mention a few. Many of these great cadets go on to join our Defence Force units, and we are all the better because of them.

This bill aims to implement the recommendations from the First Principles Review of Defence Force. It was the fulfilment of a commitment made by the coalition during the lead up to the 2013 federal election to 'undertake a first principle review of the departmental structure and its major processes'. The Minister for Defence announced the composition of the
Panel appointed to carry out the review in 2014 and, while doing so stated that the review would 'make recommendations designed to ensure Defence's business structures support the Australian Defence Force strategic plan to 2030'. The focus of the review was to make sure that the Australian Defence Force was fit for purpose, able to respond to future challenges and to deliver against its outputs with the minimum resources necessary. As such, the review team was given very broad terms of reference which, in addition to the structure of the Department of Defence and the Defence Force itself, also included the adequacy of materiel acquisition and sustainment practice to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Defence overall. The government released the First Principles Review on 1 April 2015 and it agreed, or agreed in principle, to 75 of the 76 recommendations made in the report.

The review found there was a proliferation of structures, processes and systems with unclear accountabilities, which in turn caused institutionalised waste, delayed decisions, flawed execution and duplication, over-escalation of issues for decision and low-engagement levels amongst employees in parts of the organisation. The review proposed substantial change across Defence to ensure it can deliver on the future requirements that will be outlined in the government's forthcoming Defence White Paper. In the process of review, through extensive discussion and analysis, the effectiveness or otherwise of the current structure within Defence and the way it manages its core business were evaluated. The majority of the recommendations relate to matters of internal structure and practice, and implementation of most of them—including the re-integration of the Defence Materiel Organisation, commonly known as the DMO, back into the department as a part of the new Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group—does not require legislative change. As a consequence, the majority of the recommendations do not need to be covered by the bill; they can be readily implemented. However those areas which require legislative change relate particularly to a key recommendation of the review, and that was to 'establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top-level decision making' in Defence.

Another recommendation was to improve the flexible work arrangements in line with a number of recommendations contained in the Australian Human Rights Commission's review into the treatment of women in the Australian Defence Force. This recommendation was seen as a very relevant tool to increase the retention rate of women in our Defence Force. Last week we launched the White Ribbon campaign, where many Australians wear a white ribbon to signify our respect for women and our self-challenge to reduce domestic violence. Considering the needs of women in Defence is particularly significant. On the Wednesday ambassadors from Australian Defence—including Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AO CSC RAN, Vice Chief of the Defence Force; Vice Admiral Tim Barrett AO, CSC RAN, Chief of Navy; Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, AC, Chief of the Defence Force; and Lieutenant General Angus Campbell, DSC, AM, Chief of Army—joined many politicians to witness a flyover of Parliament House. The flyover consisted of two Army Black Hawks, a Navy Bell 429 helicopter, a C17A Globemaster 111 and a C130J Hercules marked with the white ribbon to raise awareness of family violence and encourage commitment to making a change in culture to non-acceptance of such behaviour.

In all spheres, but especially in Defence, there has been an outstanding effort in this regard, so it is equally important that this aspect of workplace flexibility is addressed formally in the first principles review and part of the legislation before the House. While the capacity to
provide flexible working arrangements is not new to Defence, this is yet another positive step of change. In addition, the release of the review itself has generally been well received, with a number of commentators expressing the view that implementing the review would improve the operation of the department and the ADF. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute's published analysis of the review was positive, describing it as a 'sensible, serious and purposeful' document.

Item 7 of the bill repeals and replaces parts II and III of the Defence Act. As part of the focus, the review highlighted the need to update legislation to formally acknowledge the key role played by the Chief of the Defence Force and the Vice Chief of Defence in the modern Australian Defence Force. In sections 8 and 9 of the Defence Act, there is a clarification that the minister has general control and administration of our Defence Force and that the command structure of the ADF is confirmed to reflect how it actually works.

It will give full command of the Australian Defence Force to the CDF by removing legislative limitations that were established back in 1903. It will recognise the Vice Chief as the deputy of the Chief of Defence and provide for the service chiefs—Chief of Army, Chief of Navy and Chief of Air Force—to be subject to the direction of the CDF.

Strengthening these key military leadership roles will enable improved coherence and effectiveness in Defence command and decision-making. Currently the Defence Act provides that, subject to the powers of the minister, the Chief of Defence commands the ADF, and the service chief of an arm of the ADF 'shall, under the CDF, command the arm of the ADF of which he or she is Service Chief', which creates a potential ambiguity, a lack of clarity that has been confirmed by legal advice. It is even hard to read. The Chief of Defence's powers may be interpreted as being subject to—and potentially constrained by—the authority of the Service Chiefs to command their respective services. This uncertainty is compounded by other provisions of the act.

Within the new part III—’The Australian Defence Force’—proposed section 23 more fully incorporates the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force within the Defence Act's definition of the ADF, including specific reference to their respective chiefs and permanent and reserve elements. The service and training of reserves in the Navy, Army and Air Force are set out in proposed sections 24 to 26. New Division 3 of part III of the Defence Act specifically provides for calling out of ADF Reserves elements.

Proposed sections of the Defence Act provide that the Chief of the Defence Force is to direct and administer the cadets—including the wonderful cadets in my local area—and in doing so the Chief of the Defence Force must comply with any directions of the minister. Importantly, this reaffirms the understanding that neither cadets nor anyone involved in the cadet program is inherently a member of the ADF by virtue of that involvement. Consistent with this distinction, the bill provides that the Chief of the Defence Force may make determinations by legislative instrument for the payment of allowances and benefits to cadets and their families. This is different from the existing arrangement where such payments are made by ministerial determination.

So to clarify: the Chief of the Defence Force will have full command of the ADF with the removal of the legislative limitations on the CDF's command power. The Vice Chief of the Defence Force is to be recognised explicitly as the deputy of the CDF and has both command
and administrative responsibilities to the ADF as directed by the CDF. The service chiefs will be explicitly subject to the direction of the Chief of the Defence Force.

Proposed section 27 incorporates into the Defence Act provisions previously in the Defence (Personnel) Regulations 2002, which state that an ADF member's service does not create a civil contract with the Crown or the Commonwealth. Essentially, members of the Defence Force are not employees. Rather, their military service once entered into is an obligation to the Crown. This has been the case for hundreds of years and it means that the status of members of the Defence Force is subject to defence law, not civil law.

As mentioned earlier, the ADF has previously advocated for more flexible working arrangements for its personnel through the Project SUAKIN reforms. This aims to support ADF personnel in maintaining their required continuous service through allowing approved part-time service for full-time personnel. The Defence Legislation Amendment (Superannuation and ADF Cover) Act 2015 provides for flexible service arrangements within the Defence Act 1903, the Air Force Act 1923 and the Naval Defence Act 1910, with effect from 1 July 2016. However, with the repeal of the Air Force Act and the Naval Defence Act, this bill makes sure these flexible service arrangements apply across all three service areas.

New division 3 of part III of the Defence Act, 'Calling out the Reserves', is in effect the same as the current division 4 of part III, resulting in no changes to the call-out provisions.

The review was critical of the fact that Defence has a number of geospatial intelligence functions. It noted the administrative inefficiency of this and that a more coordinated and better resourced facility would better improve support to the ADF. To this end, the bill amends the Navigation Act 2012, to position the Australian Hydrographic Service within the Department of Defence, as opposed to the Australian Navy. It is entirely sensible to make these changes in line with the way the defence forces functions in modern Australia. It is effectively a partial catch up with current process yet also it formalises a number of aspects that bring the Australian Defence Force in line with the recommendations of the first principles review.

Currently, the Defence Act does not recognise the ADF as a single entity in its own right; rather it encourages the view that the ADF is no more than a federation of the three services. The bill provides the foundation for a more unified and integrated Australian Defence Force. It streamlines the statutory treatment of the components of the ADF in the defence legislation incorporating the substantive provisions of the Navy and Air Force in the Defence Act. These provisions include the recognition of the Regular Army and Air Force, and the Permanent Navy, together with the reserve components of each of the services, and the ability of the Governor-General to call out the ADF Reserves under certain circumstances.

The bill consolidates the statutory treatment of Defence Force cadets, making provision for the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force cadets in a new part of the Defence Act, while retaining the existing provisions in current legislation regulating the relationship between Defence Force cadets and the ADF.

In substance the bill updates the Defence Act to clarify the control and administration of Defence in line with the first principles review's first principle, which is that Defence should have 'clear authorities and accountabilities that align with resources.' In doing so it seeks to ensure that the Defence Act is brought up to date with the way that Defence is controlled and
administered at present. This legislation establishes the structure to achieve stability of
defence capability and with bipartisan support positions the Australian Defence Force to plan,
in conjunction with the proposals in the defence white paper for sustained planning and
ultimately the safety of Australia and our people.

Mr NIKOLIC (Bass) (12:15): I acknowledge the member for Gilmore's excellent speech.
In fact, as she was speaking, it made me recall my time living in her electorate as the
commanding officer of the Parachute Training School in Nowra from 2000 to 2001. I echo
her comments about cadets, because at that time we looked after the 222nd regional cadet unit
from Ulladulla and they were a great bunch of young people, many of whom, after having
experienced a taste of the Army with my unit, went on to join the Army.

I am also pleased to speak about the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill
2015, which amends the Defence Act 1903. The thinking that underpins the changes in this
bill was undertaken during the first principles review of Defence. Members may recall that,
prior to the last election, the coalition committed to a first principles review as a way of
ensuring that Defence is appropriately structured and organised to support the Defence Force
into the 21st century.

There were five people named to head up this review: the former managing director of Rio
Tinto, David Peever, who was assisted by Jim McDowell, a former BAE Systems executive,
Robert Hill, a defence minister in the Howard government, Lindsay Tanner, a finance
minister in the Rudd government, and former Army chief Peter Leahy. Their report was titled
Creating one Defence. It was released in April this year and is set to reshape the Defence
enterprise over the next few years. The review praised Defence's record of operational
service, which has certainly grown in the last 15 years.

The review makes me reflect on the fact that, when I first joined the Army, as a young 17-
year-old soldier in 1978, there was a fairly narrow focus at that time on the defence of
Australia. I can recall doing a lot of exercises focused on that sovereign protection role. In
addition to working out how to repel the mythical Musorian enemy—they were called the
'Musorian Armed Forces'—we fought a fair few bushfires in support of civil authorities
around Australia. We undertook a variety of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
tasking, and trained for the possibility of assisting the protected evacuation of Australians and
other approved nationals in our region. I can even recall in 1983, as a nuclear, biological and
chemical Defence instructor, being part of a response team ready to respond to Kosmos
1402—a nuclear powered, disabled Soviet satellite—which at that time had the potential to
scatter radioactive fragments across Australia. But I must admit that those moments of
excitement and high tempo were pretty few and far between.

How things have changed as concepts of security have broadened during the last 35 years,
as have the things that we routinely expect of our troops. The Australian Defence Force still
helps our civil authorities to fight bushfires and deploy to places like Pakistan and Banda
Aceh, Japan and Papua New Guinea in support of our humanitarian assistance and disaster
relief objectives. Our troops have also assisted the people of East Timor during troubled
times. They have furthered the cause of good governance in the Solomon Islands, conducted
border protection activities close to home and counter-piracy operations in the north Arabian
gulf and off the Horn of Africa. Perhaps most notably, they have fought and died while
conducting high-intensity war fighting in places like Afghanistan and Iraq.
In responding to those broadened concepts of security and our community's increasing expectations of our troops, the first principles review found that Defence has implemented significant changes since the 1990s. Despite that outstanding record of operational service, the first principles review also called for more effort and improvement in the area of organisational effectiveness. One of the report's key recommendations said, quite rightly, that we had to 'establish a strong, strategic centre' to strengthen governance, accountability and top-level decision-making. The report highlights the need for more work to be done in aligning the government's strategic aspirations with the tasks we ask our troops to perform on behalf of the Australian people, and we need to make sure that we give the Defence Force the appropriate resources to undertake those tasks.

It is fair to say that the first principles review is only one component of this important work. As Australians will know, the Defence white paper and the force structure review will also contribute to that restoration. But the first principles review highlighted some key shortcomings that must be urgently addressed—in particular, the need for some re-engineering of Defence structures, processes and systems. Governance and accountabilities need to be more clearly defined; institutional waste and suboptimal decision making must be addressed. Getting the most out of the white paper relies on these enhancements to structure, system and process. To achieve this, Defence must move from a current inefficient federated approach into a single, integrated organisation that delivers an enhanced joint capacity.

As I said earlier the title of the report, Creating one Defence, sums up the proposal behind it. The key purpose of this bill, therefore, is to enshrine the properly constituted command arrangements at the very top of Defence which will support unity of purpose. The government has agreed, or agreed in principle, to 75 of the 76 recommendations. The review outlines a two-year implementation plan with key milestones which provides high-level direction for Defence. The implementation of these recommendations will be led by the secretary of the department and by the Chief of the Defence Force, and will commence immediately, with the majority of the recommendations made in the report to be implemented within two years. The commitment of this government and that of the Defence senior leadership is steadfast in delivering on these recommendations.

Leadership is of course central to an effective modern defence force, as is unity of purpose between the three services. The first principles review has charted a course towards an integrated organisation that delivers enhanced joint capability. Perhaps the key recommendation of the review was that Defence:

Establish a strong, strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top level decision-making

This requires the updating of legislation to formally codify the roles played by the Chief of the Defence Force and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force in particular. A key effect of this bill is the amendment of the Defence Act so that the authority of the CDF and VCDF is formally recognised. The review recommends in its report:

- The Chief of the Defence Force to have full command of the Australian Defence Force by removing the legislative limitations on the Chief of Defence Force's command power;
- The Vice Chief of the Defence Force to be recognised explicitly as the 'Deputy' of the Chief of the Defence Force. This amendment would require clarifying that the Vice Chief of the Defence Force has command responsibilities as well as administrative responsibilities in relation to the Australian Defence Force as directed by the Chief of the Defence Force; and
The Service Chiefs to be explicitly subject to the direction of the Chief of the Defence Force. A legislative amendment removing their statutory authority would ensure absolute clarity of the Chief of the Defence Force's command and authority.

During most of Sir Angus Houston's time as Chief of the Defence Force, I served as a member of his Strategic Command Group in Russell offices building R1. That experience reconfirmed for me that, when it comes to command and control, we must rely on properly constituted and legislated arrangements, rather than on goodwill, between the CDF and the service chiefs. This bill strengthens key military leadership roles, enabling improved coherence and effectiveness in Defence command and decision-making.

In addition to strengthening the command responsibilities of the Chief and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, the bill streamlines the statutory treatment of the components of the Australian Defence Force in defence legislation, repealing the Naval Defence Act 1910 and the Air Force Act 1923 and incorporating the substantive provisions of these acts in the Defence Act 1903. These provisions include the recognition of the Regular Army, the Permanent Air Force and the Permanent Navy, together with the reserve components of each of the services, and the ability of the Governor-General to call out Australian Defence Force Reserves under certain circumstances. These include wartime, peacekeeping operations, support to community activities of national or international significance, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Let me touch briefly on the legislative coverage of the Defence Reserves, which are being brought together into a single Defence act, helping to further integrate our reserves into the total force concepts articulated in Plan Suakin and Plan Beersheba. When I spoke earlier about broadened concepts of security, it has often been the reserves that have filled the breach, so to speak, in assuming the responsibilities of our regular forces to free them up for high-intensity activities at the upper end of the conflict spectrum that I mentioned earlier. The reserves have filled rotations for our Rifle Company Butterworth deployment in Malaysia. Outstanding reservists, including from my home state of Tasmania, have also deployed to places like Solomon Islands and Timor.

In essence, this bill traverses the broadened concepts of security I highlighted earlier, ensuring that the ever-increasing range of tasks we expect our troops to do, from humanitarian assistance at one end of the spectrum to high-intensity war fighting at the other, are appropriately recognised, commanded and resourced.

Importantly, the measures in this bill ensure that, for the first time, all three services of the ADF are under one act—the Defence Act. The services retain their individual identity and service chiefs but are nested under the Defence Act as part of the Australian Defence Force. It is not exaggerating the point to say that this is historic because, prior to this, each service was separately recognised in legislation.

The powers of the service chiefs as a result of this change are subordinate to the overall direction of the Chief of the Defence Force. That said, the service chiefs' vital roles in raising, training and sustaining capable force elements within their services remains, and they will continue to command their respective services subject to the sole command direction of the Chief of the Defence Force. For the vast majority of our troops, their local command-and-control arrangements will remain unchanged. Of equal importance is the fact that none of the identities, traditions or history of our service units will be lost.
As I mentioned earlier, I note the bill also consolidates the statutory treatment of Defence Force Cadets, making provision for the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force cadets in a new part of the Defence Act. That is why I am pleased that this bill modernises the existing provisions to ensure the relationship between Defence Force Cadets and the Defence community is interlinked. But the bill also makes it clear that Defence cadets are volunteers—a community-based youth development organisation. The day-to-day activities of cadet units and their organisational structure into Navy, Army and Air Force cadet units remain unchanged. Again I reflect on the excellent generosity of spirit of the people who are involved with our cadets, giving them a taste of and an interest in service life in the Army, Navy and Air Force and, as I said, translating that interest into their joining our services and going on to serve our country.

I note that this bill enjoys bipartisan support in the parliament and I thank members opposite for lending their support to the sensible, uncontroversial provisions that this legislation encompasses. I join my parliamentary colleagues in welcoming this bill to the House.

Mr BALDWIN (Paterson) (12:28): I rise to speak on the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. The government commissioned the first principles review of Defence in 2014, the focus of which was to ensure that Defence is fit for purpose and is able to respond to future challenges and deliver against its output with the minimum resources necessary.

The government released the First principles review on 1 April 2015 and agreed to or agreed to in principle 75 of the 76 recommendations. The review found there were a proliferation of structures, processes and systems with unclear accountabilities, which, in some cases, caused institutionalised waste, delayed decisions, flawed execution, duplication, overescalation of issues for decision making and low engagement levels amongst employees in parts of the organisation. This is critical to the future of our Defence Force, the protectors of our nation.

One of the key recommendations of the review was to establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability in top level decision making in Defence—I want to come back to that a bit later. The Chief of the Defence Force and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force will have ultimate power over the Defence Force. This bill formally recognises their authority. It gives full command of the Defence Force to the Chief of the Defence Force by removing any legislative limitations contained in the Defence Act 1903. It recognises the Vice Chief of the Defence Force as the deputy of the CDF and provides for service chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force to be subject to the direction of the CDF. This is all about strengthening the Defence structure in this nation to deliver greater capability.

There are also other subsequent matters to be repealed, but I want to particularly focus on a couple of issues in my local area. Since 1996, when I entered this parliament, whenever I have not been a member of the executive of the government, I have been a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. In particular, I take an active interest in the defence subcommittee. I am a strong advocate and a very strong supporter of Defence and defence industries in my electorate and, in fact, in the whole Hunter.
In the neighbouring electorate, there is the home of Singleton Army base. In the neighbouring electorate of Newcastle, there is the Williamtown RAAF base, which was once in the electorate of Paterson. At the Williamtown RAAF base, we have the FA18 and the Hawk lead-in fighter, which was actually assembled at Williamtown. It is also the home of the advanced early warning aircraft, and it is soon to be home of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter. Currently, there is a base redevelopment to the value of around $1 billion to accommodate the Joint Strike Fighter, and that flows on to our local economy through increased jobs.

Defence industry is a critical employer in my area, and it is reflected in the economic contribution to our Hunter region. But there is an underlying need to reduce tendering costs, to speed up approvals and to avoid scope creep, in particular, for small to medium enterprises. That is why, when I spoke about the requirement for accountability to the CDF, we now have a one-stop shop for all of the problems. There can be no more passing the buck. Last week, I raised these issues on Defence contracting in the defence subcommittee of the parliament with Mr Kim Gillis, the new deputy secretary of the Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group, CASG, which has replaced the old DMO.

I welcomed the news last week that Forgacs's engineering, shipbuilding and defence divisions are to be acquired by Civmec. This will spread Civmec's footprint and give greater certainty and more opportunities to the future of shipbuilding and Defence contracting across our region. I well remember working with the late founder of Forgacs, Steven Forgacs, and his acquisition of the Tomago shipyard from the Australian Submarine Corporation in 1996 to ensure a shipbuilding future for the region. I worked with him and the then former head of DMO, Stephen Gumley, to ensure that air warfare destroyer modules would come to our region. That is but one of many companies in the Hunter. Varley Engineering at Tomago is another outstanding local, private company that is headed by Jeff Phillips and engaged in Defence projects—in particular, the delivery of the Joint Strike Fighter ground support equipment components and the development and design of unique specialty engineering solutions for military vehicles and integrated military shelters. Their work on LAND 121 with Mercedes and Rheinmetall is delivering jobs to our region.

Bohemia Interactive Simulations at Nelson Bay is headed by Ryan Stephenson. This is a global software company leading the world on military simulation training solutions for tactical military training. These unique and highly accredited war game strategy programs have been adopted by militaries across the world. Bob Cowan's Cowan Manufacturing in the southern part of the region at Warners Bay has developed an international reputation with navies across the world for his high-tech specialised recompression chambers, which not only have won Australian design awards but also are accredited by the Australian and US navies. C-E Solutions, headed by Boris Novak, is also located at Nelson Bay. It is a systems engineering surveilling and control specialist team that has delivered defence solutions, not only for Australia but across the world, with mobile surveillance platforms and weapon impact scoring systems. Partech Systems at RAAF Williamtown is a leader in the development of test program sets for military avionics equipment, working on platforms such as the FA18 Hornets, Seahawks and the Joint Strike Fighter program. At Cardiff, there is Puzzle Precision, a specialist, Defence-accredited, high-tech electronics assembly firm working on unique and specialised circuit boards. Around the corner from my home at Thornton, the team at ATSA Defence Services develop, test and maintain remote operated
vehicles, an underwater system critical in mine warfare. Then of course there are BAE, Lockheed Martin and Boeing facilities at Williamtown RAAF base. This is to name but a few innovative Defence contractors and support specialists that have expanded and utilised the specialist skills in the region to establish the Hunter as one of the leaders in their field, not just nationally but internationally. I also commend Ian Dick and the team at Hunter Defence in promoting the skills and the opportunities our region can provide to a growing Defence presence in the Hunter. As I said earlier, there is an expansion of Williamtown RAAF base to accommodate the Joint Strike Fighter program—an investment of over $1 billion.

As the CDF now has absolute power over the Defence Force, and absolute responsibility, the next issue I want to raise lies with him as the person at the top. I know he is showing a great interest in it.

The biggest issue I have to deal with is the PFOS contamination, the firefighting foam contamination, which is leaking from Williamtown RAAF base. I have raised this issue here in the parliament before, and I acknowledge the presence in the chamber of Assistant Minister for Defence, Darrell Chester. Last Friday, I met with Professor Ravi Naidu, Chair of Global Innovation and Director of the Global Centre for Environmental Remediation based at Newcastle University. He is a world leader in dealing with cleaning up contaminated messes like that of PFOS at Williamtown. Professor Naidu is also CEO and Managing Director of the Cooperative Research Centre on environmental remediation. Professor Naidu is already undertaking remediation works at other defence facilities, so I ask the question—and it is pertinent that the assistant minister is here: why hasn't he been contracted to start work at Williamtown? This is one of a number of possible solutions to the problem to be explored.

After my meeting on Friday, I referred Professor Naidu to Air Vice Marshal Greg Evans—Defence's lead person for this issue in the region. I will also be raising it at a meeting that I am hoping to procure later today or tomorrow with my colleague Darrell Chester, to follow-up on our discussions last week. I will not let this issue go. We require action—urgent action.

It is important, first of all, to make sure that we have safe, potable water for my constituents to drink and to give to their animals. I know that Defence are filling tanks and providing water bottles to people. But I have also put forward the suggestion to the assistant defence minister that perhaps we need to engage Hunter Water, who have been vocal about this issue, to provide town water mains through that region. The main pipeline goes right past these affected properties. There are some in the community who are saying, 'We don't want town water,' but a lot of my constituents are raising with me that they do want it, because they want safe, potable water. The other thing that needs to occur is the stopping of the contamination—and it needs to be stopped very quickly. There are many ways to do this, and some of them are discounted by experts in Defence but they need to think outside the square. There needs to be a levee built around Lake Cochrane. The water in it needs to be drained and cleaned and the contaminated soils contained in Lake Cochrane excavated and stockpiled. There is an opportunity to deal with this waste with the Hunter being home to some of the largest open cut mines in Australia. Some of these pits are hundreds of metres deep. There is no reason that contaminated soil and water could not be buried deep in that area rather than them going through an expensive treatment process. The soil would be buried under millions of tonnes of dirt. It would never reach the surface and there are no aquifers through these coalmines. We need to clean up not just Lake Cochrane but also the Dawsons and Moors
drains. That can be done in part by excavating the soil around the sites and removing it from the sites. This will not eliminate but it will reduce the immediate flow-on effect of the PFOS continuing down the drain.

We need to provide support—total support—to my community. We need to look after their health. There has been a call for blood testing. As I have said publicly, there is no reason that New South Wales department of health cannot organise blood collection where people require it—whether that is the Tomago hospital, the Maitland Hospital or the John Hunter Hospital—and then have these blood tests analysed by the National Measurement Institute. This will give people peace of mind. The community is calling for it. They are not responsible for this contamination but they have been the recipients of it.

There is also the issue of the prawn and fishing trawlers who have had a ban placed on them since 3 September. That ban goes through to June 2016. I acknowledge that the government has provided income relief through a fortnightly payment of $523. The government has also provided a $5,000 one-off grant to affected businesses, as well as $20,000 over five instalments to help meet the ongoing costs of maintaining the survival of these businesses. These people have lost a lot more than that. I think the government needs to rethink the package and provide greater support. There are not only the prawn trawlers. There are also the egg producers and the beef producers whose products are restricted from going to market. There is also the stigma or the perception surrounding any product that comes from that region. We need to do what we can and as quickly as we possibly can to restore the lifestyles and the security of property to those affected constituents in my electorate.

The most pressing issue—and I have taken a number of calls on this recently—is the mental anguish that people are going through. For those whose bore or water supply tests positive with PFOS—and I do note that, of the 45 tests that have been conducted by Defence, only seven have proved positive—their mental anguish is supreme. Not knowing what you do not know is a major part of the problem. The New South Wales department of health put out one set of fact sheets in relation to this issue and then the Chief Scientist, Mary O’Kane, put out contradicting evidence. There needs to be a single, clear line of communication, an explanation of the facts and a plan and a program put forward about what can be done, what will be done and in what time frame it will be done.

This bill gives ultimate power to the Chief of the Defence Force. As he was once based at Williamtown, he knows the issues there very, very well. I ask for his personal intervention, along with that of the assistant minister, to make sure that we provide a solution to this problem in quick time, not long time. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Assistant Minister for Defence) (12:43): I welcome the opportunity to speak in relation to the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. Of course, following the honourable member for Paterson, it would be timely for me to reassure him and other members affected by the Williamtown contamination that the government and the Australian Defence Force are taking their responsibilities very seriously.

The concern raised by the honourable member and other members in this place have been the subject of a great deal of investigation by the government. It is a legacy issue that this government is dealing with here, dating back many decades. It is one that will take a considerable amount of effort not just in the Defence space but also in the civilian space as we start looking at the use of aqueous film-forming foam as it has been used throughout
Australian history. I can assure the member that it is something the minister, Marise Payne, and I are taking very seriously, and we are working with him and his constituents to achieve the best possible outcome.

Specifically in relation to the legislation before the House, it is important to note that the legislation follows the recommendations from the *First principles review—creating one Defence*, which was commissioned by this government in 2014 and released in April 2015. The review found there was a proliferation of structures, processes and systems, with unclear accountabilities which, in turn, caused institutionalised waste, delayed decisions, flawed execution, duplication, overscalation of issues for decision and low engagement levels amongst employees in parts of the organisation. The review proposed substantial change across Defence to ensure it can deliver on the future requirements which will be outlined in the government's upcoming Defence white paper.

As part of the first principles review and the legislation before the House today, the passage of this bill will ensure that, for the first time, all three services of the ADF will be incorporated under one act, the Defence Act. That is historic because until now each service was recognised separately in legislation in recognition of their different histories. So, in speaking to the legislation before the House, I want to draw attention to one aspect of the first principles review: the support required to meet Defence's future capability needs through the Defence estate.

The Defence estate—as you would be aware, Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell, in your own electorate—is a complex beast and it has been the subject of significant discussion and debate in recent times. The former government commissioned the *Future Defence Estate* report in 2012. This government is committed to ensuring we provide for significant savings for Australian taxpayers through a smaller and less dispersed Defence estate while still, obviously, meeting the capability needs of a modern Australian Defence Force. The key factor in terms of what has changed in recent times regarding the Defence estate, from a government perspective, was a decision to ensure that any proceeds from consolidation of the Defence estate would be reinvested in defence itself. So this should not be seen through the prism of a budget saving or a finance measure. It is all about making sure our Defence estate is efficient and needs the future needs of the ADF. One of the other things I want to do in the context of my contribution today is reassure affected communities that, when we are talking about the consolidation of the estate, this should not be seen as a threat. In many cases it is a repurposing of an existing asset in a way that will allow it to make a far more significant contribution to a local community into the future.

My objectives in negotiations with local councils, state government and local communities when we are talking about the consolidation of the estate provide three broad parameters. My first objective is, quite naturally, to obtain a good return for Australian taxpayers and give them a fair return from a parcel of land that they obviously own. The second objective is to make sure that in doing the negotiations we maintain and enhance, wherever possible, the reputation of the Australian Defence Force, keeping in context that the ADF has been in many of these places for decades and has had a very good working relationship with the host community. We want to enhance that reputation into the future. Finally, I want to make sure we work in partnership with the local members of parliament. Whether they be from the coalition side, from the Labor benches or from the Independents, I want to make sure we
work in partnership with them as much as possible—and with their local councils and their state MPs—to deliver the best possible result for their local community.

I would like to take the opportunity, in the context of the legislation before the House, to reflect on some current progress in relation to the Defence estate consolidation. The government has taken the view, in support of the first principles review team, to assess the consolidation effort on a case-by-case basis rather than trying to put forward whole blocks of property for disposal. We have worked in a coordinated and cohesive way to put forward individual parcels of Defence estate for consolidation. I will take this opportunity to update the House on a couple of the more significant parcels throughout Australia.

One is the Bulimba Barracks site on the Brisbane River, which I have worked on with the member for Griffith in recent times. On 20 March this year the government announced that Defence will dispose of the majority of the Bulimba Barracks in Queensland. However, a portion of this land will be retained for use by the naval cadets who are on site. It is in the order of a 20-hectare site, and Defence has been working very closely with state and local government throughout the year, including through the preparation of a master plan for the Bulimba site. We continue to have very productive negotiations with the state government and local council in that regard, and we are confident and hopeful that within months we will be able to progress a sale for this site for the benefit of the local community.

Across the other side of Australia, another very substantial site—again, in a waterfront location—is the Leeuwin Barracks at Fremantle. I have worked with the member for Fremantle and had several discussions with her in this place about the future of Leeuwin Barracks. Defence has indicated that Leeuwin Barracks is surplus to Defence requirements in the future and will be sold. We have not progressed as far with this negotiation or discussion with the local community as we have with Bulimba, but Defence is now working to ensure that ADF personnel and public servants associated with Leeuwin Barracks are aware that it will be sold. The nearby Irwin Barracks will be the subject of significant redevelopment to accommodate the staff required into the future. Leeuwin Barracks is on a 14-hectare site. It is on the southern banks of the Swan River in East Fremantle, about 16 kilometres from the Perth CBD, so obviously it is a very sought after site. We are working to make sure not only that the state government is involved but also that the local council, the East Fremantle local government area, is aware of our ambitions to sell the site. We are seeking opportunities to make sure that the precinct is developed well and sensibly and in such a way that the local community gets maximum enjoyment and benefit from it in the future, keeping in mind that we will be making every effort to retain the significant Defence heritage on that site, most notably a memorial to the young naval cadets who were the subject of some serious abuse in the past. So the need is there not only to be sensitive to the previous use of the site but also to look at ways we can work with the community to ensure that the Leeuwin Barracks site is well managed and well used into the future.

A smaller site is the Pontville Small Arms Range Complex in Tasmania, which is an approximately 517-hectare site. A lot of it is open grassland. It will be sold in two stages. It is a 2.8-hectare area on the western side of the Midland Highway which is currently on the market. Expressions of interest for stage 1 closed earlier this month and bids are now being considered for that that particular site. I would like to acknowledge that the member for Lyons has worked very closely with his local community, the state government, the local council,
community groups and various interest groups and has advocated very strongly on behalf of
his community to try to find a suitable buyer that will maximise the use of this site in the
future.

The Pontville site is listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List as one of the sites used for
training of the 1st AIF in August 1914. The heritage listing also includes natural heritage
values on the site with remnant grassland and grassy woodland communities. I think the
negotiations on that site will take some time. As I said, there have been several organisations
that have expressed an interest and we will be proceeding to an open sale of that site within
months as well.

Another site which is of significant interest is the Inverbrackie site. Defence determined,
and the government agreed, that Inverbrackie in the Adelaide Hills is no longer required to
meet the future capability requirements of the ADF. Defence is currently undertaking due
diligence before this site, which is about 22 hectares, is sold. This site is about 37 kilometres
from the Adelaide CBD. I have had some discussion with the local member, the member for
Mayo, about this. Again, he is keen to work with his community to achieve the best possible
outcome as we repurpose a site which has served the community well in the past and will
continue to serve the community well into the future.

Another Brisbane site which I omitted to mention previously is the Witton Barracks
location in Brisbane where the member for Ryan and the Brisbane City Council have been
keen to reach a resolution which is mutually beneficial for Defence and the local community.
There is an off-market bid for that site which is being progressed through the usual channels
within the government at the moment. I would like to commend the member for Ryan in
particular for her diligence in pursuing an outcome on this particular site. It is one that I think
will meet the needs of the Brisbane community and meet the infrastructure requirements for
the local community in the future whilst also preserving the heritage of that important site
from the ADF's perspective.

On a smaller scale, in the last 12 months through my office the consolidation has included
one site in my own electorate—that being the old Darriman naval transmission station site or
Omega Tower, as it is known locally. It was actually the scene of a tragic death in January
2014. A decision was made at that time that the tower was surplus to Defence's needs. There
was no ongoing requirement for the tower. It was the subject of a demolition earlier this year
and that site has been sold. I think it will primarily be used for local grazing in the future.

Another site which I would like to congratulate the member for Page on and which we
worked very closely on is the Casino Drill Hall. It has been returned for community purposes
after a successful negotiation between the local council and Defence on an off-market sale,
with the support of the Minister for Finance.

So the activity in relation to Defence's estate disposals is continuing. It is on a case-by-case
basis. There will be other examples of property which are identified as being surplus to
Defence's needs that will go through that process of negotiation—first of all, seeking
opportunities for off-market sales with local governments or state governments, as is
appropriate, and, if they are not required for those purposes, we will proceed to private sales.

I would like to thank the Defence department officials who have worked very closely with
me on these issues. Lorraine Holcroft and her team and Steve Grzeskowiak have been very
diligent in pursuing these individual property disposals. It has been a good example of how
when we work in partnership with local communities and local members and put all the
politics aside we can achieve good outcomes for the Australian people.

One other point I would like to make in relation to the legislation before the House is that it
makes provision for the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force cadets in a new part of the
Defence Act whilst still retaining the existing provisions with regard to the relationship
between the ADF and Defence Force cadets. Defence Force cadets and their instructors are
not members of the ADF, although they do enjoy the support of ADF members. The
Australian Defence Force cadets number in the order of 25,000. Army obviously have the
greatest proportion with about 15,000 or 16,000 cadets. It is the key youth development
priority for the Australian government, as indicated by our expenditure in that regard. The
Australian government—both this government and the previous government—strongly
support the youth development initiative driven by the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force
cadets. I am very keen to see the program expand in the future.

Early this year I had the opportunity to travel to Weipa to open a new Air Force cadets unit.
It was great to see the young Aboriginal kids in particular having their first opportunity to
access all the benefits that the cadet program offers to them. It was terrific to see young
people from, in many cases, low socioeconomic backgrounds getting the chance to put on the
uniform, go on parade, learn about teamwork, learn about leadership and learn new skills that
I am sure will help them in their future careers.

I stand here as a very strong supporter of the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force cadets,
and I encourage local members from across Australia to take the opportunity the Christmas
break presents to them to visit their local cadet units and get involved and have the chance to
see exactly what they do in their communities. We obviously see them most prominently
every Anzac Day, but throughout the year the cadets are very active in their communities. I
encourage local members to support them whenever they can.

We all recognise that investing in our young people and helping them achieve their full
potential is critical to the future of our great nation. I pay tribute to the cadets themselves, to
their instructors and to their families and friends who support the cadet units for the work they
are doing in support of young people throughout Australia. With those comments, I thank the
House for the opportunity to speak and I commend the bill to the House.

Ms GAMBARO (Brisbane) (12:58): I also rise to speak to the Defence Legislation
Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. I thank the previous speaker for his contribution. I
want to acknowledge the fine work that he is doing as Assistant Minister for Defence and the
diligence with which he carries out his role. My interactions with him regarding the military
base in my electorate have been very, very favourable.

This particular legislation strives for a better balance between the effective use of resources
and effective operational capabilities. They are simply common-sense changes to ensure that
we have one of the best militaries in the world and that it remains that way. The amendments
come out of the government-commissioned First principles review—creating one Defence in
2014. The review followed a broad consultation process, taking the best facets of community
and business best practice and incorporating them into the management of our Defence Force.
The focus of the review was on making sure that Defence is fit for purpose, able to respond to
future challenges and deliver against outputs with the minimum resources necessary. As the
review found, the operation of the Defence Force in the past proved to be very costly and cumbersome and some new processes needed to be put in place to take us forward.

The government released the First principles review—creating one Defence on 1 April 2015. I want to commend the fine work that was done. The review team, which was expertly chaired by David Peever, comprised Professor Robert Hill, Professor Peter Leahy, Mr Jim McDowell and the former finance minister in the previous Labor government, the Hon. Lindsay Tanner. The government agreed, or agreed in principle, to 75 of the 76 recommendations made in the report. As previously mentioned, we are absolutely committed to having a world-class military to defend our country both at home and abroad.

The review found that there were a proliferation of structures, processes and systems that had layer upon layer of unclear level of accountability. This caused a lot of institutional waste and delayed decisions. There were flawed execution, duplication and overscaling of issues, and low engagement levels amongst employees in many parts of the organisation. The review proposed substantial change across Defence to ensure that it can deliver on future requirements that will be outlined in the government’s forthcoming Defence white paper. A key recommendation of the review was to ‘establish a strong, strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top level decision making’ in the Defence Force.

As part of the focus on the joint force, the review highlighted the need to update legislation to formally acknowledge the key roles played by the Chief of the Defence Force and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force—the VCDF—in the modern Australian Defence Force. The key purpose of the bill is to formalise the authority of the CDF and the VCDF. It will give full command of the Australian Defence Force to the CDF by removing legislative limitations in the Defence Act 1903, recognising the VCDF as the deputy of the CDF and providing for the service chiefs—Chief of Army, Chief of Navy and Chief of Air Force—to be subject to the direction of the CDF. It also looks at strengthening and streamlining the key military leadership roles of the CDF and the VCDF, which will enable improved cohesiveness and much more effectiveness in the Defence command and decision-making aspects of Defence. As the chamber would know, the key to an effectively run organisation as big as our Defence Force is strong communication channels. This is absolutely integral to the bill.

Another recommendation found that, as part of the performance management system, Defence should take steps to create a culture where leadership, professionalism and corporate behaviour are valued and rewarded. This is absolutely vital in our Defence forces. It is absolutely vital that these values remain at the apex of our military, that the best and brightest are elevated to senior positions. I want to thank members of the Defence Force for their contribution to the complex project management course that was started at QUT in the electorate of Brisbane. This course was much anticipated and very well received. It will also ensure that we have some of those brightest graduates going back into Defence and working with that industry group in a very positive way in the future. I want to thank the founders of that particular course, who are a mixture of academic and military people, and place on the record my congratulations to Professor Little at QUT and to Kim Gillis.

Another issue this bill seeks to rectify is the uncertainty in the chain of command, which presents a potential problem of ambiguity and lack of clarity—this has been confirmed by legal advice. The CDF’s powers may be interpreted as being subject to the authority of the
service chiefs to command their respective services. This uncertainty is compounded by other provisions of the act.

The review also recommended the management of staff resources to deliver the optimal use of funds and maximise efficiency, including abolishing the use of antiquated measures such as the teeth-to-tail ratio and the one-third budget split. This will be a very welcome recommendation.

The bill also facilitates the implementation of an enterprise approach to the delivery of corporate- and military-enabling services to maximise their effectiveness and efficiency. This will be manifested through Defence disposing of all unnecessary estate holdings. The assistant minister spoke earlier about what an enormous task that is. Defence has some of the largest Defence holdings in the country, many of which are surplus to use. It is a very involved process. It is important, when many of those Defence estates come onto the market to be disposed of, that the relevant environmental planning and community consultations take place and that former Defence estates are disposed of in the most efficient way possible in order to return that revenue back to the government. I want to again acknowledge that this is a huge part of the Defence budget. It certainly has changed over the years. This particular review focussed on that and said that there are better ways that we can move along to make this process much more efficient and a lot speedier than occurred in the past. Whatever occurs, it is the best possible outcomes for Defence that are at stake here.

Another recommendation was to examine the System Program Office to determine the most appropriate procurement model and achieve value for money. Again, Defence has many SMEs that contract to it in the procurement and supply chains. It was very interesting to see the first principles review focusing on many of these procurement practices and recommending the way forward. I am sure many of Defence's SME suppliers will welcome such a recommendation. They are a very valuable and important part of our whole defence industry. I pay tribute to many of these SMEs that work in this area. They are some of the most innovative and dynamic companies in Australia, and we thank them so much for all that they do and for their input into the defence industry aspect of defence.

Clearly, the amendments are embracing best practice management, which is indicative of the government's legislation presented in the House. As the government, the Public Service and indeed the economy continue to adapt and innovate, it is absolutely imperative that Defence comes along with them, as part of this adaptation. Defence has some of the brightest and most innovative people, but in a lot cases it is being let down by the processes. So I acknowledge again the wonderful work that was done by the first principles review. I know that they will continue taking an active role in this area, and that they will be working with the secretary of the department and with Defence in an overview role to ensure that many of these processes will be implemented over the next two years. That has been welcomed by all in Defence. I congratulate the Peever committee. These are fine recommendations. The bill will ensure that the chequered past of the Defence Force's management will now longer be an issue in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (13:08): Defence, as we know, is one of the most important priorities of the federal government. It is expensive, but it is worth investing in. This government is committed to increasing the level of defence spending by up to two per cent of GDP, and it is important that that money that is spent wisely. That is why this legislation is
important. As we have heard from my colleagues, this bill will strengthen accountability and improve our decision making, ensuring that those on the front line get what they need to serve and protect our nation.

Other than attending many community events, it would be fair to say that, as the member for Hindmarsh, I have spent most of my time on Defence related matters—more than on any other issue. I know the member for Makin, who is sitting in the chamber today, is well aware of the considerable attention and engagement that I have had with the defence industry across Australia but also in our state of South Australia, regularly talking with the key defence companies and key industry bodies to make sure that we get the best outcome for our nation from the investment that we make in defence. That includes the numerous meetings with defence ministers and prime ministers that I have had, pushing for sustainable shipbuilding based at the facilities at Osborne in South Australia. The announcement earlier this year that the frigates and the offshore patrol vessels would be brought forward, fast-tracking those projects, is great news to all involved in the defence industry in Australia. I know that the member for Makin is very supportive of the announcement and of the jobs that it will bring our state, South Australia—around 2,500 on the Future Frigate program. I look forward to the member for Makin's positive contribution to this debate and acknowledgement of that important announcement and the fast-tracking of those projects, as time goes on. I also look forward to the contributions of many other members of parliament from both sides, and also from the industry, including bodies like the Defence Teaming Centre, on how important the Future Frigate program is to our state, as well as other Defence projects. Obviously the Future Submarines program is another massive project. I have spent countless hours meeting with the submarine builders and meeting with the various stakeholders on the importance of that project to our country and the maximisation of Australian industry involvement, importantly.

The air warfare destroyers and the future frigates will be significant projects. We all know that they are on the right track with what they are doing with the air warfare destroyers. I was down there a few weeks ago, and the improvements that they have made in the productivity and performance of their work are commendable. I want to congratulate all the workers at ASC and those involved in the project for the improvements that they have made, especially in boat 2 and boat 3. It is often the case that the first one is the most challenging, but, as time goes on, things have become better in terms of the construction of those important warships. This demonstrates how, if we have the right people involved and the right focus, we can improve in terms of the work that we do.

It is a wonderful facility at Techport. The former United States Secretary of State and current US presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton, said only three years ago on her visit to Techport in Adelaide that:

Adelaide is, from our perspective, one of the great critical industrial centres in the world and part of Australia's defence manufacturing and a city where American and Australian companies work together in close partnership every day.

I know through the Air Warfare Destroyer program that Raytheon is one of the alliance partners. Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems and other companies—whether they be from the US or the United Kingdom like BAE Systems and Babcock—do significant work down there. Highly skilled engineers, software systems programmers and other specialists in the defence sector do some great work down there. I was recently at Pacific Marine Batteries, who make
the batteries for the submarines. They are world-class in what they do, and they are doing some interesting work in research and development that could be quite valuable in years to come.

Returning to the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015, the focus of the review was on ensuring that Defence is fit for purpose, is able to respond to future challenges and deliver against its outputs with the minimum resources necessary. The government released the review in April this year and agreed or agreed in principle to 75 of the 76 recommendations in the report. The review found there was a proliferation of structures, processes and systems with unclear accountabilities, which in turn caused: institutionalised waste, delayed decisions, flawed execution, duplication, over-escalation of issues for decision and low engagement levels amongst employees in parts of the organisation. We, as a prudent and responsible government, review government agencies, departments and our operations and try and improve things and get better efficiency and better accountability. The review proposes substantial changes across Defence to ensure it can deliver on the future requirements that will be outlined in the government's forthcoming Defence white paper. A key recommendation of the review was to establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top-level decision making in Defence.

I will not go through some of the more administrative elements of the review, because we have heard about those from my colleagues, but, in summary, this is important work of the government. It is important that we continue to look at all ways to improve the productivity of all departments, and I welcome the appointment of a board that will ensure that these improvements are implemented. The board is made up of the authors of the first principles review—David Peever, Robert Hill, Lindsay Tanner, Peter Leahy and Jim McDowell—with the addition of Erica Smyth. I know Robert Hill personally. Being a fellow South Australian and a former defence minister, he brings a lot of expertise not only from the Defence portfolio but from other experience in politics in general. Jim McDowell, from BAE Systems, is a fine man with fine credibility for the role. I support the work that they do and wish them all the best. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr TEHAN (Wannon) (13:16): I rise to speak on the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. I start by making the point that this is an incredibly important piece of proposed legislation. As we now hear far too often—but it needs to be continually repeated—the No. 1 priority of government is to keep its citizens and this nation safe. That is very much at the forefront for the Turnbull government and it is very much at the forefront for all of the members of parliament in this chamber. This bill is very important in this regard.

When it comes to our Department of Defence and to those who protect us and fight for us, there is nothing but admiration from me and my constituents and, I think, across the nation—because our defence forces, along with our intelligence agencies and police forces, do an outstanding job in keeping this nation safe. That does not mean that we do not have to look at ways to continually improve the way that our defence department does things, and that is what this review is all about.

In 2014, the government commissioned the first principles review of Defence. The focus of the broad-ranging review was on ensuring Defence is fit for purpose and able to respond to future challenges and deliver on its mission efficiently, while ensuring the maximisation of the resources which are allocated to our defence forces. The report of the first principles
review was released on 1 April 2015, and the government has subsequently agreed to 75 of the 76 recommendations it made. The review, it would have to be said, made some confronting findings. For instance:

The current organisational model and processes are complicated, slow and inefficient in an environment which requires simplicity, greater agility and timely delivery.

The government has, therefore, undertaken a series of steps to help make Defence more efficient, whilst strengthening Defence capabilities to ensure that Australia is kept safe. The review found there was an unnecessary number of management structures and processes. This has produced an organisation with unclear accountabilities, which, in turn, has caused institutionalised waste and hindered important decision-making mechanisms. These are fairly important findings which the government has had to act upon. The complicated management structures have caused unnecessary duplication and over-escalation of issues for decision and restricted engagement amongst some employees in some parts of the organisation. When you think of the threat environment currently, you can see why these issues need to be dealt with.

One of the examples pointed to was that the number of Defence senior leaders has nearly doubled, growing from 201 in 1998 to 374 in 2014—that is an 86 per cent increase. When you compare that with the total number of other staff, which has risen from 73,000 to 78,000—an increase of seven per cent—you really see a contrast with what has happened in the senior levels of Defence. Furthermore, more than 60 per cent of Defence managerial staff supervise fewer than two other staff members. This is far fewer than the five to eight staff recommended by the Australian Public Service Commission and which is more consistent across the rest of the Public Service.

The first principles review proposes substantial changes across Defence to ensure it can deliver on future requirements. This reform is absolutely essential for implementing the requirements and priorities which will be recommended in the government’s forthcoming Defence white paper. The government wants to provide the vision, and, obviously, it will be left to Defence to implement that vision. We have to ensure that Defence has the capabilities, the wherewithal and, in particular, the management structures to be able to do this.

The review stated that there were three root causes that have made Defence an organisation that has become risk averse and resistant to change. First, the high operational tempo and increasing national security demands over the past decade have demanded high levels of the senior leadership’s time and attention. Understandably, this has hindered natural internal reorganisation within the department. Second, the budget uncertainty under the previous Rudd-Gillard-Rudd government years saw $18.2 billion removed from the Defence budget from 2009-10 onwards. It is worth repeating that: $18.2 billion was removed from the Defence budget from 2009-10 onwards. This has led to reactive planning, deferred military capability and a hollowing out of enablers such as estate, and information and communications, technology. Third, a constant leadership churn from 1998 to the present, resulting in nine defence ministers with an average tenure of two years, six secretaries with an average tenure of 2½ years and five chiefs of the Defence Force with an average tenure of four years, has not been good for Defence. Obviously, a constant senior strategic leadership is vital for any organisation, and, in particular, Defence. This government is committed to fixing these root causes to ensure a stronger and more sustainable Defence Force.
A key recommendation of the review was to 'establish a strong strategic centre to strengthen accountability and top-level decision making' in Defence. The review referred to this as 'one Defence', the idea that the ADF, the defence department and all three services will act as one entity. This will hopefully address the substantial opaqueness around accountability at all levels and obviously create a unity of purpose across the organisations, which will enable everyone to ensure they are moving in the one direction in a very focused and organised way.

As part of the idea to form one Defence, the review highlighted the need to update legislation to formally acknowledge the key role played by the Chief of the Defence Force, the CDF, and the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, the VCDF, in the modern Australian Defence Force. This is the key purpose of this bill: to formally recognise the authority of the CDF and the VCDF. It will give full command of the Australian Defence Force to the CDF by removing all legislative limitations in the Defence Act 1903. It will also recognise the VCDF as the deputy of the CDF and it will recognise the service chiefs—Chief of Army, Chief of Navy and Chief of Air Force—as subject to the direction of the CDF.

This works through an unusual leadership construct that includes the joint management of Defence with the department secretary and the CDF. The construct does not necessarily align with the first principles review recommendations of clear authorities and accountabilities and simplicity. However, given the dual nature of the Defence organisation, which requires both military and public sector expertise, the government will retain this management structure. However, by clarifying and formally documenting the roles of secretary and Chief of the Defence Force, the bill will increase effectiveness, minimise duplication and simplify reporting lines. The bill will, of course, continue to retain the Governor-General's role in appointing the CDF and continue to acknowledge the Governor-General's titular role under section 68 of the Constitution. Strengthening the key military leadership roles of the CDF and VCDF will enable improved coherence and effectiveness in Defence command and decision making.

Currently the Defence Act provides that, subject to the powers of the minister, the CDF commands the ADF, and the service chief of an arm of the ADF 'shall, under the CDF, command the arm of the ADF of which he or she is Service Chief'. This presents a lot of accountability ambiguity. In fact, this lack of clarity in the accountability structure has been confirmed by legal advice to be legally ambiguous. The CDF's powers may be interpreted as being subject to—and potentially constrained by—the authority of the service chiefs to command their respective services. This uncertainty is compounded by other provisions of the existing Defence Act.

The review recommended three key legislative changes to formally recognise the command authority of the CDF and the VCDF: the CDF have full command of the ADF by removing the legislative limitations on the CDF's command power; the VCDF be recognised explicitly as the 'deputy' of the CDF, including the clarification that the VCDF has both command and administrative responsibilities in relation to the ADF, as directed by the CDF; and the service chiefs be explicitly subject to the direction of the CDF. This includes the removal of their statutory authority to ensure absolute clarity of the CDF's command and authority.

This bill also makes some other changes to streamline the legislative foundation of the ADF. The Defence Act does not recognise the ADF as an entity in its own right; rather, it
encourages a view that the ADF is no more than a 'federation' of the three services. This outdated view is not compatible in the modern era, where military operations involve all aspects of the three services. The bill provides the foundation for a more unified and integrated Australian Defence Force.

The bill streamlines the major components of the defence legislation. This means that the bill will repeal the Naval Defence Act and the Air Force Act. All substantive provisions of these acts will be incorporated in the Defence Act. These provisions include the acknowledgment of the Regular Army, the Air Force and the permanent Navy. It will also acknowledge the Reserve components of each of the services and the capacity for the Governor-General to call out the ADF Reserves under certain circumstances.

It must be stressed that the role of the service chiefs will continue to be a vital element of Defence capability. This bill does not seek to change their role, nor does it seek to lessen the chiefs’ importance. Rather, the bill seeks to clearly define the management structures of the ADF and the Department of Defence.

The bill also amends the Navigation Act 2012 to ensure that all geospatial-intelligence functions are consolidated under the Australia Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation. According to the Defence first principles review, Australia currently does not have a unified geospatial information enterprise. It has a series of stand-alone organisations that collect, analyse, maintain and distribute single domain foundation geospatial information. They have separate systems, business models, workforce planning, internal governance and capability development processes, all operating with little reference to each other or to a coherent plan for collective action. This is inefficient and wasteful, especially in an organisation that has limited resources.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott): The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour, and the member will have leave to continue his remarks at that time.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Climate Change Rally

Mr ZAPPIA (Makin) (13:30): Yesterday I joined thousands of South Australians, including the federal member for Port Adelaide, Mark Butler, Labor Senator Anne McEwen, former Member for Hindmarsh and Labor's candidate for Hindmarsh at the next federal election, Steve Georganas, and other SA members of parliament at the climate rally in Adelaide. People, young and old, from all walks of life, including from various faith communities, came out to show their support for meaningful global climate change outcomes at the Paris conference that is now underway.

I did not see, however, any SA Liberal MPs at the rally. I did not see current Member for Hindmarsh nor the Member for Sturt nor the Member for Mayo. For them it seems climate change is just an inconvenient truth for which they are not prepared to make any hard decisions or personal effort in order to respond to the risks posed. Young people, who have followed the science and who expect to be here in 2050, know that climate change will impact on their lives. They also know that it is a global problem in which every country shares responsibility and must respond accordingly. It is their future that is at stake, and their future is in the hands of politicians. Coalition members may find it politically expedient to keep
kicking the climate change can down the road to save their political careers, but ultimately they will be judged harshly for their selfishness and their failure to support effective action on climate change.

**Cowan Electorate: CCTV Installation**

*Mr SIMPKINS (Cowan) (13:31):* CCTV is an important element in combating crime. It has value in prevention, deterrence and detection of those involved in criminal activity on our streets and around our suburbs. All the way across Cowan I can see the opportunities for the placement of effective CCTV systems to help fight crime. Soon we will see good outcomes in Ballajura at Kingfisher Park with the CCTV system I got for the people of Ballajura.

I am also pursuing a CCTV system for the Kingsway Sporting Complex and my wife, Councillor Lara Simpkins, is pushing for the City of Wanneroo to apply under our Safer Streets Programme for that proposal. The Kingsway Sporting Complex is a high-use facility, and the users of the complex as well as the sporting clubs located there will benefit through a reduction in break-ins, crime in general and anti-social behaviour.

Over in the east of Cowan CCTV would also be highly beneficial. I have met with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CEO of the City of Swan to talk about that need. There is a benefit through the installation of fixed cameras wired into the WA Police CCTV hub, augmented by the city's mobile CCTV trailers to provide coverage in and around Beechboro, Lockridge and Kiara. I recently spoke about the options with the City of Swan and the value of CCTV in the area. Whether it is around Brockman House and the Altone Park Shopping Centre or down around the Alice Davoren Community Centre and the Lockridge Community Garden or even on Benara Road around the Altone Park Leisure Centre, there are benefits for having CCTV in these suburbs. I look forward to supporting the need in Beechboro, Lockridge and Kiara for my constituents.

**Kingsford Smith Electorate: Cricket Competition**

*Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (13:33):* Yesterday I joined many members of our community to watch the mighty Randwick Petersham Cricket Club defeat Sydney university in the Kingsgrove Sports T20 Cricket Cup. Batting first, the local boys set a big task for the students by scoring seven for 166, with the standouts being Nathan Price, hitting 45 off 25 balls, Daniel Sams 43 off 33 and Anthony Sam 28 off 27.

Sydney university began their run chase well, reaching 80 runs with a loss of just two wickets, before some excellent bowling, particularly by the captain, Adam Semple, who delivered a beautiful yorker on the first ball of the new spell to take out the stumps of Sydney university captain Nick Larkin, who was on 61 at the time and so halted the momentum of the visitors. In the end the visitors could only manage seven for 140 off the 20 overs.

Randwick Petersham were declared the champions for 2015-16. The competition win was the locals' third in just five years and their 17th victory in the past 18 games. All in all, it was a tremendous display of skill and sportsmanship from two great Sydney cricket clubs, with the legendary Randy Petes adding to the already proud history. Congratulations and thanks to all the players and volunteers of this great club, in particular my good mate, Mike Whitney, the president of the club whose passion and commitment to the club are admirable. Up the Randy Petes!
Drought

Mr PASIN (Barker) (13:34): Mr Deputy Speaker, drought has gripped my electorate of Barker—a phenomenon which I know that your own electorate of Maranoa knows much too much about. We are now experiencing a one-in-100-year rainfall deficiency in Barker over the last 24 months. The federal government acknowledges the severity of drought not only in South Australia but across the country and we have implemented drought concessional loans—a scheme that will help farmers in this difficult time. The scheme is, of course, in addition to our obligations under the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Drought Program Reform between the federal government and each state and territory.

Under the agreement the federal government is responsible for providing the funding, while states and territories are responsible for delivering the programs. The guidelines for assessing applications under the scheme were developed by the federal government and are consistent across jurisdictions. Given that, you might ask why authorities in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria have approved 74 per cent, 58 per cent and 61 per cent respectively of applications, while those under the control of Minister Bignell has seen fit to approve a meagre 14 per cent—meaning that, from a total of $180 million being pumped out of the economy to help drought affected farmers, only $1.6 million has made it to South Australia. That is less than one per cent, and it is really disappointing. Mr Bignell was in my community last week playing cheap politics. What he needs to do is to face up to his responsibilities and deal with his department.

Throsby Electorate: Top Blokes Foundation

Mr STEPHEN JONES (Throsby) (13:36): Today I asking parliament to join with me in congratulating Melissa Abu Gazaleh, the 2016 New South Wales Young Australian of the Year. Melissa is a resident of Kanahooka in my electorate of Throsby and is an inspiring young woman. In 2006, tired of seeing young men painted as drunk and violent no-hopers, Melissa established the Top Blokes Foundation, which is a youth led organisation in Wollongong that empowers young men to positively contribute to their local communities through volunteering and peer led programs. As CEO of Top Blokes, Melissa is helping Australia combat anti-social and risk-taking behaviours among young men and busting many negative stereotypes along the way.

Reaching thousands of 14- to 24-year olds each year, the Top Blokes Foundation fosters young men's social inclusion, resilience and mental health, while empowering them to contribute to their community through volunteering. Melissa's Junior Top Blokes Mentoring Program, for example, uses social education to challenge boys to address issues like alcohol, drugs, mental health, anger, masculinity and pornography. Melissa has also been selected in Australia's 100 Brightest Young Minds. Today, Melissa speaks across Australia on how to best address young men's health and well-being. So congratulations Melissa on behalf of the entire Australian parliament.

Petition: Mobile Phone Coverage

Mr PITT (Hinkler) (13:37): I table a petition containing 606 signatures which draws to the attention of the House the severe lack of mobile phone coverage in Doolbi, Horton, Abington, Goodwood, North Isis and Redridge in my electorate of Hinkler. The petition has
been considered by the Standing Committee on Petitions and certified as being in accordance with the standing orders.

The petition read as follows—

To the Honourable The Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives

This petition of certain citizens: of Doolbi, Horton, Abington, Goodwood, North Isis and Redridge in the Electorate of Hinkler in Queensland, Australia

draws to the attention of the House: A severe lack of mobile phone coverage and black spots in the above mentioned area which we see as potentially dangerous given the large number of elderly with complex health issues and no access to 000/ Emergency assistance. Due to financial constraints these people, many of whom are on age pensions, can only afford a mobile phone.

We therefore ask the House to: Facilitate funding and placing of mobile phone translators onto the existing NBN towers on Knockroe and Goodwood Rds so that lives are not needlessly placed at risk.

from 606 citizens

Petition received.

Mr PITT: In August this year, I met with the principal petitioner, Jennifer Symons, to discuss the fact that areas surrounding Childers do not even have SOS phone coverage. The region is home to many seniors and some of our biggest farms. They are unable to call for help in an emergency and are asking the House for funding to co-locate mobile phone equipment on the recently constructed NBN towers. This is an issue I have raised with my ministerial colleagues on numerous occasions. In April last year, Paul Fletcher, the then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications, visited the electorate. We met with residents and businesses to discuss mobile telephone black spots across the region. We encouraged locals to make submissions for round one of the coalition's $20 million Mobile Black Spot Program before 28 February, 2015. On 7 July last year, I formally nominated several Hinkler locations for the program. This included areas near Childers, such as Goodwood. From the public submissions and sites nominated by MPs, the Department of Communications compiled a database of locations that was shared with mobile network operators to help them prepare their proposals for funding. I was deeply disappointed that no Hinkler locations were successful under round one of the program. I look forward to round two opening and I look forward to a much better outcome in securing something for Childers.

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (13:39): I would like to welcome proudly to the parliament today nine leaders from Indi. To Hannah, Will, Riley, Caleb, Mark, Quin, Brody, Lindsay and Jacqui, as our leaders, I would like to thank you for what you have done and for what you will do. I acknowledge the work that young people do in my electorate and I commit to be your representative in this place. Some of these young people are from Victory Lutheran College and are accompanied by principal John Thompson. I take this opportunity to acknowledge Victory college, and I thank the board, the 80 staff and the people who look after the 670 children who go to this wonderful school and their families.

Victory was established in 1992 by the Wodonga Lutheran parish, and since that time it has gone from strength to strength. It plays a critical part in our community. Over lunch with these young leaders today we had the opportunity to talk about the issues facing young people in Albury-Wodonga. We talked about the role of politics in influencing law, of the importance
of turning up and having your voices heard. Today I have committed to return to the school in particular next year to talk to these young people about youth mental health and what I might do in my role, and what together we might do to address the scourge that is hitting our community. I welcome these young people.

**Zonta: 16 Days of Activism**

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan) (13:41): I have been a proud member of Zonta for many years and I am an advocate of our Zonta Says No campaign, which aims to combat violence against women on an international scale. Part of this is our 16 Days of Activism, a campaign against gender violence. The campaign runs between 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and 10 December, International Human Rights Day, to reinforce the message that violence against women is a human rights issue. Today is day 6, which focusses on human trafficking. You may wonder why I am talking about human trafficking in Australia in this day and age, in the 21st century, in 2015. It is estimated that between 300 and 1,000 people a year in Australia are trafficked, and 80 per cent of them are women. In fact, just recently there has been a report of a 'slave house' on Brisbane's south side where 27 people were crammed in and forced to work as call centre operators. There is not enough time to go into more detail now, but a quick scan of news articles reports slavery right in our midst in Brisbane.

We all need to work to raise more awareness of these issues and all the issues affecting human rights and gender violence. 16 Days of Activism is an important campaign that does just that and I am proud of Zonta’s advocacy for these issues. Zonta says no.

**Richmond Electorate: Tourism**

Mrs ELLIOT (Richmond) (13:42): I rise to mention some major successes at the recent New South Wales Tourism Awards held last week in Sydney. I would especially like to congratulate these tourism achievements from my electorate of Richmond, and more specifically from around Byron Bay, which won a number of the awards. Firstly there is Bluesfest, which won in the Major Festivals and Events category. The Cape Byron State Conservation Area won the award in the Tourist Attractions category, and the Arakwal Dolphin Dreaming Cape Byron State Conservation Area won the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Tourism category. Also, Flash Camp won the Specialised Tourism Services award. Congratulations to all of them. Bluesfest director Peter Noble noted that the competition was fierce, and he rightly paid tribute to all the Bluesfest team for this award. Delta Kay, education officer for the Byron Coast National Parks and Wildlife Service, said she believes Dolphin Dreaming did so well because of the large focus on customer satisfaction for locals and tourists alike. Dolphin Dreaming uses story, song and dance to share the culture of the local Arakwal people.

I congratulate all the winners and note that tourism is a vital contributor to and driver of our local economy on the New South Wales North Coast. I acknowledge the hard work and commitment of all the local tourist successes that have so rightly been recognised in the 2015 New South Wales Tourism Awards. Congratulations to all those involved—it is a major achievement for our area, especially Bluesfest, which continues to attract so many international awards. To all the winners, congratulations for your hard work and commitment.
**Durack Electorate: Exmouth**

Ms PRICE (Durack) (13:44): I am pleased today to speak about my recent trip to Exmouth a fortnight ago. Over 800 kilometres north of Geraldton, Exmouth is in the heart of the Gascoyne region, and this gorgeous iconic beachside town offers locals and tourists a great fishing, camping and snorkelling experience. Exmouth is home to more than 2,300 people according to the 2011 census, with fishing, tourism, light engineering and building and construction among the key local industries. In my two-day trip, as well as talking with constituents I attended the Gascoyne Country Zone meeting with representatives from the shires of Carnarvon, Exmouth, Shark Bay, Upper Gascoyne, Wiluna and Meekatharra.

Amongst the vast range of issues each council faces, the councils and I all agree that a deepwater wharf in Exmouth will be a game changer for these six shires. The wharf would then create pressure to improve transport links in the region to benefit the cattle and tourism industries, to name but a few, but it would also create more pressure to increase the Defence presence in Exmouth.

It is well known that great things do take time, and projects such as the deepwater wharf cannot be achieved by one person or one body alone; they can only be achieved through groups such as local councils working together to improve their towns and regions, together with the state and federal governments. I commend the Shire of Exmouth for this fabulous initiative and wish them all the best in raising the funds.

**Lalor Electorate: People's Climate March**

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:45): I rise to share with the House an experience I had on Friday evening, when I proudly joined members of the Western Region Environment Centre and members of the Labor Party on the People's Climate March. It was a wonderful event in Melbourne, with 60,000 people coming from all walks of life to put on the record their support for action around climate change. Of course, I was also there proudly wearing red, because Labor is very proud of its announcements around tackling climate change. Fifty per cent renewables by 2030 is one of our targets; the other is zero net carbon pollution by 2050. On this side of the House we are serious about climate change, we accept the science and we intend to act. We are a party with a track record of consultation and negotiation, and we have a leader in Bill Shorten who has a proven record in bringing business, unions, workers and the public together in positive action. He will come up with win-win solutions. We can trust a Shorten Labor government to deliver. On the opposite side, we have the Prime Minister out there today calling our targets 'heroic'—but, without aspirational targets, talk of innovation is empty rhetoric. We want action and we want to reduce the impact of climate change in this country.

**Corangamite Electorate: Infrastructure**

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (13:47): As Geelong and south-west Victoria continue to grow, the duplication of the rail track between South Geelong and Waurn Ponds is becoming a greater priority for our region. The current single track between Geelong and Waurn Ponds, which is approximately 15 kilometres, is a choke point as trains running in the opposite direction cannot pass each other. Residents who use the Marshall, Waurn Ponds and South Geelong stations deserve better passenger rail. A duplicated track and additional platforms will deliver more frequent train services, which are so important during peak hour.
The Victorian Labor government concedes this is a priority project but has done nothing to put this on the priority list.

Over the weekend, I was delighted to go doorknocking with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, spreading the word on our NBN rollout, which is starting at the beginning of 2017, across Grovedale, Highton, Belmont, Wandana Heights and Marshall and right through the southern part of Geelong. We were also urging residents to sign my petition for a duplicated rail track. We have seen Labor turn its back on the people of Colac by not agreeing to further train services. We have seen Labor abandon the East West Link project, which has cost our state nearly $1 billion and badly hurt the people of Geelong and Corangamite. The federal government has a strong role to play in passenger rail, but the Victorian government must prioritise this project.

Newcastle Electorate: Hunter Medical Research Foundation

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (13:48): The Hunter Medical Research Foundation recently held their awards night to celebrate some of the remarkable work that their scientists do every day. The 2015 Researcher of the Year Award went to Professor Julie Byles for her work on optimising planning and service delivery for an ageing global population. Professor Byles was instrumental in establishing the Australian longitudinal study on women's health in 1995 and continues to lead it today, as some of the original study participants advance into their 90s. Her expert advice has been sought by successive federal governments and she is a highly valued adviser to the World Health Organization on a range of important public health policies.

The Director's Award for Mid-Career Research was presented to Professor Philip Morgan. This prestigious award adds to a list of 30 major research and teaching accolades that he has won since completing his PhD in 2003. His obesity prevention programs have been delivered with unprecedented success. Global adaptations of the Healthy Dads, Healthy Kids program are now underway in the UK and US—nations that are facing an epidemic of obesity. I also pay tribute to the local CFMEU mining and energy division for their donation of $100,000 towards improved treatment and testing for prostate cancer.

HMRI is a remarkable facility with a brilliant team that continues to make a truly significant contribution to science here in Australia and globally.

Lindsay Electorate: Thoroughbred Racing Industry

Ms SCOTT (Lindsay) (13:50): The north and the southern wings of my electorate are home to many of the metropolitan thoroughbred racing breeding stables, including Darley's Osborne Park and Princes Farm, owned by the late Bart Cummings. Last week, the Planning Assessment Commission, for the third time, rejected the bid by Anglo American to expand its Drayton South project. This decision will help give certainty to the 5,633 racing employees that work in Western Sydney. Had Drayton South been given the green light, there is little doubt that much of the industry would have relocated to Victoria. Had Darley relocated their stud, it would have cost some 90 racing jobs in the electorate of Lindsay, not to mention the extensive small business support that they also need to maintain their operations. Henry Plumptre of Darley said:

The Planning Assessment Commission has considered the Drayton South proposal on three occasions. They have used the strongest language yet regarding the need for the thoroughbred industry to be
Henry went on to say that key points of the terms are the renewed investment, the growth of the industry and the certainty that the protection zones and the buffer zones for the thoroughbred industry will bring. I call on the New South Wales government to pick up the Planning Assessment Commission’s recommendations and implement clearer planning guidelines so important decisions can be made for the future.

Canberra Electorate: People’s Climate March

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:51): As so many of my colleagues have done, I rise today to speak about the People’s Climate March that took place in Canberra yesterday but also at other locations right across the world. More than 6,000 people turned out for the march in Canberra yesterday, with a great showing from ACT Labor and from LEAN. They joined more than 120,000 people around the nation. Around the world, more than 600,000 people took to the streets. That is an enormous amount of people, who are all calling for better outcomes at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change which starts in Paris today. They were calling for real action on climate change.

That is why I am so proud Labor has committed to net zero emissions by 2050 in an effort to limit global warming to less than two degrees Celsius. To achieve this 2050 target, Labor will consult on the Climate Change Authority’s 2030 baseline target of a 45 per cent reduction in carbon pollution on 2005 levels.

Australia goes to the Paris climate change conference as the only nation that has actually gone backwards on climate action in the past two years. Now is the time for the government to listen to what those 6,000 Canberrans were demanding yesterday; now is the time for the Prime Minister to listen to what those 120,000 Australians were demanding yesterday: we are calling for real action on climate change, and we want it now.

Murray Electorate: Pony Clubs

Dr STONE (Murray) (13:53): The electorate of Murray is well known for its highly successful horse breeding. We have some of the best thoroughbred stables in Victoria, and Nagambie is the home of champion Black Caviar. Black Caviar was born in 2006 at Nagambie, on the great Goulburn River. We have great young and mature-age people involved at all levels in the industry, as well as with horse eventing and pony clubs.

I want to congratulate 22-year-old Anna Parry, from Powlett Plains in the south-west of my electorate, who was part of the successful three-rider team that won a silver medal at the Pony Club Australia National Championships held recently in Murray Bridge, South Australia. Anna Parry has been riding since she was four and competing at show events since she was nine.

Victoria was crowned overall champion for its performance across all disciplines. This is particularly commendable since there were only three riders from Victoria and they had to be placegetters in every event.

All sports require dedicated volunteers, and I want to congratulate Frances Corry from Nathalia, who has given years of voluntary service to pony clubbing in Nathalia and across the whole state. Frances has been secretary-treasurer of the northern zone pony club region since 1967. This region stretches from Mildura to Cobram and is the largest zone in the state.
Frances has also served at all levels of the Pony Club Association of Victoria. As well as working in administration, Frances is a rider herself and has been an instructor since 1961—a truly amazing effort. She has made a significant contribution, and I commend Frances and all of those who enjoy horse riding in my part of the world.

**Hotham Electorate: Hotham Writing Prize**

Ms O’NEIL (Hotham) (13:54): Mr Deputy Speaker:

Girls of today are bombarded with images of unattainable beauty. Through all these provocative and sexualised pictures it’s difficult to find depictions of positive body image and to find strong, confident female role models. For some girls, just fitting in is a struggle, for girls that are athletically motivated it can be even worse.

These words are not mine, though I do wish I had written them. They are the words of Bria Raso, of Heatherton Christian College, and I would like the House to join me in congratulating Bria, who is the senior winner of the Hotham Writing Prize.

I launched the Hotham Writing Prize earlier this year because I wanted primary and secondary school students to understand that, even though many of them do not vote yet, I am their voice in the federal parliament and I am really interested in understanding the issues that affect them and raising them with you, my colleagues in this House.

Bria wrote me an incredibly passionate, well-argued essay about gender equality in sport. Bria is a very talented soccer player. She plays most days. But she is very frustrated that she sees more attention, resources and focus given to boys, even when they are playing at the same standard as girls. She thinks we need to encourage the participation of girls in sport, and I could not agree more—not only so that we see equal treatment on the sporting field but also to make sure that girls around this country have plenty of attainable, healthy role models for body image, something that women struggle with a great deal. We need to do more to make sure that girls and women are treated equally and sport.

Bria, congratulations. It was a really important issue that you raised with me, and it is an honour to be your voice in the House of Representatives.

**Gilmore Electorate: Project Bucephalus**

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (13:56): You have to be curious when you see an email from a group called Project Bucephalus asking you to support a MINDSTORMS event. Under the guidance of Lyndell and Andrew Clark, a number of my students in Gilmore have competed in a LEGO robotics competition at our local university campus.

Last Saturday was the regional championship, where there were about 20 teams, from Moruya to Sutherland, participating in a robot-building tournament. The competition is fundamentally a robotics joust, with LEGO construction robots. For two years now, I have been sponsoring students from Gilmore to attend these robotics camps because it is an unusual opportunity for them. Last year, the four students I put through were Dominic Ivanovski, Estelle Hancox, Madilyne Pride and Joel Mion. I am so proud of them.

The atmosphere at the competition on Saturday at the site was exhilarating, exciting and inspiring. The member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, and I presented certificates and LEGO-constructed trophy cups to the winning teams for activities such as collaboration, creativity, effectiveness and overall points. Then the teams going forward from the regional tournament.
were announced. The state tournament will be held at Macquarie University. The actual announcement was made in an atmosphere that was absolutely electric.

I am very proud to note that the young people from the robotics players with Project Bucephalus are one of the teams that will be taking their talents forward in the robotics competition, and I wish them all the very best.

Whaling

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (13:57): Japan's announcement over the weekend that it will this summer resume the slaughter of whales in the Antarctic is an outrage that must be condemned.

Less than two years ago, Australia won a resounding victory against Japan in the International Court of Justice. The court agreed with Australia that Japan's so-called scientific whaling program in the Southern Ocean was nothing more than commercial whaling dressed in the lab coat of science, and was in breach of Japan's obligations under international law. The Japanese government said during the litigation that it would abide by the ruling of the highest court in the world.

Japan's announcement is an affront to Australia, which for 20 years sought to bring Japanese whaling to end through diplomacy and, when that failed, took the matter to be decided by the International Court of Justice. Japan's announcement is an affront to the international rule of law and undermines over half a century of exemplary international citizenship by Japan since it joined the United Nations in 1956. Japan's announcement is also an affront to the environment, which we now know beyond any shadow of doubt requires international co-operation to protect.

Labor calls on the Turnbull government to bring all pressure to bear on Japan to renounce this irresponsible and illegal course of action and to honour the moratorium on commercial whaling in the Southern Ocean.

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

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (13:59): I inform the House that the Prime Minister will be absent from question time today and tomorrow. He is attending the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of The Parties in Paris. I will answer questions in his place. The Minister for the Environment will be absent from question time this week. He is also attending the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of The Parties in Paris. The Minister for Trade and Investment will answer questions in his place. The Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Small Business will be away from question time today attending to a personal matter. The Treasurer will answer questions in her place. The Minister for Cities and the Built Environment will be absent from question time this week. He is conducting a series of bilateral meetings with international ministerial counterparts. The Minister for Trade and Investment will answer questions in his place today, and The Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects will answer them for the remainder of the week. The Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major
Projects will be absent from question time today. He is representing the government at the Creating Healthy Cities Summit in Melbourne. I will answer questions in his place.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Climate Change

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:01): My question is to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Australian reports today that the Prime Minister will put innovation at the centre of his climate change agenda in Paris. In the context of negotiations in Paris, is it still government policy to abolish the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation—the very agencies that drive innovation in clean technology?

Ms Macklin interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Jagajaga will cease interjecting.

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:01): I thank the member for her question. I understand that the clean energy finance bill is before the Senate. It has been rejected by the Senate. That is one issue, secondly—

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Already the level of interjections is too high. I refer members to my statement of last Thursday. I will deal with a wall of noise. A number of people were already warned last week. They carry those warnings over. The member for Jagajaga is warned.

Ms JULIE BISHOP: I am informed that it remains our policy. It has been rejected twice by the Senate, but it is still our policy.

Child Care

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia) (14:02): My question is to the Acting Prime Minister and the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. Will the minister advise the House how regional communities will benefit from the government's Jobs for Families child care assistance package?

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (14:02): I thank the honourable member for her question. This is very important for the people of Capricornia. There are almost 10,000 children receiving approved child care in her electorate, from over 90 services. It is a very significant service being provided to the people of her electorate. The Jobs for Families child care package announced by the government includes $40 billion of funding, including $3 billion of new commitments. The increased support will mean that families earning between $65,000 and $170,000 will be an average of $30 per week better off. Families are receiving substantially improved access to child care services and substantially improved benefits. Families that are using budget based funding services, and that will include a number in the honourable member's electorate, will receive subsidies now, where previously that had not been the case. Those located in regional, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, who would typically miss out on receiving childcare assistance, will be eligible for support through this program.

There is $304 million for the Community Child Care Fund, a competitive grants fund to help children in disadvantaged communities and to increase the supply of centre based mobile
services, especially in regional communities. There are a number of people who, because of their geographical location, have difficulty in readily accessing any form of child care, so the government is trialling a Nanny Pilot Program, which will help to provide childcare services, including to people in regional and remote communities. It is going to particularly target shift workers and farming and rural and regional families, for whom there have been limited opportunities in the past to have any childcare services.

This is a program about choice. It will deliver substantial opportunities for people to access childcare support, regardless of their location and regardless of their financial situation. We want this program to support families who wish to access childcare services and who want to participate in the workforce, to give them the opportunity to contribute to their communities and to the wellbeing of their families.

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS**

The SPEAKER (14:05): I inform the House we have present in the gallery this afternoon the Hon. Telmo Languiller, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria. On behalf of the House, I extend a very warm welcome to you.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Climate Change**

Mr BUTLER (Port Adelaide) (14:05): My question is also to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In a press conference immediately after deposing the member for Warringah, the Minister for Foreign Affairs said:

... we've already announced climate targets for Paris in December and I expect those targets to continue.

But The Australian reports today that the Prime Minister will tell the Paris conference that there is scope to consider more ambitious targets. Exactly what is the position of the government?

Mr Simpkins interjecting—

Mr BUTLER: The member for Cowan will cease interjecting.

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:06): The Prime Minister reiterated, in Paris and to The Australian newspaper, that the targets of 26 per cent to 28 per cent will not be negotiated at the Paris climate change conference. I have a mandate from the Australian government that was passed by the cabinet and endorsed by the party room for 26 per cent to 28 per cent. That is our target. That is the target that the Prime Minister was speaking about. He was not changing government policy. Government policy remains the same. Our target is 26 per cent to 28 per cent.

What he was referring to—if the member had bothered to read the article—was that it is government policy to look, in 2017, at the question of the use of international units. That has always been our policy. It is also government policy to consider reviews for all countries that sign on to reducing greenhouse gas emissions reductions in five years time. In fact, I said last week, in answer to a question here, that we believe countries should review their targets every five years. If they are not meeting their target they can change their action. If they are
exceeding their target they can raise it. It can be calibrated every five years. This has been
government policy since August.

**Climate Change**

**Mr WOOD** (La Trobe) (14:07): My question is also to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Will the minister update the House on the government's approach to the Paris climate change conference and Australia's contribution to global efforts to respond to the challenge of climate change? How does this compare with other proposed approaches?

**Ms JULIE BISHOP** (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:08): I thank the member for La Trobe for his question. The government is, as he knows, taking strong and effective action to reduce our contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. We will meet and, indeed, exceed the existing 2020 target. We have put measures in place to support the uptake of new technologies to improve energy efficiency. We will meet our 2020 target; indeed, as the Minister for the Environment said, we will exceed it. We have committed to reduce emissions by 26 to 28 per cent on 2005 levels by 2030. This compares well to other countries. On a per capita basis our emissions will be reduced by half. It will reduce emissions per unit of GDP by two-thirds.

Australia accounts for just over one per cent of global emissions and, therefore, we should be part of a coordinated global agreement that includes the major emitters, our major trading partners and, indeed, developed and developing countries. Any agreement must set a common basis for all countries to take action to reduce emissions, to provide transparency and accountability—and that is what we will be negotiating in Paris—and to set five-year reviews to monitor global progress.

The coalition has adopted a target that is environmentally and economically responsible and one that we are confident we will achieve. The opposition has taken the opposite approach. They have plucked a figure out of the air—a reckless, pie-in-the-sky target of 45 per cent—that will be a huge hit to the Australian economy. The opposition has no idea how they will achieve their target other than through a supercharged carbon tax.

**Mr Thistlethwaite interjecting**—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kingsford Smith will cease interjecting.

**Ms JULIE BISHOP:** Under the opposition's plan, Australia's income per person would be around $5,000 lower—

**Mr Thistlethwaite interjecting**—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kingsford Smith is warned.

**Ms JULIE BISHOP:** and wholesale electricity prices would be about 80 per cent higher by 2030. That is what the opposition are proposing. The 45 per cent target that Labor is putting forward would cost Australia's economy billions of dollars. Labor would need a carbon price of $200 a tonne to meet its 45 per cent target—10 times Labor's failed carbon target. The Climate Change Authority modelling commissioned by Labor itself in 2013 indicates that a target of around 45 per cent would cost the economy over $600 billion. That is Labor's way. Labor's target of 45 per cent is absolutely fanciful. This government is committed to real and effective global action that will reduce emissions with a strong achievable target that will not cost jobs and will not hit the economy with a $600 billion tax.
The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Sydney, I remind the member for Kingsford Smith that he was warned. The member for Hotham is also warned. The member for Griffith will not interject, particularly while she is not in her seat, and the Leader of the House will not interject while I am addressing the House. The member for Sydney.

Budget

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:11): My question is to the Treasurer. Deloitte Access Economics now says the budget has deteriorated by $38 billion. How much of that deterioration occurred since he became Treasurer and how much occurred during the months he was conspiring to become Treasurer?

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will stop interjecting. The Treasurer has the call.

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:12): I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her question. As she would know, the MYEFO statement will come out in December—and that will follow the December quarter national accounts which will be released this week—and that is when the government will be updating our position on the budget. She makes reference to the Deloitte report that has come out today which highlights two very significant issues confronting the budget—commodity prices and growth in China. The Deloitte report also refers to one of the things that will be working against the government as we seek to repair the budget—the $17 billion worth of savings measures which are being opposed by those opposite.

I find it galling that those opposite would seek to ask us about the position of the budget when they are standing in the way of a $17 billion improvement in the budget because they continue to oppose measures. But they oppose far more than that. There are over $55 million worth of things they are opposing and commitments they are putting forward—and they have come up with a grand total of about $5 billion to pay for it! Those opposite know what they left this government in terms of the fiscal mess that we are addressing. We will continue every day the job of putting together and implementing policies that support growth and jobs, and we are controlling expenditure. That is how you get to surplus. Those opposite believe the way back to surplus is to increase taxes over and over again to chase their endless appetite for spending.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:13): I inform the House that we have present in the gallery this afternoon a delegation from the Council of Mayors South East Queensland. On behalf of the House, I extend a very warm welcome.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Regional Australia

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (14:14): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. As you know, Minister, applications from Indi for round 2 of the National Stronger Regions Fund are in, projects have been assessed and we are keenly awaiting an announcement from the government. I have been
asked by members of local government in Indi to ask you when we can expect an announcement for this very important community building initiative.

Mr TRUSS (Wide Bay—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development) (14:14): I thank the honourable member for her question. I am pleased that she has drawn attention to this very important initiative by the coalition government to provide support for worthwhile projects in the most disadvantaged areas of Australia.

This program is an economic program rather than a social program although it, obviously, has social benefits as well. It is designed to help those areas that have been left behind in our nation's growth or those who are suffering particular local or individual difficulties. As a result, the projects that were announced in the first round, including quite a number in the honourable member's electorate, have been about addressing disadvantage and providing opportunities in regional communities.

For the second round, as the honourable member referred to, the applications have closed. The assessment is at an advanced stage and I expect that announcements about the successful projects in this round will be made in the next week or so.

Taxation

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (14:15): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise the House how important it is for the tax system to support economic growth and jobs, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative plans that would impact on Australians who are working, saving and investing for our future prosperity?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:16): I thank the member for Robertson for her question and I commend her for her own plan, for the Central Coast and Robertson, for jobs and growth in the local economy on the Central Coast and a range of initiatives going right from local business opportunities through to education and others. I commend the member for Robertson.

When the coalition is engaged in changes to our tax system it is about supporting jobs and growth in the economy. That is our record. When last there were major changes to our tax system, that resulted in taxes being cut. Income taxes were cut. Stamp duties on myriad issues were cut. Bed taxes were cut. Financial institutions' duties were cut. When we change the tax system we improve the situation of Australians by ensuring the tax system is backing people who are out there working and saving and investing.

This is one of the many measures that we are doing to support jobs and growth in the economy—whether it is the Deputy Prime Minister's $50 billion rollout of the national infrastructure plan and our greatest trade minister of all time rolling out the most ambitious agenda of trade agreements or, indeed, the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science and the innovation statement that will shortly be coming before the Australian people. We are unrolling this national platform for jobs and growth in our economy. When you pursue tax changes, it is about pursuing growth and jobs. That is why we are engaged. Our economy does face headwinds but we are realistically optimistic. In the last 12 months, particularly in the year to 30 June, we not only doubled the growth rate of the Canadian economy, which is a comparable economy, we also saw 315,000 jobs created in the last year, which is something positive for the economy.
When we look at changes to the tax system it is about jobs and growth, but those opposite simply see the tax system as a way to milk the Australian taxpayer. There are alternative approaches on tax and the most striking one we saw, over the last few days, was the opposition’s plan to double-down on the carbon tax they had when they were in government—a 45 per cent target on the reduction of emissions, which would see a carbon tax reintroduced to this country with full fury, with absolute full fury. It would be a carbon maxitax that those opposite would seek to introduce to go after this 45 per cent target. It would cost the economy some $600 billion over 15 years. It would be an economy-crunching and a job-munching tax that would come from those opposite if they ever got their hands on the carbon tax levers again. What is it about carbon taxes they just cannot leave alone? They are like that little child who just has to keep touching it and to touching it. They cannot leave it alone. The Australian people set a clear—(Time expired)

Taxation

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:19): My question is to the Treasurer. On 16 June the Treasurer said:

The Government has made it crystal clear that we have no interest in increasing taxes on superannuation either now or in the future.

But on Friday the Treasurer backflipped and argued that, actually, superannuation concessions are not well targeted, undermine confidence in the system and need to be changed. Is this another example where the Treasurer says one thing in public but organises—for months—other things in private?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:19): I thank the member for his question, and I will refer to some comments by the Premier of South Australia in a second. If he were to be truthful about outlining my statements on these matters, previously, he would note that the context of my comments related, particularly, to the retirement phase of the process.

There have been changes, and those changes have been supported by none other than the Premier of South Australia, who said:

… we need a new style of leadership: one that respects people’s intelligence, explains complex issues, sets out a course of action and argues the case for it.

What he was referring to is this: he was referring to the choice that sits between the opposition and the government. He said you can sit back and be paralysed when it comes to the issues confronting this country on tax, as those opposite seek to do—off on their smoko, when it comes to tax reform. The only thing they would come up with is a sickies tax. That is their approach. Their approach is to look at tax as a big bag of cash, to chase their spending.

Or you can have the approach of the government that treats the Australian taxpayer and the Australian citizen with respect and understands that they are capable—unlike those opposite—

Mr Husic: It’s all about the context!

The SPEAKER: The member for Chifley will not display props.

Mr MORRISON: to hold one idea in their head at a time and can look at the broader array of taxes and reforms that can leave them better off. That is what this government is doing. We are pursuing tax changes in the spirit of those announced and commended by the Labor Premier of South Australia, who does believe that we need to respect people’s
intelligence, that we do need to explain these complex issues, as we are doing. Those opposite just jump in the bed, pull the doona over their head and hope it will all go away.

Scenario 3—if they want to talk about taxes, the Leader of the Opposition and, particularly, the shadow Treasurer, know all about scenario 3, which is the option he modelled to expand the GST base and increase the GST rate. But I notice there are a lot of other plans. Maybe it is the plan B that the member for Grayndler is working on. Maybe he has a plan B. Maybe the member for Sydney has a plan B. We know the Leader of the Opposition is sticking with plan A.

Mr Burke: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Has the Treasurer concluded his answer?

Mr Morrison: Yes.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer has concluded his answer.

Trade

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin) (14:22): My question is to the Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the minister update the House on the vital contribution that Australian exporters make to our economy across a wide range of areas and the importance of recognising their efforts?

Mr ROBB (Goldstein—Minister for Trade and Investment) (14:22): I acknowledge the accomplished private-sector career of the member, which has given him a strong trade and investment understanding. Australian exports have been a major reason why Australia has enjoyed 24 years of uninterrupted economic growth. In fact, through to June this year, exports contributed 1.4 to 2.4 per cent growth. We have got some wonderful and innovative exporters out there, and their efforts were celebrated on Friday night at the 53rd Australian Export Awards in Melbourne. From 74 finalists there were 12 category winners. The finalists generated more than $1.9 billion in export sales in 2014-15 and employ more than 16½ thousand Australians.

Victoria's ANCA, manufacturers of innovative advanced machinery—high-tech tool and cutter grinders—were named Exporter of the Year and also won the manufacturing category. They are based in Bayswater North, bordering the member's and the Speaker's electorates, and recently hired 160 new employees to meet the increased demand for their products. In 2014-15, ANCA achieved 39 per cent growth in export sales, with revenue exceeding $197 million. ANCA—exporting to Germany, the US, Japan, China, the UK and many more—are living proof that Australia has a healthy future, with knowledge-based manufacturing of innovative, high-quality products. The other category winners were—and I think they should be recognised in this place—agribusiness: Austral Fisheries, WA; business services: Nuix, New South Wales; creative industries: Alt.vfx, Queensland; environmental solutions: Rubicon Water, Victoria; health and biotechnology: Blackmores—and what a year they have had; information and communication technology: Soprano Design; minerals, energy and related services: Blast Movement Technologies, Queensland; online sales: Halfbrick Studios, Queensland; regional exporter: Tasmanian Quality Meats; and small business: b.box for kids in Victoria.

The free trade agreements we have concluded with Korea, Japan and China, as well as the transformational Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, are unlocking unprecedented access to
major markets for our exporters, and we have been and are a proud trading nation. To the winners of the Australian Export Awards, along with other category finalists: we salute you.

Economy

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:25): My question is to the Treasurer. Senior Treasury official Mr Nigel Ray has said that, under the Turnbull government, Australia is experiencing 'a prolonged period of below-par growth, the likes of which we have rarely seen outside a recession'. Is Mr Ray correct? Is this the economic leadership the Prime Minister promised when he knifed the member for Warringah?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:25): The member for McMahon would be very familiar with knives, as would the member for Fowler, who seems to be his current target at the moment. But, to come to his question—

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon will cease interjecting. He has asked his question.

Mr MORRISON: The government is not in denial about the fact that our economy is transitioning from the most significant investment boom we have seen in the mining sector into the post-boom scenario. That is what is happening in the Australian economy at the moment. That might be lost on those opposite, but we understand that. And that is why it is so important that we have policies in place that support growth and jobs in our economy. That is why we are doing what we are doing when it comes to the rollout of our $50 billion national infrastructure plan. That is why we are embracing competition policy reforms that can drive micro-economic growth at the state and territory level. That is why we are engaged in the innovation statement that will be released shortly, to do all the things that will drive growth and jobs and, in particular, to have a tax system that backs Australians to work, save and invest, who are out there doing it every day. That is the plan the government is engaged in.

The member opposite refers to average long-term growth and obviously includes the mining boom in those figures. Well, it is no secret to the Australian people that we have moved on from the investment boom in the mining sector. That is a very understandable position that the Australian people get, and they know that they are having to work through this transition. But they are also realistically optimistic. That is why we are pleased to see the figures that have come out today on business indicators which show an above-median result on expectations when it comes to gross operating profits. We are seeing improvement in those profits. We have seen an improvement also in wages outcomes today—the best and strongest increase for the past two quarters we have seen since June 2012. We have also seen an increase in inventories as well.

We are getting on with the job of supporting growth and jobs in our economy. Those opposite want to put a carbon maxitax on the economy—a 45 per cent reduction in emissions. On what planet do they think that that does not kill jobs and slug the economy? It is only on planet Labor-Green where you actually think that you can have an emissions reduction target of 45 per cent and think that that will not have a devastating impact on the Australian economy. So we will keep about our plan. We will keep about the progress we are making on these issues. We understand the challenges that we face and we make no excuses for them; we
just get on with the job of addressing them and ensuring Australians can be confident that the
government is doing everything within its power to support growth and jobs in our economy.

Mental Health

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (14:28): My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the
minister please outline the government's plans to improve the care provided to people
suffering from mental health issues? What has been the reaction of the sector to these
reforms?

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Health, Minister for Sport and Minister for Aged Care)
(14:28): Can I thank the member for Solomon for her question and acknowledge her interest
in the area of health generally, particularly in mental health. We do know that one of the areas
of concern is the mental health of the fly-in fly-out workforce, and the rationale behind these
key reforms is that it will not be one-size-fits-all delivered from Canberra, but that individual
locations across the country will be able to pick up the policies they need—the consumer-
driven, person-centred initiatives that will make the real difference for individuals.

I have been pleased with the response to the government's reforms, which I announced last
Thursday with the Prime Minister, Professor Allan Fels and Professor Ian Hickey. I would
like to pick up on a couple of further comments that have been made by people whom we take
very seriously in this sector. One comment is from John Mendoza, who was Labor's former
chief mental health adviser—a person of influence, an expert in his field and, above all else, a
passionate advocate. He described this as the most significant shake-up to mental health
services funded by the Commonwealth since the beginning of the national mental health
plans. It is bold. It is brave. It is visionary. Mr Mendoza said:

What was announced today responds directly and decisively to the core problems in mental health care
identified in a continual 10-year public critique and published in truckloads of reports to government.

That captures it, because the most important thing we did in announcing these reforms was to
listen: listen to the sector, listen to consumers, listen to families, listen to advocates and to
understand that, in designing a reform that works for them, we have to, and we had to, hear
their voices. John Mendoza goes on to say:

… we will see an end to the sort of 'mental health care system' that mirrors the old Soviet automotive
industry—the one car, in one colour and only available after an eternal wait!

Others have been similarly encouraged. Mental Health Australia welcomed the response by
saying that 'reform starts today'. Beyond Blue, the Black Dog Institute, the Psychological
Society, the Consumers Health Forum—and today, in The Age newspaper, I was delighted to
see its editorial headline, 'Government gets it right on mental health.'

As I said, this is a key reform, and it is designed first and foremost to add the services, the
professional expertise, the tailor-made, individualised care packages for people who either
suffer in an episodic way with mental ill health or who experience a lifetime of differences—
if I could describe it like that—in mental health and need ongoing, special support. I am
delighted that, from here on, so many will be on board with this key reform, and I look
forward to the support of all my colleagues as we go forward.

Taxation

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:31): My question is to the Treasurer. Isn't it the case that the
two quarters following the introduction of the GST, in 2000, saw the worst six-monthly
performance of the Australian economy in the last 20 years, including the global financial crisis. Will the Treasurer guarantee that increasing the GST will not lead to a further slowdown in economic growth?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:32): I welcome the question because it enables me to go back over the coalition's record when it comes to changing the tax system. When we change the tax system, as I have said on a number of occasions today, we cut taxes—we do not just change taxes, we cut taxes. As a result, what that does is to lift the performance of the economy over time. It grows the economy. As a result, receipts will grow with the growth in the economy.

Those opposite believe that the way to deal with the budget challenges that the country faces is to just increase taxes. There is not a tax that they do not want to increase, and they are out there with the high tax cheer squad saying, 'Australia has a revenue problem. Australia has a revenue problem.' Every time those outside this place hear the opposition say that Australia has a revenue problem, this is what the opposition means: they do not think the government is taxing people enough, and if they had the opportunity, the opposition would increase taxes on the Australian people for no other purpose than to chase the higher and higher levels of expenditure that they have not been able to break their habit of pursuing. Their aspiration and ambition for spending is unmatched, and that is why they always want to go for higher, higher and higher taxes.

Ms O'Neil interjecting—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Hotham that she has been warned!

Mr MORRISON: They raise the issue of what happened under the Howard and Costello government. They had ample opportunity to change all that. Despite the fact that they went to an election and said 'we think this is terrible', and all the rest of it, did they change it? Did they change one iota of it? Not one!

On this side of the House, if we go to the Australian people and we say that we are going to get rid of the carbon tax and we are going to get rid of the mining tax, we do it.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton.

Mr MORRISON: We follow through. What the Australian people need to know about those on that side is that they will huff and they will puff about these things, but if they ever have the opportunity they will not do anything because they are addicted to the tax revenues that fuel their higher aspirations for spending. On this side we will control our expenditure, as we are. Those opposite are happy to make commitments without being able to pay for one, but on this side we make sure that the budget washes its face when it comes to new initiatives. Whether it is for childcare or anywhere else, we make sure we put the measures in place to fund the changes we wish to make for the Australian people.

Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton is now warned. The member for Sydney!

Mr MORRISON: Those opposite have completely lost track of those important principles for managing the nation's finances.
The **SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Hotham again. She has now been warned twice. It is her final warning. I call the member for Flynn.

**Mining**

**Mr O'DOWD** (Flynn) (14:35): My question is to the Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia. As you are aware, my electorate of Flynn is home to some of Australia's most significant resources and energy projects. In particular, a number of major LNG projects in Gladstone. I speak with the constituents and the community leaders almost every day about the importance of this vital sector. Would you please update the House on how the investment in the Australian resources and energy sector is creating jobs, growth and opportunities for the constituents in my electorate of Flynn?

**Mr FRYDENBERG** (Kooyong—Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia) (14:35): I thank the member for Flynn, who has been a fantastic advocate for the resources and energy sector ever since he won a seat from the Labor party, in 2010. It was terrific to join the member for Flynn, the member for Capricornia and Senator Canavan at the Fitzroy Water Forum in Queensland recently to discuss a number of potential water projects which I know the minister is focused on—Connors River Dam, Nathan Dam, the Eden Bann and the Rookwood weirs.

It is in energy and resources that the member for Flynn's electorate is making its greatest contribution to the Australian economy. In his electorate there are three world leading LNG projects: Gladstone LNG, Australia Pacific LNG and Queensland Curtis LNG. Together this has seen an investment of more than $60 billion from some of the biggest companies in the world, including Conoco, BG, Petronas and Kogas and others. Those three projects will produce $15 billion worth of export income every year, and, over the life of these projects, a remarkable half a trillion dollars—half a trillion dollars in export income will be created. More than 15,000 jobs in construction and thousands of other jobs will have been created once these projects are up and running.

In terms of supporting the local economy, some $5 billion ever year is supporting more than 2½ thousand local businesses in the electorate of Flynn, like the company MIPEC, a local ship repair company helping to repair ships in Gladstone Harbour. With the support of the electorate of Flynn and these major projects, Australia will become the world's largest LNG exporter in the world by 2020. But Flynn is also part of the—

Ms Owens interjecting—

**Mr FRYDENBERG:** fantastic coal production story that we see in Australia—this is coal coming out of the Bowen Basin—employing 3½ thousand people directly and thousands more indirectly: the Blackwater coalmine, the Rolleston coalmine and the Callide coalmine. This is good news for people from Gladstone to Taroom, from Blackwater to Mount Morgan and from Emerald to Rolleston, because when the energy and resources sector is doing well in Australia the people of Flynn are doing well.

**Parenting Payments**

**Ms KATE ELLIS** (Adelaide) (14:38): My question is to the Minister for Vocational Education and Skills, representing the Minister for Education. When will the government release the detailed modelling of its childcare package that shows who will be worse off,
including how many families that rely on grandparents for child care will lose access to the registered childcare benefit? And does this modelling include the impact on child care of a 15 per cent GST?

Mr Morrison interjecting—

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer and the Leader of the House will cease interjecting.

Mr HARTSUYSKER (Cowper—Minister for Vocational Education and Skills and Deputy Leader of the House) (14:39): I thank the member for her question, and I must say that this government understands the importance of child care. We are committed to high-quality child care for Australian families, and we certainly understand the importance of the contribution that is made by grandparents to fulfilling important childcare needs. That is why this government is investing heavily in child care—almost $40 billion over the next four years, including an additional $3 billion in funding. This is the single-largest investment in early learning and child care that this country has ever seen. We are targeting to support parents. It is vitally important that child care is accessible, that child care is affordable and that child care is sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of parents. We want to ensure that child care can meet the needs of Australians in the 21st century, particularly those families who are seeking to transition off income support and into the world of work. It is very difficult to get back into the workforce if you cannot have the childcare support that you need to do that.

From 1 July 2017 a single childcare subsidy will make it easier for parents to navigate. Child care will be more affordable. Families will be better off. Those families who are on incomes of between $65,000 and $170,000 a year will, on average, be $30 a week better off; that is $1,500 a year. And child care will be more flexible. We on this side of the House understand the importance of flexibility. That is why we have the new nanny pilot program that is going to help particularly workers who work unusual hours, such as shiftworkers, particularly people in remote and regional locations where they do not have easy access to childcare facilities. We have the $869 million childcare safety net, which recognises that vulnerable children and families need extra support. We are a government that understands the needs of this nation's families in relation to child care. That is why we are putting in place the sorts of policies that are going to provide flexible, affordable child care for parents and grandparents.

Azerbaijan

Mr SIMPKINS (Cowan) (14:41): My constituency question is to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Minister, in Cowan I have constituents of Azerbaijani and Turkish origins, and they have contacted me and asked me about the 1992-93 Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani territory—namely, Nagorno-Karabakh and nearby regions. What is the government's view on this occupation? And does the government recognise these regions as belonging to Azerbaijan?

Ms JULIE BISHOP (Curtin—Minister for Foreign Affairs) (14:42): I thank the member for Cowan for his question. I acknowledge the deep and consistent support he provides for a number of ethnic communities in his electorate. The Australian government has a longstanding policy of condemning the illegal occupation of the sovereign territory of nations around the world. An example would be Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea, the breach of
Ukraine's sovereignty. We were very outspoken on that occasion. Likewise, in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Australian government's policy is to recognise the sovereignty of Azerbaijan. We do not recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state. Indeed, the Australian government supports the efforts of what is known as the Minsk Group—chaired by Russia, France and the United States, with other members including Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey and Belarus—to resolve the situation. It has been our consistent position that the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan should come together peacefully to resolve the issue, to end the conflict and to end the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh area.

**Special Minister of State**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:43): My question is to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's responsibility for the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act. As a matter of government policy, does the minister ask the Australian Federal Police to investigate when staff members employed under that act provide unauthorised access to a member of parliament's official diary?

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (14:44): I can inform the honourable member that that occasion has not arisen so I have not had the opportunity to discuss such a matter in this way.

*Opposition members interjecting—*

The SPEAKER: Members on my left!

**Manufacturing**

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (14:44): My constituency question is to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. One of the biggest issues for my constituents in Corangamite is jobs. There is strong growth in some sectors, but the biggest challenge is in manufacturing. How will our government's decision to establish an industry growth centre in advanced manufacturing at Deakin University campus in Waurn Ponds and other investments help drive a wave of smart manufacturing jobs across Corangamite?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (14:44): I thank the member for Corangamite for her question. I can confirm to her that Geelong has been an area which is moving from an old economy approach around heavy manufacturing to a new economy including advanced manufacturing and high-tech industries. The member for Corangamite has been at the forefront of supporting, and lobbying for support for, her particular part of Victoria and has been very successful. Recently, she and I launched the latest round of the Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund: $11.2 million worth of grants to seven different businesses. She is quite right that the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre has recently established a node at the Deakin University campus in Waurn Ponds, which is the base of their advanced manufacturing industry growth centre. So Geelong is (1) being well served by the member for Corangamite and (2) seeing the very real effects of the government's commitment to and investment in advanced manufacturing and high-tech industries, not only at the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre at Deakin University in Waurn Ponds but also in terms of the GRIIF, the Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund. Recently at Jeff Sykes's business, Sykes Racing, we announced a $135,000 grant that will impact on 11 new jobs in Geelong around an advanced manufacturing facility. At Air Radiators, we also announced a $3.3 million grant which will...
lead directly to the creation of 30 jobs and allow Air Radiators to create a new purpose-built factory that will replace products coming from overseas—products that they are currently competing with—with Australian made domestic products, which is very good news for Geelong.

This all plays into the government's wider innovation and science agenda, through which we are directing the economy beyond mining and agriculture towards new areas in advanced manufacturing and high-tech industries. This particularly impacts on areas such as Port Kembla in the member for Gilmore's electorate, but it also impacts in other areas such as in South Australia, in Geelong, across Victoria and in Tasmania. We will soon have announcements to make about Tasmania and their growth fund, which we will roll out across Tasmania. Next week, we will get the opportunity to announce the national innovation and science agenda.

Opposition members interjecting—

**Mr PYNE:** I am sorry that the opposition does not care about innovation and science, but the reality is we see it as a terrific opportunity to create jobs and growth, because this side of the House is focused on jobs and growth. Jobs and growth are all we care about, not the muckraking that we are about to see from— (Time expired)

**Special Minister of State**

**Mr DREYFUS** (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:48): My question is again to the Special Minister of State. I referred to the minister's previous answer when I asked: does the minister ask the Australian Federal Police to investigate when staff members employed under the Members of Parliament (Staff) Act provide unauthorised access to a member of parliament's official diary? The question is not whether this event has happened. The question is: how does government policy dictate the minister should act?

**Mr BROUGH** (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (14:48): In this year of ideas, I suggest that what I would do is take advice as appropriate and act appropriately.

**Mr Mitchell interjecting—**

The SPEAKER: The member for McEwen is warned!

**Family Payments**

**Mr EWEN JONES** (Herbert—Government Whip) (14:48): My question is to the Minister for Social Services. My electorate has a very mobile population, and Australia's childcare system is vital. My constituents are asking me how we can make savings from the family tax benefit system and how this can help them with child care. Minister, can you outline the answer to that question for me?

**Mr PORTER** (Pearce—Minister for Social Services) (14:49): The member for Herbert has not only a very mobile but a very intelligent electorate if they are asking excellent questions like that. The childcare reforms were originally designed, in their first iteration, by the now Treasurer when he was Minister for Social Services. He also bore the responsibility for finding the savings inside the family tax benefit system to pay for those reforms. It is now the case, because of machinery-of-government changes, that the Minister for Education and Training has taken responsibility for child care. As the member for Herbert would be well
aware, the genesis of the changes that we have suggested for child care, which need to be paid for with appropriate, rational savings out of the family tax benefit system, was the work of the Productivity Commission. The commission noted that 165,000 Australian parents said that they wanted to, and would, work more but felt that they were unable to do so or inhibited from doing so because of the access to and arrangements surrounding child care. They are the 165,000 Australians whom we are working very hard for, whom we have devised a plan for and whom we wish to assist to engage in the workforce. As the member has noted—and as his constituents are no doubt keenly aware—that has to be paid for. Perhaps it is timely for me to give him a response that relates to the procedural mechanism by which that payment will occur.

We had a rare event in the House last week, where members opposite agreed with savings initiated by the government. It does not happen very often, but it did happen last week. Those savings, with respect to a mechanism to pay for at least some portion of that childcare spend—$525 million worth of savings—were agreed to by members opposite. They will mean that, in the not-too-distant future, the family tax benefit will end for couple families when their youngest child turns 13. They will be making a contribution—$500 million worth of contribution—to sweeping reforms to child care. It is now the case, as the member would be aware, that we have legislation before the House this week with all the details on the childcare package. But that package involves a very significant expenditure of money, and it has to be paid for. One of the benefits that we have seen is that the expenditure is slightly less than expected; there is less generosity to those on higher incomes and better targeting of childcare support to those on lower incomes. But I want to assure the member for Herbert and his constituents that, whilst the childcare package needs to be paid for and whilst only part of it has been agreed to, the remaining savings will come back before this House, with some slight modifications. I have sent some legislation to the member for Jagajaga, and that revolves around excluding the small group of grandparent carers and single parents over 60—both small groups. We have been able to do that because the spend on child care, due to the work of the education minister, is less than we had thought. (Time expired)

Special Minister of State

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:52): My question is again to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's answers in question time last week and today. On 29 March 2012 the minister texted his email address to James Ashby so that he could be sent a better quality copy of the Speaker's diary. Ashby replied, and I quote: 'Done. Coming through in minutes.' Did the minister receive those unauthorised copies of the Speaker's diary? Is conduct of this nature consistent with the standards the government applies to this minister's portfolio?

Mr Wood interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for La Trobe will cease interjecting, particularly when he is out of his seat.

Mr Albanese interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Grayndler with cease interjecting.

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (14:53): I refer the honourable member to the findings of the Federal Court, which
brought down their findings on 27 April 2014. In particular, you might wish to refer to paras 122 to 124.

**Infrastructure: Water**

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia) (14:53): My constituency question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources on behalf of the attendees of the Fitzroy water forum recently held in Rockhampton. Will the minister update the House on how the $500 million National Water Infrastructure Fund will aid in the construction of important water projects, including potential projects like Eden Bann and Rookwood weirs, which I am fighting for near my electorate of Capricornia. When will the approved projects be announced?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:54): I thank the honourable member for her question. The honourable member knows full well how important it is that our nation is not a nation for which dams infrastructure is something of the past. We want to be the nation that builds on the legacy of Curtin, Chifley and Menzies and goes forward with a further construction of dams, because we know that water is wealth and that a dam is a bank that stores the wealth. We note also that, through the white paper process, we appropriated half a billion dollars, $500 million, towards the feasibility and construction of dams. We have already got that process started with the states on 19 November and look forward to a reply by 21 January, for which they will nominate what they believe are the preferred sites. We are working very closely with the state ministers, and we have already had discussions in the member’s electorate about Eden Bann, Rookwood and, of course, Nathan Dam. Nathan Dam has been discussed back and forth since 1924. 1928 was the first time it appeared in the parliament. I think it is about time that we go a bit further than just discussing it.

Eden Bann and Rookwood are not only important to the member for Capricornia but also very important to the member for Flynn, who is sitting right beside her. This is part of the process of expanding our agricultural production in the area, whether it is cotton, whether it is to help in the industry development of Rockhampton or whether it is to help in residential development. It is this part of the process that makes it so crucial that our nation goes towards the construction of dams.

I would note that, in the per capita megalitre of water that is stored per person in Australia, we are going to be forced to an agenda of building dams whether we like it or not. Over the last few decades, Australia has had an aversion to the construction of dams, which has meant that our capacity has been reduced. I am very happy to be working with the member for Capricornia, because we know that the member for Capricornia and the member for Flynn are great champions of the construction of new dams in what is the second-biggest catchment after the Murray-Darling Basin, which is the Fitzroy catchment. We know that it further assists in the development of our mineral resources in that area and we also know that, around Taroom, it is absolutely essential, especially for the Xstrata mine, that we have further construction of water infrastructure.

I close by stating that one of the great dreams of Australia is to move water into the Murray-Darling—to move water from one catchment to another—and the Nathan Dam would actually allow that to happen. It would allow it to happen in part to try and assist in some of the requirements around Miles in the northern part of the Murray-Darling Basin. So this is a
government of vision. This is a government with a plan. The plan is afoot, and we will be delivering.

**Special Minister of State**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (14:57): My question is again to the Special Minister of State. Again, I refer to text messages exchanged between the minister and James Ashby on 29 March 2012. The minister sent a text back, after James Ashby had assured the minister that copies of the Speaker's official diary would be coming through in minutes, and I quote: ‘Thanks’. Ashby then sent a text to the minister, and I quote: 'Will need to get daily printouts tomorrow with greater detail.' Did the minister receive those unauthorised daily printouts of the Speaker's diary? Is conduct of this nature consistent with the standards the government applies to this minister's portfolio. *(Time expired)*

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (14:57): Mr Speaker, I actually do not understand what you are just referring to there, but can I assure you that every document that I have received is in the Federal Court.

**Syrian Refugees**

Mr WILLIAMS (Hindmarsh) (14:58): My question is to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. What security and screening measures is the government taking to ensure that the 12,000 refugees from Syria coming to Australia are legitimate refugees?

*Mr Mitchell interjecting—*

The SPEAKER: Just before I call the minister, the member for McEwen has been warned. He will not interject again and remain in the chamber.

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (14:58): I want to say thank you very much to the member for Hindmarsh for the question and also for the work that he does on the backbench immigration committee. He has a great interest in making sure that we can continue to grow our nation. Of course, since the Second World War, we have welcomed to our country some 825,000 refugees—people from the four corners of the earth and people who have been able to take that opportunity presented to them and to their families and contribute to our country in a phenomenal way.

It has been the business of this government to clean up the border protection mess that we were left. We have secured our borders and, as a result of that, we have been very clear about the fact that that enables us to increase the number of people that we will take through the humanitarian and refugee programs. With the devastation in Syria and in Iraq, we have announced that we will take 12,000 people from Syria and Iraq. We have done an incredible amount of work—in particular, with the Syrian leaders in the Christian communities and elsewhere here in our own country—to try to identify, as the government has made clear on a number of occasions, those people that remain our priority: women and children, people who have been persecuted and those who are very unlikely to be able to return to their place of birth or to their place of residence.

The government has, I think, the most rigorous criteria when compared to any other country that has volunteered to take Syrian refugees. We are applying biometric and fingerprint testing. We are working with our Five Eyes partners to access databases and with experts within the department to verify the authenticity of documents that people have so that
we can be assured that people who are applying under that program are, indeed, those who are most in need. That is important for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the national security of this nation is the absolute priority of this government and under no circumstance will we compromise on the national security of this nation. If we find we have a suspicion about an applicant's motivation, background or affiliations, that person will not proceed into this program. They will not be coming to this country. Secondly, it is very important to get this right because there are many millions of people who are in need, and by taking people in the program that are not worthy we are displacing those people who are most in need.

I thank the member for Hindmarsh and many of those within the coalition—and, indeed, within the parliament—who have a serious interest in making sure that we can get this matter right and that we bring people to this country, particularly those from persecuted minorities, including Christians, who will make this great opportunity that is available to them a great success story for their families for generations to come.

Special Minister of State

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:01): My question is to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's answers in question time last week and today. On 29 March 2012, now former journalist Steve Lewis sent an email to the minister which read:

On how many occasions has Peter Slipper travelled to New Zealand since July 2010?

DIARY EXTRACTS—CAN THESE BE PROVIDED FOR THE FOLLOWING DATES:

Did the minister agree to obtain unauthorised copies of the Speaker's official diary for a journalist? As a matter of government policy, does the minister now give unauthorised copies of other documents to journalists?

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (15:02): The answer is no.

Economy

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (15:02): My constituency question is to the Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia. Minister, the coal industry is absolutely critical to jobs and economic growth in my electorate of Dawson, and the opening up of the Galilee Basin is crucial to more jobs and more growth locally. Can you please update the House on the importance of coal to the Australian economy and to jobs more generally and also coal's prospects for the future?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia) (15:02): I thank the member for Dawson for his question and acknowledge his strong advocacy for the resources and energy sector, not just for his constituents but for Australia at large, and in particular his support for the development of the Carmichael mine, which has the potential to create thousands of jobs and billions of dollars worth of export income. Even the Labor Party has described it as a project of great importance to both Queensland and Australia. The member for Dawson understands that it is not just the jobs in the mines that are created by the coal industry; it is also the other services and jobs that are created. For example, when I visited Mackay we went down to G&S Engineering, which services mining equipment. It is a very high-tech, innovative business that employs apprentices, among many
others. In the seat of Dawson you also have the Abbot Point terminal, which provides hundreds of jobs relating to mining development in the Bowen Basin.

The member for Dawson knows as well as anyone else in this place the importance of the coal industry to both Australia and the world. Australia gets more than 60 per cent of its electricity from coal, and globally the world gets more than 40 per cent of its electricity from coal. The International Energy Agency says that by 2040 that number will still be very significant at 30 per cent and that the demand for coal in a number of countries continues to rise. For Australia, coal is our second largest export. In 2013-14 it earned around $38 billion worth of export income, and we are the world's second largest exporter of coal. It creates 40,000 jobs directly and more than 100,000 jobs indirectly in Australia. Australia's coal is predominantly low in sulphur and low in ash and can be used for these high-efficiency, low-emission power plants that we are seeing all around Asia which can reduce the carbon footprint by up to 40 per cent, and there are other new technology like carbon capture and storage which will be important to the future of clean coal.

The member for Dawson understands how important energy and resources are to his electorate. He recently visited India to promote Australia's coal industry and to speak to Adani and hand over thousands of postcards from his electorate which said, 'Mr Adani, we are ready to get working!' The member for Dawson is not only always working hard for his constituents; he wants to create the opportunities in the resources and energy sector for them to get working hard too.

**Special Minister of State**

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (15:06): My question is, again, to the Special Minister of State. I refer to the minister's answers in question time last week and today. On 29 March 2012 James Ashby sent a text message to the minister which included pages of the Speaker's official diary. The minister sent a text back which said, 'Can that be emailed James it is hard to read Mal.brough2@bigpond.com' The initial copy he received may have been blurry, but isn't it crystal clear the minister should resign?

Mr Ewen Jones interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Herbert will cease interjecting.

Mr BROUGHS (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (15:06): Let me make it very clear for the honourable member that these matters have all been canvassed by the Federal Court, and the full bench of the Federal Court actually—

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

Ms King interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Ballarat!

Mr BROUGH: I say to the deputy leader—actually addressed this issue—

Mr Dreyfus interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Isaacs!

Mr BROUGH: and I invite you to go and have a look at exactly what they had to say. I further—
Ms Kate Ellis interjecting—

Mr Danby interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Adelaide and the member for Melbourne Ports will cease interjecting.

Mr Bowen interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for McMahon is now warned!

Mr BROUGH: I would further confirm for the member who continually asks these questions that I at no time passed any diaries to any journalists. Can I be any clearer than that?

Mr Dreyfus: I seek leave to table the text exchanges between Mr Brough and Mr Ashby.

Leave not granted.

Wine Industry

Mr PASIN (Barker) (15:07): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the minister update the House on new innovations in the wine industry that will support the integrity of Australian wine in the international marketplace? How will such innovations help to boost winemakers in my electorate and the Australian wine industry more broadly?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (15:08): I thank the honourable member for his question, which is in fact the 27th question today. Obviously the wine industry is an industry that has shown great promise since we have been in government. We have seen a major turnaround. In the last 12 months there has been an eight per cent increase in exports of $1.96 billion. We have seen exports to China rise by 47 per cent to $313 million. It just goes to show you how great work pays a dividend. The work we are doing on free trade agreements and getting protocols in place is delivering a better return not only to the farm gate but to the cellar door. We have also seen wine sales to Canada up by four per cent to $189 million and to Hong Kong up by 24 per cent to $118 million.

The reason this wine sells is not only because of the hard work that we have been doing to bring about free trade agreements but also that it is a brilliant product. It is a brilliant product that has been brought together by the hard work and endeavours of so many people in South Australia, Western Australia and the Hunter Valley over such a long period of time.

This work is of such a nature that it is not surprising that people want to mimic it. We are doing our very best to make sure that we get the protocols in place so that we own intellectual property and that it is not counterfeited. If that is not good enough, there are companies such as Beston Global Food Company which are bringing about reform of tracking so that this product can be tracked all the way through. A person with a smartphone device, whether they are buying the product in Shanghai, Hong Kong or any manner of places across the globe, will be able to check the authenticity of the product they are buying. We know that if you are buying a good bottle of wine you want to make sure that it is the authentic article and that it actually has come from the Coonawarra or McLaren Vale. All the members are sticking their hands up with examples!

Mr Truss: Murgon.
Mr JOYCE: Murgon? Probably not as much has come from Murgon as comes from McLaren Vale! But, nonetheless, let's not run down Murgon wines. They are very good. I have tried some myself from time to time when I have run out of money!

This is part and parcel of how even in the wine industry, which was in the depths of despair under the previous government, we are turning things around, and we are bringing a better return back to the cellar door for them as well.

Mr Truss: I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper.

DOCUMENTS
Presentation
Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House, Minister for Industry and Innovation and Science) (15:11): Documents are presented as listed in the schedule circulated to honourable members earlier in the day. Full details of the documents will be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings.

BUSINESS
Leave of Absence
Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (15:11): I move:

That leave of absence from 12 October 2015 to the end of the current period of sittings be given to the honourable member for Lilley on the ground of parliamentary business overseas.

Question agreed to.

BILLS
Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015
Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (15:13): I would like to thank the honourable members for supporting this very important piece of legislation for our defence forces. This bill amends the Defence Act to formally recognise the authority of the CDF, the Chief of the Defence Force, and the VCDF so that the CDF will have full command of the Australian Defence Force by removing the legislative limitations on the CDF command power. The VCDF will be recognised as the deputy of the Chief of the Defence Force. This amendment will clarify that the VCDF has command responsibilities as well as administrative responsibilities in relation to the Defence Force as directed by the CDF. Also, the service chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force will be explicitly subject to the direction of the CDF. The legislation amendment removing the statutory authority will ensure absolute clarity of the CDF’s command and authority.

This bill seeks to make some other changes to streamline the legislative foundation of the Australian Defence Force. In addition to strengthening the command role of the CDF and the VCDF, the bill also streamlines the statutory treatment of the components of the Australian Defence Force in the defence legislation, repealing the Naval Defence Act 1910 and the Air Force Act 1923, incorporating the substantive provisions of these acts in the Defence Act.
1903. I thank all those members who participated in the debate and I commend the bill to the House.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

**Third Reading**

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (15:15): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Mr CONROY (Charlton) (15:15): I rise to speak on the Defence Legislation Amendment (First Principles) Bill 2015. This very important bill, which has been the subject of some debate today, arises out of the 35th significant review that has been conducted into Defence since 1973. The management of the Defence portfolio and, in particular, Defence capability development, acquisition and sustainment, is fraught both within Australia and around the world, so it is no surprise that we have had almost as many reviews as we have had years since 1973. What is interesting about this particular review is that its recommendations reverse and contradict recommendations that very significant reviews over the last 15 years have put forward in this area. This does not make it wrong, but it does represent a significant change in approach to Defence capability development, definition, acquisition and sustainment.

What was the general problem that the first principles review made recommendations about? The review stated:

The current organisational model and processes are complicated, slow and inefficient in an environment which requires simplicity, greater agility and timely delivery. Waste, inefficiency and rework are palpable. Defence is suffering from a proliferation of structures, processes and systems with unclear accountabilities. These in turn cause institutionalised waste, delayed decisions, flawed execution, duplication, a change-resistant bureaucracy, over-escalation of issues for decision and low engagement levels amongst employees.

This is a pretty damning indictment of the state of the Department of Defence and its processes. While I fear it is an accurate assessment, it is not a reflection on any particular government of the day. Defence is the single most complex part of governing and delivery for this country and, if you look at the Western world, any country around the globe. While that quote is quite damning, it needs to be put in a broader context of the great challenges in capability definition, development and acquisition.

While that is the general problem, I want to highlight a couple of the other problems that the review traversed—that is, the Capability Development Group and the Defence Materiel Organisation. The first principles review stated:

The Defence Materiel Organisation has also been beset with problems that have impacted its ability to achieve the required outcomes. It is clear that the organisation has become top heavy, complex and unnecessarily deep. This significantly contributes to Defence not getting the capability it needs at a reasonable cost or in reasonable time.

I disagree slightly with the assessment around cost. But it is well and truly self-evident that the performance of DMO has been controversial and suboptimal for some time and that
change was needed. I would submit, though, that there was a possible further reform to what the first principles review recommended.

I will turn first to the Capability Development Group. Review after review has identified problems with this organisation. Training is a classic example. In 2013-14 the ANAO did a report around capability development. It conducted a survey of CDG staff, particularly ADF personnel, so it was the CDG personnel themselves making statements about their own capabilities. The findings were quite stark. The survey found that 79 per cent of staff at CDG had worked in CDG for less than five years, and 20 per cent of project managers stated that they had no skills or experience as project managers before they had their first project to manage. Let me repeat that: 20 per cent of CDG project managers had zero skills or experience before they managed their first project. The survey also found that 62 per cent had no or below average skills or experience before starting their first project management role, and 70 per cent of CDG staff said they had no or below average skills and experience in managing a project of the size that they were currently tasked with. This pointed to an organisation that had project managers with very poor training and experience before they were given their particular tasks.

The survey also revealed that there was a total focus on getting projects approved by government but very little focus on running a project on time or budget. This accords with evidence from within the defence sector and from the experience of people I talk to regularly in the defence industry and bureaucracy, who were very frank in saying that CDG provided no real internal contestability. It certainly was not at arm's length. It was very weak because of the fundamental problem that the promotion prospects of ADF personnel within CDG ultimately were dependent on the service heads of their organisations, whether Army, Air Force or Navy, rather than arising from providing strong internal contestability to projects being argued for by the services.

The main problem with the Defence Materiel Organisation was that it was in no-man's-land. It was not completely outside the Defence organisation, so it did not have independence and accountability in the budget, but it was not completely within the Defence organisation either, which meant it was exposed to conflict. This was because governments of both persuasions were unable to implement very strong recommendations from two landmark reviews of Defence—the Kinnaird review of 2003 and the Mortimer review of 2008. Both of them, in very strong language, recommended that the DMO should become an executive agency. The Kinnaird review said:

It is essential for the DMO to establish its own identity, separate from Defence, to ensure it is able to rapidly transform its culture and develop the commercial focus it needs. A cultural shift in the DMO can underpin and help drive a new focus on performance and outcomes, and lead to improved procurement and support practices and better results for government.

This is why Kinnaird recommended that it become an executive agency. The review also highlighted that because of this lack of structural separation:

... there have been occasions where the capabilities being acquired in projects managed by the DMO have been altered as a result of decisions made elsewhere in Defence. This has included changes made after contracts have been signed and without government approval, resulting in rises in the real cost of projects or significant delivery delays ...
This is an unacceptable event to occur: projects were changed post contract signing without the project manager being told or even consulted about it. That is why Kinnaird recommended an executive agency.

The Mortimer review was equally strong. It argued that the DMO should become an executive agency, because of the benefits such as:

- full accountability for performance;
- better transparency of both financial and non-financial performance; and
- full control of personnel inputs.

This is where we are now. Neither the Howard government nor the Rudd government were able to get broad enough support within and outside Defence for DMO to become an executive agency. Instead, it became a prescribed agency, where it was separated from Defence but not given the independence, the budget and the authority to act properly as a full commercial project manager. That is why we have seen these controversies. That is why we have seen the delays and the schedule overrun. But reform has occurred and DMO has improved its performance since the Kinnaird and Mortimer reviews. In particular, we have seen a more businesslike relationship between the three services and DMO. We have seen very strong efficiencies and we have seen a stronger negotiating party with the private sector.

We have seen negatives. We have seen the tensions with Defence over financial control and budgeting, which are self-evident. We have seen the DMO fail, in most cases, to attract commercial talent. We have seen unnecessary layers of management develop, particularly at the deputy secretary level. This reflects the fact that there was a real sense that they could not poach from Russell 1, from the mainstream Defence organisation, but they were not able to attract the commercial talent. So in the end we saw another layer of deputy secretaries develop, which really did not add too much. The ultimate sin was that the DMO was unable to consistently provide real contestability around acquisition strategies or industrial realities. That led to suboptimal acquisition strategies.

But performance did improve. For example, of the 30 top projects currently in the acquisition stage, 87 per cent of the schedule slippage of these projects occurred in projects approved before 2007. This cumulatively represented 81 years of deferred capability, which is a problem, but, as I said, 87 per cent of this schedule slippage occurred in projects approved before 2007 and before the reforms of DMO were fully in place. There has been improvement in cost control, but schedule is still an issue. These are the problems that the first principles review sought to solve, and that is why, ultimately, they recommended that DMO be brought within the organisation completely and why CDG should be dissolved, with its role split between the policy and intelligence group and CASG, as it is known.

So I think that it was unsustainable for DMO to be structured as it was before this review. It had to be either fully out of Defence or fully within Defence. But there are risks of this particular reform approach. First the risks are around contestability. I have concerns about whether the policy and intelligence group will be able to provide the genuine contestability to challenge the capability definitions process being driven by the service chiefs—whether they have the resources and the attitude to generate that. It is not just about rigorously defining military capabilities. It is about providing true independent advice on the financial, technical, industrial and economic implications of certain capability options being developed.
There is also a risk in replacing CDG and DMO while we are undertaking acquisitions of the submarines, future frigates and LAND 400—three very significant acquisition projects. To effectively abolish the Capability Development Group and the Defence Materiel Organisation while acquiring projects that cumulatively will cost more than $80 billion is a high risk indeed. There is also a risk that capability managers will specify very narrow needs and timelines at gate 0 to game the system. This is something which, unfortunately, does happen with the Defence organisation—a service or a particular group within a service will set their heart on a particular capability. They might do it for the best of reasons. They might do it because they see it as the best platform in the world and they want their troops to have the best piece of equipment, and I understand that. But it means that we do not get real contestability, we do not reduce risk and we do not look at Australian options.

I saw an example firsthand, which was around LAND 121 Phase 4—protected mobility vehicles, light—effectively to replace the Army's Land Rovers with something with suitable protection to survive in the modern battlefield. Parts of the Army and the CDG had their hearts set on the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, a US option being developed right now, and they specified timelines, processes and requirements that effectively ruled out almost every other option. It was only because of real leadership within the Labor government at the time, driven by the defence materiel minister and the defence minister, Senator Faulkner, that we saw an Australian option kept on the table. It was only through the actions of Minister Combet and Minister Faulkner that we saw an Australian option, championed by Thales, given a real chance to compete against the US option. It has come through. As predicted by some, the US option is delayed as they deal with their defence cycle and as they deal with trying to get requirements merged between the marines and the army. The Thales option of the Hawkei looks like it is going to be a really good platform that will not only provide the best protection for our troops in the field but also save hundreds of jobs in Bendigo. This is an example of the risks of giving too much power to one part of Defence without having true contestability. There are also issues around staffing in CASG to do post gate 0 acquisition, strategy and implementation.

Defence is a complex beast, to state the obvious. Australia, quite frankly, does it better than most countries in the world. That is because governments of both persuasions have been undertaking reforms of this area since 1973. The first principles review makes a sound contribution to this. I think that moving DMO back into Defence has merit but is not without risks. I, for one, will be keeping a very close eye on it, because ultimately it is about providing the best capabilities for the Defence forces at the lowest cost and on time and on budget, while maximising the number of jobs in Australia. So I commend the bill to the House, but it is not without risk.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Export Control Amendment (Quotas) Bill 2015

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

With a population of 24 million, the domestic Australian market is relatively small in the international context. The government understands that a growth in exports is necessary to promote demand-driven economic growth in the Australian economy. This will be achieved by tapping into developing markets in emerging economies, with increasingly affluent consumers purchasing Australian made goods and services, generating export income. The projected growth in exports in the near future will have a positive impact on our national economy, which, in terms of trade, has recorded persistently large current account deficits for the past 50 years. The balance of trade for the month of September 2015 was a $2.32 billion deficit. The historical deficit in the balance of payments, to a large extent, may be attributed to Australia’s narrow export base, which is heavily dependent upon commodities. There are also other factors which have contributed to the extremely high current account deficit that Australia has today, such as lagging international competitiveness in some sectors of the economy and a heavy reliance on imported capital goods from overseas. Low levels of national savings also contribute to the high current account deficits, as businesses seek funds overseas.

By the same token, when governments run constant budget deficits, monetary requirements are met by borrowing from the domestic sector. Economists refer to this as the crowding-out effect: when governments borrow from the domestic sector, they force the private sector to ‘crowd out’. Since there are not enough funds available within the domestic economy, the private sector is, in turn, forced to borrow funds from overseas. Borrowing from overseas causes Australia’s current account deficit to increase, leading to a major increase in debt expansion. Excessive current account deficits, combined with low investor confidence and the possibility of a currency crisis, may force the Reserve Bank to implement contractionary macroeconomic policies to restrict economic growth and curb the deficit. Australia’s current account deficit requires a long-term solution in order to secure the Australian economy’s prosperity—a growth in exports is an integral part of the solution.

The projected growth in international trade provides opportunities for economic development between both established and emerging economies across the globe. In 2013-14, the value of Australian exports accounted for $331 billion, while imports amounted to $338.6 billion. The emergence of free trade agreements—which are, essentially, international treaties removing barriers to trade, such as tariffs and quota restrictions—serves to facilitate stronger trade and commercial ties, contributing to increased economic integration between participating countries.

Free trade agreements will create opportunities for Australian exporters and investors to expand their businesses into key overseas markets. For instance, in my electorate of Moore, which borders established agricultural areas and coastal fisheries, the recent free trade agreements have benefitted intensive horticultural producers who export quality fruit and vegetables—such as carrots, broccoli and tomatoes—as well as the exporters of western rock
lobsters and premium beef cattle, through tariff reductions, putting local producers on a level playing field with competitors from countries such as New Zealand. Access to global markets helps maintain and stimulates the competitiveness of Australian firms by increasing domestic productivity and contributing to greater GDP growth by allowing Australian businesses access to cheaper inputs, introducing new technologies and fostering competition and innovation. This directly benefits Australian consumers through access to an increased range of goods and services at more competitive prices.

We live in dynamic times which will see a raft of changes to tariffs and export quotas on an ongoing basis as the free trade agreements are implemented and begin to take effect. Currently, there are a whole range of different tariff rates imposed on Australian exports of beef, grains, fruit, vegetables, seafood and dairy products by different countries, with the rates scheduled to reduce over various intervals, in time, in accordance with respective free trade agreements coming into operation. Accordingly, these proposed legislative changes are an appropriate measure in managing this level of administrative complexity.

Essentially, the proposed legislation seeks to modernise the current system by consolidating the quota export certification arrangements for agriculture by amending the Export Control Act 1982 to provide the secretary of the department with the necessary powers to make orders in relation to the administration of tariff rate quotas. It also enables the secretary to make directions in relation to matters covered by an order, and to override the order; and it makes a series of consequential amendments.

In current practice, the department of agriculture seeks to manage export tariff rate quotas operating under trade agreements in order to provide exporters with the maximum concessions possible on agricultural products. The current legislative schemes for quotas are specific to meat and dairy products and are not sufficient to address the range of quotas arising under more recent free trade agreements. The department currently administers 33 quotas, which save exporters millions of dollars in tariffs each year. To cite an example, managing the eight new quotas introduced under the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, including quotas for honey and juices, between January and May 2015, has saved exporters approximately $3 million in tariffs. Similarly, the effective management of quotas to the European Union and the United States of America saves Australian exporters between 20 and 100 per cent of the value of goods in applicable tariffs.

In administering the quotas, the department seeks to fulfil a number of broader objectives, including minimising market distortion from quota management; minimising regulatory intervention and barriers to exporting; and optimising the commercial value from use of the quota. Further, consideration is given to the commercial arrangements, and rewarding market development, whilst providing consistent, transparent and efficient administration.

The Export Control Act 1982 is the preferred vehicle to enable all of the department's export certification arrangements to be carried out under a common set of powers. This would be achieved by abolishing one act in its entirety, parts or divisions of two other acts and consolidating provisions currently sitting within the Export Control Act.

Based on internal and external stakeholder input, the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has determined that a comprehensive quota regime, administered under one act, is preferable and more efficient than the existing commodity-specific regimes which are currently administered under four different acts. Stakeholder workshops were conducted
earlier this year to develop the proposals contained in the bill, and information about the proposed changes was provided to all quota holders.

A comprehensive general quota legislative regime will enable a more secure and flexible legal framework for the implementation of existing and any future quotas negotiated in pursuit of export opportunities under the *Agricultural competitiveness white paper* and free trade agreement negotiations. Exporters will gain access to quota tariff rate concessions provided under free trade agreements through contemporary, flexible and efficient regulation. The bill complements the government's strategic approach for capturing premium markets outlined in the *Agricultural competitiveness white paper* and builds on the gains from recent free trade agreements with our major trading partners.

The bill will also facilitate a reduction in red tape in accordance with the government's election commitments. Bringing regulation of quotas under the same legislation as other export controls of the same commodities will offer opportunities for synergies in deployment of resources. It will also enable a consistent approach to appointment of third parties as authorised officers where they are permitted by importing countries.

The bill will not have any detrimental impacts on domestic industry or on Australia's international trade relationships. Consultation with industry to date has confirmed that a comprehensive legislative quota scheme is preferred to the existing commodity-specific regimes. There are no major financial impacts associated with this bill. Ideally, the legislation should be in place to enable the next Japanese quota year, commencing on 1 April 2016, to be regulated under the new powers.

The anticipated future increase in the flow of goods and services across international borders is brought about by the emerging economies in our region, with increased international trade facilitated by free trade agreements with Japan, Korea and China. Trade is projected to continue expanding as a free trade agreement is expected to be reached with India and as Australia develops stronger economic partnerships with the 10 member countries in the Association of South East Asian Nations and beyond. Free trade agreements will also address barriers which impede the flow of goods and services between nations, will encourage investment, and will enhance international cooperation. The agreements extend to other issues, including intellectual property, competition policy and government procurement. The competitiveness of Australian exports in the partner market can be enhanced, adding to the attractiveness of Australia as an investment destination.

In summary, the proposed legislation seeks to modernise the existing system through the consolidation of the quota export certification arrangements for agriculture by replacing four separate acts relating to tariff rate export quotas with a single act which covers all commodities. Based on consultations, the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has determined that a comprehensive quota regime, administered under one act, is preferable to and more efficient than the existing commodity-specific regimes, which are currently administered under four different acts. The bill also introduces new powers consistent with contemporary, flexible and efficient legislation, such as the use of registers and computer systems to make decisions under a system of tariff rate quotas.

I commend the bill to the House.
Mr PASIN (Barker) (15:44): I rise to speak in support of the Export Control Amendment (Quotas) Bill 2015. This is a sensible bill which seeks to streamline the management of our great quota system. This bill delivers a better outcome for the nation and more particularly better outcomes for my constituents—those living within the electorate of Barker, not limited to but principally focused on those primary producers who export overseas.

As it currently stands, the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources administers some 33 quotas that save exporters millions of dollars in tariffs each year. Through the use of quotas, Australian farmers are shielded from the costs imposed through that process. Whilst we currently have management frameworks which administer our quota arrangements, the current legislative schemes for quotas are specific to meat and dairy products but are insufficient to address the range of quotas arising under recent free trade agreements. It is this government's position that a comprehensive legislative quota scheme under the Export Control Act 1982 would enable a more secure and flexible legal framework for the implementation of these and any future quotas negotiated in pursuit of export opportunities under the Agricultural Competitiveness white paper.

I have the great privilege of representing an electorate which is home to extensive agricultural and primary industries and so it is comforting to see that a long-term view is being taken to quota administration. It is time that we implement a more efficient and comprehensive legislative framework in this space. Due to the trade deals that this government has secured with China, with Japan, with South Korea—not to mention the recently resolved Trans-Pacific Partnership—the number of such export tariff quotas has increased exponentially. The Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement alone has delivered eight new quotas.

This government remains committed to opening up markets and giving Australians the opportunity to grow their prospects through industry and endeavour. The Australian agricultural industry provides hundreds of thousands of jobs across the nation and many thousand in my electorate. The Australian agricultural sector delivers 93 per cent of Australia's domestic food supply and exports some 60 per cent of its produce abroad. Our agricultural exports contribute a whopping $32 billion in income to the national accounts. As we face an increase in the world's population and that of our immediate region, reliance on clean, fresh and healthy Australian agricultural product can only increase. Recognising this opportunity, our government has striven to deliver better trade access and more efficient management systems to facilitate that trade.

Export opportunities for Australian agricultural enterprise continue to expand under our leadership. This government understands that, by getting out of the way of agribusinesses through simplifying compliance and trade management, Australian farmers and producers will go from strength to strength. This bill seeks to deliver a simpler system for the management of quotas and, as ever, less is more when it comes to the management of trade. More room for trade volumes and more access to markets have been achieved by this government, and this progress has delivered greater opportunity to constituents, particularly in my electorate when it comes to exporting their prime produce. Independent economic analysis shows that Australia's free trade agreements with China, Japan and Korea together will add $24.4 billion to the Australian economy over the period 2016-2035. Of all agricultural exports, China accounts for 14 per cent of our market and Japan, 13 per cent.
I welcome, as do constituents throughout Barker, the increased demand Beijing and Tokyo have for produce from the Riverland, the Barossa, the South East, the Murraylands and the Mallee—produce which I know is amongst the very best in the world. Barker produces some 50 per cent of the gross value of agricultural production in South Australia, estimated at $2.6 billion. Barker, without question, disproportionately drives the agricultural sector in South Australia; it is endowed with extensive natural resources and it is ideally suited to the pursuit of agricultural production. Be it beef, lamb, wool, wine, dairy, grain or even wood products, producers across the electorate consistently export significant quantities of very high-quality produce.

As well as being home to a productive and vibrant agricultural industry, the South Coast is also home to a significant fisheries sector with popular wild-catch species including abalone and southern rock-lobster, which are found along the coast. That is to say nothing of the Coorong fishery, which I am sad to say is under attack from the New Zealand fur seal—the quicker we organise a sustainable harvest of that animal in that place, the better. The much sought-after seafood species are found up and down the coast and the seafood industry drives significant economic wealth and opportunity through export. Barker is squarely positioned to make the most of our newly signed free trade agreements.

Whilst the government has made excellent progress in expanding our markets, it is also important for the government now to focus on non-tariff barriers to trade. The new volume of trade with the countries in our region, as well as continued expansion of markets, necessitates the upgrade of our trade mechanisms, and this legislation is a move in that direction. This bill will ensure that Australia administers quotas in a way that: minimises market distortion from quota administration; minimises regulatory intervention and barriers to exporting; optimises the commercial value and use of the quota; ensures consistent, transparent and efficient administration; considers commercial arrangements; and rewards market development. The bill enables the creation of a register of tariff rate quota entitlements. It is intended that this should be accessible to exporters in respect of their own entitlements, much like an exporter might have access to information held in their business financial accounts. There are certain elements of the register which could be made available to all exporters, such as the entities holding quota to facilitate trading in quota entitlements. A list of quota-entitlement holders is currently published on the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website for this purpose. Bringing regulation of quotas under the same legislation as other export controls for the same commodities will offer opportunities for synergies in the deployment of staff. It will also enable a consistent approach to the appointment of third parties as authorised officers where permitted by importing countries.

The bill will commence on royal assent except for the repeal of existing regulation of quotas. This allows for all existing quotas to run their course under the current legislative arrangements before being phased out and orders under the new powers commence. The existing legislation governing quotas will be repealed later, on 1 January 2017. The bill complements the government’s strategic approach to capturing premium markets outlined in the agricultural competitiveness white paper and builds on the gains we have achieved through the outstanding efforts of Minister Robb in negotiating free trade agreements with our major trading partners. This bill is undoubtedly a good one for farmers and producers across the country but particularly for those resident in Barker. I commend the bill to the House.
Mr McCormack (Riverina—Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister) (15:53): We see on the front page of the current issue of The Land, dated 26 November, 'Rain revs up restockers—cattle prices back to record levels.' The article, on page 5, talks about sky-high cattle prices possibly being here to say. That is of course good news for Riverina producers and good news for cattle farmers right across Australia. The article says that the supply of both prime and store cattle has failed to keep pace with demand from lot feeders, restockers and processors, and that will enable prices to remain steady and to remain high. It says that New South Wales stock agents have suggested that if all the ducks line up, such as northern monsoons, a steady dollar at about US70c and low interest rates, by next year cattle prices could be as dear if not dearer than now. As I say, that is tremendous news that will be welcomed by cattle producers right across this wide brown land.

The Export Control Amendment (Quotas) Bill 2015 is good for agriculture and good for cattle producers. I am very pleased that this legislation has bipartisan support. I will come back to that bipartisan support in my later remarks, but initially I want to talk about Wagga Wagga and its role in agriculture and more specifically in stock. The Wagga Wagga Livestock Marketing Centre, established in 1979, is the largest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere—4,000 cattle per week and, on average, 200,000 a year go through the facility, as well as 1.8 million sheep. Peter Adams, who has an economic development role with Wagga Wagga City Council, refers often to the $380 million worth of stock that are put through the Wagga Livestock Marketing Centre each and every year. They are impressive numbers, and they are numbers that will only go up as the years go on and the trade agreements that trade minister Andrew Robb has been able to successfully broker help our export markets. They are the sorts of numbers that farmers around the Riverina and even wider afield need to hear, because 35 to 40 per cent of those stock numbers come from outside the Riverina—stock are being brought into the Riverina to be bought and sold through the livestock marketing centre there, and many of those stock end up in neighbouring abattoirs. Certainly Teys plays a vital role in Wagga Wagga employment, and I know just how many refugees who come to Wagga Wagga to seek a better life in a better land work out there. They are willing to work, they are very hard workers, and certainly the 457 visa arrangement is made use of by Teys because unfortunately they cannot always fill the numbers that they need out at the abattoir. They have a very strict drug and alcohol policy, because it is difficult work and dangerous work if it is not done properly. Certainly they are one of the most impressive abattoirs—along with JBS at Yanco—in the Riverina, I am proud to say in my electorate.

It is important to get these logistics right, it is important to get the processing right. We know that the trade arrangements that have been brokered and bartered by the trade minister with Japan, with South Korea, with China and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement that has been successfully negotiated, and indeed the talks currently progressing with India, are going to mean that we are going to have to produce even more—certainly more cattle and sheep out of the Riverina. It is important to note that this bill, as I say, has bipartisan support. That is why I was so interested to listen to the contribution of the member for Bendigo in this debate. On 26 November she said for her electorate it is important that the live cattle trade continue because Bendigo is receiving an upsurge of hay demand. The member for Bendigo, Lisa Chesters, said:
Hay, believe it or not, is a new crop that more and more of the farmers in our part of the world are transitioning to, because, as the live cattle export trade grows, they need to take with them Australian hay for the Australian cattle to eat whilst they are in transit.

I say 'Hear, hear!' She goes on:

In the north of the Bendigo region, around Goornong, more and more of our farmers are switching to hay so that can be transported and exported with our live cattle trade. Ensuring that we have a robust and rigid export system is critical.

I am glad that the member for Bendigo is on board with this and I am glad that she is in agreement with the live cattle trade, because, unfortunately, in the last parliament, the government of the day, the Labor Party, were not on board with live cattle export. They closed the trade down, quite disgracefully, in June 2011 in a knee-jerk reaction to a television program and many, many people right throughout the Riverina were left out of pocket. That is not to mention the thousands of other people who were affected by this knee-jerk reaction by Labor back in the previous parliament.

This bill consolidates four acts that govern tariff rate export quotas into one act that covers all commodities. It has bipartisan support. Technically speaking, it is to help with the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, the preferential trade agreement that we have negotiated with that vital export market. Well done to the Minister for Trade for successfully completing those talks. An all-encompassing general quota legislative regime will enable a more secure and flexible legal framework for the implementation of current and any future quotas negotiated as we pursue more export opportunities under the agricultural competitiveness white paper and free trade agreement negotiations. I have to say, when you look at the ag competitiveness white paper—as I am joined in the chamber by the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, the member for New England; well done to Barnaby Joyce—the very first item in that wonderful document is entitled 'Stronger farmers, stronger economy'. It says:

Agriculture has always played an important role in the success of our nation—it touches all Australians. More is the pity that more Australians, and particularly more Australians who occupy the benches opposite, do not always appreciate that. They do not always understand that and they do not always get it.

I recently quoted in this place an Aboriginal elder, Gail Clark, from my electorate. As she pointed out, you will need a politician now and again; you will need a lawyer now and again; you will a priest, a teacher and a policeman every so often in your life; but you need a farmer three times every day—in the morning, in the middle of the day and at night—to feed you. You need a farmer to clothe you. The food and fibre that is grown in our regional electorates clothes and feeds not just our nation but also many other nations besides. To quote again from the agricultural competitiveness white paper:

The opportunities for the sector are enormous.

I quoted from *The Land* earlier about record cattle prices. It is no coincidence that record cattle prices and prices for wheat, barley, oats, grapes and everything else are at an increased level because we have had good seasons—I admit that—but they are also at a premium, at a peak, because of good government policies which go to the nexus of understanding what farmers need. We need to put those policy parameters in place, get out of the way and let
farmers do what they have been doing for generations—producing the very finest food and the very finest fibre—and make sure that those opportunities for the sector continue to grow.

We sit on the edge of the strongest growing region in the world, we have a developed agriculture sector … we have food safety and environmental credentials that are world-class, we develop and have access to up-to-date technology, we have a strong economy … and we have a well-educated and skilled workforce.

I ask the minister: did you write that? You must have. I could not have written it any better myself. The minister is not taking credit; he is a very humble man. It is in the agricultural competitiveness white paper and I urge anybody listening to this debate, and certainly those opposite, to get a copy of it, read it and get on board—because there are some tremendous things in that document.

There are also some very good things in this bill. Exporters will gain access to quota tariff rate concessions provided under the free trade agreements through contemporary, flexible and efficient regulation. That is what we need in this country at the moment. We are eliminating red tape. It was started by the member for Kooyong, was continued under the member for Pearce and is now continuing under the member for Eden-Monaro in their various roles of cutting through legislation which is archaic, which is over burdensome and which we do not need. This bill will lower costs for small business, for farmers and for those people who we need to increase food and fibre production and get things done. As the Mayor of Tumbarumba, Councillor Ian Chaffey, often says, we need a 'ministry for getting things done' in this place—I could not agree more.

Where export tariff rate quotas are established by trade agreements, Australia seeks to manage quotas in order to offer exporters the maximum concessions possible on the products our farmers produce—agricultural products which, as I say, are the finest in the world. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources presently administers 33 quotas, which save exporters millions of dollars in tariffs each year. That is a good thing. For example, eight new quotas have been introduced under the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement. It is predicted that these would have saved exporters about $3 million in tariffs between January and May 2015. Quotas to the European Union and the United States of America save Australian exporters between 20 and 100 per cent in applicable tariffs. You can see that is going to help exporters, help Australia and, moreover, help our balance of payments figures, because we need to get those balance of payments figures right so that we can get our budget right. Goodness knows, after six years of budget mess we need to be in the job of budget repair. This bill has bipartisan support, and that is a good thing—it needs it.

Consultation with industry to date has confirmed that a comprehensive legislative quota scheme is preferred to the existing commodity specific regimes. Consultation is important in this context, because we as a government understand that we have to get those industry stakeholders, those agriculture sectors, on board. They were not listened to, they were not even asked, by the last government or the one before it—and by that I mean the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd years. They were just steamrolled. Legislation went through this place, and live animal exports were stopped; there was no clear direction on water, save to take it all off our irrigation farmers; and there was never a clear understanding of the great role that our farmers played, are playing now and will continue to play into the future.
Stakeholder workshops were conducted on 16 April, 2 September and 26 October this year to develop the proposals contained in this particular bill, and information about the proposed changes were provided to all quota holders, which is what a good government should do. We went out and sought feedback, we listened to what was said, we acted and then we went back to them and said, 'This is what we are going to do,' and that was very much appreciated. That is not the sort of thing that went on under Labor. It is the sort of thing going on under the coalition because we understand the importance of getting people on board and taking them with us. We understand the importance of this legislation, and that is why I commend it to the House.

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (16:08): To sum up the debate on the Export Control Amendment (Quotas) Bill 2015, the bill consolidates four acts that govern tariff export quotas into one act that covers all commodities. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources currently administers 33 quotas and saves exporters millions of dollars in tariffs each year. These quotas are currently managed under four separate acts. This bill brings that regulation under a comprehensive quota regime.

The bill will amend the Export Control Act 1982 to provide the secretary with powers to make orders providing for, or in relation to, the establishment and administration of a system or systems of tariff rate quotas; enable the secretary to make directions in relation to matters covered by an order and to override the order; introduce new powers consistent with contemporary, flexible and efficient legislation; abolish one act in its entirety and parts or divisions of two other acts; and consolidate provisions currently sitting within the Export Control Act 1982.

The bill complements the government's strategic approach to capturing premium markets as outlined in the agricultural competitiveness white paper and builds on the gains from recent free trade agreements with our major trading partners. In response to the shadow minister for agriculture, I note that since the election the coalition have achieved over 50 key market access gains or restorations, as well as over 30 market access improvements.

This is basically a non-controversial bill. It has bipartisan support. I thank all those involved for their participation.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr JOYCE (New England—Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (16:10): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

BUSINESS

Rearrangement

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (16:11): by leave—I move:
That consideration of government business order of the day No. 3, Australian Citizenship Amendment ( Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015, be postponed until a later hour this day.
Question agreed to.
Debate resumed on the motion:
That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (16:11): The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Amendment Bill 2015 streamlines a number of functions of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, or AIATSIS. This bill also amends the appointment process to the AIATSIS Council to ensure a majority of Indigenous people on that council. It is welcome and necessary.

I say quite clearly at the start that Labor support this bill, just as we have supported the work of AIATSIS for the last 50 years—work that keeps safe and celebrates the history and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, the oldest living continuous cultures in the world. We note that AIATSIS Chair Professor Mick Dodson has stated that the institute will work with the minister to implement the changes in the bill.

AIATSIS is one of our nation's indispensable cultural institutions. Its international significance grows and grows. It was established back in 1964 by the Menzies government, with the support of the Labor opposition. The institute began as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, and Labor's Kim Beazley Sr, a great champion of justice for Indigenous people, spoke in support of the institute during the parliamentary debate in 1964. He remarked:

It is … a terrible reflection … that … 63 years after the formation of the Commonwealth … for the first time we are passing legislation to establish an institute, the function of which will be to record aboriginal languages, ceremonies, customs, nomenclature and everything else associated with them as a people.

Like many on both sides of the chamber, Kim Beazley Sr recognised the pressing need for the institute. He went on to say:

If we do not take steps to preserve the knowledge of the ways of thinking and the languages of the aborigines, our own people in the future will resent this generation …

I agree with him. He served as the parliamentary representative of the institute's counsel from its inception in 1964 until 1972.

 Understandably, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people demanded a greater voice and role within the institute. In 1970, those demands were answered with the appointment of the first Indigenous person to the institute's council, Mr Philip Roberts. The election of the Whitlam Labor government marked the beginning of revolutionary change and saw increased funding for the institute. In 1989, the Hawke Labor government revised and expanded the role of the institute and, in the process, renamed it the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, AIATSIS.

Fifty years on, the institute's principal function remains research, publication and collections. AIATSIS undertakes high-quality, culturally sensitive research in areas of anthropology, archaeology, human biology and linguistics. Most of this research takes place
in the remotest parts of Australia, where AIATSIS has demonstrated commitment to community engagement and collaboration. AIATSIS enriches our history and tells us about the true past of this country. In 2014-15, the research work of the institute's staff appeared in 51 publications and its staff presented 107 conferences and seminars. Its other work is intertwined with collections: it collects, nurtures and shares more than tens of thousands of years of Indigenous Australian history. It maintains the world's largest collection of material related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including their history, culture, knowledge, language, songs and dances. The language collection, with recordings of 250 languages and almost 700 dialects, is listed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register along with other iconic cultural artefacts such as the Gutenberg Bible and the Magna Carta.

Former AIATSIS council member, former co-chair of Reconciliation Australia and now co-chair of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, Jackie Huggins AM, said:

The AIATSIS collection has touched the lives of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in this country without their even knowing it.

The collection is priceless. It includes over 100 artworks and artefacts, 130,000 books and printed materials, 13,000 manuscripts, 4,000 videos, 830 film titles and 40,000 hours of recorded sound that document Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, ceremonies, music and oral histories—most of which is unique and unpublished. It also includes the world's most comprehensive photographic record of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with over 600,000 photographs from the late 1880s to the present—90 per cent being unique materials. Truly, AIATSIS is a national treasure. These things are absolutely irreplaceable sources of knowledge for all the peoples of the world and utilised by local and international researchers and academics. For 50 years, AIATSIS has provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a way to learn about their history, their culture and their families, so much of which has been lost over 200 years of occupation. The importance of AIATSIS hits home when you listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people talk about the institute, as I have done on many occasions.

On 14 May this year, I was privileged to attend the launch of the AIATSIS Foundation hosted by Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove at Government House in Canberra. The AIATSIS chair, Professor Mick Dodson, outlined that the foundation will 'develop partnerships and raise funds to support and extend AIATSIS's work in securing and sharing Australia's Indigenous culture and heritage'. That afternoon we heard from Ms Rachel Perkins, the noted Indigenous filmmaker and inaugural president of the AIATSIS Foundation. She has been working extensively in Australian filmmaking for over twenty years. Her award-winning body of work speaks for itself. She directed the biographical film *Mabo*, she wrote and directed the film *Bran Nue Dae* and she directed episodes of *Redfern Now*. Her production company, Blackfella Films, produced the multiple-award-winning documentary series *First Australians*, which aired on SBS in 2008. Her speech at the launch of the AIATSIS Foundation at Government House on that afternoon in May drove home the vital work of the institute. She talked about a personal project recording the Arrernte women's dreaming stories in the area around Alice Springs. There are about 5,000 Arrernte people living in that region, and she said they realised there are only about ten ladies currently living who hold, in their memory, the dreaming stories in song. They said that, in their culture, they use songs to transmit this knowledge. They said:
Although we recorded many of our songs, we also realised how many songs we had lost. This story is not unique, it is a story that resonates in Indigenous communities across much of Australia. Without AIATSIS, more of these songs and stories would have been lost, to the significant detriment of all Australians. This is our land, and these are our languages.

AIATSIS is not standing still; it is evolving to meet the expectations and opportunities of the digital age. In 2014-15, the institute migrated nearly 10,000 webpages to its new website, creating more than 30 new topic pages. In that year, it published six online exhibitions in the style of the new website. Its website was viewed more than 1.1 million times in 2014-15, with almost 374,000 unique sessions. I encourage everyone listening to spend some time exploring the fascinating and informative AIATSIS website.

We support this amending legislation. When I was chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs, we established an inquiry that looked into the loss of Indigenous language and produced a report called Our land our languages. We had a bipartisan approach, and we recommended in that report, handed down in 2012, that the Commonwealth government consult with AIATSIS to determine an appropriate and sustainable funding model for it to recommence its research grants in the 2013-14 budget. The proposed legislation before the chamber today is important because it would increase the Indigenous capacities and personnel in relation to AIATSIS. It would streamline AIATSIS functions, provide that AIATSIS members will have demonstrated interests in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage rather than just studies, and provide that a minimum of two of the four elected councillors be Indigenous. It would also provide that the five councillors appointed by the minister be appointed for their skills and experience and would result in a majority of Indigenous councillors. It would provide that a councillor could only be elected or appointed for two consecutive terms. It proposes to replace the term ‘principal’ with ‘Chief Executive Officer’, remove the research advisory committee from the legislation and update some definitions and terminology relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, persons, studies, culture and heritage. It also incorporates necessary transitional provisions and repeals redundant transitional provisions from the 1989 legislation.

As I said, Labor have always supported AIATSIS. We support these amendments which we believe will strengthen the governance of AIATSIS. We commend the government for introducing this legislation into the chamber. We hope this bill signals an intent from the government to re-engage with the institute and support its work in the future with a different approach to funding. We also hope that it is the start of the government resetting its approach to science, culture, heritage and language and that the government has changed its perspective from what we saw in the 2014 budget. However, given the government’s abysmal treatment of publicly funded research in this country, we remain concerned. But we do commend the government and support the legislation before the chamber.

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (16:21): The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Amendment Bill 2015 is a significant step forward for the AIATSIS reform agenda. The bill will amend the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989 to update the appointment process for the AIATSIS Council. This will be done to better reflect the skills needed for effective governance and diversity while retaining an Indigenous majority on the council. The bill will refocus the functions of AIATSIS from its current eight functions down to five. The
revised functions will allow AIATSIS to function on its strengths in research, education, collection and preservation. This will ensure a better targeting of resources and direct maximum effort towards preserving the pre-eminent collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

I do not think we can underestimate the historical and cultural significance of the AIATSIS collection. It comprises over a million items of Indigenous and Australian culture and heritage value—the value of which cannot be quantified. Managing such a collection is an immense responsibility and brings many challenges for AIATSIS. This bill is part of the government's ongoing commitment to continue the work with Professor Mick Dodson AM and the AIATSIS Council to ensure the future of this important national institution. I would like to thank honourable members for their comments and commend the bill to the House.

Question agreed.
Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr HAWKE (Mitchell—Assistant Minister to the Treasurer) (16:23): by leave—I move:
That this bill be now read a third time.
Question agreed to.
Bill read a third time.

STATEMENTS

Terrorist Attacks around the World

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister) (16:24):
Like many Riverina people and others who were watching from around the globe, I was deeply touched, saddened and shocked when I saw the pictures coming out of Paris and Beirut, following the terrorist attacks on Friday 13 November. It was indeed a black Friday. I was heartened by the response of many of the local people in my electorate to Australia’s role in condemning these evil and despicable acts and by the solidarity that we have shown towards the people, communities, families and friends of those who have lost their lives, their loved ones, in such a needless and callous way. I was heartened to see the world, including Parliament House, turn shades of red, white and blue, just as France did following the events of 11 September 2001. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and the Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, expressed Australia's anger, justifiably, at these attacks and its support for those whom this reckless terrorism has touched. I know the opposition leader and all those opposite concur.

We will as a government, we will as a parliament and we will as a nation be resolute in fighting the perpetrators of these insidious acts. We will do our best to bring about the destruction of IS and Daesh. I am reluctant to call IS by its full title. Its acronym stands for Islamic state. As I have said before, a state builds things. A state protects people. A state promotes confidence and looks to the future. IS does nothing of the sort. IS does nothing but impose its will upon the world. IS wants to impose its destruction, its acts of evil, upon an innocent world.

I have not been to Paris. I have been to Calais in France but I have not been to the French capital, although my wife, Catherine, has. She says it is beautiful. Many people will feel an
affinity with Paris, whether they have been there or not. It is so constant an image and idea in our travel, our culture and our conception of the world that we would have all felt something to see those horrible scenes coming through our televisions and through our social media on that Saturday morning, following those dreadful and despicable acts.

The focus of the international meetings attended by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister has rightly turned to how we can best counter insurgency and extremism as it grows online. It is dreadful to think that so many young Australians—more than 110 and many of them young people—have been radicalised by the false and fake hopes and ideologies that are coming from the leadership of the IS movement. Australia has role to play in bringing the spread of IS to an end—hopefully, an abrupt end.

I represent Kapooka, the Army Recruit Training Centre at Wagga Wagga. I represent the Royal Australian Air Force base at Forest Hill, just east of Wagga Wagga. I also represent an important strategic naval base, which is housed along with the RAAF base at Wagga Wagga. The men and women who train at these bases give of themselves. They want a better future not just for our nation, not just for our future generations but for others as well. They would sacrifice their lives if need be for that ideal. They would sacrifice their lives so that others may live free. The price of peace is eternal vigilance—we know that. We know how important it is to have an able and well-prepared defence force. I am so very proud and privileged to represent an electorate in which much of the training of our army is done. Indeed, every young recruit—and some not so young—do their basic training at Blamey Barracks, just south-west of Wagga Wagga. When I go to the march out parades I am always amazed to see the resilient determination and the patriotism in their eyes. I should not be amazed, because I have been there many times before.

Mr Deputy Speaker Mitchell, I know you have been with me to see the wonderful work that our troops do in overseas postings, particularly in Afghanistan. We went there together last year, along with the member for Batman and Senator Sean Edwards, and we saw the great work that they do there. We know that many of those people that we saw in Kandahar and Kabul would possibly now be on joint operations in the Middle East risking their life and limb over Syria or in northern Iraq. We pay homage to them. We certainly respect the efforts that they put in. I am joined in the chamber by the shadow parliamentary secretary who understands just how important is the role that these people play in protecting and safeguarding the future of our nation. These people whom we train and who wear our uniform proudly do not deserve to come up against other Australians—other citizens of this nation—when they are fighting IS, when they are fighting Daesh, when they are tackling terrorism. They do not deserve to have to fight those radicalised people who leave this country to go to fight for IS.

As a former journalist and a former newspaper editor, I think it is a shame to see how IS is sometimes portrayed in the wider media. We see them driving around in the newest cars, brandishing the newest rifles, waving that dreadful black flag. We see those images. What we should be seeing of IS is the depravity that they inflict upon the world—or the aftermath thereof. What we should be seeing is the squalor in which they live. What we should be seeing is the false hope that they provide. That is the image that should always be coming out in our media. But the trouble is we see them brandishing their arms, driving along in their
new cars, and this offers some sort of sick hope to young people whom they coerce online to join their sick, depraved ideology.

Terrorist activity increased by 80 per cent in 2014 to be at its highest recorded level. The attack on Paris killed 130, at least 43 died in the accompanying suicide bombings in Beirut, the Bamako attacks killed at least 19 victims and an attack on the presidential guard force in Tunis killed at least 12—and that is just this month. The terrorist activity high recorded in 2014 was according to the Global Terrorism Index. What a sad state of affairs it is when we have people who spend their whole lives recording global terrorism. The largest ever year-on-year increase in deaths from terrorism was recorded in 2014. It rose that year to 32,685 from 18,111 the previous year—and I dare say that figure is even higher now. The number of people who have died from terrorist activity has increased ninefold since 2000. Terrorist activity is highly concentrated. Five countries account for more than 75 per cent—more than three-quarters—of deaths. Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria account for more than three-quarters of terrorism related deaths. How sad is that? Private citizens are increasingly the targets of terror attacks, and that is disturbing. That is very, very worrying. According to this GTI, or Global Terrorism Index—and how sad it is that we have to even have one—deaths of private citizens increased by 172 per cent between 2013 and 2014, compared to the total number of deaths, which rose by 80 per cent. Terrorist attacks on religious targets decreased by 11 per cent in 2014. So the mood is swinging from religious groups to private citizens. In Australia we have seen the dreadful death of a young man working for the New South Wales Police Force—an absolutely dreadful incident—and we hope and we pray that these sorts of attacks do not continue.

We hope and we pray for our brave soldiers, our sailors and our Air Force personnel who are going into harm's way. We hope and we pray that ISIL can be negated and wiped out. The damage that that movement is doing in Syria to many of humankind's most ancient cities which hold some of the most treasured artefacts, possessions and temples is beyond belief. Some of the artefacts, precious urns and other symbols of mankind which had been destroyed had lasted hundreds if not thousands of years and had been lovingly recovered and preserved by archaeologists and put on display. With no more than a cursory thought, they have been smashed by members of ISIS with sledgehammers. How dreadful is that?

But it is the deaths of people that is, of course, of far graver concern. It is the numbers of journalists and other freedom fighters who have had their throats slit and have had their lives taken—snuffed out just like that—by these people. And for what? People do not deserve to be treated in this way.

Australia stands united in solidarity with the people of Paris, as we should. IS has to be eradicated. I am pleased that the parliament and the nation recognise this. I am pleased that my electorate is doing its bit in prayers and support for those affected and by way of training our people who will go and fight this scourge. As I said, our thoughts and our prayers are with those people affected. Paris did not deserve this. The world does not deserve to have IS continue its deadly regime. The sooner IS can be snuffed out the better.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (16:38): I rise today with my colleagues on this side and those on the other side to condemn terrorism. I also speak on behalf of all Canberrans in condemning terrorism. It gives me great sadness to reflect on the recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Mali, Beirut and Istanbul and the one late last year in Sydney. Before that, there were
the attacks in New York, Bali, Nigeria, Yemen, Cameroon and many, many other places around the world. It is heartbreaking to think of the families who have lost loved ones at the hands of a terrorist.

The only thing that gives me hope is the way that horrific events such as in Paris, Istanbul and Mali and horrific situations such as we have seen in Sydney have exposed the worst of human nature but also exposed the best. The outpouring of support and love, care and compassion that we have seen flow after these attacks in Paris, Beirut, Istanbul and Sydney has been remarkable, deeply moving and incredibly powerful. People have rallied around those countries and communities and the people who live there, sending messages of support and prayers from every part of the world.

This is what needs to happen. In these challenging times that we face at the moment we must focus on what unites us and not on what divides us. Now, more than ever, is the time to support one another and stare down this hate. We must do everything we can to defeat ISIS and other terrorist groups like Boko Haram and al-Qaeda offshoots. It is promising to see world leaders uniting on this. It was the focus of everyone’s attention at the G20, at APEC and at the East Asia Summit. It is promising to see world leaders coming together with a strong determination to come up with coordinated strategies to defeat ISIS. This gives me hope that we will defeat ISIS—because we must.

Terrorism is an affront to all humanity. There is no question just how little regard ISIS has for human life. We have seen public murders, slavery and systematic sexual abuse. We have seen the most unspeakable acts of sexual violence, where rape and sexual abuse are not just a by-product of war but used as a deliberate military strategy to degrade the enemy.

Horrifyingly, we have learned that girls from Iraq and Syria have been stripped, sold and, in many cases, made to undergo over a dozen virginity reparation surgeries. There are of course countless reasons to destroy, degrade or contain terrorism in all its forms, but the sorts of horrific stories we are hearing about those women and what they have to endure are reason enough. What I find most deplorable is the fact that, as I said, sexual slavery and the degradation of women and girls has become not just a by-product of war but a deliberate strategy.

We were all horrified to hear just recently about the mass grave that was dug up and the 100 Yazidi women found there who were aged between 40 and 80. That story did not just speak about the fact that these women had been killed—and I hate to think about how they were killed—but also spoke about the other women. What happened to the girls? What happened to the other girls in that community who were in their teens, 20s and 30s? What happened to all the women who were aged under 40? Where are they? That is what I worry about. That is the thing that really keeps me driven on this issue. This is the reason I want to see this hateful organisation overcome. What happened to those young girls? They are probably sex slaves. God knows where they are now. They are probably scattered throughout the region. It reminds us again about what happened to those schoolgirls that Boko Haram took more than 12 months ago. I think we are getting up to 18 months. What happened to them? Where are they? And where are the Yazidi girls? What are they enduring each day at the hands of these barbarians?

As I said, there are countless reasons to destroy, degrade or contain terrorism in all its forms and bring down ISIS and Boko Haram and all those evil offshoots of al-Qaeda. But, for
me, the use of sexual violence as an act of terror is one of the worst possible crimes against humanity and the most compelling reason to defeat this evil. We absolutely must fight this evil in every way we can.

According to the United Nations, sexual violence in conflict is one of the greatest moral issues of our time. It is a moral issue we face now, and it has been a moral issue for time immemorial. Historically, rape was characterised as a private crime and not a matter of universal human rights. It was considered a crime against a woman's honour rather than an act of gross physical violence. To date, the focus on sexual violence has been on state actors. However, the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, as an orchestrated, institutionalised, industrialised terror tactic and as a combat tool is a more recent phenomenon—and a terrifying and unimaginable one at that. What we are seeing with ISIS is a non-state actor engaging in the most unspeakable acts of sexual violence. It is different to other uses of sexual violence in conflict because women's bodies have now become part of the terrain of conflict, according to a report by Amnesty International. As I said, rape and sexual abuse are not just a by-product of war; they are used as a deliberate military strategy.

The United Nations estimates that ISIS has forced some 1,500 women, teenage girls and boys into sexual slavery, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the true figure is far greater. I have seen reports of between 1,500 and 6,000, but, after the mass graves of Yazidi women and girls were found recently—which makes you wonder what happened to them—I am sure the figure is far greater than that 6,000. The UN envoy on sexual violence in conflict found that girls from Iraq and Syria were made to engage in the most unspeakable acts of sexual violence. What these women, young girls and boys have had to endure is just unspeakable. The intense shame that accompanies these acts is too much for many women to bear, with a number later committing suicide.

As I said earlier, it is a great moral issue of our time, as described by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura. As I also said earlier, there are countless reasons to destroy, degrade or contain terrorism in all its forms, but for me it is especially for the women and children, who often suffer the most during and after conflict. In order to protect these women and children and all of those living in the Middle East region, as well as those who have been forced to flee, we must defeat ISIS. The situation we face is complex, with many elements, so the solution must include military, political, diplomatic and humanitarian strategies and assistance for refugees.

I am proud of Labor's bipartisan approach to national security. So far Labor has supported and enhanced four rounds of national security legislation and the government's decision to deploy our ADF personnel to the Middle East to protect civilians and build the capacity of Iraq's security forces. We can and must provide Iraqi armed forces with the skills and training needed to defeat ISIS. Labor also welcomed the government's commitment—after we had called on the government to increase our existing refugee intake—to take in an additional 12,000 refugees.

While Labor has consistently sought to provide bipartisanship on national security, we have also called for greater transparency. We have been calling on the government to develop and make public a long-term, inclusive and coherent strategy to end the conflict and to make Australia's objective as transparent as possible. Australians have the right to know what the
strategy involves and, most importantly, what our exit strategy would look like, so we will continue to call for greater transparency.

After the most recent terrorist attacks in Paris, the world has united as never before to defeat those who would wish us harm—to defeat ISIS. This has involved our ADF personnel, who have played a vital role in that strategy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the men and women of our Defence Force for their courage, dedication and bravery. It is these qualities that make our Defence Force what it is—a world-class Defence Force.

There are 780 Australian Defence Force personnel currently deployed in the Middle East region, including Iraq, and another 1,461 deployed elsewhere overseas. These men and women spend months—sometimes years—away from their home and loved ones. They often put their lives on the line in order to protect Australia and our national interests. We owe them so much. We also owe their families, who make a great sacrifice, so much. I would like to extend my thanks to our ADF personnel and their families, and to Australia’s security agencies, who are working around the clock to keep Australians safe.

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who have lost someone they love as a result of terrorism. ISIS, Boko Haram and the al-Qaeda offshoots are a scourge on our nation and the world, and we must do all we can to defeat them. They are evil. We must do everything we can in a military, diplomatic and political sense. There has to be a holistic, coherent and cohesive approach. We have to have a military response; we have to have a political response; we have to have to have a diplomatic response; and, as I said before, we have to have a humanitarian response. The best way for us to respond is by standing together in solidarity—united, not divided—and joining together in love, not dividing in hate.

I want to conclude with the words of the French ambassador. The foreign minister and I were at a function with French industry at his residence last week. He made a very powerful and compelling speech that was deeply moving for everyone who was there. I encourage all Australians to follow his words, which were, in a way, an act of defiance. He sent a very positive message to all Australians and to the world: we are alive and we are not afraid.

**BILLS**

**Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015**

Second Reading

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

**Mr DUTTON** (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (16:51): I rise to sum up the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015. I thank the honourable members for their contribution to this debate and acknowledge that it has attracted a lot of discussion both in this place and in the broader Australian community. Allegiance is a duty owed by all citizens to their sovereign or state. This bill emphasises the central importance of allegiance to Australia in the concept of citizenship.

Australia does face a heightened and complex security environment. In this environment, this bill will bolster Australia’s national security arrangements, with measures to protect the community from persons who have clearly renounced their allegiances to Australia by engaging in serious terror related acts that harm Australians or Australian interests. This
national security threat is unprecedented in our history, and the Australian government has struck the right balance in ensuring that dual nationals demonstrate their allegiance to our country if they wish to retain the privilege of Australian citizenship.

This bill is an important piece of legislation that will strengthen Australia's ability to confront the challenges posed by dual nationals who betray Australia by participating in serious terrorism related activities. The bill does this by providing the government with three mechanisms for responding to dual citizens who pose a terrorist threat to Australia. Firstly, it provides for automatic renunciation of citizenship from the time a person engages in terrorism related conduct. Secondly, it recognises automatic cessation of citizenship where a person engages in fighting for or in the service of a declared terrorist organisation. Thirdly, it provides the minister with the power to determine the loss of a person's citizenship if they have been convicted of a terrorism related offence.

I would like to thank the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security for its work on this bill through its inquiry and recommendations. In particular, I would like to thank the chair, Dan Tehan, and the deputy chair, Mr Anthony Byrne, for their hard work and assistance. I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the department, in particular to Pip de Veau, Ian Deane and all of their team. Thanks also to my staff, who have provided great assistance, as well as others within this building.

The government has adopted the committee's recommendations to the fullest extent possible. These amendments provide this parliament with an appropriate level of scrutiny and oversight in the exercise of these important and sensitive new measures. In accordance with the recommendations of the PJCIS, the government has amended the bill further to include additional safeguards in the application of these new provisions. It has clarified that, in relation to my power as minister to make a determination to rescind a notice or not, a person can seek judicial review under section 75 of the Constitution or in the Federal Court of Australia under section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903, if I choose to exercise that power. Also, a person can seek review on the basis on which a notice was issued, including: whether or not the requisite conduct was engaged in by the person, whether the person engaged in the conduct with the requisite intent and whether or not the person was a dual citizen at the time of the conduct. This implements recommendation 14 of the committee's report. In addition, the rules of natural justice will apply in instances where I decide to consider my power as minister in relation to the making of a determination to rescind a notice or not. The rules of natural justice include the hearing rule and the bias rule.

I would like to thank all members for their comments in the debate on this important bill. It is a measure of this bill's significance to the security of Australia that so many members of this House have contributed to this discussion. In conclusion, this bill is about protecting Australia and Australians at a time when we face a heightened and complex security environment. It has important new measures to deal with those who have engaged in conduct that is contrary to their allegiance to Australia. On that basis, I commend the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Mitchell): The question is that the 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 in this division, 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, Mr Bandt, Ms McGowan and Mr Wilkie voting no.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Bill—by leave—taken as a whole.

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (17:00): I present a supplementary explanatory memorandum to the bill. I ask leave of the House to move government amendments (1) and (2), as circulated, together.

Leave granted.

Mr DUTTON: I move government amendments (1) and (2), as circulated, together:

(1) Schedule 1, page 3 (line 1) to page 10 (line 8), omit the Schedule, substitute:

Schedule 1—Main amendments

Australian Citizenship Act 2007

1 Section 32A

Omit:

• you serve in the armed forces of a country at war with Australia: see section 35; or

substitute:

• you engage in various kinds of conduct inconsistent with allegiance to Australia: see sections 33AA, 35 and 35A; or

2 Section 33 (heading)

Repeal the heading, substitute:

33 Renunciation by application

3 After section 33

Insert:

33AA Renunciation by conduct

Renunciation and cessation of citizenship

(1) Subject to this section, a person aged 14 or older who is a national or citizen of a country other than Australia renounces their Australian citizenship if the person acts inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia by engaging in conduct specified in subsection (2).

Note 1: The Minister may, in writing, exempt the person from the effect of this section in relation to certain matters: see subsection (14).

Note 2: This section does not apply to conduct of Australian law enforcement or intelligence bodies, or to conduct in the course of certain duties to the Commonwealth: see section 35AB.

(2) Subject to subsections (3) to (5), subsection (1) applies to the following conduct:

(a) engaging in international terrorist activities using explosive or lethal devices;

(b) engaging in a terrorist act;

(c) providing or receiving training connected with preparation for, engagement in, or assistance in a terrorist act;
(d) directing the activities of a terrorist organisation;
(e) recruiting for a terrorist organisation;
(f) financing terrorism;
(g) financing a terrorist;
(h) engaging in foreign incursions and recruitment.

(3) Subsection (1) applies to conduct specified in any of paragraphs (2)(a) to (h) only if the conduct is engaged in:

(a) with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause; and

(b) with the intention of:

(i) coercing, or influencing by intimidation, the government of the Commonwealth or a State, Territory or foreign country, or of part of a State, Territory or foreign country; or

(ii) intimidating the public or a section of the public.

(4) A person is taken to have engaged in conduct with an intention referred to in subsection (3) if, when the person engaged in the conduct, the person was:

(a) a member of a declared terrorist organisation (see section 35AA); or

(b) acting on instruction of, or in cooperation with, a declared terrorist organisation.

(5) To avoid doubt, subsection (4) does not prevent the proof or establishment, by other means, that a person engaged in conduct with an intention referred to in subsection (3).

(6) Words and expressions used in paragraphs (2)(a) to (h) have the same meanings as in Subdivision A of Division 72, sections 101.1, 101.2, 102.2, 102.4, 103.1 and 103.2 and Division 119 of the Criminal Code, respectively. However (to avoid doubt) this does not include the fault elements that apply under the Criminal Code in relation to those provisions of the Criminal Code.

(7) This section does not apply in relation to conduct by a person unless:

(a) the person was not in Australia when the person engaged in the conduct; or

(b) the person left Australia after engaging in the conduct and, at the time that the person left Australia, the person had not been tried for any offence related to the conduct.

(8) Subsection (1) applies to a person who is an Australian citizen regardless of how the person became an Australian citizen (including a person who became an Australian citizen upon the person’s birth).

(9) Where a person renounces their Australian citizenship under this section, the renunciation takes effect, and the Australian citizenship of the person ceases, immediately upon the person engaging in the conduct referred to in subsection (2).

Minister to give notice

(10) If the Minister becomes aware of conduct because of which a person has, under this section, ceased to be an Australian citizen, the Minister:

(a) must give, or make reasonable attempts to give, written notice to that effect to the person:

(i) as soon as practicable; or

(ii) if the Minister makes a determination under subsection (12)—as soon as practicable after the Minister revokes the determination (if the Minister does so); and

(b) may give notice to that effect to such other persons and at such time as the Minister considers appropriate.
Note: A person may seek review of the basis on which a notice under this subsection was given in the High Court of Australia under section 75 of the Constitution, or in the Federal Court of Australia under section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903.

(11) A notice under paragraph (10)(a) must set out:
(a) the matters required by section 35B; and
(b) the person's rights of review.

(12) The Minister may determine in writing that a notice under paragraph (10)(a) should not be given to a person if the Minister is satisfied that giving the notice could prejudice the security, defence or international relations of Australia, or Australian law enforcement operations. The Minister must consider whether to revoke such a determination:
(a) no later than 6 months after making it; and
(b) at least every 6 months thereafter until 5 years have passed since the determination was made.

11 Minister's power to rescind notice and exempt person

(13) Subsections (14) to (19) apply only if a person has renounced his or her citizenship under this section.

(14) At any time after a person has renounced his or her citizenship under this section, the Minister may make a determination to:
(a) rescind any notice given under subsection (10) in respect of the person; and
(b) exempt the person from the effect of this section in relation to the matters that were the basis for the notice, or in relation to matters that would have been the basis for giving a notice in respect of the person under paragraph (10)(a), but for the operation of subsection (12).

(15) The Minister does not have a duty to consider whether to exercise the power under subsection (14) in respect of any person, whether the Minister is requested to do so by the person who has renounced his or her citizenship under this section, or by any other person, or in any other circumstances.

(16) To avoid doubt, in deciding whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (14), the Minister is not required to have regard to any of the matters referred to in subsection (17).

(17) If the Minister decides to consider whether to exercise the power in subsection (14), then, in that consideration, the Minister must have regard to the following:
(a) the severity of the matters that were the basis for any notice given in respect of the person under subsection (10), or of matters that would have been the basis for giving a notice in respect of the person under paragraph (10)(a), but for the operation of subsection (12);
(b) the degree of threat posed by the person to the Australian community;
(c) the age of the person;
(d) if the person is aged under 18—the best interests of the child as a primary consideration;
(e) whether the person is being or is likely to be prosecuted in relation to matters referred to in paragraph (a);
(f) the person's connection to the other country of which the person is a national or citizen and the availability of the rights of citizenship of that country to the person;
(g) Australia's international relations;
(h) any other matters of public interest.

(18) If the Minister makes a determination under subsection (14), the Minister must cause to be laid before each House of the Parliament, within 15 sitting days of that House after the Minister makes the determination, a statement that:
(a) sets out the determination; and

(b) sets out the reasons for the determination, referring in particular to the Minister's reasons in relation to the matters set out in subsection (17).

(19) If the Minister thinks that it would not be in the public interest to publish the name of the person or of any other person connected in any way with the matter concerned, the statement under subsection (18) must not include those names or any information that may identify those persons.

General provisions relating to Minister's powers

(20) The powers of the Minister under this section may only be exercised by the Minister personally.

(21) Section 47 applies to a decision by the Minister to make, or not make, a determination under subsection (14), but does not apply to any other decision of the Minister under this section (including any decision whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (14) to make a determination).

(22) The rules of natural justice apply to a decision by the Minister to make, or not make, a determination under subsection (14), but do not apply to any other decision, or the exercise of any other power, by the Minister under this section (including any decision whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (14) to make a determination).

(23) An instrument exercising any of the Minister's powers under this section is not a legislative instrument.

(24) To avoid doubt, a person's citizenship is taken never to have ceased under this section because of particular conduct if:

(a) in proceedings under section 75 of the Constitution, or under this Act or another Commonwealth Act, a court finds that the person did not engage in the conduct or have the requisite intention under subsection (3) of this section; or

(b) in proceedings under section 75 of the Constitution, or under this Act or another Commonwealth Act, a court finds that the person was not a national or citizen of a country other than Australia at the time of the conduct; or

(c) the Minister makes a determination under subsection (14) in relation to the conduct to exempt the person from the effect of this section; or

(d) a declaration under section 35AA is disallowed by either House of the Parliament, and the person's citizenship would not have ceased under this section if that declaration had not been made.

4 Section 35

Repeal the section, substitute:

35 Service outside Australia in armed forces of an enemy country or a declared terrorist organisation

Cessation of citizenship

(1) A person aged 14 or older ceases to be an Australian citizen if:

(a) the person is a national or citizen of a country other than Australia; and

(b) the person:

(i) serves in the armed forces of a country at war with Australia; or

(ii) fights for, or is in the service of, a declared terrorist organisation (see section 35AA); and

(c) the person's service or fighting occurs outside Australia.

Note 1: The Minister may, in writing, exempt the person from the effect of this section in relation to certain matters: see subsection (9).
Note 2: This section does not apply to conduct of Australian law enforcement or intelligence bodies, or to conduct in the course of certain duties to the Commonwealth: see section 35AB.

(2) The person ceases to be an Australian citizen at the time the person commences to so serve or fight.

(3) Subsection (1) applies to a person who is an Australian citizen regardless of how the person became an Australian citizen (including a person who became an Australian citizen upon the person's birth).

(4) For the purposes of subparagraph (1)(b)(ii) and without limitation, a person is not in the service of a declared terrorist organisation to the extent that:
   (a) the person's actions are unintentional; or
   (b) the person is acting under duress or force; or
   (c) the person is providing neutral and independent humanitarian assistance.

Minister to give notice

(5) If the Minister becomes aware of conduct because of which a person has, under this section, ceased to be an Australian citizen, the Minister:
   (a) must give, or make reasonable attempts to give, written notice to that effect to the person:
      (i) as soon as practicable; or
      (ii) if the Minister makes a determination under subsection (7)—as soon as practicable after the Minister revokes the determination (if the Minister does so); and
   (b) may give notice to that effect to such other persons and at such time as the Minister considers appropriate.

Note: A person may seek review of the basis on which a notice under this subsection was given in the High Court of Australia under section 75 of the Constitution, or in the Federal Court of Australia under section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903.

(6) A notice under paragraph (5)(a) must set out:
   (a) the matters required by section 35B; and
   (b) the person's rights of review.

(7) The Minister may determine in writing that a notice under paragraph (5)(a) should not be given to a person if the Minister is satisfied that giving the notice could prejudice the security, defence or international relations of Australia, or Australian law enforcement operations. The Minister must consider whether to revoke such a determination:
   (a) no later than 6 months after making it; and
   (b) at least every 6 months thereafter until 5 years have passed since the determination was made.

Minister's power to rescind notice and exempt person

(8) Subsections (9) to (14) apply only if a person has ceased to be a citizen under this section.

(9) At any time after a person has ceased to be a citizen under this section, the Minister may make a determination to:
   (a) rescind any notice given under subsection (5) in respect of the person; and
   (b) exempt the person from the effect of this section in relation to the matters that were the basis for the notice, or in relation to matters that would have been the basis for giving a notice in respect of the person under paragraph (5)(a), but for the operation of subsection (7).
(10) The Minister does not have a duty to consider whether to exercise the power under subsection (9) in respect of any person, whether the Minister is requested to do so by the person who has ceased to be a citizen under this section, or by any other person, or in any other circumstances.

(11) To avoid doubt, in deciding whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (9), the Minister is not required to have regard to any of the matters referred to in subsection (12).

(12) If the Minister decides to consider whether to exercise the power in subsection (9), then, in that consideration, the Minister must have regard to the following:

(a) the severity of the matters that were the basis for any notice given in respect of the person under subsection (5), or of matters that would have been the basis for giving a notice in respect of the person under paragraph (5)(a), but for the operation of subsection (7);
(b) the degree of threat posed by the person to the Australian community;
(c) the age of the person;
(d) if the person is aged under 18—the best interests of the child as a primary consideration;
(e) whether the person is being or is likely to be prosecuted in relation to matters referred to in paragraph (a);
(f) the person's connection to the other country of which the person is a national or citizen and the availability of the rights of citizenship of that country to the person;
(g) Australia's international relations;
(h) any other matters of public interest.

(13) If the Minister makes a determination under subsection (9), the Minister must cause to be laid before each House of the Parliament, within 15 sitting days of that House after the Minister makes the determination, a statement that:

(a) sets out the determination; and
(b) sets out the reasons for the determination, referring in particular to the Minister's reasons in relation to the matters set out in subsection (12).

(14) If the Minister thinks that it would not be in the public interest to publish the name of the person or of any other person connected in any way with the matter concerned, the statement under subsection (13) must not include those names or any information that may identify those persons.

General provisions relating to Minister's powers

(15) The powers of the Minister under this section may only be exercised by the Minister personally.

(16) Section 47 applies to a decision by the Minister to make, or not make, a determination under subsection (9), but does not apply to any other decision of the Minister under this section (including any decision whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (9) to make a determination).

(17) The rules of natural justice apply to a decision by the Minister to make, or not make, a determination under subsection (9), but do not apply to any other decision, or the exercise of any other power, by the Minister under this section (including any decision whether to consider exercising the power in subsection (9) to make a determination).

(18) An instrument exercising any of the Minister's powers under this section is not a legislative instrument.

(19) To avoid doubt, a person's citizenship is taken never to have ceased under this section because of the person serving or fighting as set out in subsection (1) if:

(a) in proceedings under section 75 of the Constitution, or under this Act or another Commonwealth Act, a court finds that the person did not so serve or fight (whether because of subsection (4) of this section or for any other reason); or
(b) in proceedings under section 75 of the Constitution, or under this Act or another Commonwealth Act, a court finds that the person was not a national or citizen of a country other than Australia at the time the person served or fought; or
(c) the Minister makes a determination under subsection (9) in relation to the conduct to exempt the person from the effect of this section; or
(d) a declaration under section 35AA is disallowed by either House of the Parliament, and the person's citizenship would not have ceased under this section if that declaration had not been made.

35AA Declared terrorist organisation

Declaration of declared terrorist organisation

(1) A declared terrorist organisation is any terrorist organisation, within the meaning of paragraph (b) of the definition of terrorist organisation in subsection 102.1(1) of the Criminal Code, that the Minister, by legislative instrument, declares is a declared terrorist organisation for the purposes of this section.

(2) Before declaring that an organisation is a declared terrorist organisation, the Minister must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the organisation:
   (a) either:
      (i) is directly or indirectly engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of a terrorist act; or
      (ii) advocates the doing of a terrorist act; and
   (b) is opposed to Australia, or to Australia's interests, values, democratic beliefs, rights or liberties, so that if a person were to fight for or be in the service of such an organisation the person would be acting inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia.

(3) The making of a declaration under subsection (1) is taken not to be prescribed administrative action for the purposes of Part IV of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979.

Review of declaration by Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

(4) The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security may:
   (a) review a declaration made under subsection (1) as soon as possible after the declaration is made; and
   (b) report the Committee's comments and recommendations to each House of the Parliament before the end of the period during which the House may disallow the declaration.

35AB Sections 33AA and 35 do not apply to conduct of Australian law enforcement or intelligence bodies or in course of certain duties to the Commonwealth

(1) Sections 33AA and 35 do not apply to conduct engaged in by:
   (a) a person in the proper performance of a function of an Australian law enforcement or intelligence body; or
   (b) a person acting in the course of the person's duty to the Commonwealth in relation to the defence, security or international relations of Australia.

(2) In this section:

Australian law enforcement or intelligence body means a body, agency or organisation of the Commonwealth, or of a State or Territory, that is responsible for, or deals with, law enforcement, criminal intelligence, criminal investigation, fraud, security intelligence, foreign intelligence or financial intelligence.
5 After section 35

Insert:

35A Conviction for terrorism offences and certain other offences

Cessation of citizenship on determination by Minister

(1) The Minister may determine in writing that a person ceases to be an Australian citizen if:

(a) the person has been convicted of an offence against, or offences against, one or more of the following:

(i) a provision of Subdivision A of Division 72 of the Criminal Code;
(ii) a provision of section 80.1, 80.1AA or 91.1 of the Criminal Code;
(iii) a provision of Part 5.3 of the Criminal Code (except section 102.8 or Division 104 or 105);
(iv) a provision of Part 5.5 of the Criminal Code;
(v) section 24AA or 24AB of the Crimes Act 1914;
(vi) section 6 or 7 of the repealed Crimes (Foreign Incursions and Recruitment) Act 1978; and

(b) the person has, in respect of the conviction or convictions, been sentenced to a period of imprisonment of at least 6 years, or to periods of imprisonment that total at least 6 years; and

(c) the person is a national or citizen of a country other than Australia at the time when the Minister makes the determination; and

(d) the Minister is satisfied that the conduct of the person to which the conviction or convictions relate demonstrates that the person has repudiated their allegiance to Australia; and

(e) having regard to the following factors, the Minister is satisfied that it is not in the public interest for the person to remain an Australian citizen:

(i) the severity of the conduct that was the basis of the conviction or convictions and the sentence or sentences;
(ii) the degree of threat posed by the person to the Australian community;
(iii) the age of the person;
(iv) if the person is aged under 18—the best interests of the child as a primary consideration;
(v) the person's connection to the other country of which the person is a national or citizen and the availability of the rights of citizenship of that country to the person;
(vi) Australia's international relations; and
(vii) any other matters of public interest.

Note: A person may seek review of a determination made under this subsection in the High Court of Australia under section 75 of the Constitution, or in the Federal Court of Australia under section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903.

(2) The person ceases to be an Australian citizen at the time when the determination is made.

(3) Subsection (1) applies to a person who is an Australian citizen regardless of how the person became an Australian citizen (including a person who became an Australian citizen upon the person’s birth).

(4) For the purpose of paragraph (1)(b):

(a) the reference to being sentenced to a period of imprisonment does not include a suspended sentence; and

(b) if a single sentence of imprisonment is imposed in respect of both an offence against a provision mentioned in paragraph (1)(a) and in respect of one or more other offences, then:
(i) if it is clear that only a particular part of the total period of imprisonment relates to the offence against the provision mentioned in paragraph (1)(a)—the person is taken to have been sentenced to imprisonment in respect of that offence for that part of the total period of imprisonment; and

(ii) if subparagraph (i) does not apply—the person is taken to have been sentenced to imprisonment in respect of the offence against the provision mentioned in paragraph (1)(a) for the whole of the total period of imprisonment.

Minister to give notice

(5) If the Minister makes a determination under subsection (1) because of which a person ceases to be an Australian citizen, the Minister:

(a) must give, or make reasonable attempts to give, written notice to that effect to the person:

(i) as soon as practicable; or

(ii) if the Minister makes a determination under subsection (7)—as soon as practicable after the Minister revokes the subsection (7) determination (if the Minister does so); and

(b) may give notice to that effect to such other persons and at such time as the Minister considers appropriate.

(6) A notice under paragraph (5)(a) must set out:

(a) the matters required by section 35B; and

(b) the person's rights of review.

(7) The Minister may determine in writing that a notice under paragraph (5)(a) should not be given to a person if the Minister is satisfied that giving the notice could prejudice the security, defence or international relations of Australia, or Australian law enforcement operations. The Minister must consider whether to revoke the determination:

(a) no later than 6 months after making it; and

(b) at least every 6 months thereafter until 5 years have passed since the determination was made.

Minister must revoke determination if conviction overturned

(8) The Minister must, in writing, revoke a determination made under subsection (1) in relation to a person if:

(a) a conviction because of which the determination was made is later overturned on appeal, or quashed, by a court; and

(b) that decision of that court has not been overturned on appeal; and

(c) no appeal, or further appeal, can be made to a court in relation to that decision.

(9) If the Minister revokes the determination, the person's citizenship is taken never to have ceased under this section because of that determination.

General provisions relating to Minister's powers

(10) The powers of the Minister under this section may only be exercised by the Minister personally.

(11) Except for the powers of the Minister under subsection (1), the rules of natural justice do not apply in relation to the powers of the Minister under this section.

(12) Section 47 does not apply in relation to the exercise of the powers of the Minister under this section.

(13) An instrument exercising any of the Minister's powers under this section is not a legislative instrument.
35B Matters to be set out in notices to persons who have ceased to be Australian citizens

(1) A notice that is given to a person under paragraph 33AA(10)(a) or 35(5)(a) must:
   (a) state that the Minister has become aware of conduct because of which the person has, under section 33AA or 35, ceased to be an Australian citizen; and
   (b) contain a basic description of that conduct.

(2) A notice that is given to a person under paragraph 35A(5)(a) must:
   (a) state that the Minister has determined under section 35A that the person has ceased to be an Australian citizen; and
   (b) include the reasons for the decision to make the determination.

(3) However, a notice given to a person under paragraph 33AA(10)(a), 35(5)(a) or 35A(5)(a) must not contain information, or content of a document, if:
   (a) the information or content includes any operationally sensitive information (within the meaning of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010); or
   (b) the disclosure of the information or content would or might prejudice:
      (i) the security, defence or international relations of Australia; or
      (ii) the performance by a law enforcement or security agency (within the meaning of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010) of its functions; or
   (c) the disclosure of the information or content would or might endanger a person’s safety; or
   (d) the disclosure of the information or content would be likely to be contrary to the public interest for any other reason.

6 Paragraph 36(1)(a)
Omit "35, 34A or 35", substitute "or 34A".

7 At the end of Division 3 of Part 2
Add:

36A No resumption of citizenship if citizenship ceases under section 33AA, 35 or 35A
If under section 33AA, 35 or 35A a person ceases to be an Australian citizen, then Divisions 1 and 2 of this Part do not apply in relation to the person on and after the time of that cessation.

Note: The effect of this section is that (subject to subsections 33AA(14) and (24), 35(9) and (19) and 35A(8) and (9)) the person can never become an Australian citizen again.

8 Application provisions

Application of section 33AA
(1) Section 33AA of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (as amended by this Schedule) applies in relation to:
   (a) persons who became Australian citizens before, on or after the commencement of this item; and
   (b) conduct engaged in on or after the commencement of this item (whether the conduct commenced before, on or after the commencement of this item).

Application of section 35
(2) Section 35 of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (as amended by this Schedule) applies in relation to:
   (a) persons who became Australian citizens before, on or after the commencement of this item; and
(b) fighting for, or being in the service of, a declared terrorist organisation that occurs on or after the commencement of this item (whether the fighting or service commenced before, on or after the commencement of this item).

(3) If the fighting or service commenced before the commencement of this item, the person ceases to be an Australian citizen at the time this item commences.

Application of section 35A

(4) Section 35A of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (as amended by this Schedule):

(a) applies in relation to persons who became Australian citizens before, on or after the commencement of this item; and

(b) does not apply in relation to a conviction of a person before the commencement of this item unless:

(i) the conviction occurred no more than 10 years before the commencement of this item; and

(ii) the person was sentenced to a period of imprisonment of at least 10 years in respect of that conviction.

(2) Page 10 (after line 8), at the end of the Bill, add:

Schedule 2—Other amendments

Australian Citizenship Act 2007

1 After section 51A

Insert:

51B Reports to Parliament

(1) As soon as practicable after each reporting period, the Minister must table a report in each House of the Parliament that sets out:

(a) the number of notices given by the Minister under paragraph 33AA(10)(a), 35(5)(a) or 35A(5)(a) during the reporting period; and

(b) the number of notices the Minister unsuccessfully attempted to give under paragraph 33AA(10)(a), 35(5)(a) or 35A(5)(a) during the reporting period; and

(c) for each notice given or attempted to be given under paragraph 33AA(10)(a) or 35(5)(a)—a brief statement of the matters that are the basis for the notice; and

(d) for each notice given or attempted to be given under paragraph 35A(5)(a)—a brief statement of the matters that are the basis for the determination under subsection 35A(1) to which the notice relates.

(2) The report must not contain information, or content of a document, if:

(a) the information or content includes any operationally sensitive information (within the meaning of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010); or

(b) the disclosure of the information or content would or might prejudice:

(i) the security, defence or international relations of Australia; or

(ii) the performance by a law enforcement or security agency (within the meaning of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010) of its functions; or

(c) the disclosure of the information or content would or might endanger a person's safety; or

(d) the disclosure of the information or content would be likely to be contrary to the public interest for any other reason.

(3) For the purposes of this section, reporting period means:

(a) the period of 6 months beginning on the day this section commences; and
(b) each subsequent 6-month period.

51C Briefing of Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

(1) This section applies if any of the following events occurs:
   (a) the Minister gives or unsuccessfully attempts to give a notice under paragraph 33AA(10)(a) or 35(5)(a);
   (b) the Minister gives or unsuccessfully attempts to give a notice under paragraph 35A(5)(a);
   (c) the Minister makes a determination under subsection 33AA(12), 35(7) or 35A(7).

(2) The Minister must, as soon as practicable after the occurrence of the event, inform the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security in writing.

(3) Before the later of:
   (a) the end of 20 sittings days of the House of Representatives after the occurrence of the event; and
   (b) the end of 20 sittings days of the Senate after the occurrence of the event;
the Minister must, if requested to do so by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, arrange for the Committee to be briefed on the event.

(4) The briefing may be done orally or in writing.

(5) The briefing must include details of the following:
   (a) for an event mentioned in paragraph (1)(a):
      (i) the matters that are the basis for the notice; and
      (ii) whether the Minister has rescinded the notice and exempted the person to whom the notice related from the effect of the section in relation to the matters that were the basis for the notice;
   (b) for an event mentioned in paragraph (1)(b):
      (i) the matters that are the basis for the determination under subsection 35A(1) to which the notice relates;
      (ii) whether the Minister has revoked under subsection 35A(8) the determination to which the notice relates; and
   (c) for an event mentioned in paragraph (1)(c)—the matters that are the basis for the determination.

Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010

2 Section 4 (before paragraph (a) of the definition of counter-terrorism and national security legislation)

Insert:
(aa) sections 33AA, 35 and 35A of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 and any other provision of that Act as far as it relates to those sections;

Intelligence Services Act 2001

3 Section 3

Insert:

Immigration and Border Protection Department means the Department administered by the Minister administering the Australian Citizenship Act 2007.

4 Before paragraph 29(1)(c)

Insert:
(ca) to review, by 1 December 2019, the operation, effectiveness and implications of sections 33AA, 35, 35AA and 35A of the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* and any other provision of that Act as far as it relates to those sections; and

5 Paragraph 29(3)(g)

Omit "ONA or AFP", substitute "ONA, AFP or the Immigration and Border Protection Department".

6 At the end of section 30

Add:

; (c) the Secretary of the Immigration and Border Protection Department.

7 Clause 1A of Schedule 1 (definition of agency)

Omit "or AFP", substitute ", AFP or the Immigration and Border Protection Department".

8 Clause 1A of Schedule 1 (at the end of the definition of agency head)

Add:

; or (f) the Secretary of the Immigration and Border Protection Department.

9 Application of amendments

The amendments of the *Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Act 2010* and the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* made by this Schedule apply in relation to sections 33AA, 35 and 35A of the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* as in force on and after the commencement of this Act.

The amendments are moved by the government in response to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence and Security and give effect to those recommendations to the fullest extent possible and in consideration of legal advice, including from the Solicitor-General. The amendments also respond to advice received from the Solicitor-General. The bill provides that a dual citizen renounces their Australian citizenship if they act inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia by engaging in certain conduct or by fighting for or being in the service of a declared terrorist organisation. Conduct can include engaging in international terrorism activities, recruiting for a terrorist organisation and financing terrorism.

The bill clarifies that the conduct provisions are limited to individuals who have engaged in relevant conduct offshore or engaged in relevant conduct offshore and left Australia before being tried in respect of that conduct. The amended bill provides that a person has engaged in a terrorist related conduct if they do so with the intent of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause and with the intention of either coercing or influencing an arm of the Australian government at the Commonwealth, state or territory level, or the government of a foreign country, or intimidating the public or a section of the public.

In response to advice from the Solicitor-General, the government proposes an amendment to the minister's power to make a determination to rescind a notice and exempt a person from the operation of the relevant provisions of the bill. This makes it clear that, at any time after a person has renounced their citizenship through their conduct or service with a declared terrorist organisation, the minister may consider whether to exercise his discretion to make a determination to rescind a notice in respect of the person. This power is discretionary and the minister does not have a duty to consider whether he should make a determination to rescind a notice. Where the minister has decided to exercise his discretion, he must have regard to a number of matters, including the severity of the matters that underpinned the issuing of the
notice in the first instance, the degree of threat posed by the person to the Australian community and, if the person is under 18 years of age, the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. As an important safeguard, the rules of natural justice apply to the minister's power in relation to the making of a determination, if he chooses to exercise those powers, but not to other powers of the minister under other provisions. The minister is also required to provide to parliament a statement setting out the determination and the reasons for the determination.

The government is also making amendments to ensure that a person who has received a notice of renunciation of their citizenship through their conduct may seek review on the basis on which the notice was issued to them. The person can seek review under section 75 of the Constitution or in the Federal Court of Australia under section 39B of the Judiciary Act 1903. This implements recommendation 14 of the PJCIS report and is a further additional safeguard in the application of these new provisions.

The Australian Citizenship Act currently provides for the automatic loss of citizenship where a person serves in the armed forces of a country at war with Australia. This bill expands automatic cessation of citizenship for persons aged 14 or older who are dual citizens overseas and fighting for, or in the service of, a declared terrorist organisation. The minister, by legislative instrument, may declare a terrorist organisation where he is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the organisation is directly or indirectly engaged in preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of a terrorist act, or advocates the doing of a terrorist act, and is opposed to Australia or to Australia's interests, values, democratic beliefs, rights or liberties so that, if a person were to fight for, or be in the service of, such an organisation, the person would be acting inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia.

The declaration provision has important safeguards so that those who provide neutral or independent humanitarian assistance or who act unintentionally or under duress are not considered to be in the service of a declared terrorist organisation. Further, the provision does not apply to conduct engaged in by a person in the proper performance of a function of an Australian government agency, including a Commonwealth, state or territory agency, or where a person is otherwise acting in the course of their duties to the Commonwealth in relation to the defence, security or international relations of Australia.

As amended, the bill provides a discretionary power where the minister may determine a person's citizenship has been lost if they have been convicted of a relevant offence and upon consideration of relevant criteria. In line with the PJCIS recommendation, this applies to dual citizens convicted of a relevant offence in the previous 10 years from the time of the new laws. The bill provides the minister with the power to determine that a person ceases to be a citizen if, among other criteria, they have been convicted of a terrorism or related offence and sentenced to imprisonment of at least six years or periods of imprisonment that total at least six years. Offences of incursions into foreign states with intention of engaging in hostile activities have also been included through the amendments.

The bill provides significant and important safeguards with respect to children. No part of the amended bill will apply to a child aged less than 10 years, and the conduct based provisions of the bill will not apply to conduct by a child under 14 years of age. Provisions relating to convictions will apply to convictions involving a child over 10 and under 14 years of age where they are found to be criminally responsible for an offence and the child knows
that his or her conduct is wrong. In such a case where a child has been convicted of a relevant offence, a court will have confirmed that they were criminally responsible for their conduct. When considering whether to make a determination that a child ceases to be an Australian citizen following a relevant conviction, the minister must take the age and the best interests of the child into account as part of the required criteria.

The government is also proposing strengthened scrutiny and transparency measures by amending the Intelligence Services Act 2001 to include the Department of Immigration and Border Protection as a relevant agency and to enable the PJCIS to review the effectiveness of the new powers. The minister's declaration of a terrorist organisation will be reviewable by the committee and subject to disallowance by parliament in the usual manner.

As I stated in the second reading speech to the bill, we face a heightened and complex security environment. Regrettably, some of the most pressing threats to the security of our nation and the safety of the Australian community come from Australian citizens engaged in terrorism. It is appropriate to modernise provisions concerning loss of citizenship to respond to current terrorist threats. The world has changed, and so our laws should change accordingly.

Before I conclude, I would like to briefly discuss the delay in considering the amendments last week. As I have stated previously, the government sought the advice of the Solicitor-General on proposed amendments to the bill. The Solicitor-General provided advice to strengthen the implementation of recommendation 15 of the PJCIS report in particular. The opposition has considered this amendment and has agreed to facilitate passage of the legislation with the amendment. I would like to thank, in particular, the shadow minister for his continued approach to the legislation. I understand he has had assistance from other members of the shadow cabinet, including the shadow Attorney-General, and I thank them as well.

The bill as amended will strengthen Australia's national security. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (17:08): In my speech on the second reading I spoke in support of the legislation before the House, including the package of amendments which emanated from the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security. So I do not intend to say any more relation to that, but I do wish to speak briefly in relation to those additional matters that were circulated by the government as a result of the advice that was received by the government last week.

As the minister has referred to, the government received advice in respect of the constitutionality of the amendments emanating as a result of the recommendations from the PJCIS. As a result of that advice, the government met with both me and the shadow Attorney-General to seek an additional amendment to those amendments in order to further bolster the constitutionality of this legislative package.

There were constitutional issues raised during the hearings of the PJCIS, and I spoke about that in my speech on the second reading. The opposition at that time made it clear, as I do now, that it is of course for the government, in bringing legislation before this parliament, to be certain of the constitutionality of that legislation, and we were provided with a letter from
the Attorney-General to the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which was made public, assuring us of the government's confidence in the constitutionality of the legislation.

In raising with us the issue that there may be further amendments to those that emanated from the parliamentary joint committee, it was also made clear that the motivations for those was in respect of constitutionality, and we again sought assurances from the government that this would assist in the ultimate constitutionality of the legislation before the parliament. The Attorney-General wrote to both me and the shadow Attorney-General on 25 November making it clear that these additional amendments seek to further enhance constitutionality of this legislative package.

Once again, I make the point from the view of the opposition that it is of course for the government to be confident of the constitutionality of this legislative package. We appreciate the letter that was provided on 25 November giving an indication of the government's confidence in these new amendments and what they do in terms of the constitutionality of the package, and it is on the basis of that that we continue to proceed forward in support of this legislative package. But it is of course for the government to be confident of the constitutionality. It does, as a result, change the substance of the recommendations that were agreed to by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, in particular, in respect of recommendation 15, which goes to the question of a judicial review which ultimately is available to those persons who have their citizenship cancelled by virtue of their own conduct. Whereas previously there was a mandatory requirement in recommendation 15 for the minister to consider whether there were any extenuating circumstances such as would warrant the rescinding of a loss of citizenship resulting from the operation of a person's conduct, that is now a matter of discretion for the minister.

Again, we sought clarification from the government in respect of the ultimate ability for judicial review to be available to persons in this circumstance. As the minister made clear in his speech, and as we understand has been put into the supplementary explanatory memorandum, and as was provided in a letter to the opposition again by the government on 27 November, the right of judicial review for all persons who find that their citizenship has been revoked as a result of their own conduct is still available, albeit that it is narrowed by virtue of this amendment. The continued presence of a judicial review is important for the opposition in continuing to support this process, which we do. We also note in that sense that the critical focusing of this legislation which emanated as a result of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security—that is, the limitation of a loss of citizenship by operation of conduct to those people acting overseas—remains intact and is unaltered by virtue of these new amendments.

As result of all of that, the opposition is comfortable to move forward and support this package of legislation. It is important legislation. We do, as a parliament, need to have as our primary responsibility keeping our nation safe. The minister is right when he says that there is an unprecedented level of concern in relation to our nation's security. In doing that, we have to get the balance right of people's rights versus addressing the needs of our nation's security, and the opposition believes that this legislative package ultimately does that.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (17:14): The House has before it today a sheet of government amendments to the bill. In the main, these amendments give effect to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on
Intelligence and Security. I spoke to those recommendations in my second reading speech on the bill on 12 November. As the minister for Immigration has indicated, there have been two further developments since that time, and the amendments before the House today reflect both of those developments.

The first is the government's correction of an error it made in the earlier form of these amendments. That error was in the drafting of section 33AA(3), which implements the recommendation of the committee that the bill be clear about what level of intent is required for a person to renounce their citizenship by conduct while overseas. The relevant recommendation was recommendation (2) of the committee's report, which read:

The Committee recommends that changes be made to clarify that the conduct leading to loss of citizenship listed in proposed section 33AA of the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015 is intended to be considered in light of the meaning of the equivalent provisions in the Criminal Code Act 1995, and is not intended to be restricted to the physical elements.

The earlier form of the government's amendments misstated the effect of the equivalent provisions of the Criminal Code. Under section 100.1 of the code, an act is not a 'terrorist act' unless:

(b) the action is done or the threat is made with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause; and

(c) the action is done or the threat is made with the intention of:

(i) coercing, or influencing by intimidation, the government of the Commonwealth or a State, Territory or foreign country, or of part of a State, Territory or foreign country; or

(ii) intimidating the public or a section of the public.

In the initial form of the amendments circulated by the government, the bill would have covered acts done with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause or coercing or intimidating a government or the public.

This was a minor slip, but it had major consequences. The conduct elements of the Criminal Code's terror offences are, by design, broadly drawn. Terrorist conduct is distinguished from other forms of criminality by its particular motivation. As originally drafted, an inappropriately broad category of conduct going far beyond the Criminal Code offences would have been captured. Labor raised this matter with the government, and I thank it for making the necessary amendments to correct this error.

The second is the government's change to the process by which the Minister is to consider exempting a person from the revocation of their citizenship by conduct while overseas. The committee had, in recommendation (15) of its report, recommended that the minister be obliged in every case to consider exercising his or her power to exempt a person from revocation, according to a range of criteria the committee considered relevant. In the earlier form of amendments circulated, the government had implemented this recommendation. Late last week, however, the government indicated to Labor that the Solicitor-General had advised that the constitutional prospects of the bill would be strengthened if the bill did not oblige the minister to consider exercising this exemption power, but merely permitted him or her to do so. It is unfortunate that this did not occur until after some 40 members of this House had spoken on the bill on the basis that the government accepted all of the recommendations in the intelligence committee's report.
The government has refused to release any of the Solicitor-General's advice on the bill, despite repeated requests from Labor. I asked the Attorney-General to release the new advice by the Solicitor-General relating to this particular matter, but I regret that he refused to do so. The Attorney-General did, however, provide a letter to me and the member for Corio, dated 25 November, which apparently summarises the Solicitor-General's advice. In particular, the letter reads:

The Solicitor-General is of the view that, by imposing a requirement that the Minister consider circumstances of excusal from the operation of s. 33AA and s. 35, the effect of those provisions is that the Minister could be regarded as the effective decision-maker, thus violating the self-executing character of the scheme. Were such a ministerial decision to be characterised as an exercise of judicial power, there would be a significant risk that the High Court might take the view the requirements of Chapter III of the Constitution, as explained, inter alia, by the Boilermakers case, would make the exercise of the power ultra vires.

The proposed changes directly address the concerns of the Solicitor-General by removing the requirement that the Minister must consider exempting persons from the automatic operation of the provisions, and by inserting a requirement that the Minister observe the rules of natural justice and give reasons only in circumstances where he does make a decision under the relevant provisions, but making it clear he has no obligation to do so — thus obviating the concern that the Minister is the effective decision-maker. The changes are specifically designed to maximise the Bill's prospect of withstanding a constitutional challenge.

These changes have been reviewed by the Solicitor-General and he has now advised that they have a good prospect of being upheld by the High Court.

As with the bill as a whole, Labor has accepted the government's assurances about the constitutional implications of this particular provision, and we will support the government's revised amendments accordingly. It is important to note that the committee's recommendations about what the minister is to consider when deciding whether to exempt a person from the operation of the bill will remain fully implemented by these amendments.

I also finally note the government's explanation, in a letter dated 27 November and addressed to me and my colleague, the member for Corio, of the availability of judicial review under the revised form of the bill. The Attorney-General stated in that second letter:

The basis for the conclusion that the terrorist-related or foreign fighting conduct has occurred may be reviewed by a court. … Any judicial review would extend to whether or not the contract was engaged in, whether the person engaged in that conduct with the requisite intention, and whether or not a person was a dual citizen.

I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (17:20): Parliament is being treated with contempt. We are dealing with serious issues of terrorism; we are dealing with the serious issue of the relationship between parliament, the executive and the courts. We are dealing with one of the most fundamental issues: when someone, who is a citizen and who might even have been born here, loses their citizenship. In walks the minister with 14 pages of amendments to some of the most fundamental laws in this country at a time when we are dealing globally with one of the most serious questions about how to deal with terrorism and how to make Australia safer. He says, 'Pass this now—I want you to trust me that it's all going to be okay.'

These provisions have not been the subject of any inquiry by this parliament. These provisions have not been looked at by dispassionate experts in the field who know that when
emotions are running high it is often the worst time to be making decisions about fundamental principles of the rule of law and to be giving the executive more powers. These have not even been looked at by the closed shop of a joint committee, which Labor and the coalition set up to deal with this matter in the past. Instead, the parliament is told just to accept this on trust and that a backroom deal has been done. Parliament is about more than backroom deals between Labor and the Liberals. Parliament is about giving an opportunity to scrutinise what a government is doing when it is trying to use national security issues to gain votes. Blind Freddy can see that that is what has been going on, certainly under the previous regime. What we have here is a Tony Abbott era bill brought back up and given life and now being pushed through the parliament, and it is being done, sadly, with the support of the opposition.

The Greens have said from the beginning that this bill will do nothing to make us safer. We have stuck with a fairly straightforward principle, which is that if someone breaches the laws of this country and take steps that indicate they are going to attack us and attack our people and potentially kill people, if they commit acts that are tantamount to murder and break laws, then you prosecute them in the courts and whatever punishment the courts mete out is what they get. If someone comes to Australia or if someone is born in Australia and wants to bomb us or wants to attack us and they are convicted, then send them to jail. As to the suggestion that someone who is so motivated that they are prepared to blow themselves up and take others with them is somehow going to be persuaded by the fact that they might have their citizenship affected, from the beginning we have said to show us the evidence. The government has none, and it has none because this has been an ideological bill from the start. That is why organisation after organisation that is concerned about safety, that is concerned about terrorism but above all is concerned about the principles that define a democratic society have lined up to say there is nothing in this that will make us safer and it might not work. It suggests that we were onto something. It suggests that we were onto something when we said this bill will not make us safer, and in fact it might contravene some of the fundamental principles of rule of law in this country.

The government comes in here with 14 pages of amendments and tells us to take them at face value because they will tidy things up. Have these amendments been drafted so recently, and is there some urgency that means the legislation has to go through now? No. The footer of this document suggests that these amendments were prepared on 27 November at 5.12 pm. They were done last Friday—they could have been out in the public domain and open to scrutiny from commentators, from academics, from journalists and from people who are going to be asked to vote on it but, no, as is the case with everything with this government, transparency is a foreign concept—secrecy rules the day: hold onto these amendments, do a backroom deal and then come here and ask us to pass them. I am very proud that at least on this the Greens will be part of the opposition, because this is a Tony Abbott era bill that will do nothing to make this country safer. I urge Labor: please stop rolling over for the government on this stuff because if you give them an inch they will take a mile. There is nothing that they will not do. They will talk about dual nationals, they will come after sole nationals next and this country will not be any safer for that. I will not be a party to this process of passing bad laws quickly. We do not know what is in these amendments, and 25 per cent of the population do not vote for either Labor or the coalition and they and their representatives in this place deserve to be treated with respect. You cannot come in here on such a fundamental matter and ask us to pass amendments and laws like this.
Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (17:26): The fundamental point made by the member for Melbourne relates to the applicability or success of this bill. The government was guided by what has happened in the United Kingdom, where for some time a bill introduced as I recall by the Blair government allowed for dual citizens to be stripped of their British citizenship, and in fact it went further than that, and that has resulted in a number of people, having lost their citizenship, not returning to the UK. Our judgement, and certainly the judgement of others, is that that does go to protect our national interest, by providing a situation where we do not render somebody stateless but we disallow the return of that person to Australia if they have engaged in a terrorist act. That is in our national interest. I think the contribution from the member for Melbourne earlier would only reinforce in the minds of good thinking Australians, the vast majority of Australian’s, that thank goodness the Greens are not in control of national security in this country.

The Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which is made up of members of the government and the opposition, properly contemplated the provisions the government put forward in this bill. It does provide checks and balances, it does provide the appropriate responses and it does allow people to review in certain circumstances decisions that have been taken or ways in which this bill acts. On that basis we do believe we have a balanced approach to what is a very serious issue and, as we have seen in Paris, in Lebanon and elsewhere in recent weeks, this is a significant issue that will only get worse and governments in Western democracies like ours need to respect the rule of law, we need to respect people's individual liberties, but at the same time we need to protect the public. The balance has been struck here. It is a refined bill, a bill improved with the assistance of the committee and with the input of the opposition, and the final proposal does meet the fine balances required in such a response. I can only, again, reject the suggestions made by the honourable member and point to the fact that the Greens have never really supported any national security bill. That is why this government is determined to make sure that we have the appropriate balance in place ultimately to protect the Australian people.

Question agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Mitchell): The question now is that the bill, as amended, 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 noes in this division, 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, Mr Bandt, Ms McGowan and Mr Wilkie voting no.

Bill, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (17:33): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Centenary of Anzac

Mr ROBERT (Fadden—Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Human Services and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC) (17:34): by leave—It is with great pleasure that I rise to deliver this ministerial statement—my first as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC—to apprise the House of the government's continued commitment to commemorating the Centenary of Anzac. This significant period in Australia's history commemorates the centenary of the First World War and, indeed, a century of service. It provides an unprecedented opportunity to honour the service and sacrifice of past and present generations of Australian service men and women, who have defended our freedoms and values since Australia's Federation. It is also an opportunity to acknowledge the role of those on the home front. Its objective is to leave an improved understanding of Australia's military experience, its impacts and lessons for current and future generations so that the sacrifices made by our young nation and her people is never forgotten.

Though there was understandably a significant focus in 2015 on the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings on Anzac Day, this does not mark the end of the Centenary of Anzac national program that will continue until the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day on 11 November 2018. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to reflect not only on the program's great many achievements to date, but also to outline a number of the key future components of the program, particularly the commemorative events planned for the coming year.

2015 Events

The government recognises the significant community wish to participate in domestic commemorative events and I am in no doubt that the Anzac Centenary period is a time when Australians will want to engage in commemorative activity in substantially greater numbers at home. This year there have been a number of events to commence the Centenary of Anzac, with the highlight, of course, being the amazing service at Gallipoli. Millions more Australians gathered at local services right across the country in what was an extraordinary display of commemorative spirit.

I personally spent Anzac Day with the men and women of the special forces task group in Iraq before joining our ambassador in Baghdad for a service that included the diplomatic corps. I finished the day with an Anzac evening service with our air task force component and commemorated the start of the Mesopotamia campaign in the Middle East 100 years earlier that saw the start of the Australian air arm—what is now the Royal Australian Air Force.

Domestic commemorative events in 2016

The program for 2016 reflects this growing need and enables solemn, dignified and respectful commemoration of more than a century of service and sacrifice by the men and women who have served and continue to serve Australia during war and on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. In addition to services that will be held at memorials on Anzac Parade in Canberra, some of the key domestic activities in 2016 will include:

- events to recognise the 25th anniversary of the Gulf War, on 28 February 2016;
a reception at the Captain Reg Saunders Gallery at the Australian War Memorial, for veterans and their families for the 75th anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk, on 10 April 2016;

• an event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the battle of Greece and Crete, on 15 April 2016; and

• a government hosted reception at Parliament House's Great Hall, for veterans and official guests on 17 August 2016 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

International commemorative events in 2016

Gallipoli

The dawn service held on Anzac Day in Turkey this year at the Anzac commemorative site, and the Lone Pine service later that morning, were significant milestones in the Centenary of Anzac national program. They poignantly commemorated the centenary of the Gallipoli landings and the extraordinary bravery of troops from both sides. Following the successful conduct of these services, this is an appropriate time to reconsider the approach to Gallipoli commemorations.

On reflection, as there are risks to Australians and New Zealanders in attending multiple services, often over two days with little sleep, with the Lone Pine service held in an exposed and isolated location, a review of the continuation of the Lone Pine service is appropriate. The government takes its duty of care to attendees to all services very seriously. The review of the Lone Pine service will be made in consultation with Turkish agencies.

The Anzac Day dawn service at Gallipoli will remain one of Australia's most significant commemorative events each year, and plans are well underway for the 2016 service. Our commitment to maintaining a very close and productive working relationship with the Turkish government in providing a solemn and dignified dawn commemorative service at Gallipoli will continue.

France

Despite the special place that Gallipoli holds in our nation's story, Australia's greatest achievements and greatest losses of the First World War were on the Western Front, in France and Belgium. Between 1916 and 1918, more than 290,000 Australians served on the Western Front. Of these, some 47,000 died and more than 130,000 were wounded. They shaped the course of history in a way that Australians had not before, and have not done since. This story deserves to be better known both in Australia and in Europe.

When complete in April 2018, the Sir John Monash Centre will commemorate the extraordinary achievements of the 1st Australian Imperial Force in France and Belgium. It will provide a focal point for visitors of all nationalities to the Somme battlefields, and educate a new audience about the costs and outcomes of Australia's early involvement in that conflict.

During a recent visit to France, I had the opportunity to meet with my counterpart, Minister Todeschini, in Paris, as well as with local officials in the Somme region. I thanked them for the strong support national, regional and local French authorities have given and continue to
provide to the centre. As a result, construction of the Sir John Monash Centre will commence in late January 2016, with a sod-turning ceremony planned for 20 January 2016.

When it is completed, the centre will anchor the 12 sites of the existing Australian Remembrance Trail. Comprising museums, interpretive walks and memorials, the trail has built on the efforts of local communities over many years to commemorate the service and sacrifice of the 1st Australian Imperial Force. I thank the people of France and Belgium for their unflagging effort to ensure the legacy of Australian achievements and losses on the Western Front is not forgotten.

To further recognise the service of those on the Western Front, two commemorative events will take place in France in 2016 to mark the 100th anniversaries of the Battle of Fromelles and the Battle of Pozieres. The services will be held on 19 and 23 July 2016 respectively, with Australia also likely to be involved in the 14 July Bastille Day celebrations in Paris. All of this is in the planning stage.

Given the significant public interest in attending the Fromelles and Pozieres events, a registration system to attend one or both of these services will soon be launched. National advertising will commence in December to inform Australian citizens and permanent residents on how they can apply to attend the commemorative services. Those wishing to participate in one or both of the commemorative services will require an attendance pass to gain entry to the commemorative sites. The system will allocate passes on a first-in basis until all passes have been allocated. Once all passes have been allocated, anyone registering will be placed on a waiting list. If passes are returned, then they will be allocated to the next person on the waiting list. There are 3,200 places available for the public at the Fromelles commemorative service and 3,500 places available at the Pozieres commemorative service. For those who do not receive an attendance pass, there will be an alternative site close by where the commemorative service can be viewed on large video screens.

**Vietnam War commemorations**

18 August 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, Australia's single most costly engagement of the Vietnam War, with the loss of 18 Australian soldiers. I am pleased to announce a number of commemorative activities planned to honour the service and sacrifice of our veterans of the Vietnam War, in 2016. These include:

- a reception at Parliament House, Canberra on 17 August;
- a national commemorative service, with a broad focus to commemorate Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, which will be held on the morning of 18 August, at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra; and
- a commemorative service to specifically commemorate the Battle of Long Tan, to be held on the afternoon of 18 August, at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera military base, Brisbane.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs is working closely with representatives of the Vietnam veterans community on the arrangements for these events, and to ensure that Vietnam veterans who wish to attend the reception and the services receive appropriate support to do so.

Discussions are currently underway with the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on a small and most appropriate way to mark the shared sacrifice of both our nations on the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan service at the Long Tan cross site in...
Vietnam. It is envisaged that the Vietnamese government will permit Australia to run a small commemorative service at the Long Tan Cross site with access to those Australians and Vietnamese who may wish to attend. Discussions are ongoing between both governments.

**Korean war commemorations**

2016 will mark the 65th anniversaries of two significant Australian military campaigns of the Korean War—the Battle of Kapyong on 23 to 25 April 1951 and the Battle of Maryang San on 3 to 8 October 1951. To commemorate these anniversaries, and more broadly, the service and sacrifice of Australians in the Korean War, the government is planning for a veterans' commemorative mission to the Republic of Korea in October 2016, with a particular focus being the commemorative service at Busan at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea on United Nations Day on 24 October.

This commemorative mission will conclude an era of commemorative missions, dating back to their commencement in the 1990s. It will be the last mission run from Australia by the government. The veterans' commemorative mission to Papua New Guinea in September 2015 to commemorate Victory in the Pacific, was the final commemorative mission for the Second World War. The magnificent men and women who are the surviving veterans of the Second World War and Korean War are now mostly in their 90s and the rigours of an overseas mission, with its demanding schedule and often testing locations, are no longer the most suitable way for acknowledging their service and the sacrifice of their comrades.

It is essential, however, that their service and sacrifice continue to be acknowledged by a grateful nation. Commencing in 2016, the government will conduct commemorative services at memorials on Anzac Parade in Canberra, and other relevant military memorials of national significance, to mark significant anniversaries from the Second World War and the Korean War. The first of these will be commemorative services at the Rats of Tobruk Memorial, Anzac Parade, on 10 April 2016 to mark the 75th anniversary of the siege of Tobruk.

**Commemorative events in 2017-18**

As I noted early, the Centenary of Anzac commemorative period extends through to Armistice Day on 11 November 2018. Planning for commemorative events in 2017 and 2018 to recognise a number of significant battles has commenced and will include services at the following locations:

- Polygon Wood in Belgium on 26 September 2017;
- Beersheba in Israel on 31 October 2017;
- Jerusalem in Israel on 8 December 2017; and
- Le Hamel in France on 4 July 2018.

An event will also be held in France on 11 November 2018 to commemorate the end of the First World War. There are also plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the fall of Singapore on 28 February 2017 at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in Ballarat.

**Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience**

On 4 September this year, the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience was officially opened in Albury-Wodonga by the then Prime Minister, the Hon. Tony Abbott MP. Created to be the flagship community event of the Anzac Centenary national program, this travelling exhibition will visit cities and regional centres across Australia until April 2017. The exhibition utilises a
mix of visuals, over 200 artefacts usually housed at the Australian War Memorial, audio and film to provide visitors with an interactive experience that guides them through the chronological Century of Service time line spanning from pre-First World War Australia to the present day.

In the short time since its launch, in excess of 50,000 people have visited the exhibition in Albury-Wodonga, Launceston, Hobart, Ballarat and Bendigo. A community zone is created in each location in close collaboration with the communities being visited to tell the stories of local servicemen and women. I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience's corporate supporters, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Telstra, which have allowed this exhibition to be brought to life.

I believe the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience will leave a legacy of increased understanding of Australia's wartime history and, through this, help carry forward the Anzac spirit and values. I encourage all those who have the opportunity to attend to do so.

**Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program**

I turn now to the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program. The government is committed to ensuring that the Anzac Centenary was not just about large-scale commemorative services at iconic international and national locations, such as Gallipoli and the Australian War Memorial, but also leaving a legacy in communities right across Australia. The Australian Centenary Local Grants Program was instrumental in enabling this local engagement, as many members from all sides have already attested when reporting the scope and resonance of community commemorative activities and projects that have occurred in their electorates. I remind members that of the over 1,800 applications received, 1,651 grants totaling $16.8 million (ex GST) across 150 electorates have been approved for projects demonstrating high levels of community engagement, innovation and educative value.

I thank once again the members of the many communities who have collaborated to devise these varied and ingenious projects, who joined local electorate committees, hosted by members of this parliament, to assist in the assessment of projects, and who, once the funding had been provided, volunteered their time and energy to ensure their delivery. It was the involvement of ordinary Australians, with extraordinary vision and commitment, who have made the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program the outstanding success it has been.

**Anzac Centenary Public Fund**

The Anzac Centenary Public Fund was established to collect donations from the public and the business sector to pursue a range of Anzac Centenary initiatives. I am pleased to report that, to date, the fund has received approximately $35.7 million in donations. This result would not have been achieved without the assistance of the fund's private fundraiser, Mr Lindsay Fox, and I would like to thank him for his efforts. He is an extraordinary Australian and has done a great job. I would also like to thank several of the corporate donors who have made significant contributions to the fund, including: ANZ, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, the National Australia Bank, Telstra, Woodside, BHP and Rio Tinto.

The Anzac Centenary Public Fund Board, which is chaired by Mr Gary Humphries, provides advice to the government on the merits of proposed projects seeking funding, and I thank them for their work. Based on the recommendations of the board, some of the projects that have received funding include:
the Northern Territory's The Borella Ride, which received $1.7 million;
the Queensland Remembers Gallery and Exhibition—a new permanent exhibition gallery—which has received $350,000 of a total commitment of $6.9 million;
the Victorian Shrine of Remembrance Galleries, which has received $8.3 million of a total commitment of $22.5 million;
the New South Wales Hyde Park Memorial, which has received $3 million of a total commitment of $19.6 million;
the Adelaide Memorial Garden Walk, which has received $5.5 million;
the Hobart Pedestrian Bridge, which has received $3 million of a total commitment of $8 million; and
the Sir John Monash Anzac Centenary Scholarship, which has received $4 million to provide for one new three-year scholarship to be granted annually in perpetuity.

**Australian War Memorial World War I Gallery**

Australia in the Great War is the Australian War Memorial's new permanent exhibition on display in the First World War galleries, created in recognition of the centenary of the First World War and as part of the memorial's key contribution to the Anzac Centenary.

The exhibition presents the story of Australia in the First World War chronologically, covering all major theatres of operations, including Gallipoli; the Western Front; Sinai and Palestine; and the war at sea. The events taking place on the home front and the immediate and enduring legacy of the war are also included.

The First World War galleries integrate a wide variety of items, including dioramas and other works of art; uniforms; medals; technology such as artillery and firearms; photographs, film and personal items such as letters and diaries. Since the opening of the memorial in 1941, the First World War galleries have undergone several major alterations and many smaller updates.

The new state-of-the-art galleries now occupy the entire west wing of the memorial's ground level and contain ready-made content for the media to draw upon for the centenary years from general overarching themes down to individual stories from Australia's service men and women.

The $32.5 million redevelopment of the galleries received $28.7 million from the federal government, $3.82 million from the memorial's existing capital reserves and an additional $1 million donation from BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities. It provides a world-class display and presents the story of the First World War in a unique, memorable and relevant way for all Australians.

**Conclusion**

The delivery of the Anzac Centenary Program constitutes a major national effort involving all facets of the Australian community, and I would like to acknowledge the effort of all those who have contributed. I am confident that the initiatives that have already been delivered by the program, and those that are planned, will ensure that the Centenary of Anzac period will leave a legacy of reinvigorated national awareness and increased knowledge of Australian's military history and the service and sacrifice of all those who have served.
Mr FEENEY (Batman) (17:55): I rise to respond to the ministerial statement by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Stuart Robert, and I take this opportunity to formally congratulate him on his appointment to that important role. The opposition, the government and all other members of parliament recognise the significance of the centenary for the nation, and we continue to offer our bipartisan support for the Centenary of Anzac national program.

In my capacity as shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs I had the very great honour of attending the Anzac Day commemorations in Turkey this year with the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten; the former Prime Minister, Tony Abbott; the former Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson; and many thousands of Australians and New Zealanders, including 10 widows of Australian First World War veterans. All the commemorative events were remarkably moving and powerful, all of them were brilliantly organised and all of them kept faith with our nation’s resolve to commemorate those events 100 years ago in a way that does service to the men who went ashore a century ago and the resonance that that moment has had for contemporary Australia and our identity as a modern Australia. I thank all of those who worked so hard to commemorate the centenary of the Gallipoli landings.

Although the dawn service in Gallipoli in April this year was central to the significant commemorative events, there will of course be many important dates to commemorate over the four-year period of the centenary, including Armistice Day in 2018. For Australia, the Great War was tragic, profound and transformational. From a nation of some four to five million people at the time, over 400,000 Australians volunteered for that war and more than 330,000 served overseas. Of those, more than 60,000 never came home. Alongside the carnage and the suffering, we were witness to courage, tenacity, resilience and mateship—values that helped shape a young nation. Indeed, echoing the point made by the Minister for Veterans, Affairs, one of the most redeeming qualities of our commemoration of Gallipoli in particular is the tribute we paid to the bravery of troops who fought on both sides of that struggle, and it is of course a Gallipoli that we find the birth certificate of not just Australia but also the modern republic of Turkey.

During the Anzac Centenary, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to honour the service and sacrifice of those Australians who permanently linked these values and qualities with the name 'Anzac'. The Centenary of Anzac national program to date has achieved just that. We have commemorated more than a century of service and sacrifice by Australian service men and women in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations in which Australia has participated and continues to participate. The program honours generations of Australia's service men and women, past and present, and shows the continuity and strength of the Anzac inheritance.

Planning for the Anzac Centenary was begun by the former Labor government on Anzac Day 2010 with the establishment of the National Commission on the Commemoration of the Anzac Centenary. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the vital contribution made by two former ministers for Veterans Affairs—Warren Snowdon and Alan Griffin. The commission, led by former prime ministers the Rt Hon. Malcolm Fraser and the Hon. Bob Hawke, reported to government in March 2011 and recommended the establishment of the Anzac Centenary Advisory Board to carry the baton forward by developing a blueprint for a program of Anzac Centenary initiatives.
Since its establishment in October 2011, the board has provided regular advice to the government on the development of a blueprint for the Anzac Centenary Program. The board has also undertaken extensive consultation with the states and territories and local communities. On 21 April 2013 the former Labor government released the board's report on a program of initiatives to commemorate the Anzac Centenary. The board report put forward 25 recommendations, all of which were accepted. I would like to thank the board and its chair, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AC, AFC (Ret'd), for their excellent, well-considered document—and I know that he continued to work with the former minister, Senator Ronaldson, in setting up and implementing the architecture for the commemorations.

The desire of Australians to participate in commemorations marking the centenary of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli is great and we welcome the minister's commitment to a program of domestic events in 2016 that will establish solemn, dignified and respectful commemoration. We also appreciate the update of international commemorative events for 2016. It should never be forgotten that we Australians are invited to Gallipoli, each year, to commemorate Anzac Day thanks to the government and the people of Turkey. It is by the goodwill of the government and the people of Turkey that so many Australians are welcomed so warmly each year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of the Australian people, the Turkish authorities and people who help us stage Anzac Day services. I also congratulate the Australian embassy in Turkey and our consulate in Istanbul. Their work is extensive and vitally important to the success of these occasions. I extend our appreciation to the government and the people of Turkey for the ongoing cooperation, support and even enthusiasm for allowing us to hold commemorations, on a yearly basis, on Turkish soil. Our longstanding relationship and combined dedication to preserving and protecting the Gallipoli battlefields is paramount to the commemoration of the service of our forebears.

In France and Belgium we find the sites of some of the most significant Australian battles fought during the First World War, the battles of the Western Front. In April 2013, the former Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Warren Snowdon MP, signed a memorandum of understanding with French minister Kader Arif that laid the groundwork for Australia's participation in commemorations in France. I welcome the minister's update to the House, today, regarding the commemorative events scheduled to mark the 100th anniversaries of the Battle of Fromelles and the Battle of Pozieres as well as the 14 July Bastille Day celebrations in Paris.

I also welcome the government's update on commemorations planned for both the Vietnam War and the Korean War. On 18 August 1966 the Battle of Long Tan was fought primarily between Delta Company of the 6th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, supported by other Australian task force elements, and a force of up to 2,500 men from the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army. Starting in the afternoon, the Battle of Long Tan was fought in a rubber plantation and lasted until the early morning of 19 August. The Australian Forces—remarkably—were able to repel the enemy assaults and inflict very heavy losses on the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army.

It was, arguably, the most significant action of the Vietnam War for Australian forces. It is certainly a battle that has captured and held the imagination of the Australian people and become one of the emblematic moments of that war for our nation. Eighteen Australian
soldiers died and 24 were wounded. The Vietnam War took a heavy toll on our nation. As ever, the Australian soldiers serving in Vietnam upheld the very high standards of the ANZAC tradition and remained faithful to one another and their duty to the nation.

I also congratulate the minister for speaking to the Korean War. I know if former Prime Minister Julia Gillard were here she, too, would be delighted to see the Australian contribution to the Korean War given the substance and significance it deserves. In April 2011 Julia Gillard travelled to South Korea to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the very significant Battle of Kapyong. Fought in 1951, the Battle of Kapyong witnessed the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment, side by side with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, withstand an advance of many thousands of People's Liberation Army soldiers, enabling our allies to withdraw to Seoul. It was a desperately fought action. Many lives were lost. So extraordinary was the Australian effort in that action that 3RAR was secured a US presidential citation. Perhaps in contrast to Long Tan, this is not an action that is well known in Australia but it deserves to be. That is why I am so pleased to hear it spoken of, today, by the minister.

We see greater and greater attendances at our commemorative events. While there is the occasional commentary about the appropriateness and place of these in our national life, Australians are voting with their feet. We see the crowds, gathering with dignity and solemnity at these events, grow year on year at local events and, centrally, at the major events here at the Australian War Memorial and elsewhere. Community participation is the way to ensure the Anzac legacy is passed to our next generation.

This is one of the main aims of the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program, which was an initiative introduced by the former Labor government to offer every Australian electorate the opportunity to commemorate the immense sacrifice our Anzacs made at the local level. The program provided grants to each of Australia’s 150 federal electorates to support communities commemorating the centenary in ways of their own choosing. I congratulate the government on overseeing 1,800 applications, with 1,651 approved grants totalling $16.8 million, and I thank honourable members—on all sides of this House—for working with their communities to generate the ideas and make the most of this initiative.

In my home electorate of Batman, the program has made it possible for a wide range of local organisations and schools to pay tribute as we commemorate the centenary of World War I. Like every community, the community of Batman has its own unique Anzac story to tell, and this program ensured it was heard. The very first Australian casualty of World War I, Able Seaman Billy Williams, was a son of Northcote in my electorate. He was killed in the Battle of Bita Paka as a member of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force that successfully expelled the Germans from, what was then, German New Guinea. It is a deep privilege to have been able to work with so many members of my community to ensure that we have honoured our Anzacs, and I know that has been replicated in 150 efforts around the country.

Although the government made a number of significant funding commitments to the Anzac Centenary, to supplement this funding the former Labor government established an Anzac Centenary public fund to collect corporate donations. The minister has paid proper tribute to that today. I join with him in commending the significant role played by Mr Lindsay Fox, who has left no stone or high-wealth individual untouched in his effort to encouraging
corporate donations and private philanthropy. I thank him for his remarkable efforts. I also join with the minister in acknowledging those Australian companies that have made very significant contributions to this fund: ANZ, the Commonwealth Bank, the National Bank of Australia, Telstra, Woodside, BHP and Rio Tinto.

I would just like to touch on the recent attacks on World War I graves that we were saddened to learn of just last week. Labor condemns the mindless vandalism of the Australian war graves in West London at St Mary's Churchyard Cemetery in Harefield. A quarter of the 112 graves of Australian soldiers killed in World War I and laid to rest there were targeted by vandals for the second time this year. This deliberate attack on Australian war graves is disturbing. Australian war graves are sacred places for all Australians, and attacking these graves is a cowardly and obscene act deplored by us all. These soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and their graves are honoured by every Australian and, indeed, by thousands of Australians every year visiting Europe and visiting those places.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission not only for their swift work in restoring these graves and ensuring they are returned to their original condition but also for the work they do every day of the year. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission does an outstanding job, caring for and maintaining Australian war graves right around the world, and one cannot help but be affected by the sight of these carefully nurtured places in various places around the world, and by knowing that this fine and upstanding organisation, backed by Australians, does the job it does.

I also acknowledge the many other organisations that partner with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission which do an outstanding job. I was pleased to host, on 13 November, a visit to Australia by Warrant Officer Didier Pontzeele, head of the Belgian war graves service, who gave a wonderful series of speeches around the country and in my own electorate of Batman about the work he and his colleagues do, tending Australian graves in his country. It was a deeply affecting contribution but also very heartfelt, and it is a fine thing to know that people of his calibre look after these places right around the world, including of course, in his case, in Belgium.

In conclusion, the centenary is one of the most significant periods of commemoration in our nation's history. It is a time to reflect on the Anzac values of mateship, courage, sacrifice, loyalty and resilience, and on how these values are upheld by Australia's service men and women today. It is a time to reflect upon the impact that these struggles and fights, these failures and successes, have had in shaping modern Australia.

I thank the minister for his update and I thank all those who have ensured, and will continue to ensure, that our Centenary of Anzac national program achieves a series of commemorative events that allow us to reflect on our history as well as our future as a nation and to thank all those who have served and sacrificed for their country. I thank the House.

STATEMENTS

Terrorist Attacks around the World

Mr IRONS (Swan) (18:09): I rise to speak on the terrorist attacks around the world and to support the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. I thank the member for Batman for his contribution just now, following the ministerial statement, and for reminding us all about the duty of our soldiers and other members of the armed services and of the work they
do on the battlefields around the world and about how Anzac commemorations have paid tribute to them, going back through many years.

I do also want to mention the bill that just went through, the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015. This is part of the total suite of packages that the government is putting together to help make Australians safer from terrorist attacks. I just wanted to mention my displeasure at the speech by the member from Melbourne, who was not supportive of the amendments or of the fact that this government, along with the opposition, in a bipartisan manner is trying to improve the safety of all Australians. His speech was an absolute disgrace. But I will move on from that and try to talk positively to the motion the Prime Minister and the opposition leader brought forward.

We are well aware of the vicious and cowardly terrorist attacks that locked down Paris on 13 November. Many of us watched it unfold on our TVs, and our thoughts turned to the victims of these cowardly attacks and to their families. Our thoughts are also with those in Australia who have family in France, who, I am sure, would have tried to contact them and establish their status as soon as they possibly could. Those attacks stole the lives of at least 129 people and injured hundreds more. Those organised attacks, which ISIL has taken responsibility for, saw eight killers—or, as we should call them, eight cowards—attack seven locations across the city. No country should ever have to endure what Paris did that night, and I join with the Prime Minister to extend my deepest condolences to the people of Paris.

Australia and many other countries around the world grieve with Paris. They do not stand alone in these attacks. Here in Australia we have experienced the Lindt cafe siege and the shooting of a Parramatta police worker, and they are still at the front of Australians' memories. Those wounds are still fresh. We mourn with Paris. We mourn for our loved ones lost, and for their loved ones lost as well.

According to local Middle East media, on Friday, 20 November, a bomb killed nine people just south of Baghdad, for which, again, ISIL is suspected. ISIL is not resting; they will not—but neither will we in our fight against them.

The 2014 Global Terrorism Index tells us that the world experienced a 61 per cent increase in the terrorist attacks in just that year and, in that same year, our national terrorism public alert level was raised to the status of ‘High’. Since then, there have been 26 people charged, resulting from 10 counter-terrorism operations. There are currently more than 400 high-priority counter-terrorism ongoing investigations being managed by our security agencies. That means that there is an average of 2.6 high-priority counter-terrorism cases across each Australian electorate, which has doubled from what it was only a year ago. In a recent newspaper article we also noted that last year there were more than 1,000 people killed in terrorist attacks around the world. So, as the French President said, we are at war.

At the current time, there are 110 Australians known by our security agencies to be either fighting with or engaged with terrorist groups in Syria or Iraq. The number of Australians joining extremist groups is rising. The reality of home-grown terrorism is on the rise. Despite our best efforts, the risk of a terrorist attack on home soil is rising. The Parramatta shooting and Lindt cafe siege, as I mentioned before, were just the start. Now is the time to make sure we are doing all we can to preserve the safety of our citizens. We have to respond to this worsening threat picture.
I note that this morning the member for Dawson brought to the House a motion on the violent extremism in Australian society. I note also that the member for Macarthur and the member for Hughes—you, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly—spoke on that particular motion. I would like to quote some passages from that motion because I think it is very relevant to the terrorism that we see rising across the world.

The member for Dawson stated:

This motion concerns the threat of violent extremism, particularly in the form of radical Islam, in Australia, a threat that has been borne out in this country. This is not violence for the sake of violence; it is violence driven by an extreme ideology, a jihadist ideology that does not accept the Australian way of life.

The ideology of Islamism despises our freedom, hates democracy and rejects our values—Australian values—which are very clearly defined. They are no state secret. When someone applies for a provisional, permanent or temporary visa, applicants must sign a statement that they have read and understood about the following Australian values: respect for freedom and dignity of the individual; freedom of religion; commitment to the rule of law, parliamentary democracy, equality of men and women, and the spirit of egalitarianism; and embraces things like mutual respect, tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need in pursuit of the public good. These are the values that new citizens and new entrants to Australia sign up to, but not all citizens—or, indeed, their children—agree with these values in practice. In practice, some people hate these values. Those people can be found in Paris, they can be found in Europe, they can be found in the Middle East. Sadly, they can be found in Australia.

We would be kidding ourselves to think everyone in this country subscribes to our common set of values, and we would be foolish to think that there are not jihadists in this country who wish to do us harm because of who we are and the values that we hold dear as a nation.

That was from the member for Dawson's speech. I also acknowledge the speech that the member for Hughes made and also the member for Macarthur. It reminds me of a comment that was made by the previous Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the honourable Scott Morrison, who is now the Treasurer. When he was immigration minister he said that those who come to this country should come to 'join us', not 'change us'. I think that resonates well amongst most of the people in Australia. We are a welcoming community. We are a community that is built on multiculturalism and immigration. One of the aspects of the Australian nature is to be very generous and welcoming to new citizens in this country. I think that the minister's comment is very relevant.

Early this year, a review was conducted into our counter-terrorism capacity. The report stated that our recent years have been shaped by the rising of terrorist and extremist groups and that these groups have had unprecedented appeal and reach into Australian communities. As a government, we are committed to countering home-grown terrorism by investing in counter-terrorism capabilities and updating national security legislation like the legislation before us today. On 30 October 2014, we introduced the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Bill 2014 into the parliament, meaning that Australian telecommunications companies keep a limited set of metadata—information about the circumstances of a communication—for two years. On 3 November 2014, the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Act 2014 received royal assent, amending 22 acts to respond to the threat posed by Australians engaging in, and returning from, conflicts in foreign states. The legislation strengthened our ability to arrest, monitor,
investigate and prosecute returning foreign fighters and onshore extremists. On 2 December 2014 we passed the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1), which responds to urgent operational requirements identified by law enforcement, intelligence and defence agencies.

I will also speak about the rising tide of terrorism in Australia and why it has become harder to combat. There are an increasing number of potential terrorists, supporters and sympathisers in our country. There is also the trend of lone-actor attacks. The Lindt cafe siege and the Parramatta shooting were both lone-actor attacks. It means there may be no visibility of planning and no time delay between intent and action. Terrorists are using sophisticated technologies and methodologies to stay under the radar and they are now adept at exploiting social media to distribute propaganda products. We need to counter the extreme corrupting messages of ISIL, and violent extremists, in schools, mosques and online and through social media. We cannot let them brainwash our children, our neighbours or our future leaders. We are well aware ISIL will get through to us by spreading fear. We will not be scared by this group. They have no power over us.

I would like to quote some passages from the Prime Minister's speech on his motion: This was a coordinated attack involving eight killers and six locations. It was more than a lone-wolf attack, but it was not an elaborately sophisticated one. It reminds us that a few fanatics with automatic weapons and explosives can do great damage and strike at the heart of free, open and democratic societies. This was not just an assault on French lives and French freedoms. It was an attack on all humanity, on all our freedoms—the freedom to gather and to celebrate, the freedom to share time with our family and friends, the freedom to walk our streets without fear. That is why, when I spoke with both President Francois Hollande and Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, I conveyed not just the heartfelt sympathy but the unwavering solidarity of all Australians with the people of France.

The Prime Minister went on to say:
The Paris attacks—all of these attacks—highlight just how critical it is that the international community cooperates to defeat ISIL in the field, in its space, in Syria and Iraq. They highlight how important it is for us more effectively to counter the corrupting messaging of ISIL and other violent extremists in schools, in mosques and, above all, online.

We have been undermining and will continue to undermine terrorist support and activity. Our efforts to detect and undermine terrorist support have been effective despite their increasing volume and significance. We must continue to stop the flow of terrorist support.

In 2013, a Sydney based man was arrested in Sydney and charged with facilitating the recruitment of Australians to train and/or fight with terrorist groups in Syria, including Jabhat al-Nusra. Since 2011, the number of passport cancellations has been increasing exponentially, reducing the flow of Australian fighters supporting terrorist groups.

Last Monday, I asked the Prime Minister to outline the collective response of global leaders to this crisis. The Prime Minister told the House that the international response to the terrorist attacks, not only in Paris but in other countries too, was at the forefront of the discussions of recent international summits and that all leaders agreed that the fight against terrorism was the major priority in national security. He said that ISIL must be defeated in the field and that Australia has the second largest foreign military contribution of coalition partners in the battle. I endorse and echo his points.
I also heard the member for Canberra speak about the treatment by ISIL of women in Iraq and Syria and the strategy of rape and abuse of women—how that should be abhorrent to all Australians and that we should keep that at the forefront of our minds when we think about what these ISIL people do and what they are about. They are about fear; they are about striking at the heart of what our society is about. Who can forget the Yazidi woman who entered the Iraqi parliament and was pleading for help from everyone, for all nations, in the fear that ISIL was going to wipe out the Yazidi race? Here in Australia we might think we have had some experiences in our nation such that we need our armed forces, the AFP and our border force to protect us. But to actually live in that environment and to know that you are going to be subject to persecution by ISIL must create absolute fear for the people of those nations, particularly the Yazidi race.

We are working with our allies and we will defeat ISIL. We have a fight on our hands, one that will bring Australia and other global leaders together. We will band together to achieve a lasting defeat of ISIL. I think all Australians should take into consideration supporting these amendments and related legislation. I congratulate the opposition and thank them for their bipartisan support of the legislation that we are bringing in as a suite to secure the safety of all Australians and to protect other nations from people who leave Australia to go and fight with the ISIL terrorists and extremists. So, again, I support the motion, and I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on it.

Mr BROUGH (Fisher—Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Special Minister of State) (18:24): In speaking on this motion regarding terrorist attacks around the world I would first of all like to acknowledge and pass on my condolences to not only the people of France and those who have lost loved ones—family and friends—but also the people of Ankara, who lost over 200 of their brethren in the Russian plane that was shot down. The one thing we have all come to recognise is that terrorism knows no international boundaries. It touches lives equally no matter your language, your creed or your colour, and sadly here in Australia as well—in Parramatta, in Melbourne and in Sydney. So I think it is poignant at the start of my statement here tonight to acknowledge the pain and suffering that is so real for these individual families as they live with the horror of their lives being shattered in a moment of madness.

Back on 3 September last year I gave a speech in the Federation Chamber in which I reflected on Iraq and Syria, as we pretty much are doing today, and the circumstances around terrorism. I said then, unequivocally, that as much as we may wish that there were alternatives, the reality is that the world has no choice but to destroy ISIS and everything it stands for at its core, because, like moths attracted to a flame, people from all over the world—through social media, through the brilliance of the internet—are able to be reached, encouraged and drawn. So it does not take many people to make a massive impact on the world—sadly. I guess that is one of the things that has changed so much in recent times. Instead of conflicts being very much isolated to a region, through technology they can reach out their tentacles and reach literally anyone, anywhere, at any time. That creates challenges for the world. It creates social challenges as well as security challenges, and world leaders are dealing with this in different ways.

The terrorist attacks in Paris have been a moment in time when now we finally see the sort of language we need from world leaders. That language is considered, but you can also see
that it is robust, and it is determined. Until all of us, with differing belief systems and different political systems, when the initial pain subsides, recognise that we are all equally at risk, that it is our people whom we need to protect, that we need to maintain the resolve we are now seeing from international leaders, that unless we remain resolute and that unless we continue in a single, focused manner to destroy—and I use that word very deliberately—ISIS at its heart, then this menace will continue to come back time and time again, wreaking havoc and pain and suffering on innocent people all around the world.

I and many of my colleagues who have spoken on this motion reflect upon some of the attitudes and concerns that we hear in our own electorates. People have every right to be fearful. That is what terrorism does: it strikes fear in people's hearts. That is what it is designed to do. We all remember back in the seventies when it seemed that there were hijackings all the time; it was always on the news. They was designed to make people fearful.

We as a nation can fight back as individuals by our very actions, just as the French people are doing by going to public places and not being intimidated. One of the ways in which I sense that we can lose the battle on an individual basis, in our communities, is when we isolate groups because of their religion and then persecute them as a whole. What we must persecute and prosecute are people who speak against Australia and its laws and speak for terror and tyranny. Those are the people whom we need to home in on, in a laser-like fashion, with our attitudes, our comments and all our energies. We need to embrace the broader community.

I want to reflect on a sad indictment of a small number of people. It is probably best to be positive, but we need to highlight some of the underbelly that is there as well. Recently, on Facebook, I put up a photograph of an Australian female Navy captain who had won the Telstra Australian Business Woman of the Year award. You would think everyone would applaud that. But, because she was wearing her Muslim headdress in formal attire, some of the vitriol was un-Australian and downright disgraceful. Those people are dancing to the tune of the terrorists, because this brave Australian woman has fought in the battles that we have had in the Middle East on operations for Australia, for our values and for our freedoms. We still have a small minority of people who wish to denigrate this woman because of her religion. I find that behaviour not just abhorrent but dangerous because it is dancing to the tune of the terrorists.

Every time we isolate someone, we actually assist the terrorists' activities. So it behoves us all to understand our fellow citizens better, to understand the differences and to embrace the differences, but we must never, ever tolerate intolerance and the calls for anarchy, for terrorism or for anything that is un-Australian, because, after all, we all exist in this country under one law. I do not care what political persuasion a person in this place has. There are some as Far Left as the Greens, there are some on the Far Right, as some of my colleagues here are, and there is everyone in between—and I never pointed out the National Party, I say to my colleague sitting here! But all jokes aside, it is a serious issue. We have a broad range of views, but we are all as one in saying that Australia will be governed by one law for all. The distortion being put that somehow this parliament would allow people to have different laws, and using that as an excuse to denigrate a particular section of our community, again plays into the hands of the terrorists. It weakens us as a people and it does us no good.
Each and every one of us in this community can, every day, play a small role in protecting our values and protecting our society, from a security perspective, by the way in which we deal with each other, the way in which we understand each other and the way in which we tolerate those differences and embrace those differences. At the same time, we must be absolutely steadfast in maintaining our national law, a unified one law, and, at all times, treat those who would do us harm with total disdain and the full force of the law.

In my final comments here today, I want to particularly pay due respect, as the Minister for Defence Materiel and Science, to the men and women who are currently giving their all for us in this battle. People forget this. They see these images, but there is somehow a disconnect. Australia is actually at war; we have troops in harm’s way. Some of those troops are the Australian Special Operations Task Group—about 80 personnel. They are providing advice and assistance to the Iraqi counter-terrorism service. You can only imagine how important that work is. We have the best in the world and they are imparting their knowledge, their expertise, their professionalism and their esprit de corps to the Iraqis. I am sure they value it, and we value the work of the Australian Special Operations Task Group. There is also the combined Australian-New Zealand Task Group, which is training the regular Iraqi army forces as part of the US-led Building Partner Capacity mission. These 300 Australian and 110 New Zealand personnel are working together, as our countries have done for over 100 years, in another part of the world but in the interests of our protection here. I say to those who keep missing the connection: if we do not take them on at their base, their light remains lit, the flame grows and, by using the internet and social media, moths are attracted to that flame, and the destruction can be very real. There are also 400 personnel in our Air Task Group operating as part of the broader coalition. They continue to strike at the heart of ISIS, Daesh or whatever you want to call them, in Iraq and Syria, taking the fight directly to the militants who wish to destroy us. The Australian Air Task Group is there, with its F18s, its multirole tanker transport and its E-7A Wedgetail airborne early warning and control aircraft. We owe a great deal of gratitude to all of the men and women of our Air Force and the personnel from the Navy and Army. Many of them will not get to do what we will do in a couple of weeks, which is to spend time with our family over Christmas. Their children may, at best, get a Skype or a video, but they will be over there doing their duty as professionals as part of the coalition, trying to make the world a safer place.

At this time, I conclude my remarks by saying to all Australians: please, spare a few moments of thought and compassion for those who do not just talk about it but have actually put their lives on the line and are leading with experience and with dedication, but also with passion to ensure that we have a safer world. If we act together, we can do it, and we can do it in our lifetime.

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan) (18:36): We refer to ourselves as the lucky country, and indeed we are. But there is another well-known saying: you make your own luck. Just as we make our own luck, we earn our own freedoms. In our country, there is a statistically small number of men and women who earn our freedoms, who keep us lucky and who, if you will, protect us in times of trouble, both at home and abroad. They are the ones who run towards a fire, not away from it. They are the ones who are willing to be covered with blood or mud, or wade through freezing, fast water, or stand in the blazing sun for hours, or dangle from a rope over
a cliff or out of a helicopter. They are our emergency services and our military personnel and, lucky for us, they are the best in the world.

Many of my colleagues have spoken about the current spate of terrorism around the world. I have no intention of mentioning the name of any terrorist organisation today. I choose not to give them the satisfaction of being the focus of my contribution to this debate. Instead, I choose to highlight how the attacks in the last month in Bangladesh, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, Somalia, Lebanon and, of course, France, bring to the forefront of our minds those members of our community who must experience firsthand the aftermath of such atrocities—our front line of emergency services, security agencies and military forces. To use the words of Winston Churchill: they are the few.

I choose to place on the record in this place my support and admiration for the more than 7,000 men and women of the Australian Defence Force who live in the electorate of Ryan. I choose to send my best wishes to their families and their friends—those who are waiting for their loved ones to come home from deployment, where they are serving on our behalf and are working to eradicate those who would harm others to further their tangled ideologies and agendas. I thank the volunteers and staff of humanitarian organisations who live and work in refugee camps, helping the dispossessed, the victims of war and/or oppression—often from their own people. I thank the overseas post and embassy staff who live in countries where they themselves may become targets while assisting their fellow citizens, just because they are Australians.

I choose to thank the men and women of Border Force, along with our Navy and Airforce, who work at our ports and airports and around our expansive coastline, keeping a vigilant eye on our safety and on who and what comes to our country. I also thank the hundreds of staff at ASIO, ASIS, AFP, Special Forces and DFAT, who, day in and day out, analyse threats and make potentially life or death decisions to counteract schemes that we will never know existed, hopefully. I thank our fire and rescue services, who, of course, douse fires but who are also ready to prise someone out of a car or a building, to lift a train carriage or to clear a tunnel that has collapsed. I choose to recognise the ambulance officers who, as well as saving lives, live with the possibility of becoming secondary targets themselves when attending to the injured in a violent situation of any kind—domestic or terrorism related. And, finally, I thank the police—the people we call first and just assume they will come, and they do. Their families live daily with the knowledge that every day they go to work is a day that they may not come home in one piece.

These are the dedicated, highly trained and motivated members of our community who reinforce my belief in our lucky country and, indeed, make it a reality. These are the people who, should the worst happen, choose to be the first on the scene. Every day we should give thanks for their diligence and dedication, which ensures that we can continue to enjoy our way of life. May we never need to test their resolve.

Mr BALDWIN (Paterson) (18:41): I start by offering my sincere condolences to those who have lost loved ones due to the senseless, extremist terrorist attacks, both abroad and at home, in recent times. It sickens me; it sickens my peace-loving community. These cowardly, extremist Daesh cult attacks are designed to attack the innocent and to instil fear across the community. There is no room in the world for Daesh death cults, no room for those extremists who, in reality, betray their own religious teachings.
I am neither a hawk nor a dove when it comes to military matters, but I firmly, without reservation, believe that when action needs to be taken, when all other avenues have been exhausted, it needs to be hard, swift and with the full might of all militaries involved to stop this senseless murder as soon as possible. While we have all been shocked by the Paris massacre, there have been more—too many more. All this radicalisation and terrorism is done in the name of a Daesh Muslim extremist cult’s desire to rid the world of the infidels, yet many of the Muslims I know are not extremist. They abhor the actions that have been taken by these extremists.

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL, has executed more than 3,000 people in Syria in the year to 29 June 2015, since it declared itself a caliphate. They include 1,787 civilians, of whom 74 were children, according to a media report in the *Observatory*. To label all Muslims as extremists is unjust, unfair. As I said, the ISIL Daesh cult are murdering their own Muslim people—they do not discriminate. A recent partial history of attacks includes: 23 September 2014 in Melbourne, when 18-year-old Numan Haider stabbed two counter-terrorism officers in Endeavour Hills, a suburb of Melbourne, in Victoria. He was then shot dead. Then, on the 15 December 2014, a self-proclaimed Muslim sheikh, Man Haron Monis, took 17 people hostage inside the Lindt chocolate cafe in Sydney. He forced hostages to hold up a jihadist black flag against a window of the cafe. In the early hours of 16 December, following the escape of several of the hostages, police breached the cafe and fatally shot Monis. Sadly, two hostages, Tori Johnson and Katrina Dawson, also died, while another four people, including a police officer, were injured in the incident. Then, on 7 January 2015 in Paris, two heavily armed gunmen entered the Paris offices of satirical news magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and killed 12 people, including two police officers, and injured 10, all for a satirical cartoon. Where is the mutual tolerance preached by some? And then five days later, on 12 January 2015, in another massacre linked to the Charlie Hebdo massacre, another five people were gunned down at a Jewish supermarket.

Australian terrorist Willie Brigitte was in contact with the perpetrators Cherif and Said Kouchi and Amedy Coulibaly whilst in Fleury-Merogis prison, where Brigitte is held. He is alleged to have been involved in the plotting of both of those attacks. Willie Brigitte and his wife were arrested in 2003 in Australia and deported to France for being part of a terrorist group planning attacks at Holsworthy Army Barracks and the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor.

Plotting and planning can cross borders with modern communication means, but it can also lead to the revealing of a plot. The planned Anzac Day 2015 terror plot was foiled. A teenage girl, Sevdet Besim, was romantically linked to a 14-year-old British boy planning an Anzac Day terror plot in Melbourne. The boy was sentenced to a life sentence with a minimum five-year term in jail by a UK court earlier this month for masterminding the plot to carry out the suicide attacks on police officers at the Melbourne Anzac Day parade. The girl exchanged thousands of messages over eight days with the teenage boy who planned the foiled attack. The court heard that Sevdet Besim became obsessed with the idea of suicide bombing and martyrdom. Both Sevdet Besim and her co-plotter Harun Causevic have been charged with conspiracy to commit acts done in preparation for, or planning of, terrorists acts and held without bail—and rightly so.

Then, on 26 June at the Tunisian tourist resort at Port El Kantaoui, north of Sousse, 38 people were mercilessly gunned down. Three months before that, at the Bardo National
Museum, another 22 had been killed. Then, on the 2 October 2015, a radicalised 15-year-old Iranian-born, Iraqi-Kurdish boy, Farhad Khalil Mohammad Jabar, shot dead an innocent 58-year-old accountant, Curtis Cheng, who worked for the New South Wales Police Force, outside the Parramatta police headquarters. The boy then shot at special constables guarding the building. He was shot dead. NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione said:

We believe that his actions were politically motivated and therefore linked to terrorism.

On 31 October in Egypt, ISIL affiliated Wilayah Sayna militants claimed destruction of Metrojet flight 9268. It has been confirmed that the aircraft had been bombed. Two hundred and twenty four innocent people were killed. Then, on 12 November 2015 in Beirut, an ISIL suicide bomber detonated a bike loaded with explosives and, when onlookers gathered, another suicide bomber detonated himself on them, bringing the casualties to 43 dead and 240 wounded.

The next day, on 13 November in Paris, 130 innocent people were killed, plus the perpetrators, and 368 were injured, including 19-year-old Emma Parkinson, who was shot in the buttocks. A series of coordinated attacks began over about 35 minutes at six locations in central Paris. The first shooting occurred in a restaurant and a bar in the 10th arrondissement of Paris. There were more shootings and bombs detonated at Bataclan theatre in the 11th arrondissement during a rock concert. Approximately 100 hostages were taken and, sadly, 89 were killed. Other bombings took place outside the Stade de France in the suburb of Saint-Denis during a football match between France and Germany.

Also on 13 November, there were attacks targeting Shiites in Baghdad, including suicide bombers. The blasts killed 19 and left 33 wounded. ISIL has claimed responsibility for these attacks. Last week on 24 November in Tunisia, a bomb exploded on a bus packed with Tunisian presidential guards in the capital Tunis, killing 12 and injuring 17 people in an attack one source said was probably the work of a suicide bomber. Then, just days ago on 27 November, 21 people were killed after a suicide bomber blew himself up in the crowds at a Shia Muslim procession near the northern Nigerian city of Kano.

In Australia we expect those who choose to live here to support the freedoms of the Australian way of life. It is of concern that some choose not to, and I believe that there is no place for them here in Australia. To preach hatred and to insight people to acts of violence and terrorism is not Australian and it should not occur on our soil.

I, like many, was concerned following the Paris attacks when the Grand Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamed, dismissed antiteror strategies as ineffective, while saying the focus should be on racism, Islamophobia, foreign policies and military intervention. How wrong he is! He later corrected his statement when he told media he has always consistently and unequivocally condemned all forms of terrorist violence. Many other Australian Islamic organisations were quick to condemn the ISIL attacks and distance moderate Muslims from being responsible. They condemned the attacks—and I would point out that many of those who were victims in Paris were also Muslims.

We as a nation are a tolerant, welcoming people. When we accept people into Australia, we expect them to live by our country's laws and respect fellow Australians. There is no room in Australia for sharia law. The displays of terrorism related activities and the incitement of others is not acceptable by any means. Race riots are unforgivable. There is no place in Australia for that.
I can accept the preachings by many Muslim religious leaders crying out for tolerance. But
tolerance is a two-way street. I, like many of my constituents, am rightly offended by the
demand by some Muslim clerics that any religious festival or prayer is un-Australian because
it may offend them. It is offensive to me that I would have to sacrifice what I believe in
through my faith just to appease others. I have no issue with Muslims celebrating their
festivals and their religious days, but to exclude what I and many believe in because it offends
them is not tolerance. Stopping the celebration of Christmas and Easter, the two most holy
days of our Christian calendar, is not tolerance. It is discrimination.

As I said, tolerance is a two-way street. There is room in Australia for all. This is Australia
and, as others have often quoted, if you do not like Australia and all it has to offer, then do not
come, do not stay, go back to where you came from. Do not bring your battles to my
homeland. If you want to participate in religious wars and vendettas from where you came,
then go back to where you came from.

I was proud the speak on the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia)
Bill 2015, which will strip the citizenship of dual nationals who fight against Australia in the
name of terrorism. In my eyes, it is a treason against my nation. If you want to abide by our
laws and partake in all the freedoms and the benefits of our great democracy, then you are
welcome. But do not come to Australia to change it to what you have escaped. Do not use
Australia as your safe haven whilst fighting for terrorism overseas.

At the weekend I was at Nelson Bay. I was approached by a young man asking whether he
will need to join the army and go to war to fight terrorism to protect his Australia. This is
typical of how Australians are viewing the current situation. Community concern is rising and
rightly so with the increasing spate of terrorism attacks and number of people—over 400—
currently being investigated in Australia for involvement in terrorism activities.

I also personally and firmly believe that if my home, Australia, was being attacked and
taken over by some Islamic State terrorist group I would stay to fight, not flee. I would expect
the same of my sons, as indeed most Australians would of theirs. What I have noticed, as have
many of my constituents, is that a large number of the refugees fleeing Syria, Iraq and other
war-torn countries seem to be predominantly males between 18 and 45. I have to ask the
question on behalf of my constituents: why are they not staying and training to
defend their
land, their lifestyle and their rights? I have no problem with and totally support women,
children and the elderly being removed from danger, but it is a bit rich to expect others from
foreign countries to lay down their lives for you if you are not prepared to stand and fight.

One of my concerns is also the proper vetting of those fleeing and seeking refuge to make
sure that they are not sleepers seeking to infiltrate and plan and plot terrorism activities in
Australia as is alleged to have happened in Paris. There is still inconclusive evidence that the
passport of a terrorist found at the site of the Paris massacre was fake alleging the cowardly
assassin was a fleeing refugee. The media report in RT said:

The mastermind of the November 13 terrorist attacks in Paris was planning more attacks targeting Jews,
schools and transport system, media reports say. He also mocked EU’s open border policy that allowed
him to enter as a refugee.

Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian citizen of Moroccan origin and Islamic State extremist who was
behind the massacre in a concert hall and near the stadium in Paris, told his cousin, Hasna Ait
Boulahcen, “they would do worse (damage) in districts close to the Jews and would disrupt transport and schools,” according to a witness statement cited by the French Valeurs Actuelles weekly magazine.

Abaaoud approached his cousin two days after the attacks and asked to hide him, while he was planning new terrorist acts. He also promised to give Boulahcen €5,000 … so that she could buy two suits and two pairs of shoes for him and his accomplice, who has not been identified yet.

The terrorists planned to use the suits to blend into the crowd and "look the part" during a planned attack on Paris' commercial district La Defense, French media reports.

Paris prosecutor Francois Molins confirmed that the extremists indeed plotted an attack on La Defense.

According to a confidential police witness statement leaked to Valeurs Actuelles this week, Abaaoud also mocked the European open-border Schengen system by boasting about freely and easily slipping into Europe with refugees and living for two months in France unnoticed.

Abaaoud claimed he exploited the ongoing migrant crisis and entered Europe from Syria through Greece disguised as a refugee. He also described France as "zero," apparently referring to the authorities' inability to detect him, Valeurs Actuelles reports citing the witness statement.

It concerns me that people are taking advantage of nations' generosity, seeking to destroy and disrupt the way of life of the innocent. All that can be done must be done. We need to stamp out these extreme terrorism acts now, before it is too late.

Mr HUTCHINSON (Lyons) (18:56): This is beyond comprehension. This is the challenge that we face. The senselessness of the recent attacks that occurred in Paris have left us, I think, quite numb. My reaction on hearing the news was just disbelief and numbness. It was not anger. It was not a want for retribution. It was just a complete and utter void. It seemed so senseless as news came out of the 130 people who were tragically killed as a result of these senseless and evil people who have perpetrated this act on one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It is beyond comprehension. It is so foreign to everything that I think this country stands for and that ultimately I think humanity stands for. More than anything else, this evil attack was an attack on humanity itself.

I note the comments of the previous speaker, the member for Paterson, that as Australians we have the greatest privilege of any people on Earth perhaps. All of us came here one way or another as immigrants, ultimately. With the privileges that citizenship in this country give us, the responsibilities that equally come with those privileges are something that we should contemplate every day. These people are challenging the things that we do not think about day to day because they are inherently within us, because we are, as the member for Paterson said, a tolerant people. We are people who have welcomed people from around the world. We have supported them in their time of need. We have been a generous country from day one. The questions that we are all being asked at the moment are so inherently un-Australian.

In speaking on this motion, I would like to pass on my condolences to the families and friends of all of those people who were tragically killed and injured most recently. In recent days, many have mentioned Tasmanian Emma Parkinson. I do not know her; I have never met Emma. Her response, having been in that place, was quite inspiring—that this was an attack on humanity and is something that we must all stand up and fight. I do not suppose that the families of those people killed in Paris will ever hear the speeches that have been made in this place, recognising our sorrow at the loss of those innocent lives. I know that the sympathy of Australians, including the people of my electorate, go out to all of those people. It was an attack on humanity.
As the Prime Minister said, we should grieve and it is right that we should be angry. But we cannot let our judgement be blindsided. We must remain cool and logical in how we respond. This is what I want to work through now. Despite the confusion and concerns that I think we all have, it is a time to take stock. This has shone a light, if it were needed, on another act by these evil people who are part of the IS scourge around the world. Our country's response to this terror threat has been equal to any in the world. It is a global problem that will ultimately require a global response. Regardless of your faith, the colour of your skin or the language that you speak, ISIS absolutely must be defeated.

I want to reassure this country about border protection and Australia's safety. I note the important role that the member for Wannon plays in this place as the chair of the committee that oversees security within our nation. Australia has the very best security agencies in the world that talk and communicate with the very best security agencies all around the world. As I speak, I am sure that somewhere in the ASIO, Department of Defence, ASIS and other buildings there are men and women working to protect our nation right now. They certainly will not be listening to what I am saying! But, on behalf all of the people of my electorate, I thank them for the work that they do. It is difficult work. I cannot even appreciate how difficult it is, but I thank them for the work that they do every day to ensure that our nation remains safe.

I am very proud of the security and intelligence agencies that are working extremely hard to ensure our safety. These are very complicated situations. We are dealing with new technologies and criminals who are increasingly using new methods to recruit people to their cause. It is very important that our security services remain resolute in stopping those who would wish to do our country harm, and that they are supported in every way.

Since winning the election in 2013, nobody could criticise or question the commitment that this government has shown to national security and respecting our borders. In relation to Australia's border protection policies, there are some, even in this place, who, only a matter of weeks ago, criticised decisions that the government was making with the ultimate objective of keeping our country and its people safe. They were considered too harsh—for example, the security screening that is required of people who want to come to this country. This is not something that can be comprised. I suspect that the events of recent weeks may have quietened some of those voices.

In respect of the religious aspects, it is vital that, in our response, we remember not to persecute Islam or Muslims in general, but we must hunt down the individuals who are attacking the religion of Islam as much as they are attacking humanity. We must not generalise, but we also must not insulate specific groups. We must unite and work together to defeat ISIS. They want us to hate each other. They are using hatred as a tool. By showing intolerance, we will assist the terrorists.

In our own country, we have seen the attack on the Lindt cafe, attacks on people going about their business to work and young men attacking police officers. This is not the Australian way. Many people have contacted my office. I understand that there are people in my electorate who are scared, angry and concerned about what has happened in recent times. They are concerned that the government is doing enough to protect the country from the atrocities that recently occurred in Paris. I reassure all those people that this government is doing everything it can; it is the first priority of this government to protect our people, but we
must stand together as one nation. The terrorists of today take aim at people regardless of their race or religion. ISIS has killed en masse many Muslims in this process. We will defeat these groups, but not by going—a race or a culture—it alone. We must work as humans, as people of good humanity, in a united way. We need the support, absolutely, of our community leaders from all religions and all ethnic groups to be involved in this process.

ISIS is attacking Islam and the Muslim faith as much as it is attacking humanity in general. But the Muslim leaders in our country must continue to campaign within their respective communities, and that goes to the very top of the tree. I know that people in my electorate were, frankly, confused and disgusted by some of the responses of Muslim leaders in our country to these attacks. So it is a time for them to show leadership in this space. We will support them but only if they stand up and support what it means to be Australian.

Australia is doing more than its share to fight this scourge of terrorism. Australia has troops on the ground. Australia has Air Force troops putting their lives at risk over Iraq. Unlike 70 per cent of all the money that was pledged to support those countries in the region that are bearing the brunt, Australia has pledged and paid that money. In Jordan and Lebanon, only 30 per cent, or thereabouts, of the money that has been pledged from around the world has been received to go to their efforts to deal with this torrent of humanity that is flowing across the border from Syria and Iraq. Australia is doing its bit.

We have agreed to take 12,000 refugees from Syria, and I know that there is some concern within my community about who they are. I reassure the people in my electorate and more broadly around Australia that we will have the appropriate security checks, the appropriate character checks and the appropriate health checks on these people to make sure that they are the sort of people that can start a new life in Australia and add to our country to make it a better place. Our laws in Australia are not negotiable. When you come to this country, you live by Australian laws. That is not negotiable. It is not something that we talk about, because it is instinctive in all of us.

Mr Frydenberg: A mutual obligation.

Mr HUTCHINSON: It is a mutual obligation, as the Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia at the table has suggested, and I applaud the comments that he has made in recent days. The government are doing that, but we absolutely need the leaders of the communities where these young men, primarily, are getting into huge trouble to stand up and condemn this without any doubt, so that Australians, who are tolerant people, will understand.

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (19:11): I rise this evening to convey my outrage at the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and other places, and to express my deepest condolences to the families of all of the victims. I would also like to reflect on the overall battle with terrorism in which we are engaged. Our response to these events should be threefold: to express solidarity with the affected nations, to unambiguously express our revulsion at the evil people who have committed these deeds, and to redouble our efforts to stamp out ISIL and its sympathisers.

Evil has lurked in every era in history. The great paradox of humanity is that, while the world always improves over time, that improvement is frequently punctuated by barbaric events. This has always been true, and will continue to be true while darkness exists in humanity. In most of the world, it is much better to be alive now than it was 100 years ago or 500 years ago. Over the centuries, we have found better ways to govern ourselves, to respect
one another and to resolve disputes through debate rather than war. Of course, this progress has been marked by horrendous evil events. In the past century, we experienced not only the Nazi atrocities of World War II but genocides perpetrated by governments all over the world against their own people.

In every age, civilised people have had to stand up against those who would seek to destroy us. The manner in which we stand against evil varies according to the circumstances, but stand up we have and we must. We should not forget that, until the very recent past, the threat of global nuclear war was real. We are fortunate that that threat, in recent years, has largely passed. This happened not through luck but through a mixture of successful military, diplomatic and economic policies that brought the communist world to its knees.

Today, our enemy is the evil of terrorism, practised in its most barbaric forms by ISIL. We must defeat ISIL by denying it territory, denying it funds and denying it supporters. Military action is essential to success in this battle. Controlling territory enables ISIL the physical space it requires in order to organise its activities and train terrorists. This territory must be taken away from it. Central to this is cooperation amongst all of the international powers who are acting in Iraq and Syria against this evil group. All of the international community's efforts should be pointed at ISIL in this theatre of war. Coordination, too, with local resistance must occur in order for ISIL to be eliminated. We should work closely with those on the ground who are risking their lives to defeat this evil organisation. Most of these groups are not admirable, and many of them will have been involved in activities that we find deplorable, but we must embrace a practical policy with the paramount goal of destroying ISIL. Necessarily, this will involve working with groups that we would not otherwise support.

For hundreds of years, the politics of the Middle East have been troubled, and we cannot pretend that peace and prosperity are likely to reign in that region anytime soon. All governance options in Iraq and Syria are imperfect, but we have to confront the cold, practical reality that ISIL threatens the world in ways that other actors in that region do not. ISIL must be eliminated. It may be too ambitious to expect a lasting peace in that region, but a future without ISIL is infinitely superior to one with it. In concert with its military efforts, the international community needs to engage in negotiations that lead to a post-ISIL environment in which all racial and religious parts of Syrian and Iraqi societies are represented in their government. This will take years to achieve and will be extraordinarily complex, but it must be done if that region is to live with at least some level of peace.

We must deny ISIL territory and we must deny it any part of a political solution in Iraq and Syria. We must destroy it where it is based, but we must also deny it followers—many of whom come from places far away from Iraq and Syria, including our own nation. ISIL’s propaganda activities are sophisticated, and we must acknowledge that it has been successful in spreading its evil message to the world. We have to be the equal of it in countering its message online and, importantly, we have to work closely with the local Muslim community in seeking to identify potentially vulnerable targets for ISIL. It is the family and surrounding community who are best placed to identify at-risk individuals. We need to redouble our efforts to work with community groups to stop the radicalisation process before it begins.

The murderous acts of terrorism in Paris and elsewhere are abhorrent to civilised people everywhere. They are the modern manifestation of the darkest capacities of mankind. We must completely defeat those who were responsible for them by destroying them militarily.
and supporting a political process in Iraq and Syria that leaves no place for ISIL and its sympathisers. Throughout history, peaceful people have confronted those who prosecute evil and they have won. We must win this modern battle against terrorism, and we will.

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (19:18): The terrorist attacks on Paris were designed with maximum human, economic and social impact in mind. More than just an assault on France’s people, this was a strategic assault on her economy—to undermine her tourism industry, an essential part of the French nation’s prosperity. France was visited by 84.7 million foreign tourists in 2013, making it the most popular tourist destination in the world. In 2012, travel and tourism directly contributed 77.7 billion euros to the French GDP, 30 per cent of which comes from international visitors. The total contribution of travel and tourism represents 9.7 per cent of GDP and supports 2.9 million jobs—10.9 per cent of employment in the country.

Paris is the third most visited city in the world and the most visited by Australians. For Australians, the love affair with France has continued to grow over the past decade. According to statistics from the French embassy, in 2012 more than one million Australians visited France. Additionally, in 2014 Australians applied for a total of 1,716 long-stay visas, with around 3,000 Australians living in France. No wonder so many of us have a story connected to this outrage. Australians will not be deterred from their love affair with Paris by this attack. We know of the horrendous death toll in Paris, along with the scores of injured, many critically. These killings were brutal; they were without mercy and without compassion. They leave nothing in their wake except death, unfulfilled dreams and ambitions and a nation of mourners who will never understand why—for how could any rational person really understand this insanity?

But for the bloody-minded fanatics of ISIL, the Paris attacks made perfect strategic sense. It is vital we do not become victims of that strategy, giving up hope or control of our destinies or allowing people to lose their sense of belonging in their own countries. We cannot jump at shadows or make those refugees we have sworn to welcome from Syria scapegoats for those who would tell you there are terrorists hiding around every street corner. Yes, our world has changed, but we are the ultimate controllers of its destiny. We have the power to push it in the right direction or allow it to slide in the wrong direction. ISIL, despite its destructive objectives, is not in charge; we are.

The Paris attacks were an all-too-familiar modern tale of people being murdered en masse to satisfy the blood lust and warped ideologies of a crazed few. The French, to their credit, will mourn their dead but will remain unbowed, continuing to cherish liberty, egalitarianism and fraternity. Many Australians feel somewhat French in this attitude. We too have a country that promotes a fair go for all, equality for all and egalitarianism. I think this is part of the reason we feel such deep empathy for our French countrymen. More than just an attack on people, the events of 13 November were an assault on what we all hold sacred. The evidence was there for everyone to see, as people across the world took to the streets in support of France’s people and the French themselves defiantly sang *La Marseillaise*, embracing liberty, cherished liberty.

As consuming as the events in Paris have become, we must look past them to the broader picture. We must be mindful of what ISIL is trying to achieve and not fall victim to it. These attacks were designed to kill France and her allies from inside and out. They were designed, in ISIL’s rhetoric, to further divide the world into two camps: ‘one for the people of faith, the
other for the people of disbelief—all in preparation for the final great war. I am a man of faith, but I cannot profess to embrace anything ISIL stands for.

If we live in fear and decide to give up international travel to beautiful countries like France, so much the better for ISIL. If we decide to deride our own Muslim people as traitors, so much the better for ISIL. As writer and social commentator Waleed Aly said in the wake of the Paris attacks:

They want to start World War III—a global war between Muslims and everyone else—that's what they want to create. They want societies like France and Australia to turn on each other. They want countries like ours to reject their Muslims and vilify them … because this evil organisation has it in their heads that if they can make Muslims the enemy of the West, then Muslims in France and England and America and here in Australia will have nowhere to turn but to ISIL.

The idea of ISIL leading us to World War III is fanciful. The group has an overblown idea of its own importance. And yet it does have the ability—especially in a globalised world, where the media is everywhere—to shake the confidence of people, whether citizens or international travellers. It does have the ability to make people turn on each other, but only if we give in to that.

We embrace the future. We make the future. The future is ours, not theirs. We must embrace liberte, egalite and fraternite, now and forever more. To all our first responders: thank you for all that you do. God bless you and keep you safe.

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Assistant Minister for Defence) (19:24): I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of Gippslanders in relation to the terror attacks in Paris and to follow my good friend the member for McMillan in this place. Much has already been said and written about these barbaric attacks, but perhaps most importantly much has already been done to bring the perpetrators to justice and to help prevent further atrocities.

On behalf of Gippslanders, I offer my sincerest condolences to the people of France and extend the hand of friendship and solidarity. Throughout history, our nation's finest have stood shoulder to shoulder with our French compatriots through war and bloody conflict, and it seems we may have to do so again for many years to come, because I fear that terrorism and violent extremism in various forms are the challenge for this generation.

As we have heard the Prime Minister and many others say, maintaining the safety and security of our people is the government's highest responsibility. The security and the wellbeing of Australians, both at home and abroad, is the primary responsibility of any government. Australians understand too well the pain being experienced by the people of France because of the pain that we know ourselves through the Bali bombings, which forever changed our nation. And no decent person is immune from the pain and suffering we witnessed not only in Paris and Bali but in other indiscriminate, murderous attacks in places like Mumbai, Madrid, London and many other European capitals, and also on the African continent in recent weeks.

This violent extremism, clothed in a misguided and fanatical religious fervour, is a challenge for the world to face in the 21st century. It is simply not a problem for any single government alone. We need to keep collaborating with our allies and working with them as closely as possible. We need to share information, intelligence resources, deradicalisation
strategies and counter-terrorism techniques, and we need to share the load if and when open conflict is justified.

I am pleased to say that, in my role as assistant minister, I have had the opportunity to witness directly how Australia is doing its share in relation to this issue, both internationally and on the home front. Our defence forces are deployed in the Middle East to train Iraqi forces, to take the fight to Daesh and the terrorists who seek to impose their rule over that country. Our Air Force personnel are also deployed, helping to degrade and disrupt forces in Iraq.

Particularly at this time of year, Deputy Speaker—and I know that you, as a member who represents an electorate with a significant defence presence, will understand this well—our thoughts and prayers are with the Australian Defence Force personnel involved in their dangerous missions throughout the world, but particularly at this time in Afghanistan and the Middle East. They will be away from their loved ones over the Christmas period. They are doing a dangerous job but they are doing it well. There is no greater service they could give than to put on our nation's uniform and go out there and help people who cannot necessarily help themselves. It was a great privilege for me personally and many other members in this place this year to have the opportunity, as part of the ADF Parliamentary Program, to spend some time with the Australian men and women deployed overseas. We had just a small insight into the challenges they face, and we wish them well over the Christmas period.

On the home front, the government has taken decisive action to protect Australians from the threat of violent extremism. As the Prime Minister informed the House last week, the alert level in our nation was raised to high and has remained there for many months. The government has introduced new legislation and has invested heavily in counter-terrorism activities and programs to combat violent extremism. But, just as this is not a task for one government, this is not a task for governments alone. Our police and our intelligence agencies cannot keep us safe by themselves. The challenges we face of the home front require partnerships with our community, with parents of young people, with schools and, most importantly, with churches and leaders of all faiths.

I support the comments of several of my colleagues that the Islamic community itself has a critical role in countering violent extremism. The messages that came after the terrorist attacks in Paris denouncing those attacks were very important. All of us in this place have the great honour to represent diverse communities. But our communities right now are on edge, and the language we use as elected members in this place and in public is critically important—as important as the actions that we take in our electorates. The Muslim community itself should be expected to do its share of the heavy lifting to counter radicalisation, but it should not be unfairly targeted or maligned in the process.

We all know that social media can be a force for good or a force for evil. Some of the items I have seen in recent weeks are irresponsible, to say the least, in seeking to blame all Muslims for the acts of a relative few. I refer to the Prime Minister's speech on this topic when he said: Within Australia our counter-terrorism strategy calls for partnership between all levels of government, community and the private sector. The root cause of the current threat we face is a perverted strain of Islamist extremist ideology.
And further that:
The strongest weapons we bring to this battle are ourselves, our values and our way of life. Our unity mocks their attempts to divide us. Our freedom under law mocks their cruel tyranny. Our mutual respect mocks their bitter intolerance.
I appeal for calm and reasoned debate—not sensationalist and divisive ridicule.

Associating all Muslims with terrorism is simplistic and it is about as illogical as associating all Catholic priests with paedophilia. Just because some Catholic priests have systematically abused children, it does not mean by definition that all Catholic priests are evil. Likewise, just because some Muslims have killed in the name of religion, it does not mean that they are all terrorists. I hasten to add a crucial point: admitting there is a problem is the first step to solving it. It was only when the senior ranks of the Catholic Church acknowledged there was a problem with child abuse, stopped transferring the problem to other congregations and stopped covering up the abuse that decisive steps were taken to protect children throughout the world. Up to that point, paedophile priests hid behind the decency of the church until the brightest light was shone in the darkest corners and they were uncovered. It was those who are closest to the criminals who are best placed to uncover them.

I think it is the same situation facing our Muslim community today. A small minority of criminals who indulge in terrorism and violent extremism are like a cancer eating at the heart and soul of the Islamic community. It will take extraordinary leadership from Australian Muslims to shine the brightest light on the darkest corners of that part of our society. Again, we need to be partners in this peace, as we develop our strategies and our techniques to counter this extremism.

I have said it already tonight and I will say it many times in the future—governments cannot do this alone. It is not up to our police or our intelligence agencies or our Defence Force in isolation; we need to accept that there is a problem and work together to overcome this challenge in partnership with the Muslim community. This partnership will need to be based on our mutual trust, on our respect and our determination to uphold the values and the way of life which has made Australia such an extraordinarily successful and harmonious nation. This is a time for cool heads, for research and for reasoned and detailed analysis—not raw emotion or guesswork.

I have told this story about my own electorate previously, and it is worth repeating in the context of today's discussion. It relates to my local surf lifesaving club in Lakes Entrance, and I have been a member of the surf lifesaving club there for about 10 years. One of the local policemen once said to me, 'You know, I've never had to arrest anyone—not one person, not one young member—of your surf lifesaving club.' I asked him why. Part of it is probably that they are too tired after a day at the beach, but he said, 'What the older members of your club teach them is respect. You teach them about the spirit of volunteerism; you teach them about being part of something that is bigger than yourself.' I fear that there is a large section of the Australian community, particularly young people, who are not being given that opportunity at the moment. Our nation's great institutions, like the surf lifesaving movement, have helped to build communities and our nation. They have helped to build a bridge for disengaged youth to be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential—to make a meaningful contribution to our community.
It is not just about surf lifesaving clubs; we have other organisations and institutions in Australia—the Australian Defence Force Cadets where 25,000 young men and women get to participate in teamwork building exercises and learn about leadership—learn again about something that is bigger than themselves. All of our sporting clubs build teamwork and a spirit of camaraderie that give young people the chance to participate in an event that is bigger than themselves. The range of community groups like the Lions Clubs, Apex Clubs, Rotary, the Country Fire Authority, the SES—all of these great institutions have served our nation well and have been the glue that is held our communities together.

I believe we need to make sure that such groups are accessible to all sections of our community. At the moment a lot of our surf lifesaving clubs and our sporting clubs, even our ADF cadets program, are fairly poor representatives of the broader multicultural Australia in the 21st century. I was greatly pleased to see the Australian Defence Force Cadets has established a Navy cadet program in Western Sydney, TS Australia, which I have spoken about before and which is dominated by members of the Islamic community. I strongly believe that some of these national institutions are going to be critical in building that bridge from disengaged youth to a sense of something bigger than themselves and of what it means to be an Australian in the 21st century.

The former foreign affairs minister, Gareth Evans, wrote in today's newspapers along reasonably similar lines about the interventions that may take many different forms as we deal with and try to counter violent extremism. He said:

What is already clear is that the most successful programs are those that are least visibly associated with government and law-enforcement authorities; those developed in close consultation with local communities; and, above all, those that are most practical and specific, relying primarily on individual interventions.

Those young men (and occasionally women) who are susceptible to extremism's appeal respond best to those they trust — people who can help them step back from violence in a way that does not cause them to lose face.

I think there is great national institutions are going to be critical as we deal with the challenge of our generation.

I would like to conclude my comments tonight on a more positive note. I invited people in my electorate to make some comments in relation to tonight's speech—I indicated that I have the opportunity to speak about Paris—and I invited them to post some positive remarks. I would like to share a few of the comments from people in my electorate today.

My name is French, we loved French wine so much that we had to grow our own, we fantasize about holidaying in Tuscany or Paris and my Dad always wished that he had a hot French Teacher … where would we be without the French! Vive la France!

From Bronwyn:
The Statue of Liberty was a gift from the people of France to the people of New York. Those two cities are deeply connected by their commitment to freedom, and terrorism will never destroy that. We stand with you NYC and Paris, and anywhere else in the world that has suffered at the hands of terrorists.

Finally, from Cindy:
My husband and I flew into Paris as the horrific event was unfolding. Hearing the continuous sirens throughout Friday night and walking around a very solemn Paris the next day has had a lasting impact. Simply eating lunch at a cafe made you realise the absolute callousness of the attack. We may live half
way around the world but our thoughts remain with the people of Paris—for what they have been through and the journey ahead.

As I indicated, we are being challenged—possibly as never before—but I remain incredibly optimistic and confident that we can unite against a common foe and win. To quote the great Martin Luther King, I have decided to stick with love—hate is too great a burden to bear.

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (19:38): Unfortunately, we live in troubling times. The recent terror attacks in Paris were a halting reminder that the threat of terror remains very real and present and that the decision to lift the national terrorist threat level to high in September was not an overreaction. Australians were heartbroken and shocked as news of the sieges that occurred in Paris filtered through. Millions took to social media in solidarity with hashtags like ‘pray for Paris’, ‘je suis Paris’ and ‘peace for Paris’ and filtered their profile pictures with the tricolours of the French flag. In Sydney the Opera House was lit with the blue, white and red of the French flag. In Brisbane it was the Story Bridge; in Melbourne the MCG and the arts centre spire, in Perth the Council House and in South Australia the Riverbank Bridge. Across the world the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro was bathed in the French tricolours and in London Tower Bridge and the London Eye were lit. In America, the One World Trade Centre and San Francisco City Hall and the Empire State Building were lit in the tricolours. In Las Vegas, the replica of the Eiffel Tower went dark.

Vigils were held around Australia and around the world. More than 200 people gathered in Sydney’s Martin Place for a candlelight vigil to remember the victims of the Paris attacks. Those who gathered in Martin Place felt a special kind of solidarity for the Parisians as they held vigil at the scene of the Sydney siege. Perhaps we all felt a kinship in some way to Parisians because we have experienced events of terror in our own homeland. Almost a year ago, on 15 and 16 December, a single man wielding a gun took control of the Lindt cafe in Martin Place. There were ten customers and eight employees—all ordinary people going about their day. It was a shocking and confronting event that reminded all Australians that we are not immune to acts of terror and that we must remain ever vigilant to keep Australian people safe. With 130 deceased and 368 injured, victims of the Paris attacks were just like those who were held during the Martin Place siege—ordinary people dining in a restaurant, ordinary people attending a concert. They were ordinary people going about their day but their lives were taken in a cowardly, callous and brutal attack in the name of invoking terror and fear. We stood with many other nations in solidarity with the French in the wake of the attacks.

We must, and we do, also acknowledge the massive loss of lives at the hands of ISIL, otherwise referred to as Daesh. The day before the attacks in Paris, on 12 November, a suicide bombing in Beirut took 40 innocent lives. We mourn with the innocent, the displaced the grieving and the lost. Violent extremism as a very real and present threat to the liberties and freedoms we enjoy in Australia. The Prime Minister last week delivered a statement in relation to our national security. He said:

When innocent people are dying at the hands of violent extremists, no matter where in the world this is happening, hard questions are asked of societies like our own—hard questions for which there are no easy answers. For all freedom-loving nations, the message could not be clearer: if we want to preserve the values that underpin our open, democratic societies, we will have to work resolutely with each other to defend and protect the freedoms we hold dear.
The Australian people can be confident that we as a government led by Prime Minister Turnbull are working and will continue to work diligently and closely with our security agencies to prevent terrorist incidents from occurring. Security agencies such as ASIO, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Defence Force are continuing to work methodically and strategically to ensure public safety is maintained. Since September last year the terror alert level has been high and the government has been formulating and presenting five branches of national security laws which will assist the relevant agencies to have the tools they need to operate effectively in combating terror. The difficult task is that ISIL reflects a perversion of Islamist extreme ideology. As the Prime Minister put it:

Not all extremism ends in violence but all politically motivated violence begins with extremist ideology.

When ISIL emerged as an extremist terrorist group out of al-Qaeda in Iraq and Syria their territorial gains in Syria and Iraq fed into their own narrative of conquest. It is known that, by most measures ISIL is in a fundamentally weak position. As a country, we must not be fooled by ISIL's hype. While the ideologies it holds are archaic, the use of the internet to manipulate and extort our community is modern. The Prime Minister spoke about Australia's contribution to the coalition forces, saying:

Australia's contribution to coalition forces on the ground in Iraq is second only to that of the United States and large relative to our population and proximity to the conflict. It is larger, for example, than that of any European nation, larger than Canada's or any of the neighbouring Arab states. We have six FA18s involved in missions in that theatre, with 240 personnel in the air task group, 90 Special Forces advisers, and around 300 soldiers training the Iraqi army at Taji.

Last April I was privileged to participate in the ADF parliamentary program and witness first hand the outstanding work being undertaken by our military men and women in the Middle East. Being able to participate in this program and meet with the ADF personnel deployed in the Middle East and Afghanistan was a huge honour and experience that I will treasure forever. I am in awe of the professionalism, attitude and dedication of our defence personnel and thank them for their commitment to protecting our nation.

The most important priority for any government is to keep their nation safe and secure. When it comes to national security, there can be no shortcuts. Currently we are experiencing testing times and this government is committed to ensuring the safety of all law-abiding citizens. We should never underestimate the threat of terrorism present in modern day Australia. Since the Bali bombings in 2002, which claimed the lives of 88 innocent Australians, we have been alert to the dangers of those who disagree with our freedoms and way of life. The government is working diligently to do all within its power to halt terrorism at its source or point of origin.

Australian counter-terrorism agencies must be able to share information in a secure manner with traditional allies and regional partners to prevent potential terrorist attacks. In May this year we were aware of 30 Australians who travelled to Afghanistan and Pakistan between 1990 and 2010 to train at extremist camps and/or fight with extremists. Of these, 25 individuals returned to Australia and 19 engaged in activities of security concern following their return. Eight were subsequently convicted of terrorism related offences, with five still serving prison sentences. The number of Australians with hands-on terrorist experiences in
Syria and Iraq is now several times what it was in Afghanistan and the challenge is much greater.

The government has already strengthened Australia's national security laws and provided law enforcement agencies with increased powers to address the threat from foreign fighters, including the ability to arrest or place control orders on those who return. In addition to these measures, I supported the government's moves to remove Australian citizenship status from dual citizens who are involved in terrorism at home or abroad. These are indeed harsh measures, but they are entirely fitting of the crime. Let's not for one minute forget that these extremists are fighting against the brave men and women of the Australian Defence Force—men and women who are placing their lives on the line to protect Australia's values and freedoms.

Recently foiled terrorist plots on Australian soil demonstrate the need to maintain and support both the Australian Defence Force and other government agencies at the very forefront of counter-terrorism actions. While the urgency to address the national security threat has intensified over the past 12 months, this government has been committed to enhancing the safety of Australians since its election. This is why the 2015 budget included $1.2 billion in new funding for national security, building upon the $1 billion announced last year. In total, the government is spending over $35 billion on defence, national security and law enforcement. This includes: investing in our own security—including protecting our borders from terrorism and crime—preventing Australians from joining or supporting terrorist organisations, and improving collaboration in our community and with our region to address the uncertainties we all face, including terrorism.

However, support and action from the community with regard to the acknowledgement of their own safety is also required. Only last week, I issued a media release strongly advising Central Coast residents heading overseas to ensure they have updated their travel plans with the government. The smartraveller website is the best source of information for those heading overseas to find out the latest advice for travellers and for consulate staff to utilise in case of an emergency. The recent attacks in France have highlighted the need to ensure that when travelling overseas details are kept up to date. It was only due to the vigilance of travellers who provided their journey plans at smartraveller that Australian consulate officials were able to quickly locate and gain an understanding of the status of Australians in France. While there is a continuing and a longstanding threat of terrorist attacks across the world, Australians are viewed by ISIL and other terrorist groups as a target. This fact is unfortunate—scary but true. Even in cases where attacks may not specifically target Australian interests, Australians can and have been harmed in indiscriminate attacks or attacks aimed at others. As Australian citizens, we need to make sure that we are all vigilant in our planning, and it is important we all do what we can to make sure our travel overseas is as safe as possible.

As a government, we are steadfast in our resolution to uphold and defend democracy, and the rights and freedoms of the democratic world. We must remember that well over one million Iraqis and Syrians have been driven from their homes by an extremist death cult determined to eliminate a particular group of people from our world. The shocking images of beheadings, crucifixions and mass executions will haunt our memories for the remainder of time. Australia is certainly a lucky country. Our democracy was not born from bloodshed, civil uprising or war, and to this end the concept of people wanting to do harm to our people...
remains a foreign one. Matters of national security should rise above the political divide. Not all sympathisers of the ISIL death cult will leave our shores to physically lift a gun and fire a bullet; some have a terrifying role to conduct from the comfort of the Australian suburbs. This includes supporting and facilitating terrorism through the provision of funds and equipment or by recruiting vulnerable young people to champion their cause, and even to die for it and, more alarmingly, conduct acts of barbaric terrorism here on Australian shores.

As a government and as a nation, failure is simply not an option. We must continue to demonstrate our resolve and defend our freedom. This government’s determination to defeat the evils that wish to do us harm knows no bounds. We owe it to our Defence Force personnel who are currently abroad resolutely carrying out their duties to keep us safe. We owe it to the Australians who have lost their lives as a result of the senseless and barbaric acts of terrorist organisations. And we owe it to current and future Australians, who deserve to enjoy a safe and prosperous Australia free from the threat and danger of ideological extremists. Simply put, this is the greatest challenge a government can have. History will remember how we rose to the challenge.

There is no single measure to address the terrorism threat. The government has identified a suite of measures that, together, will best equip us in this fight, both at home and abroad. Australians of all races and religions unite to illustrate the power of what bonds us. Our unity will always prevail over those who seek to divide us. Instantaneously, we reach out to one another and are bound by common values. The various paths that make our nation great become converged into one. United people are always defiant in the face of adversity and tragedy. We are the envy of the world and, sadly, those who disagree with our democratic freedom pose a constant threat to everything that makes us unique.

However, it is becoming increasingly clear that Australia is losing its innocence to those who hate our freedoms and values. Many people have never imagined a terrorist event transpiring on our soil, but it has happened and, tragically, no doubt it may happen again. We are all too familiar with images each night on the news depicting intolerance abroad but never in our own backyard. Like those in Paris who marched in the aftermath of their tragedy, the people of Australia stand tall and defiant in the face of terrorism. We speak as one in that we will not tolerate hatred in our community. We will not tolerate those who sympathise with terrorist organisations or those willing to put Australians in harm due to their own reckless actions. We are stronger than ever before in our defiance of those who hate us and seek to do us harm. Australia is a beacon of hope and liberty throughout the world. Our values will never be compromised by those who want to suppress the freedoms of innocent men, women and children. We must not and we will not waiver from our obligation to Australia and its people.

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin) (19:52): I want to associate myself with all of the excellent remarks from members of both sides of the chamber in relation to the recent terrorist attacks around the world, not only those in Paris. I think it is very appropriate that this debate is cast in wider terms because, whilst the atrocities in Paris have brought this matter front and centre, there have been a range of attacks around the world that basically were carried out with the same motivation.

The attacks in Paris were devastating, though. We know that 130 people were killed at the hands of Islamic terrorists. In addition, there were 368 people injured, including what appears to be one very brave Australian. Obviously, this really resonates for Australians because, as
the Prime Minister has said, Paris is a destination that many of us have visited—and even for those who have not visited, given that Paris is a beacon of art and culture, history, architecture, you name it. We all know it as the City of Light. Being an economic powerhouse and a city of around 10 million people, it really is a centre of Western history and civilisation; there is no doubt about it. So an attack on Paris really sticks with us all.

Notwithstanding the greatness of Paris as a city, at the hands of just a few Islamic terrorists it was brought to its knees in a way that has not happened since World War II. It is a city that, as we all know, has experienced its fair share of turmoil over the centuries and in recent history. While the French people and other Europeans have been grappling with terrorism for a number of years now, the rest of the world has not experienced it in the full force and fury of just some weeks ago. They are the worst attacks since the Madrid bombings in 2004 and they again highlight the seriousness of the threat that all Western liberal democratic nations face.

In the early 2000s, terror attacks such as those in Madrid and, most notably, of September 11 were carefully planned by remote operatives based in Afghanistan and loosely referred to at the time as al-Qaeda. The threat we now face in the West, as is evident from these recent attacks, originates from a far more sophisticated set of jihadists and is based around the ISIS death cult, and unfortunately the tentacles of influence of ISIS spread far beyond its geographic sphere of control in Syria and northern Iraq.

It is quite sobering to note that it is estimated that more than 20,000 people from across the world have travelled to Syria to participate in the conflict in that region since fighting broke out in 2007, and it is clear that a large number of them would have been motivated to be and would have ultimately become combatants for ISIS. Of the many thousands from Europe who have travelled to Syria to join the conflict, people from France, lamentably, are among the highest numbers.

This becomes, as it has become for the French, a national security concern when those citizens return to their home countries. In nearly all cases, I would say, we can assume they return home with very clear instructions from Islamic State, with additional training and an additional understanding of the ways and means to achieve their objectives. They are there to carry on that jihadist movement in the Western liberal democratic nation to which they have returned. It is clear that some of the attackers who carried out the atrocities on 13 November were people who travelled from Syria—taking advantage of weak borders along the way to get to Paris—as well as French citizens.

This is a very alarming set of facts and, in some respects, an inconvenient set of facts for all of us to grapple with. What is most alarming, quite frankly, is that these attacks could have happened anywhere: London, Berlin, Rome, Washington or even, heaven forbid, an Australian city—but for the grace of God. It has not occurred on Australian soil. Because of our amazing security services and others, it has not. But we must look at this template that Islamic State have used in Europe and ensure it is not a template that can be utilised here in Australia.

We have suffered our share of terrorist attacks. The Bali bombings and the Marriot Hotel bombings were directly targeted at Australian interests and at Australians.
As a thriving Western democracy we are not immune from hate groups like Islamic State. Unfortunately, we know that Australia, similar to France, has its fair share of recruits to the ISIS cause. This is why it is so important that we as a government have acted categorically to strip Australian citizenship from dual nationals whose allegiance is shown to be to a perverted, barbaric creed, cause or ideology rather than to Australia.

Clearly, it is the view of this government, it is the view of this House and it is the view of Australians that those who participate in acts of war for Islamic State, raping and pillaging with a medieval barbarity that we have not seen for centuries, do not deserve the privilege of calling Australia home. I am very glad to have seen strident moves in this House to ensure that that legislation comes into full force as soon as possible. Of course, the events in Paris also show the importance of maintaining strong border controls because governments must be able to appropriately vet every person who either is seeking asylum or wants to become a citizen of our country. We should never, ever cede that sovereignty. We have an obligation to all Australian people to guarantee, as best we can, that every person who wants to make Australia home is somebody who does not share in the world view of bloodthirsty death cults.

It is sad that a number of Australians have joined to initially fight with extremist groups such as ISIS. They are participating in conflicts in places such as Syria and northern Iraq. It is clearly a failure that we have people who, in many cases, were born and grew up here do not feel an allegiance to Australia. In many cases, they are people who have been able to revel in the freedoms and the relative prosperity that we have in this country but who, somehow, are drawn into or are instructed in believing this barbaric ideology. It is quite disappointing, and it is something that we must always remember when framing policies in this place. Our security agencies have publicly said that they are managing 400 high-priority counter-terrorism investigations—a number which has doubled, I might add, since the start of this year. This is an alarming statistic. I think that, if we spoke to most people in the street and said that that was the case, they would find it very hard to believe. As I said earlier, I have no doubt that much of the reason we have not faced similar attacks to the ones that we are discussing tonight is due to the outstanding work of our security agencies, including the AFP and ASIO. We really do owe them a debt of gratitude. The way that we can show them that gratitude in this place is to continue the modus operandi of this government—that is, when the security agencies ask us for any legislative or regulatory assistance in doing their job, we give it to them unhesitatingly. We, as a parliament, must always balance competing rights. There are the rights to privacy, the rights to freedom of movement and the rights to free speech. But, in my view, all of those rights are trumped by the right to life and the right of an Australian citizen to go about their daily life unhindered and without fear that they might be in a building, in a theatre or at a concert that is targeted by one of these barbarians who proclaim the creed of Islamic State.

We cannot pretend that, without constant review and constant change, it will be always be okay. As many around the globe have said publicly, Islamic extremism is a problem that we must confront honestly and respectfully but, ultimately, with a view to keeping our citizens safe. We must be prepared to have an open dialogue about why a small but, quite frankly, growing number of Muslims continue to be attracted to this extremist ideology that wishes to do harm to, in many cases, their fellow countrymen. I completely respect and understand the view of my Muslim friends and constituents who say, 'People like that aren't practising Islam.'
They are not practising my religion,' but the reality is there is something that they are using to justify their actions. There is a perverse reading of the relevant religious texts that is giving them, in their mind, the pretext that they need to do abhorrent things in the name of religion. We have to make sure that we confront these issues together. Often, confronting these things is uncomfortable. The truth can be uncomfortable. But what is our obligation in this House? Our obligation here is to do everything that we can to make sure that our citizens are safe and that our children and our grandchildren can grow up in the kind of safe society that we have all benefited from ourselves.

I will not be one of those people who allow a misguided view of political correctness to get in the way of calling things out and calling it as I see it. Clearly, Islamic leaders in our communities must continue to do more in condemning acts of violence from their own communities. These messages are much better coming from leaders within the community than coming from those without. There can be absolutely no excuse for the barbaric behaviour that ISIS espouses. I never want to again see any tacit excuses provided by an Islamic leader, because that, ultimately, is misguided and will give fuel to those who seek to perversely interpret Islamic texts. We in this parliament, and particularly in this government, are keenly aware that our first duty is to ensure the safety of our citizens. Our duty is to ensure that our Western, democratic, liberal values are upheld and they must take primacy over everything else. In my view, that obligation absolutely trumps any kind of political correctness that has enveloped our media and our political lexicon. I can assure you that I will continue to make sure that, to the greatest extent possible, the terrorist attacks that we have seen around the world are stopped from ever occurring in Australia.

Mr PASIN (Barker) (20:07): Before I begin my statement on terrorist attacks, I congratulate the member for Deakin for his contribution. He has become a good friend. He is clearly a solid citizen—someone who in this chamber is in pursuit of the national interest and someone I am proud to call a colleague.

Terrorism could not be more antithetical to democracy. The use of force against civilians in order to promote political aims is abhorrent and immoral. As the elected member for Barker, it is trite to say that my job is to represent the views and interests of the people of my electorate in this place. So, with regard to that, I take this opportunity to convey and share the deep sorrow felt by people across my electorate when they heard of the atrocities in Paris—a city which has been visited by terrorists several times this year alone. It is the same sorrow we felt when we lost 88 Australians in the Bali bombings and when we heard the news of attacks in Martin Place and Parramatta. It is the same despondency we all felt when we saw the exploded remains of an iconic double-decker bus and watched as commuters, covered in soot, crawled out of tube stations in London in the wake of the 7/7 bombings. Indeed, the attacks in Paris delivered the same horror that transfixed the world when domestic airliners were flown into the World Trade Centre in the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and New York was consumed by a cloud of dust and ash.

Terrorist attacks rupture the very fabric of our everyday lives. Often our transport networks or places of leisure are targeted by terrorist groups as they attempt to shatter our perception of the safety that civil society facilitates. In Paris, London, Bali, Sydney and New York, terrorists mobilised their forces to attack each and every citizen, because their target was our perception not our reality. Our hearts go out to the families of the dead and the injured and to
those others who have been affected by these events for their realities have been irreparably warped by the actions of these criminals.

Each nation has in its time faced a terrorist attack. In the modern world, we all feel the threat posed by terrorists as they rail against modernity while spreading their medieval exploits over modern technologies and socialised media platforms. Across this world, we have seen many groups mobilise terror tactics to instil fear into communities. That feeling of fear is the ultimate weapon in the arsenal of the terrorists, yet their greatest weapon is one which is fundamentally contingent on dislocating our resolve. It is a gamble which will fail. We have seen a rapidly changing world deliver an increasing flow of people, culture and ideas. We live in an increasingly connected world. The internet and mass media have spread information at an unprecedented rate. It is this increasingly globalised and networked world in which we live that lends itself to acts of terror, as terrorists seek to bring their wicked exploits into our homes through our televisions, computers, tablets and phones. It is their intention to fill us with a fear such that we change our way of life and yield them our values. It is an endeavour, as I said, which will ultimately fail. Those merchants of fear have a fundamental weakness: their strategy relies on our capitulation. They will not prevail because we will not bow to their demands.

I stand here in this place today reminded of the strength of such values as freedom and democracy. This building is a symbol of the civil, peaceful and cohesive civilization we have hewn from this wide, brown land we call home. Today we have a free, open and safe society, which fosters equality of opportunity, regardless of race, gender or creed. This country was built on those foundations, as was the republic of France. In many ways, the attacks in Paris have had a profound impact on us here in Australia because we have inherited so much from the French. We share their values of equality and freedom. The French are a passionate and cultured people. They care deeply, love fiercely and enjoy a freedom that they themselves fought for. Their national anthem rejoices in seizing freedom from their tyrannical oppressors. The French have always remained as committed to the ideals of freedom and democracy as the Australian people have. Not only do we share such values; we also share much history.

While Australians have enjoyed freedom for well over a century, we too have fought to keep our society liberated from domination. The fields of France hold many young Australians who fought during two world wars to liberate France from the clutches of tyranny and to keep the evils of fascism at bay. In the town of Villers-Bretonneux there is a sign in their local school which reads: 'Never Forget Australia'. Young Australians helped liberate that town from the Germans during the First World War and the people of that town continue to remember that contribution, notwithstanding that some 100 years have passed since that time. Now we face a great tyranny. We face a religious tyranny in the form of Islamic extremism. This religious tyranny is seeking to subjugate our free society through casting a haze of fear over our nations in the same perverted way that it has destabilised Islamic communities across the Middle East. As in the 20th century, when the democratic nations came together to defeat fascism and communism, we must now rally together once more and cast this religious extremism back into the abyss.

Australia stands with all those around this world who seek to live a free and peaceful life. We support their right to freedom and will continue to do our bit to destroy the spectre of terrorism. Democracy is, indeed, a great project, the product of thousands of years of social
progress. It is in the face of that project that we see agents of darkness seeking to pull us back toward their medieval worldview. We cannot afford to take a backward step as we face their barbarity.

Ultimately, they are cowards. They attack everyday people going about their everyday business, because they are devoid of the capacity to take their fight to our security forces. They take fear-reducing drugs to suppress their anxieties; such is the weakness of their commitment to their cause. Indeed, these terrorists fear our capable security services who stand eternally vigilant, ready to dispatch their duty. Whilst we may not be able to stop all acts of terrorism, it is imperative that we mitigate terrorism's effects through a resolute and unshakable commitment to our way of life, to our values and to our Australian culture. We must always remember how terrorism, as a manipulative tool, works and understand that if we redouble our commitment to building a stronger and more prosperous Australia and put freedom at its heart we simply cannot be defeated.

I am amazed to realise that there have been some 298 terrorist attacks across the world thus far this year in France, Nigeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Lebanon, China, Ukraine, Israel, the Philippines, Denmark, Japan, India, Russia and, indeed, here in Australia. We have seen beheadings, suicide bombings, shootings, arsons, immolations, crucifixions, eviscerations and stabbings. We have even seen rocket and vehicle attacks. Just yesterday, a bus filled with presidential guards was bombed in Tunisia, killing 12. In 2015 there has been much violence in the name of religious tyranny, and yet I stand unafraid. I remain resolute in my undying commitment to the values of freedom and democracy, as do my constituents in Barker and, indeed, the people of this great nation.

I stand in our cathedral of democracy in which we can, and often do, disagree with each another, but we do not resort to violence. I am part of a liberal tradition which has long fought to conserve the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, defending freedom of speech and freedom of association. This nation is one which stands against violence against civilians in all its forms. I stand with all those people around the world that refuse to bow down and submit to this new tyranny. Australia stands with the people of Paris. We stand with the people of London, the people of the United States of America, the people of Iraq, the people of Syria, the people of Israel, the people of the Philippines, the people of Denmark and the people of the Ukraine in the face of these acts of terror. Those agents of darkness cannot shake our fundamental belief in freedom. They cannot alter the course of democracy nor our desire to build a better world.

I again would like to take this opportunity to convey my deepest sorrow to all those across our world who have felt the effects of the acts of these terrorists. The Paris attacks sent shock waves around the world, and yet the response has bound us together. The collective grief of the world has been triggered, yet so too has a recommitment to the project of freedom. I am reminded of the words of Billy Bragg in his revision of the English translation of *The Internationale*, and I will quote it in fear that those opposite will always refer to me as 'comrade'; I will take the risk:

Freedom is merely privilege extended
Unless enjoyed by one and all

We remain a tolerant, multiracial society with a strong Australian culture. I am proud to be part of that democratic society and know that those wicked people who resort to mobilising
terrorism to fight freedom will ultimately fail. Our resolve is concrete, our values firm, our actions decisive and, ultimately, our retribution will be swift.

Dr GILLESPIE (Lyne) (20:19): Terrorism by any name is hard to understand. Terror, in itself, is irrational except to the perpetrator of the terror. Anyone who has a clear perspective on what is right and wrong cannot justify acts of terror. Whether it be a jet that is shot down as it is leaving a holiday resort in Egypt, a Mounty on duty at a monument in Canada, people attacking a parliament, people arriving on a boat and turning up at an exclusive hotel with machine guns, or whether it be what we have just recently seen in Paris or what we saw at Parramatta, it does not make sense to the rational mind. What is it that, at the moment, drives people to this terrorism?

Historically, we have seen terror applied, with the bombing of pubs and bars in the UK during the Troubles. That was terrorism. We saw the Red Brigades. That was terrorism too. We saw people attacking the Olympic village. All that is terror in its barest essence. But what we are seeing now is terrorism justified by a religious belief, and that is what I think the world needs to admit to. Depending on which suras of the Koran you read, you can get a different interpretation. But, in essence, whether it was in the Lindt cafe, Parramatta, Paris, Belgium—you name it—there were frequent cries of religious allegiance, there was a banner. You only have to see what is happening in Syria and Iraq. The whole region is a site of terrorism. The whole of the Middle East is fracturing before our very eyes.

It brings up how valuable society, the rule of law and our institutions are in this country. We value freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of religion and the principle of tolerance, and we have to defend those rights. We have to call out terrorism for what it is when it happens. Using euphemisms and soft terminology will not fix the problem. To combat terrorism we have to call it what it is and call out what generates it.

There have been misdeeds across history done in the name of various religions since history began. But, generally, in the Western world and in the areas where we are seeing terrorism raise its ugly head we are the beneficiaries of movements and adjustments that have happened over centuries that have not yet occurred in parts of the Islamic world. I am referring to the Enlightenment, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the universal reassessment of what is involved in Christian principles. Theoretically you can find in the Bible justification to stone a woman to death. You could find justification in the thinking of the kings and queens of England for burning so-called witches and nonbelievers or Protestants at the stake. But Christianity got over that. We worked through it. We reinterpreted things in light of modern-day sentiment. There needs to be that process in Islam.

I know hundreds of Muslims in this country who are very fine, upstanding Australian citizens. They are model citizens—99.9 per cent of them are wonderful assets to the nation. But there are a percentage inside our borders who justify this sort of weird thinking by quoting the Koran. But that does not justify it, just as me stoning someone to death for adultery does not make sense in this day and age. Christianity realised that that is the Old Testament, and sacred texts in the Old Testament have been reinterpreted in view of the New Testament.

I do not think we are going to see the end of this scourge of terrorism soon. How do we defeat it? We defeat it not just by confronting violence with violence. Sometimes you need to point to your argument at the end of the barrel of a gun, but that will not solve the problem.
As the President of Egypt himself said, Egypt needs to have its own Reformation. The changes have to come from within the various Islamic mosques around the world. The imams themselves and the prominent teachers and thinkers in chorus around the world need to point out that violence cannot be justified by selecting bits of the Koran. I do not know how soon this is going to happen, but there are signs around the world. There are publications and prominent Islamic thinkers and speakers who are saying that. I am encouraged by that. I am encouraged by the recent pronouncements by Islamic leaders in our country condemning the violence and also saying more than just passing on condolences.

All of our thoughts are with the victims of terror. We revile in shock and horror at terrorism, but we must continue to call it what it is. We must defend the principles on which our liberal democracy has been founded. That includes all the institutions and laws that we have inherited from 800 to 900 years of British history. That includes tolerance and respect for difference, but you can only respect and tolerate other religions and actions up to a certain red line. No matter what the religion—whether it is Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity or whatever—some actions are not justifiable.

It is a sad day that we have to be standing in this House passing on condolences for events that have recently become a scar on the world. It is going to be a long and tortuous period in human history in front of us, because there are many people who still think it is justifiable to do what we have seen recently. Syria and Iraq are at the epicentre of this battle, but it is being waged on a smaller scale across Africa. Even in Asia there are outposts of this weird and extreme Islamic ideology. I call on those who know that it is unjust and not justifiable to publicly repudiate it because, until there are masses of people within Islam who are publicly repudiating it, things will not be resolved.

We in the West seem to be the focus of their anger. But, from a true global perspective, the people who have the greatest fears and concerns about this Islamic extreme terrorism are other Islamic nations, which we see being turned into ungovernable, post-apocalyptic wastelands of shattered buildings and societies with masses of refugees. We are getting a snapshot of it, but it is going to be a much greater risk to Islamic society than Western society. Nevertheless, we have principles that we are all the beneficiaries of: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the ability to disagree with religion, the separation of state and religion, and a secular, liberal democracy.

My condolences go to all those victims—the hundreds, thousands and millions of people from the Middle East who are suffering from it, as well as those in Paris, Australia and across the world. I encourage all members to remain resolute in defending the freedoms that make our society what it is.

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (20:31): The speaker before me likened the terrorist incidents that have recently occurred as 'a scar on the world'. I have to say that I concur with the view put forward by the honourable member. The incidents that we saw in Paris were shocking to say the least. It is horrific to think of all those young people trapped in the concert hall, who were basically popped off one by one, and the people who had to cower under bodies for fear that they too would be gunned down. They could not have known what was about to unfold that night. You can only imagine the horror in the cafes and the sporting ground while the soccer game was going on. In all of those places across
Paris, at roughly the same time, the forces of hell were unleashed. Those forces of hell, as we know now, were Islamic State.

We have seen many such atrocities across the Western world in recent times, going back over the past decade or so. We have certainly seen—and it has become almost commonplace, sadly—those sorts of atrocities happening in the Middle East, but, when they breach into a Western democracy and places where we, otherwise, have a peaceful existence and like to think we can all coexist with each other, it really is scarring. I could refer to 7/7 in London, where buses were torn apart by fanatical madmen, or the Bali bombings where, again, a bunch of young people, including lots of Australians, were torn to shreds because a jihadist put a bomb in a place knowing that it would kill as many Westerners—or infidels—as possible. I could go right back to 2001, when we saw those planes fly into the twin towers, a plane fly into the Pentagon and another plane, which might, perhaps, have been heading to the White House, fly into a field in Pennsylvania.

We see these images again and again and again around the world. They have even touched Australian soil. We saw Man Monis, a self-styled imam. He might have been self-styled, but so are many imams across this country, because there is no prerequisite for setting up your own Islamic centre and acting in a religious leadership role. He had thousands of followers on Facebook—tens of thousands of followers, I am led to believe—a lot of whom were in Australia. That is concerning. He walked into the Lindt cafe in Martin Place in Sydney and took that place hostage. As a result, two Australians ended up dead. We recently saw the slaughter of Curtis Cheng, where the guy ran out and started screaming, ‘God is great’—'Allahu Akbar’—repeatedly, only to be gunned down by police, who were probably wondering what that hell was going on and why this madness had descended upon the police station.

We are starting to see the incursion into this country of the violent extremism that is coming out of radical Islam. It concerns me, and it concerns me greatly. What concerns me even more than that is the refusal of people in positions of leadership to call it out. It might be politically incorrect to do so; it might be jarring; it might be confronting and offensive to some people here. But it is also reality. In the wake of a terrorist atrocity that was committed by a group calling itself Islamic State, or when someone yelled out 'Allahu Akbar' before they detonated a bomb or shot someone, I get so distraught seeing someone in leadership saying that this had nothing to do with Islam. They are wrong. They are dead wrong. It has everything to do with Islam.

I am not saying that all Muslims—not even the majority of Muslims—would be capable of, or would even think of, committing such an atrocity, but the people who do do so in the belief that they are acting completely in accord with the tenets of Islam, under the guidance of the Koran and the Hadiths and in accordance with the supreme will of their god. They fundamentally believe that.

Islamic State has been behind many of the latest atrocities, even here in Australia. If we look to the Man Monis case, he wanted an Islamic State flag brought to him by the police. He might have been what they call a lone wolf, but Islamic State is encouraging lone wolves to act in its name. That is part of this new battle that we face in this world. If we look at the 18-year-old who stabbed a number of police officers at the police station in Endeavour Hills, he posed on Facebook with a photograph of the Islamic State flag. Islamic State has a lot to do
with what is going on at the moment. It is just the latest in radical Islamic organisations that have come to the fore. We had al-Qaeda at one stage. Elements of that have left and now morphed into Islamic State. In this region, we had Jemaah Islamiah at one stage, which was acting in accordance with al-Qaeda. All of them have the common philosophy of Islamism, of the world view that there are two houses on planet Earth: the house of Islam and the house of war. The house of Islam is where countries and the people are subjugated to the will of Islam, under sharia. The house of war is those countries which have not yet accepted sharia and have not had Islam imposed upon them. It is called the house of war because the belief is that they will continue waging war, or jihad, until those places that are called the house of war become the house of Islam as well.

That is the world view that Islamic State holds, and it is no use to say that it has nothing to do with Islam. Actually, it is very Islamic; it is fundamental Islam, in fact. They take the texts of the Koran and the Hadith literally. They look at the later texts of the Koran and say that, because they were written later, they supersede the earlier, more peaceful sections of the Koran, which is why they can justify what they do. We should not be afraid to call that out and to say that there is a problem there—that there is a problem that obviously exists within a religion, which needs to be sorted out. I believe that it can only be sorted out, ultimately, by those within that religious faith.

The problem is even deeper than that. I could walk out of this place to the front of parliament, have all the cameras in front of me and burn a Bible, and I would probably get a press release from the Australian Christian Lobby condemning me. But if I were to walk out the front of parliament and burn a Koran, I think that everyone in this place would know that there would be a very, very different reaction. We have to ask ourselves, in this day and age, why would there be such a different reaction? What is it that is inherent there amongst a certain particular strand of the Islamic faith that causes that reaction? Those are the questions that need to be asked.

We do not need statements put out by the Grand Mufti the day after the attacks on Paris saying that the reasons behind this were the actions of the West and that the reasons behind it were, 'You are bringing in national security legislation that we don't like,' or something like that. It is justification for the actions of madmen. These actions have been going on long before any of the stuff that Grand Mufti complained about were enacted and were in place. We have had celebrity television presenters telling us that, in the face of this, all we need is to hold hands and have love for our fellow man. There is some truth in that; yes, we do. But it also is a bit cute, and it keeps us from dealing with the real issues and asking the hard questions that do need to be answered.

I, for one, think that as a government we should be doing more to empower those people within Islam to actually speak out and to tell people within their faith why those sections of the Koran and those sections of the Hadith that are twisted around by the murderous fanatics we see in Islamic State are not to be interpreted the way those people interpret them. I could point to someone who is very well-versed in Islamic scholarship—Professor Abdullah Saeed, at the University of Melbourne. I do not know Dr Saeed, but I certainly read a very thought-provoking article from him on the Islamic case for religious liberty. He is a Muslim and a scholar of Islam who believes that there can be a true Islamic separation of the religious from the political. That is something that would be an affront to Islamic State. Unfortunately, a lot,
perhaps, of moderate Muslims believe that there is an intertwining of the religious and the political as well. I say that because I have seen data put out by the Pew study on religious views, which suggested that a lot of Muslims—right around the world and not purely in Australia; they burrowed it down to the United States, another western nation—did believe that sharia law to them was of higher value than the law of the land and that they would adhere to it more, even if it were in conflict. That is concerning. So we need people out there within Islam that are willing to say, with authority, that there can be a separation between the political and the religious.

When I hear other people in this place talking about a reformation, I suppose that that is what I think should happen too. There is one very brave woman, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who is a former Muslim that has been calling for this for a long time. She has been calling for it for a long time and, as a result, has been subjected to repeated death threats. She now has to have security 24/7 wherever she goes. That is sad. So when those leaders in the Muslim community come out and advocate for this—something that we want to see happen so that we do not have more atrocities in this country or around the world—we need to ensure not only that their voice is amplified and heard in the Muslim community and in the wider community but that they are afforded our protection for being brave enough and bold enough to get out there and say that.

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (20:45): With much anxiety and lament, I participate in a debate of very considerable moment. The Prime Minister, on 24 November, made a national security statement. It has now been debated over some time, with many of my colleagues participating in the debate from this side of the House. Interestingly, it was only a little while ago that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was arguing that there should be a debate on these issues, and, in that context, I note that this particular debate is being conducted largely by members of the government.

My colleagues wanted to make it very, very clear that the recent mass killings of so many innocent civilians in Paris, France; in Turkey; in Iraq; in Mali; in Bangladesh and in Afghanistan have no place in the world in which we live. This is terrorism, conducted for reasons that are sometimes, for us, very difficult to understand. We have certain values; we are open, democratic societies. We want to function with people from all over the world—to be able to live together and share each other's culture, ethnicity and faith. I think the world has changed very significantly, but, by some, that is not readily recognised.

We have seen a problem emerge in the Middle East which has led to efforts to overthrow existing governments in Muslim societies, and to provide a place from which terrorist activity can be conducted and can pose a risk to us. They are about, as the Prime Minister said, fomenting resentment between Muslim and non-Muslim populations. They have been about creating an environment in which extremist groups are able to pursue objectives. But the Prime Minister noted that this organisation, as we see it, is essentially weak—and it is weak, in part, because we have allowed a situation to develop that has been extraordinarily difficult to resolve and where there are differences of view, even amongst our friends, about the way forward.

We have seen a situation where enormous numbers of people have been dislocated, and I have witnessed, personally, in the areas surrounding Iraq and Syria, the devastating impact that this situation of hostility has produced. People have fled into Jordan in their hundreds of
thousands, into Lebanon in several millions and into Turkey in much the same way. In Syria, some seven million people are, additionally, displaced.

It is an extraordinarily difficult issue to deal with because the participants, and those that surround them, have different views about how this situation should be resolved. It is not hard to understand, when you look at the Assad regime, which has maintained itself in power by dividing and, inevitably, conquering. It remains there, in part, because it has been able to put together alliances involving the different populations of its own country—the Alawi, the Christian, the Druze, the Shia and some of the Sunni Muslims—against what is often seen to be a Sunni Muslim majority. You have countries surrounding Syria, like Turkey and Saudi Arabia, who want to produce change. You have other countries surrounding Syria, like Iran and Lebanon, where the Hezbollah want to maintain the Syrian regime in power. Similarly, you get the United States supporting, ostensibly, its allies in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and Russia focusing on how it can build linkages into Syria to maintain places for its own presence in the Mediterranean.

This is a situation which is extraordinarily difficult to resolve. In my view, it is not going to be resolved through countries like Australia seeking simply, with other allies, to bomb some parties into submission. ISIL have, over a period of time, been able to obtain a degree of power in areas of Syria and Iraq. They have done so through very considerable use of money and military capacity and they have been the most objectionable regime that you could imagine, in terms of what we understand as civilised society—accepting people with different views and different perspectives.

There is a 60-nation-strong coalition, as the Prime Minister says, whose objective is to disrupt, degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. The Prime Minister argues that a full strategy, not just military but financial, diplomatic and political, is required. He recognised in his statement that Australia is a very significant contributor to the air strikes but that that is doing little more than disrupting the regime. What is needed is a political solution. We are endeavouring to support Iraq and to give it advice as to how it might be able to use its own forces to help resolve this issue.

But it is quite clear that, while some might regard a Western troop arrangement that could produce, in their view, a secure outcome, the problem we have with the way in which events have unfolded in the Middle East is that this can sometimes be enormously counterproductive. It is in that context that I think it is important to recognise that the air campaign has had limited success. It has halted ISIL's momentum. The capacity of ISIL has been degraded. Kurdish and Iraqi forces have won back some territory. But we have a long way to go.

It is from this genesis that we are seeing risks even to ourselves. With electronic communications, with the way in which these people are pursuing their objectives, we are in an extraordinarily difficult position. It is important to note, in the context of what we are experiencing with those people reaching out to people within our own community, that we have to have a very significant strategy to counter violent extremism here in Australia. The government has committed very considerable funds to doing that. We have been debating other laws, including the laws in relation to citizenship deprivation, that are part of an overall strategy. But I think it is very important to understand the importance of that strategy in the context of the nature of the society that we are here in Australia. As the Prime Minister notes, we are a community that has been supported by the government's four-tier approach,
supporting our strong and multicultural society; helping institutions and sectors in our community to combat violent extremism and its ideology, wherever it emerges; challenging and undermining the appeal of terrorist propaganda, especially as we see it online; and intervening to divert individuals away from their violent extremist views.

Over a period of time, I have been very close to our culturally diverse communities. I think it is tremendously important to recognise that we have people of different faiths, different ethnicities, different cultures. It is never perfect, but I think it works better here than it does anywhere else in the world. It is very important, in the way in which we respond to these issues, that we do not undermine that cohesion. I mention that because, at times, we focus so much on the people who are seeking to undermine us that we think it reflects a much broader view in our society than it in fact does.

We have been extraordinarily well serviced by our policing organisations and by our security organisations, which I know have used intelligence in a way that can contain this threat to our society. We ought to be enormously grateful for the way in which they have identified those risks that can potentially harm us. That is not to say that we might not see some further extremist acts here in our community, but we need to be very careful that we do not divide ourselves or allow ourselves to be divided. I think these interests want us to overreact. In that context, I continue to take, to all the communities I meet with, a very strong view about the way in which this government is supportive of our cultural diversity, acknowledges the different streams, focuses on correctly identifying the real risks we face and seeks to address those rather than create more difficult situations for us in the future.

In the context of the Prime Minister's speech, I think it is very important that this battle in which we are involved has had a very significant impact in countries that surround us. It has had a significant impact on populations in countries that we see as our friends and allies. The events that took place in France, in Iraq, in Turkey, in Mali, in Bangladesh and in Afghanistan have troubled me enormously. This should not be seen as just a matter that has impacted upon our friends; this is an issue that has impacted upon the world community. Our approach to dealing with it needs to be clearly strategic and well framed. In the Prime Minister's address to the parliament you see very clearly that the government is about protecting Australia and its interests first and foremost. The government has a clear counter-terrorism strategy which calls for effective leadership in the Australian community and emphasises the importance of maintaining our cultural diversity but also identifying the risks that are there.

I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this debate and I am grateful that the government has seen fit to give the parliament an opportunity to put this matter clearly before the Australian people.

ADJOURNMENT

Social Cohesion

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (21:00): The Prime Minister has changed the tone of the government's language about Muslim Australians, and that is a good thing. Yesterday there was a return to the old rhetoric from the Minister for Resources, which was needlessly aggressive in its tone, illogical in its substance and self-defeating in its impact. His comments were an attempt, more than a week on, to relaunch an attack against the Grand
Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamed. The language of a minority of other members of parliament looks like a coordinated attempt to ignite a sectarian debate.

When people want to claim that Muslim leaders are not being sufficiently resolute in condemning terrorism, they frequently refer to my friend, Dr Jamal Rifi, as someone who makes statements they support. I hope it sounded a note of caution then when those same people saw in the paper today Dr Rifi referring to Dr Mohamed as someone ‘always denouncing acts of terror’.

Following the horrific attacks in Paris and Beirut, Dr Mohamed made three public statements, on his Facebook page, by media release and by further clarification. The first clearly condemned the attacks; the second was terribly worded, but it was an attempt to call for community cohesion; and the third clarified the condemnation of the attacks.

The minister's comments yesterday questioned the sincerity of Dr Mohamed's condemnation claiming 'his first reaction was his instinctive reaction'. Why, oh why, would anyone think it was clever to claim that a religious and community leader who is condemning terrorism does not really mean it? Whose interests could possibly be advanced by that? The minister also forgot the first reaction was not the media statement, but the Facebook post which said the following:

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, families and people of Paris and Beirut at this time of unspeakable horror. We will continually stand united in peace with them against such heinous attacks of cowardice. There are no words to truly describe the devastation of these acts but we will continue in solidarity and pray for peace.

If the first reaction is the one that counts, that was the first statement put out. The media statement on its own did send the wrong message, and that is why the third statement went out.

But why try to undermine a Muslim leader who has been known throughout the community from the time he was appointed as someone who has consistently denounced and condemned terrorism? It is self-defeating. I do not doubt for one minute the sincere commitment of every member of this parliament to defeating the scourge of terrorism. That is why I urge all members to stop attacking our allies. Community leaders who have such a history of condemning terrorism are essential allies in this battle. If you attack and demean these allies, there is only one cause which is strengthened, and it is the reprehensible one we all oppose. When goodwill is on offer, we should welcome the goodwill and return it.

The old rhetoric offered by the minister should be viewed as a clumsy statement which will one day itself be clarified. It has been devastating over the last few days to see members of this place make statements which are clearly calculated to cause division. If an appeal to decency does not register with some MPs, then maybe an appeal to national security will. The heads of our security agencies and police forces all say that this community is our strongest ally in defeating the influence of these horrific groups. Surely, that is enough.

To the half million Australians who hold Islam as their faith, I say: just as the extremists do not represent you, in the same way the politicians stoking division do not represent the majority of members on either side in this place. To the rest of Australia, let’s welcome friendship when it is offered and not try to demonise Australians who in fact stand together with us. To those who have made comments which have reverberated around the country and stoked division in the last few days, please stop. This helps no-one. It tells people who are
doing the right thing that you do not trust them. It hurts and assassinates the character of people who are our allies and friends in the community.

I will disagree with the Prime Minister on many issues, but when he calls for calm, could every member of this parliament—like the speaker before me, the member for Berowra—heed that call, whether they are backbench or frontbench.

Infrastructure: South-East Queensland

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (21:04): South-East Queensland is responsible for one fifth of Australia's economic and employment activity; and currently one in seven Australians resides there. Its population is expected to grow from 3,000,000 to over 4,000,000 by 2031 and to nearly 5,000,000 by 2041 and so it will take just one generation before one in five Australians resides in South-East Queensland. Of course, that part of Australia offers affordable housing, a high standard of living, and an idyllic climate, and all of that desirability attracts new business and residents. They come predominantly for those assets of this region.

It is very important that we talk about planning and infrastructure for that part of Australia that is growing so fast. It is inadequate to apportion infrastructure resources according to the current population. We need to be looking at the overwhelming economic and employment growth that is happening in that part of Australia, together with the projections through to 2041 and 2051. Running consecutive budget deficits and having jurisdictions in deep structural debt have taken away the opportunity for planners and governments to build infrastructure for the future or even to build infrastructure for the present. So we are in this invidious situation where we pay as we go, building just the infrastructure we can afford in the areas that are most desperate. That takes away the element of advantage in planning for the future.

The Council of Mayors from South-East Queensland are regular visitors to this place, and their only plea is that all jurisdictions work together. The stakes are no greater anywhere in Australia than in South-East Queensland. As I pointed out, for this economically significant region it is absolutely vital that we get value for money and strategic thinking for that part of Australia before it is too late. The region is referred to as the 200-kilometre city, stretching from Noosa to the border, and there are very few opportunities to get things wrong over the next generation. If we divide up the infrastructure money from the last Labor budget and the first coalition budget, it is pretty clear that South-East Queensland did not do too badly—when you throw in the Toowoomba Range Crossing, which is fundamentally infrastructure for the nation.

Connecting to Brisbane to Melbourne more efficiently is as much a public good for Melbourne as it is for Brisbane, so when I look at what is happening in Brisbane I am deeply concerned that the prime investment is the Bracken Ridge to Nudgee triple-laning of the Gateway Motorway, which has a very specific benefit but we have a far greater challenge around what is still a hub and spoke city that has failed to decentralise itself. It is still utterly reliant on its CBD and it continues, sadly, to move major infrastructure, federal and state, into its heart, including the Australian Taxation Office—right into within 50 metres of the Queen Street Mall. There is no need for federal government infrastructure to be clustered around the Queen Street Mall. There is every reason to have a multifocal city, as Sydney has attempted to do, but we are hampered by the range of Brisbane City Council and its boundaries.
The sheer reality is that this council cannot on its own make these calls. It ultimately falls to the Queensland government to direct, and Queenslanders, where they intended to or not, have elected a zero infrastructure state Labor government that will offer very little because they have nothing left to give. This is a state Labor government that simply inherited the credit rating and the budget debt that was created by the former Labor administration. We see three more years, potentially, of paralysis when tough decisions have to be made. Labor has proven itself incapable of developing substantial and effective PPPs. The one that was attempted in 2011 led to $240 million worth of schools being constructed in Brisbane, with the overall bill rising to nearly $1.1 billion—paid by Queenslanders, and they got only seven schools in return. This was a state Labor government that had run out of money. It was a state Labor government that had corroded its financial position to the point where spending an extra dollar would probably further reduce their credit rating. They had no alternative but to go to the market in the middle of the GST to do something as fundamental as build a school. When the offer came in, it was $1.1 billion to get $240 million worth of schools.

Now is the time, while we have a Queensland government almost incapable of arriving at significant deals with the Commonwealth, to ask ourselves what is the future for this part of Queensland. I commend the mayors for their courage and I call on Canberra to do everything they can to help this part of Australia.

**Telecommunications**

**Mr MITCHELL** (McEwen—Second Deputy Speaker) (21:09): Once again I find myself speaking on the mobile phone black spot issue, this time on behalf of the community of St Andrews—just near your electorate, Mr Speaker. Through the Mobile Black Spot Program, my electorate of McEwen—which covers 4,592 square kilometres, is a recognised growth area in the north of Melbourne, is prone to natural disasters and submitted over 30 black spot locations for consideration by the program—received funding for two towers in the recent announcement made by this government. To put this in context, of the 500 mobile towers announced in the July 2015 release, 417 went to Liberal and National held seats. Only 81 towers went to other electorates—including 30 in Indi, seven in Fairfax and 18 in Kennedy. And a paltry two towers were allocated to McEwen, an area that has experienced some of the worst disasters of modern times.

When this outcome was realised, we asked questions. We asked how one of the most bushfire prone areas of Australia, that met and went beyond each and every single criterion set by the government, received such a paltry outcome? The answer we have received is that the decision was essentially a commercial one made within the rules laid down by this government. Decisions on locations were driven by economic consideration rather than operational effectiveness. Were there existing towers in the area that could be upgraded? Or, would new ones need to be built which would increase the cost? Pragmatism ultimately prevailed—for the benefit of the shareholders, not for the benefit of communities. The focus has been on picking the low-hanging fruit—that is, where existing towers could be recommissioned or upgraded. I do not blame the telcos for playing by the rules set out by the government for this program. I do blame the government, and the Prime Minister when he was Minister for Communications, for establishing a program that puts dollars before lives. I have been saying for a long time now: this program is broken and the Prime Minister must now recognise that and fix it.
This is the case for the community of St Andrews, one of the two locations selected in my black spot, natural disaster prone electorate. The town of St Andrews has existing coverage. It lies in a gully surrounded by hills that are about 190m above sea level. The outlying areas around those hills are black spots. Under the Turnbull Black Spot Program it was decided to recommission an existing tower—which has not been in use for years!—that is located inside the gully to provide a service to a town that already has coverage. The locals reckon the tower has been there, switched off and doing nothing, for more than 20 years. Looking at the tower's licensing history, they are pretty close to the money on that. The key point is that recommissioning this tower will not extend coverage far enough to include the black spot areas, and that is what the locals need.

At a community meeting last week, St Andrews locals told Telstra they wanted coverage extended to the black spot areas. These were the areas of greatest risk and threat to life. They were satisfied with the existing coverage in the town. Locals explained the community's needs and made a reasonable request—to please address the real black spot problem. The local residents asked the right question—is this the best location for the tower to address the black spots on the outskirts of the town? What we have here is a failure to communicate. Instead of addressing the community's concerns, we are told that the recommissioning of an existing tower will go ahead. This is despite the fact that local residents, with local knowledge, explained that the service would not reach where it was needed most because of the terrain. This was despite mapping evidence showing that the residents are right.

What does this inflexibility achieve? It is all about acquitting the program implementation plan, regardless of the real outcome? Big tick, save money, so-called black spot problem solved. Only it isn't. I am left scratching my head because there is no logic here. Does recommissioning this particular tower give the government and the community it is supposed to serve the biggest bang for its buck? The Turnbull government should have shown more rigour in the approval process and tested the communications companies' claims to make sure the proposals were the solutions the community where seeking.

St Andrews and other black spot areas of McEwen were not talking about the need for additional towers to cope with seasonal demand, like ski-field selfies. The black spots are not going to go away by themselves. The solution to this problem requires real dedication and commitment. It is only when we have a real conversation, when all parties are able to identify the problem, offer alternatives and agree on a solution, that any progress is going to be made. The approach taken in St Andrews to stubbornly recommission a defunct tower, which had obviously been switched off for a reason, is not a good outcome. I stand with the St Andrews community and call on the government to declare this consultation process over. I call on the government to show some rigour and start a new consultation process with the community—one without a predetermined outcome. We need towers in locations that will actually do something.

Herbert Electorate: 3rd Brigade

Mr EWEN JONES (Herbert—Government Whip) (21:14): As 2015 heads toward an inevitable close, Townsville's 3rd Brigade at Lavarack Barracks embarks on a new phase. The last couple of years have seen a remarkable transition from an infantry base to a base which has embraced cavalry as a fully mobile, fully integrated, digitised, modern Australian Army unit. Under the stewardship of Brigadier Roger Noble, 2nd Cavalry Regiment now calls
Townsville home. The black berets and their wedge-tailed eagle mascot fit right in with our city and we welcome them. Brigadier Noble also oversaw the digitisation of the command and control, C2, system, which was ‘a massive jump, taking our Australian Army from the 20th century into a 21st century modern, efficient army unit’.

Brigadier Noble, like all good leaders, deflects all credit to his team of officers, the NCOs, his soldiers and the civilians who make up the dedicated workforce at Lavarack Barracks. As Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull says, our best assets are our people, and so it is with the Army and ADF. Leaders such as Roger Noble recognise this, with a management style which promotes the core behaviours that define them as Australian soldiers of courage, initiative, teamwork and respect, and allows their people to express these values to their fullest extent. Brigadier Noble has been transferred to Sydney’s Victoria Barracks. He joins a long list of brilliant soldiers who have commanded 3rd Brigade. The incoming brigadier is Brigadier Christopher Field, an infantry man through and through with a brilliant service record. He will continue to ensure that the 3rd Brigade remains Australia's premier Army base and the premier soldier transfer in our modern Australian Army.

The relationship between the city of Townsville and the ADF, and I include the RAAF and Navy in this, is very tight. Successive mayors, brigadiers and wing commanders have worked together to ensure the smooth relationship we currently enjoy remains just that way. It is not just the 1RAR band which plays at just about every charity event in the city and region, it is not the 2RAR pipe band which turns up everywhere, it is not the way that the entire ADF turn up post-cyclone and move hundreds of tonnes of debris from our communities at a moment's notice, and it is not the way that they do every doorknock for the Salvos or the surf-lifesavers and the like. To me, it is the way that they are the other mums and dads at schools, sport and dance on the weekends, struggling with the same things we all do. They are simply part of our community. There is no 'us and them'.

To all at Lavarack Barracks, to all at Ross Island and to all at RAAF Base Townsville, including 5 Aviation, and whether or not you wear a uniform, we say thank you for being a big part of our city. We wish you all the very best for a safe and happy Christmas and a brilliant, busy and productive 2016. To Brigadier Roger Noble and his wife and right hand, Danielle, and those two little balls of energy, we say thank you for your love of our city. We say thank you for your friendship and your generous nature. We say thank you for your professionalism and dedication. We wish you all the very best and hope that you will return to Townsville frequently. On a personal note, I also thank Brigadier Noble, who, along with Stuart Smith and Shane Caughey, were so patient with me as the member for Herbert. I thank you all for your love of history and of the brigade. To incoming Brigade Chris Field: lots of pictures, please, mate.

When you add in those who have served and called Townsville home, you get the real picture of just how big Defence is in my city. In Townsville, it is not six degrees of separation; it is one degree of separation. Townsville people are proud of all aspects of our city and all aspects of our community. Defence is a large part of that and when you add in the RSLs, the veterans and ex-service organisations, and you total up what they bring to our city, you get a picture of just what Defence and the men and women of our ADF mean to us, as a city and as a community. We will never, ever take that for granted.
National Security

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (21:19): There has been a welcome change of tone in our national conversation about terrorism and national security since the new Prime Minister deposed the member for Warringah. Gone is the worst of the member for Warringah's needless chest beating, his divisive language and his lecturing of Australian Muslims and declared lack of trust in them. It was divisive language which made us less safe. None of it was helpful, none of it contributed to our fight against terror and none of it helped make this a more cohesive, more resilient community. That is why the change in language matters—and it is a positive change. As the Prime Minister said the other day in this place:

This is not a time for gestures or machismo. Calm, clinical, professional, effective—that is how we defeat this menace.

But it seems that some members of the coalition parties cannot abide this positive development. They want to undermine their own Prime Minister on national security, the most important responsibility of any government. A number of coalition figures broke ranks this morning. Australians awoke to read in the Herald Sun some quite incredible contributions from, among others, the members for Canning, Deakin, Hughes and Dawson. The member for Canning appeared on page 1, depicted in this country's military uniform next to a headline screaming: 'Islam must change.' The member for Canning said:

Modern Islam needs to cohere with the Australian way of life, our values and institutions.

He went on to demand that the religion be 'reformed'. This is divisive. It gives licence to those who would stir up unrest in our multicultural, tolerant society. It is completely unhelpful in the fight against terror, a fight in which Muslim Australians play a very great part. What arrogance from the member for Canning to lecture hundreds of thousands of Muslim Australians about their faith. What hypocrisy from a politician who has, quite rightly, insisted that his private faith had little to do with his contribution to public life.

Incredibly, his colleague the member for Deakin weighed in with a theological opinion, suggesting that Islam needed a kind of 'reformation', an extraordinary thing for a political leader to say about a religion followed by many of his fellow Australians, and a strange suggestion, too, given the centuries of sectarian blood-letting which attended Christianity's Reformation.

The many hundreds of thousands of Australians who practise Islam deserve better than this from those who are meant to be representing them in this place. The Australian Muslim community has a long and proud history stretching back into the middle of last century, certainly well before the arrival of many millions of migrants of Christian faith, for example.

Perhaps these conservative members should actually go out into their electorates and speak with their Muslim constituents rather than lecture them from the front pages of the tabloids. Maybe they would learn something. Maybe they would hear about the hard work Muslim communities do—work that has been praised by our police and our security agencies—to combat violent, extremist ideologies which threaten their young people. Maybe they would come to understand what it feels like to have your faith and your community questioned by political leaders who ought to know better—to fear the hatred that this might stir up against you.
The Prime Minister had it right the other day when he said:
Strategically, ISIL wants to create division by fomenting resentment between Muslims and non-Muslim populations.
While he is out of the country, it seems that members of his own party are set on doing just that: irresponsibly stirring up division and distrust between Muslim and non-Muslim Australians. We should not tolerate it. The Prime Minister's welcome change of rhetoric will prove very hollow indeed if it is defied by members of his own party. It is time they were pulled into line.

Wright Electorate: Scenic Rim Business Excellence Awards
Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright) (21:24): Today we were joined in the parliament by the Council of Mayors of South-East Queensland. I take this opportunity to acknowledge Paul Antonio, Mayor of Toowoomba; Paul Pisasale, Mayor of Ipswich; Graham Quirk, Lord Mayor of Brisbane; Mark Jamieson, Sunshine Coast mayor, from the north coast; and Janet Holstein, representing Steve Jones, Mayor of Lockyer Valley.

In particular, I acknowledge John Brent, mayor of Scenic Rim, who held the Scenic Rim Business Excellence Awards at The Centre in Beaudesert the other day. There were a number of nominations received. We had 22 finalists in eight different categories, and the winners were declared on the night. The awards highlighted innovation, business excellence and good corporate citizenship.

The winners in the Business Innovation category were the Lime Caviar Company, which beat Beard and Brau farmhouse brewery to win. The Lime Caviar Company is run by husband-and-wife duo Ian and Margie Douglas, who operate a unique finger-lime plantation near Rathdowney. In the Business Marketing category, Jasmin Organics skincare and the Scenic Rim Robotic Dairy lost out to Nightfall Camp.

The Corporate Citizenship award was taken out by Camp Qld, an organisation which offers school camp facilities and activities on the banks of Lake Moogerah. They do an excellent job. Leanne Conoley began Camp Qld in 2006 after noticing there was no one-stop shop for school camps. Teachers are provided with all of the necessary tools to enhance their programs, including curriculum references, subsidies for students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds and all the necessary paperwork to make their camp experience enjoyable.

In the Customer Service category, Mountain Sanctuary B&B and Pethers Rainforest Retreat were beaten by Clouds on Beechmont. Wilson and Jazz Gaythwaite accepted the award on the night—well deserved. Clouds on Beechmont offers three accommodation options on the Beechmont Plateau, including Old Saint John's Church, built in 1932.

In the Environmental Sustainability category, Beard and Brau farmhouse brewery was victorious. The Tamborine Mountain brewery was originally founded by Chris Herring and Tanya Harlow in Adelaide, before they made their move north. The company emphasise sustainability, community and self-sufficiency in their brewing, and employ solar power and rainwater collected to create their range of beers.

Jade Matthews from Camp Qld took out Young Employee of the Year. Lisa Cash from Fit Up Fitness Gym in Boonah—Boonah's first gym, I might add—won Young Business Person of the Year, and we congratulate Lisa on her entrepreneurship. Encouragement awards went to Leigh Moana from Moana Marketing, a local marketing firm that specialises in providing
affordable small business solutions; and to Andy and Toni Cooper from Valley Kitchen, a local restaurant in Kooralbyn which is a great meeting place for locals and serves a great selection of local foods for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Lihau Wong from Jasmin Organics skincare won Business Person of the Year. They were most gracious winners. There could not be more deserving winners. On the night, chief operations officer Gordon Chalmers accepted the award. Jasmin skincare was founded in 1999 and has been globally distributing totally organic, chemical-free skincare since 2003. Their head office remains on Tamborine Mountain, where many of the skincare ingredients are also farmed. Jasmin Organics also took out the Platinum Award, a well-deserved win.

I want to acknowledge the contribution made by the chambers of commerce in sponsoring the awards. The format this year was somewhat different and made for a most relaxed and enjoyable evening. To each of the nominees who put themselves up for consideration in each of the categories, I say thank you for your contribution to our community, thank you for the efforts that you make by employing our locals and thank you for the enthusiasm that you show in making our community of Scenic Rim a great place to live. To the Scenic Rim council: thank you so much for your support, your sponsorship, your drive and enthusiasm, and the vehicle that you provide for the chambers of commerce and these people to prosper. To John Brent, the mayor of Scenic Rim, who drives that community from the front and has no less than 34 years experience in local government: I commend you, sir.

Ladies in Black

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (21:29): In 20 years time, when Ladies in Black is having its second-decade anniversary performance, I will be able to say that I was at the opening night of that Queensland Theatre Company production of an Australian original musical. It is an amazing musical based on Madeleine St John's novel The Women in Black—book by Carolyn Burns; music and lyrics by Tim Finn, the very famous musician; and directed by Simon Phillips. The Queensland Theatre Company is rightly proud of the work that it did in bringing such an amazing and wonderful musical production to the stage for the benefit of the audiences of Queensland. I have no doubt that it will be an instant classic and enjoyed by audiences for decades to come.

House adjourned at 21:30
CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

HIV-AIDS

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (10:30): Tomorrow is World AIDS Day, a day to raise awareness of HIV-AIDS issues to show support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died. We have come a long way since the first World AIDS Day in 1988. While AIDS has killed more than 36 million people since the early 1980s, medical advances mean that with appropriate testing and treatment, HIV today is now a chronic disease not a death sentence. Those of us who have lost loved ones to AIDS should take solace from this progress. Unfortunately, despite this, a lack of access to testing and treatment means that even today, AIDS takes around two million lives each year, including around 270,000 children worldwide. As we have seen in some of the coverage surrounding the recent diagnosis of Charlie Sheen, even in the developing world HIV still carries a stigma, which we must continue to work to break down.

The theme of this year's World AIDS Day is 'Getting to zero—zero new HIV infections, zero deaths from AIDS-related illness, zero discrimination.' This is a laudable objective indeed. In the Aids 2014 legacy statement, all Australian health ministers agreed to the objective of virtually eliminating new HIV infections in Australia by 2020. But with four years to go, we still have some work to do. A doubling of testing rates, educational campaigns and a renewed emphasis on early access to HIV treatments have contributed to the stabilising of diagnoses in recent years, but more needs to be done. Pre-exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a relatively new drug that gives us a realistic chance of almost completely the accidental spread of HIV in Australia. When used daily, the US CDC has estimated that PrEP reduces the risk of contracting HIV from sex by more than 90 per cent and from intravenous drug use by more than 70 per cent. That is why Labor included support for PrEP in section 96 of our national platform this year, which reads: 'Labor recognises the importance of renewing efforts to reduce the spread of HIV-AIDS, including adopting prophylactic treatments, subject to the approval of independent regulators and any recommendation from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, sexually-transmitted infections, and blood borne viruses, in partnership with the non-governmental organisation sector and driven by expert evidence.'

Currently the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme does not yet subsidise these PrEP drugs. Although PrEP can be prescribed off label and is prohibitively priced at around $10,000 per year, cheaper generic brands can be obtained via online pharmacies but this is a potentially risky option. Gilead is currently seeking TGA approval to licence TRUVADA for PrEP use in Australia, but it could be months or even years before it is listed on the subsidised PBS, and available for only $27.70 a script, should experts recommend that PrEP be included on the PBS. I urge the government not to delay and to swiftly ensure that PrEP is made available to Australians throughout Australia through the PBS.

Second Sydney Airport

Mrs MARKUS (Macquarie) (10:33): I rise to speak today regarding the Western Sydney Airport, which will be developed in Greater Western Sydney at Badgerys Creek. I rise to
assure residents I represent that I have heard their concerns and I have been and will continue to advocate strongly on their behalf. An airport is needed for Greater Western Sydney. It is, after all, our nation's fourth largest city, and the economic outcome for the region in both business and employment opportunities is significant. In fact, it will provide some 60,000 jobs in the three decades following the airport's opening. Labor wants this airport too. However, I understand residents move to the lower Blue Mountains for lifestyle choices and for many, pending flight paths directly overhead were not part of the equation.

What have I been doing to advocate on your behalf? I requested the public consultation period for the draft EIS to be increased beyond 20 days. I immediately requested an information session in the lower Blue Mountains, the first of which was held in Blaxland on 31 October which I attended. Brochures regarding the sessions were handed out at lower Mountains train stations, businesses, to the local paper, facebook and my website. Some advised that they were still not aware of the session, so I requested another which will take place at the Glenbrook School of Arts on 9 December from 4 pm to 7 pm. I have met with and made representations to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, advising of my and the community's concern about the flight paths, and requesting clarification that operations would not interfere with firefighting or other emergency air procedures. I met with representatives from the Blue Mountains City Council, including the mayor, the deputy mayor and the general manager, to discuss their concerns, together with a senior member from the office of the Minister for the Environment. As difficult as it was to arrange in this last parliamentary sitting week, today the Blue Mountains City Council will meet with the Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Warren Truss, right here in Parliament House. I have met and spoken on several occasions to the Minister for Major Projects, Territories and Local Government, Paul Fletcher, and have again arranged meetings for representatives from the Blue Mountains City Council with the minister in the Blue Mountains in the coming weeks. I have spoken regularly with senior members of the offices of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, and the Minister for the Environment. I have met and spoken directly with Airservices Australia.

I will be meeting with Minister Hunt, the Minister for the Environment, following the close of the EIS and once submissions have been received. I will be making my own submission regarding the flight paths on behalf of the community before the close on 18 December, to find a possible alternative route that will not compromise residents or the World Heritage status of the national park. I will be requesting emission-free vehicles to be utilised in the airport site and genuine biobanking to preserve our environment, and I will be advocating for a rail link for airport passengers. I was pleased to see the scoping study announced regarding this.

**Scullin Electorate: Bubup Wilam**

**Mr Giles** (Scullin) (10:36): Bubup Wilam is an Aboriginal child and family centre established under the former national partnerships, located in Thomastown in the Scullin electorate. I have often spoken about Bubup Wilam in this place because it is so important to the Indigenous communities of Melbourne's north. I am incredibly proud of the work that Bubup Wilam does not only in terms of supporting early childhood education and young families but also as a hub for Melbourne's north's expanding Aboriginal population.
On Friday I was very pleased to be able to attend the annual Funfields day that Bubup organises with staff, children and parents from the centre. This day was made possible by Bubup Wilam's CEO, Lisa Thorpe, securing donations from generous community members. It was great for the kids to visit Funfields and also great for the parents to have the opportunity to catch up with one another and engage with Bubup Wilam's staff in respect of any concerns they have about the children's progress.

It was a day in which there was much to celebrate through the achievements of the year, the growing resilience of children and the strengthening of families. There was much to celebrate, but all of this celebration takes place under a significant cloud of uncertain funding arrangements. Bubup Wilam not only provides child care and early childhood learning to a community which faces some challenges but also provides important health and financial services which pull the community together. It is making a huge contribution to the communities of Melbourne's north, particularly the Aboriginal community, but it is a presence which is visible right across the communities that I represent. It is teaching Indigenous children about culture and heritage and, through a particularly tailored curriculum, helping these children solidify their proud Aboriginal identity. It is also a place which is employing a number of Aboriginal workers: nearly 50 per cent of the 47 staff there are Aboriginal.

But it is facing a very significant cost shortfall, and the federal government has, unfortunately, tried to pass on funding responsibility to the state. Since the election of the Andrews Labor government we have seen a state government working hard to try and close this gap, but without certainty over core funding Bubup Wilam staff are uncertain of their future and are unable to set-up a business plan into the future. This is unsatisfactory. Since the cessation of the national partnership, this government has refused to give funding certainty. This government needs to put its money where its mouth is in terms of its commitment to closing the gap and meeting school attendance goals. Bubup Wilam is a community run and delivered service, catering to the growing Aboriginal communities of Melbourne's north in a way that is unique. If it is unable to secure meaningful federal support, these services will simply disappear. This will be a tragedy for Thomastown and the wider communities of Melbourne's north. I am hopeful, because I hear good signs from the minister, that progress can be made, but I want the Indigenous communities of Melbourne's north to know that I will not rest until funding has been secured.

Forde Electorate

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (10:39): It is always a terrific opportunity to stand in this House and celebrate some of the wonderful events that go on in our electorates each week. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about some of the fantastic events that I had the opportunity to attend over the weekend. Firstly, I would like to congratulate Soroptimist International Beenleigh for organising the annual walk to end domestic violence on Saturday in the Beenleigh Town Centre. This was the fourth walk of its kind. The event was supported by Bravehearts, with founder Hetty Johnston taking part. It was also supported by our outstanding police, who do such tremendous work in the community and who unfortunately have to deal face-to-face with the effects of family and domestic violence. It was also great to see so many members of the community supporting this event and joining together to protest against domestic and family violence and to support White Ribbon Day.
Over the weekend, the Beenleigh Tennis Club hosted the home tie for the Asia-Pacific Tennis League. The Beenleigh Blaze were in terrific form. If they had won the tie, they would have progressed to the national final. Unfortunately that was not to be the case; whilst the women had great success, the men were not so successful. But it is terrific to see so many people there supporting our local tennis club, and also the terrific efforts by all of the players, the volunteers, the ball boys and the coaches. It was a terrific event and very well run. Beenleigh Tennis Club is well recognised for the quality of the competitions that they run.

Beenleigh Girl Guides celebrated their 70th birthday on Saturday with a ceremony, a concert and an afternoon tea. I would like to thank District Leader Jackie McSwain for inviting me along to attend these celebrations. The Girl Guides are a terrific organisation that does tremendous work in our local community. I would like commend Jackie and her leadership team, but also all the volunteers at Beenleigh Girl Guides and all the young women that take part there, for the terrific work that they do in our local community. The Beenleigh Family Centre held their inaugural community Christmas fair on Saturday, and it was great to see them getting involved in the community. It was a great turnout, and the opportunity to celebrate with friends and neighbours. It was a great community success.

Finally, I would like to recognise the efforts of Heather Redman and the team at Loganlea Community Centre who do an amazing job every year handing out Christmas hampers to people in need in our community. Heather shared with me that it has been a difficult year, with many more in need than usual. I ask that anybody who has the opportunity donate a gift or money, to any Christmas appeal, to help those less fortunate in our community at this time of year.

Canberra Electorate: National Broadband Network

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (10:42): I rise this morning to again speak about an issue that is having a significant impact on thousands of Canberrans—that is, their internet connection, or lack thereof. Over the last six months I have been hearing from Canberrans who have some of the lowest quality broadband in the country—and that is if they can get access to it. Many cannot, and are forced to use expensive and unreliable dongles. To make the situation worse, the Canberrans who need the NBN the most will have the longest wait. The next three-year rollout plan for the NBN, released in October, fails to include the Canberra suburbs that have the poorest broadband internet rating in the country. The vast majority of Tuggeranong, including suburbs like Monash and Theodore which have the lowest ratings in the country for both availability and quality of broadband—they are not even on the rollout map.

It means Canberrans are missing out on the opportunities provided by the NBN: opportunities to work and study from home; opportunities for telehealth and for better communication; opportunities to start up your own small business and to run it effectively from home; opportunities to study and to learn from home; and opportunities to contribute to civil society and to be active citizens. Canberrans have been let down by this Liberal government and its second-rate NBN—Canberrans like Omar, who wrote to me and said:

The consistently neglected Tuggeranong area will probably get NBN in 2050. We pay all taxes for fed government and local government yet it's all spent up north. We get close to zero new or upgraded infrastructure by comparison.

And like Adrian, who wrote:
In global standards we are a third world country when it comes to internet download speeds and pricing! Latvia has faster average internet speeds than we do!
That is, here in the nation's capital. Daniel wrote:
Please help. Our internet is terrible. Three or four times a week it won't work at all. Certainly limits productivity! Work provides flexible work options, but without a reliable internet this is limited, and can also be dreadfully inefficient even when connected! And we're not on the rollout map!
I heard many more comments like these from Canberrans at an NBN forum I hosted with the shadow minister for communications a few months ago. That night, I promised Canberrans that I would start a petition, and that I would lobby hard to have Canberra's NBN rollout prioritised. A few months later, more than 700 people have signed my petition; we are currently up to 741 signatures. The message is loud and clear, Deputy Speaker: Canberrans want the NBN, and we want it now. Canberrans: we have got three more days, sign my petition and send the message to the government—we want NBN and we want it now!

Dobell Electorate: Coast Shelter

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (10:45): I rise today to speak about Coast Shelter, an organisation on the Central Coast that is dedicated to providing assistance to the most vulnerable people in our community. Coast Shelter has been operating since 2002, supporting homeless or at-risk, financially disadvantaged, socially isolated and drug- or alcohol-addicted community members. The organisation has grown since 2002 to include nine refuges, a community hub, and over 60 outreach properties across the Central Coast. They have three women and children's refuges, five youth refuges, and a men's accommodation program. Each night, Coast Shelter accommodates 150 people who are in dire need of a bed for the night. They not only provide for immediate needs, such as a bed for the night, a hot shower, laundry facilities and a meal, but their incredible network of volunteers and support workers link people with services to assist with legal advice, housing and accommodation, and assessments and referrals to agencies. Coast Shelter is committed to tackling homelessness and to campaigning for the social inclusion of the disadvantaged in our community. They believe in empowering individuals, through support and advocacy, to remedy the circumstances that led to their homeless situation in the first place.

In 2013-14, Coast Shelter provided 53,367 overnight beds for clients who were in a situation of homelessness. They arranged housing for 565 people—yet another 1,524 were unable to be housed due to there being no vacancies. A large proportion of those who sought the assistance of Coast Shelter—23 per cent—found themselves in a homeless situation due to financial stress, housing stress, or housing crisis. Another 17 per cent sought help due to family breakdown, relationship issues, or needing time out from family. Other reasons included mental health issues, problematic substance abuse, inappropriate dwellings, lack of family support, and transitional accommodation issues.

However, there is one predominant area that is an ongoing concern and that is the rising number of women and children in homeless situations due to domestic and family violence. Coast Shelter is responding to the increased numbers of women and children escaping domestic violence. They have established a comprehensive program to support other Central Coast services, in an attempt to stem the high levels of family and domestic violence. At the moment, Coast Shelter is only able to accommodate one in five of the homeless women and children who approach them for assistance. More than half of them are victims of domestic
violence. I applaud Coast Shelter for their front-line approach in tackling domestic violence, and I also commend Laurie Maher, the executive officer, his team at Coast Shelter, and all of the volunteers for their compassion, genuine care and dedication in reaching out and helping those who are desperately in need. I look forward to continuing to work with Coast Shelter to support their great efforts in our community.

Corio Electorate: Economy

Mr MARLES (Corio) (10:48): I read with interest that this weekend gone, the Victorian Liberal State Council met in my electorate in Geelong. But, whilst they may have been in Geelong, it is very clear that there is little understanding from that entity about what is being experienced through the impacts of government policy in suburbs like Norlane and Corio. Today in the suburbs of Norlane and Corio, unemployment stands at a staggering 21.7 per cent; 15 percentage points higher than the state average. Today, youth unemployment in my electorate is at 20.6 per cent; six points higher than the state average. And yet, the federal Liberal government still has no plans to fix unemployment in and around Geelong. Instead, we have a Prime Minister and a government who have cut funding to education and who have cut funding to our health system. Indeed, it is coming up to two years now—since the decision was made by Alcoa to close its operations in Geelong, and we still do not have a single cent committed by this federal government to assisting Geelong through the transition that it is experiencing with its economy.

But now the Turnbull government wants to make life even harder for the people in my electorate of Corio who find themselves among these very difficult statistics. When the Prime Minister plans to raise, as he is suggesting, the GST to 15 per cent, when there seem to be plans out there to make bread, milk, medication, housing, school fees and fresh fruit more expensive, the Prime Minister is in effect planning to hurt the families of my electorate.

The Prime Minister has said, 'There will be no changes made under our government which will be unfair to people on a lower income', but NATSEM modelling shows an increase in the GST would see people least able to afford it pay the biggest share of their incomes in GST. It is a regressive tax which will hit households by up to $4,000 a year. This hits people when they go to the grocer; this hits people when they are seeking medication. This hits them when they are trying to get their kids better and when they are trying to get their kids off to school.

Norlane and Corio are suburbs where health and diet are real issues. Health outcomes in those suburbs are worse, particularly in respect of non-communicable diseases—such as diabetes, which is much higher. Fruiterer Glyn Harvey has for many years done 'fresh fruit Friday' at North Shore Primary School, and to this day still provides assistance in getting fresh fruit into those schools. That is the right direction; slugging that commodity with an increased tax is absolutely the wrong direction.

While these basics are being hit, we now see the prospect from the Victorian Young Liberals supporting a motion to move a luxury car tax. While they want to take tax off a BMW, they want to put it on bread. This shows the Liberal Party is completely out of touch when it comes to my electorate. If they want to come again, they can give me a call and I will take them to Norlane and Corio.
Mr GRIGGS (Solomon) (10:51): A couple of weeks ago I had the pleasure of contacting three school principals in my electorate—Holy Family Catholic Primary School in Karama, Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School in Wanguri and O'Loughlin Catholic College also in Karama—to let the principals know that they all have projects that are going to be funded under the Capital Grants Program.

This program provides funding to assist non-government primary and secondary schools to improve capital infrastructure where they otherwise would not have access to sufficient funds or in terms of capital resources. The Holy Family Catholic Primary School will receive $136,500 for the refurbishment of the student and staff toilets. The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School will receive $16,900 for the creation of a SunSmart outdoor learning and play space. O'Loughlin Catholic College will receive $300,000 for the construction of three new general learning areas of support to assist the continued growth of enrolments in their school.

All three projects will be beneficial to each individual school, their students and the wider community. I look forward to visiting all three schools in the not too distant future to watch the progress of these projects. All are scheduled for delivery in 2016.

While I am on my feet, I would like to place on record my congratulations to two Territorians who will start their AFL careers in the new year. Congratulations to Ryan Nyhuis of the 2015 NT Thunder premier ship team. He has been selected by the Fremantle Dockers in the rookie draft at pick 34. His mum, Glenda, and father, Michael, must be so proud, just like the rest of us are. Congratulations also to Daniel Rioli, who was selected by the Richmond football club at pick 15—and it is another Rioli making Territorians proud.

What is really interesting is that Ryan is actually living in the territory and it is not very often that Territorians get picked from Darwin. So this is something to be proud of. We are very confident that both these young men are going to have fantastic AFL careers and we are very proud. It will not be too long before the Territory has its own AFL team. We have such enormous talent that is on display so often in the AFL. So I wish these young men a very happy and healthy career.

Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (10:54): Over the weekend, I attended the Grand Cultural Festival in Bankstown to celebrate 40 years since the first Vietnamese refugees were settled in this country. This vibrant event was organised by the Vietnamese Community in Australia, New South Wales Chapter, to showcase the Vietnamese culture, achievements and contributions to the broader Australian community since their settlement 40 years ago. Over 2,000 people attended this festival, which had on display exhibitions of Vietnamese literature, visual arts, sculpture and photography. As with any Vietnamese event, there was also music, stage performances and a very detailed cultural parade.

The history of Vietnamese community in Australia is extraordinary. It is also a story of which we can all be very proud. Since the end of the Vietnam War 40 years ago, Australia opened its doors to the first wave of Vietnamese refugees fleeing the repressive forces of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. At that time, approximately 50,000 Vietnamese were settled in Australia. Today, Australia is proudly home to more than 200,000 Australian Vietnamese.
Apart from sharing their vibrant culture and traditions with the wider Australian community, the Vietnamese community has also contributed much in all areas of community life and is well represented throughout our professions, including law, medicine and engineering. Their success and achievement is a testimony to their hard work, charitable endeavours and their strong sense of community. In fact, this mindset can be attributed much to an old Vietnamese saying, which goes something like, 'When you eat the fruit of a tree, you have regard to those who planted the seed.'

A good friend of mine advised me that the Vietnamese community has always felt a great sense of gratitude to Australia because it was this country that gave Vietnamese refugees a chance at a start and a new life, which they will never forget. Today, the Vietnamese community has not only become an integral part of Australian society but has also demonstrated itself to be one of the finest examples of the true Australian spirit. In celebrating their achievements and contributions, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Grand Cultural Festival organising committee, including the president of the VCA, Dr Thang Ha; the chair of the committee, Dr Thuat Nguyen OAM; the deputy chairs, Dinh Tran and Chinh Dang; the advisors, Mr Quang Luu and Father Paul Van Chi; and the many volunteers who turned up, including Luu Dan, Tania Huynh and Julie Pham. All these people played a significant role in making this a truly successful event, but, more importantly, it was an event which drew the attention of the broader Australian community to the values that we have gained through the successful settlement of Vietnamese people in this country.

**Ryan Electorate: Defence International Training Centre**

**Mrs PRENTICE** (Ryan) (10:57): As a member whose electorate is home to the second-largest Defence Force population in Australia, I involve myself in as many activities as possible to get a better understanding of the many different aspects of our ADF. I recently had the opportunity to participate in another Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program.

The Defence International Training Centre at RAAF Williams Laverton, in Victoria, is an ADF training unit that provides language training and cultural familiarisation courses for foreign military officers. They host students from the defence forces of more than 50 Pacific, European, Middle Eastern, Asian, African and South American nations. Occasionally, the centre also hosts scientists, engineers, pilots and other professions. DITC welcomes more than 800 students a year, with an average of 50 students in residence at any one time; however, there were considerably more than that when I visited recently. After completing their training at DITC, the next stage is to study at one of our flagship training institutions, such as ADFA, the Australian Defence College and RMC Duntroon. One of the key objectives of DITC is to improve the training provided in Australia to foreign defence personnel by integrating them into our ADF training systems. Another key aspect is to foster cross-cultural awareness between our ADF and the foreign military personnel, which helps to promote Australia as an important player in our region and as a partner nation.

I was embedded with various groups as they studied, trained and became familiar with Australian culture. There were even classes in Aussie slang and culture, in which I made a small contribution. The participants at DITC range from newly enlisted personnel to senior officers. There were three distinct groups while I was there, including 11 officers of colonel-equivalent rank who will complete strategic studies in Canberra, 31 officers of major-equivalent rank who will complete masters-level strategic studies in Canberra, and 22 officer
cadets for pre-officer training preparation headed for ADFA or RMC. I was delighted to join
the latter group for a very special field trip to the magnificently renovated Shrine of
Remembrance in Melbourne.

The courses include an overview of Australian customs, culture and environment and the
Advanced Australian English Language Course. There is also a course known as MELT,
Methodology of English Language Teaching, for officers who are training to be English
teachers for the military in their own nations. While I was there I attended several lectures on
various international issues, including a very informative presentation by Professor Kingsbury
on the recent elections in Burma and the future impact of the results.

All these programs play a crucial role in our relationships with our neighbours. The officers
I met were extremely focused on developing new skills to take back to their own countries. I
particularly want to pay tribute to the commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Fiona Curtis,
and Lieutenant Commander Rob Lightbody who gave so generously of their time to ensure I
had a complete understanding of the wide range of activities they undertake at DITC, as well
as their team of dedicated staff. They truly are outstanding ambassadors for Australia.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Sukkar): In accordance with standing order 193 the time
for constituency statements has concluded.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Syria
Refugees

Ms VAMVAKINOU (Calwell) (11:01): I move:

That this House:

(1) acknowledges that:

(a) 29 November is International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People as observed by the
    United Nations (resolution 23/40 B);

(b) following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency
    (UNRWA) was established to carry out direct relief and works programs for Palestinian refugees who
    had fled to West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria;

(c) UNRWA services are available to all those living in its areas of operations—West Bank, Gaza,
    Jordan, Lebanon and Syria—who are registered and who need assistance;

(d) Palestinians registered with the UNRWA are unable to register with the United Nations High
    Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and additionally cannot be referred for resettlement by the
    UNHCR;

(e) Palestinian refugees from Syria are a vulnerable minority, who are currently fleeing for the same
    reasons as other genuine refugees and persecuted minorities; and

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

(2) calls on the Government to:

(a) recognise that the Palestinian refugees from Syria who are registered with the UNRWA are
    unable to register with the UNHCR irrespective of meeting the criteria for refugee status in the United
    Nations 1951 Refugee Convention; and
(b) work with the UNHCR to consider Palestinians fleeing Syria and registered with the UNRWA as eligible to apply for the Government's recently announced intake of 12,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict.

In moving this motion, I want to first acknowledge that 29 November is UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. This day is important for Palestinian history in two additional ways: it also marks the anniversary of the 1947 UN vote to divide Palestine into Arab and Jewish states; and, in 2012, it was the date when the UN recognised Palestine as a non-member observer state.

Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, the UN established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, known as UNRWA. There are 570,000 Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria. These refugees are decedents of about 80,000 Palestinians who fled to Syria during the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. It has been more than four years since civilian popular protest against President Assad drew a brutal and barbaric response from the Syrian authorities, the culmination and continuation of which we witness today. Those who have suffered the most are, as always, minorities: Christians, Yazidis, Kurds and, indeed, Palestinians who have become refugees for a second time.

There are a multitude of Syrian cities and towns that are war-torn and under siege, but, according to Amnesty International, the siege of Yarmouk Camp for the Palestinian refugees in Damascus has 'had the harshest impact, and has caused the largest number of deaths from starvation'. This intolerable humanitarian situation has precipitated a mass exodus of Palestinians from Yarmouk. However, their access to neighbouring countries is very difficult. Early in the conflict, Jordan and Turkey effectively closed their borders to Palestinian refugees from Syria, or PRS. Lebanon followed suit in May 2014. Thankfully, some 90,000 Palestinians did manage to leave Syria, and mostly ended up in Lebanon and Egypt. Unlike Syrian refugees, the PRS, who constitute less than three per cent of the ex-Syria refugee population, have been denied registration by the UNHCR. The reason offered is that the PRS are already registered to another UN agency, namely UNRWA.

ASPIRE, the Australian Society for Palestinian Iraqi Refugees Emergency, is an Australian non-profit organisation that was established in 2008 by Mr Yousef Alreemawi to provide language, legal and post-arrival support to stateless Palestinians fleeing conflicted countries like Iraq and Syria. It is made up of Australians from various interest and ethnic groups, including Israeli-Australians. In collaboration with Amnesty International and the UNHCR, ASPIRE's efforts led to the successful resettlement of more than 250 Palestinians in Australia to date. This year, and upon the request of Amnesty International, ASPIRE issued a comprehensive report on the consequences of UN policies on the PRS. The findings of this report where presented by Dr Graham Thom, Refugee Coordinator of Amnesty Australia, at the UNHCR's annual meeting in Geneva last July. ASPIRE is currently preparing the applications of about 20 ex-Yarmouk refugee families currently residing in Lebanon and Egypt without any option for permanent residency or protection. Some of these families have direct family connections to Australia. I would like to mention one in particular who I have met, Ms Anan Mowed, who is a single mother who arrived in Australia from Syria six years ago and is about to finish her degree in business administration, which is to complement her overseas qualification in fine arts. Anan's parents and siblings are among the applicants that are interested in coming to Australia at this moment. They fled in 2012 from the Yarmouk
Camp to Lebanon, where they currently live, with no work permit and with extremely limited aid. Anan's father is a highly qualified teacher who served in Syria and the UAE. Her brother, Mohammad, has more than 10 years of volunteering experience with UNRWA offices. ASPIRE has in the past assisted more than 40 families in similar situations to successfully integrate into Australia. Therefore, not only will those applicants enjoy the support of their families, they will also be supported and embraced upon their arrival by ASPIRE volunteers and their networks.

International best practice for the resolution of refugee situations has been to resolve them in three principal ways: local integration, resettlement in third countries and voluntary repatriation. It is therefore necessary for the Australian government to respond accordingly, by including PRS in any future intakes of refugees from Syria to Australia, and by waiving the condition of a UNHCR certificate or referral for PRS as a prerequisite for application to Australia as candidates for humanitarian protection. It is the fair and right thing to do for a people who could be rendered stateless.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Broadbent): Is there a seconder for the motion?

Ms PARKE (Fremantle) (11:06): I second the motion. I am grateful to the member for Calwell for moving this important motion acknowledging that yesterday, 29 November, was the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Never has it been more important to show solidarity with a people whose right to their own state—as established in international law—is being rendered increasingly impossible to achieve, and whose deteriorating plight has been somewhat masked by the conflagration in Syria. This applies especially to the situation of Palestinian refugees.

In discussions around the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Palestinian refugees who fled or were forced to leave their homes, located in what is now Israel, during the 1948 and 1967 conflicts is a topic that is rarely talked about. There are some 1.2 million Palestinian refugees living in Gaza, 700,000 in the West Bank, 600,000 in Syria, two million in Jordan and 300,000 in Lebanon, who are registered with UNRWA as refugees. I note that it has long been accepted practice in both UNRWA and UNHCR to register descendants of refugees while their political plight remains unresolved; as also occurs, for example, with the Burmese refugees in Thailand, and the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The right of the Palestine refugees to return home is enshrined in international law: in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and through UN General Assembly resolution 194 and Security Council resolution 237, which have been consistently reaffirmed by UN member states. UNRWA was set up in 1949 to provide relief, health, education and social services to Palestinian refugees until a political settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict was achieved. UNRWA was intended to be a temporary agency but, unfortunately—as everyone is only too well aware—there has never been a political settlement. UNRWA thus continues to have responsibility for the Palestine refugees while UNCHR—which was established after UNRWA, in 1951—has responsibility for the world's other refugees.

I had the privilege of working as a lawyer for UNRWA from 2002 to 2004, based at that time in Gaza but with coverage of the refugees in all of UNRWA's areas of operation including the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Since I have left UNRWA, the situation of the Palestinians, which was bleak even then during the second intifada, has only deteriorated—particularly for the Palestinians in Gaza who have suffered major incidents of
bom bardment and invasion, and nine years of an economic blockade by Israel, and for those in Syria who have endured almost five years of conflict. These emergency situations, which have created extreme hardships for the Palestine refugees, have placed enormous burdens on UNRWA's finances, which are entirely dependent on donor funding from governments such as Australia. UNRWA has been forced to cut back its services, like education for half a million children in 700 schools. This is a worrying development in a region becoming increasingly unstable and radicalised.

I travelled to Damascus in April 2011, at the very beginning of the Syrian conflict. With UNRWA staff, I visited a school and various community development programs in the Yarmouk refugee camp, and was delighted to receive a warm welcome from the Palestinian children and youth I met. They were intelligent, bright and exceedingly curious about Australia's democratic system, the work of the parliament, and kangaroos. The small children sang and danced.

It has been devastating to reflect on what many of these children and their families have endured these past years as Yarmouk became besieged and people denied food and medical treatment. Yarmouk has been one of the worst affected places during the war with people trying to survive by eating grass or rocks, just to have something in their stomachs.

As the former Commissioner General of UNRWA, Filippo Grandi, who is now the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said last year:

There is a ripple effect of anxiety and fear emanating from the Yarmouk experience.

Yarmouk has come to represent all places where—for Palestinians and especially for refugees—control over one's life is an illusion, where the safety of decades can disappear overnight, where land is confiscated, homes are demolished, rights are denied, travel is restricted, jobs are lost, resentments and prejudices prevail ... It was a beacon of resilience. Unless we act quickly, it risks becoming a symbol of dispossession and of a history of repeated disposessions.

The motion by the member for Calwell thus draws attention to the fact that, within the hierarchy of misfortune that applies to the people in Syria and more broadly in the region, there is a group that is more unfortunate than most, whose suffering at the hands of the Assad regime, IS and others has been multiplied by the fact that those Palestine refugees who have managed to leave Syria, have been refused entry to Jordan and Turkey, and have encountered only further hardship in Lebanon. As the motion notes, as refugees registered with UNRWA and not UNHCR, the Palestine refugees are not being considered as part of Australia's intake of 12,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict.

This week, the UN parliamentary group is pleased to host a meeting with the new Commissioner General of UNRWA, Pierre Krahenbuhl, who is in Canberra. I hope the commissioner general's visit will lead to an increased appreciation of the plight of the Palestine refugees and the vitally important work UNRWA has done to assist them for the past 67 years, and that it will continue to do until conditions markedly improve. Australia has an important role to play, financially and diplomatically in supporting UNRWA's work and global efforts to achieve political settlements, in both the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Syrian conflict. We can also assist some of the most vulnerable people affected by these conflicts by taking them in as refugees.
Mr HAYES (Fowler—Chief Opposition Whip) (11:11): Over the past four years, the civil war in Syria has resulted in the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. Over five million people, including Christian minorities, Yazidis and Kurds in addition to many millions of Muslims, have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

Amongst these minorities are Palestinian refugees who have fled the suffering and widespread human rights violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Sadly, they seem to be falling through the cracks as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection program does not appear to extend to them. When the hostilities of the Arab and Israeli conflict started in 1948, more than 700,000 Palestinian civilians became displaced. Many sought refuge in camps in West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. At that time, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency—UNRWA—was established by the United Nations to carry out direct relief work and works programs for Palestinian refugees in these regions. Unfortunately in 1967, the Palestinians were once again forced into exile as a result of the conflicts on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

These displacements, together with the ongoing Syrian crisis, have left many of the Palestinian community disproportionately impacted. In fact, the plight of the Palestinian refugees can only be seen as a catastrophe, as they represent the largest and longest standing case of forced displacement in history.

More than 500,000 Palestinian refugees migrated to Syria, with the biggest proportion now in the Yarmouk Camp in Damascus. However, given the conflict and upheavals that are continuing to plague the region, approximately 270,000 Palestinian refugees have been internally displaced by the Syrian conflict. According to reports by Amnesty International, more than 50,000 are reported to have fled to Lebanon; 11,000 to Jordan; 6,000 to Egypt; 1,000 to Libya; 1,000 to Gaza; and others to Turkey and other countries.

The UNRWA continues to contribute to the welfare and human development of these displaced Palestinian refugees through the provision of education, health care and social services. As of August this year, it is reported that there are 570,000 Palestinian refugees registered with the UNRWA in the Middle East.

Since the 1950s, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR, has provided international assistance and protection, and sought permanent and durable solutions for refugees fleeing war-torn communities. Following the Syrian crisis, UNHCR has registered over five million refugees and has assisted many for resettlement to other countries, including Australia. I would also note Australia's intake program now of an extra 12,000 from that region. Whilst not a requirement of the UNHCR registration process to determine factors for the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection, consideration of UNHCR application nevertheless makes a significant contribution.

However, unlike other Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees are being denied registration by the UNHCR because the Palestinians are already under the mandate of UNWRA. This is despite the fact that UNWRA's services are only for relief, education and health care, and have no involvement in processing refugees for resettlement. Since 2013, UNWRA has been struggling with its ability to provide for Palestinian refugees due to severe financial and
resource restraints. This has left more than half of the Palestinian refugees in the Middle East without access to schools, hospitals and even secure shelter.

Under the 1951 Refugee Convention, UNHCR has a mandate to provide international protection to refugees worldwide, which should include Palestinians, who are fleeing from the very same violence as other refugees exiting Syria at the moment. Palestinian refugees are a vulnerable group, have been subjected to flagrant human rights violations and have experienced the same conditions as everybody else that is fleeing the violence in the Syrian conflict at the moment. Therefore, I call on the government to work with the UNHCR to process registrations of Palestinians fleeing Syria, so that they can at least be entitled to apply to the Australian government for the possibility of being resettled as part of the additional 12,000 refugee places being earmarked for Syrian refugees.

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (11:17): I am really pleased to be able to speak in this debate on the motion of the member for Calwell. I actually tried to get my name down to speak on this particular motion because I feel very passionate about it, but I was unable to. In fact, we had reserve speakers waiting to speak on this bill, so I am really disappointed that the government could not put up even one speaker, because it is such an important issue. Currently we have refugees who are, on a pure technicality, being ruled out for consideration of being accepted by Australia.

On this side of parliament, we really welcome the government's decision to take in 12,000 additional refugees, but it is so very unfair that Palestinian refugees are precluded from consideration of coming to Australia, purely on a technicality. Palestinian refugees have been displaced in the same way that other refugees have been displaced, but the support that they are receiving comes from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, or UNWRA, rather than through the UNHCR—and, because the UNWRA are already providing that support, the UNHCR cannot provide the same support. These applications from Palestinians are not being rejected because they are not refugees. It is not because these people have not been subjected to the same horrendous violence as other refugees who have been assessed by UNHCR. It is not that; it is purely a technicality. We have refugees who have lived their lives in refugee camps. I have actually visited some of those refugee camps and I know the horrendous conditions that those refugees are living in. If you are living in a refugee camp and you have absolutely no hope whatsoever of ever leaving those camps then it makes your life pretty appalling.

29 November was International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, as observed by United Nations resolution 32/40B. I think it is really appropriate that around this time we as a nation and as a parliament consider the issue that these people are refugees. They are fleeing, their lives are in danger and, as such, we should be looking at including them in our refugee intake. Many of these refugees have family here in Australia, and it would be wonderful if they could be reunited with their families. I am extremely disappointed that we are not doing this. We need to carry on direct relief programs, work programs, for the Palestinian refugees. We have provided support through a different agency for refugees who have fled the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. But we are not considering including them in the intake into Australia.

I know that members of this House feel very deeply about our obligation. Members on both sides of the parliament feel very deeply about our obligation to refugees who have been
displaced by war, particularly in the Middle East at the moment, because it is such a big issue. I implore the government to sit down and consider the plight of these refugees and to include them in the 12,000 intake to Australia.

Debate adjourned.

Adoption

Mr BUCHHOLZ (Wright) (11:22): I move:

That this House:

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

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

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

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

(5) notes that:

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

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

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

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

National Adoption Week has just passed us. With the time allocated to me today, I want to raise awareness of the importance of adoptions here in Australia, and I will do that by highlighting some of the organisations that invest some time in this space. I will speak about some of the statistics nationally and then about how we compare to other countries and, more importantly, how we are tracking with reference to lifting our fair share of weight in this space. In conclusion I will speak about how the federal government can play a role through our state partners and colleagues through the vehicles of CHOGM to enhance adoption, to speed up the process and to make it a more user-friendly environment for those wishing to adopt whilst always maintaining the integrity of the child through love and care, nourishment and making sure that the interest of the child is always kept at the highest. At the conclusion of this speech, I will invite couples who have had difficulty adopting children domestically and internationally and want to share their stories to reach out to my offices either here in Canberra or in Beaudesert, Queensland, so that I am able to maintain a register or just be an ear of someone in the parliament and an advocate for this group.

For National Adoption Week I thank and acknowledge Adopt Change for the work that they have done, in particular Jane Hunt, the CEO. Deborra-lee Furness is the founder of the organisation and has done an amazing job of putting this very important issue on the national stage. It would be remiss not to mention Adoption Jigsaw, an organisation and advocacy group; Australians Caring for Children Inc.; Anglicare; Barnardos Australia adoptions; World
Families Australia; the Salvation Army; Relationships Australia; and many dozens of country-specific organisations for families going through intercountry adoption for the work that they do in this space.

I want to also acknowledge the work that has been done in the Senate in this space. There was a motion that was put on the Notice Paper over there and it was moved by none other than Senator Seselja. I want to acknowledge Senator Seselja's work in this space. I have a copy of the motion, and I was suitably impressed by the amount of senators from the other place who supported his motion—nearly all but the crossbenchers supported the motion as well. It is an issue which has support, but it is an issue that we need to move cautiously on to make sure that we ensure the protection of the children at all times.

National Adoption Awareness Week is in response to the challenges faced by families and children navigating complex intercountry and domestic adoption processes in Australia. National Adoption Awareness Week aims to increase insight and understanding through a series of specialist and community-based events exploring the experiences for children and families through local and intercountry adoption. During the week, there has been a concerted effort to promote the reforms of the Australian adoption laws and practices to facilitate a pro-adoption community. I, along with Adopt Change, our Prime Minister, many of my Senate colleagues and, I hope, those on the other side of the House, believe the needs of vulnerable children in Australia and across the globe require the urgent attention of our policymakers to ensure that there is swift yet ethical placement in permanent and loving Australian families.

Adoption in Australia is a social issue fraught with a difficult history and vacillating public attitudes. During the 1920s open adoptions were fostered in legislation through to about the 1960s, when there was a shift—with the emphasis on having a clean break from birth parents and enshrining the principle of secrecy around the adoptive status of children. I just acknowledge the good Senator Zed Seselja, whom I spoke of earlier in my speech, for his contribution to the debate and I welcome you and thank you, Senator, for your heartfelt contribution to this debate. Statistically, this period also saw a distinct drop in adoption numbers for a range of reasons. This is carried through to today, where adoption numbers are at historical lows. In the years 1971 to 1972 there were just under 10,000 adoptions. In 1991 to 1992, these were down to just over 1,000. I commend this motion to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there a seconder for the motion?

Ms O’NEIL (Hotham) (11:27): I second the motion. I want to begin by supporting many of the remarks from the member for Wright, and I want to congratulate him on bringing this important issue to the attention of the House. I am pleased to see some of the recent moves on this in the other place and also the Turnbull government's recent decision to add Poland and Latvia to the countries from which Australian families might adopt children. I do hope to see more added as we go.

One of the great perversities of our world is that there are so many children in it who need a loving home and so many families who are looking for a child to complete their family. It is just incredible, really, to think about it—despite all of the thousands of people for whom intercountry adoption could help, in 2014 just 114 intercountry adoptions were made legal in Australia. I think it is probably a shared view across everyone in this House that there is potential to do a lot more good here.
I am really pleased to see the government going about this in a measured way, and the reason that we need to be measured is that we need to be up-front about the risks that are inherent in intercountry adoption as well as the incredible benefits that can come from it. The potential for human trafficking under the shroud of intercountry adoption has to be a part of the conversation, because it is real and there is very good evidence of it. I say that not to upset anyone or to upset any of the groups that are advocates in this area, but simply to say that we have to have a balanced conversation about the challenges that we face as policymakers.

What we know is that when intercountry adoption is done well and fairly, massive human tragedy is avoided. But when it is done poorly, massive human tragedy is created. I do not believe that it is beyond the capacities and the expertise of the people who work in this parliament and around it to solve some of those policy challenges. I believe that if we took a similar approach in trying to protect children in the same way that we try to protect adults we would probably see a little bit more energy, attention and focus, but I am pleased to see some progress being made in this area.

I want to take some time in the discussion today to talk about Australian children, especially those who are in out-of-home care. There are about 43,000 Australian children at the moment who are living away from their parents. We hear a similar story with intercountry adoption. Last year just 203 of those children were permanently adopted into another Australian family. Children, especially vulnerable children, need stability. Foster care, by its very definition, is impermanent. Under today’s system, the evidence is really clearly borne out: a quarter of the children who live in foster care today in Australia have lived in 10 or more households during their time in care. That number is heartbreaking and gutting. We have to ask ourselves how we could have let this happen. Again, if the people primarily affected by this problem were adults I think we would see a very different national conversation happening about how we could help more of these vulnerable people go into safe households. I note some recent policy changes that we have seen in some states. Victoria and New South Wales have made some changes to try to better protect children in the foster care system. It is not that this national crisis is being avoided, but the numbers remain as they are: 43,000 children and 200 adoptions. It is simply not enough.

There are many other issues facing this system. We see year on year that the number of children who need the support of the community through foster care is growing and growing. Yet over time we see the number of foster carers, who are not getting the care and protection that they need, getting smaller and smaller. Fourteen per cent of all foster parents left the system in the last year. That is a huge indication to us as policymakers that we are not doing what we need to do to support those families.

I have been a foster parent myself, and it is something that I hope I can do a lot more of in the future. I have come nowhere near living up to my responsibility to the many Australian children who need the care of the community. I note this experience only to have the opportunity to say that, having lived within that system and experienced it, I have seen the system being skewed too much in favour of the parents who are not doing justice to their own children, often at the expense of the care and attention given to those children, who should always be at the heart and soul of that system.

We need to do better. When I say ‘we’, I do not just mean the people in this parliament who are trying to make sure that we have the right policy settings in place. There is a lot that
government can do to help protect Australian children, but governments cannot provide safe and happy homes for kids who need them. Only the community can do that. So we need to think a little more about what we as Australians can do to support those tens of thousands of children who need our help and support.

Mr ANDREWS (Menzies) (11:32): Consider this fact: in 1972 there were 9,798 adoptions in Australia. Last year there were 203 domestically and 114 intercountry. In the space of just four decades the number of adoptions has fallen from almost 10,000 to just a couple of hundred a year. This is a truly remarkable decline over a relatively short period of time. It reflects, in part, changing social mores, but it also reflects long delays in the adoption process and also a decreasing emphasis on the welfare and interests of the child in the balance which must be reached.

There are some 15,000 children who have been in out-of-home care for two years or more. They are the ones who are most affected by these changes. A sense of security that a child experiences from his or her earliest days is critical to that child's psychological development. Beginning in the 1950s, the psychiatrist John Bowlby and the developmental psychologist Mary Ainsworth showed that one's early experiences of attachment are critical for all subsequent relationships. The interactions of children with parents establish the powerful dynamics of security and insecurity, with significant implications for subsequent adult relationships. The happiness of adults whose relationships in their early years were secure can differ greatly from that of those whose relationships were problematic and insecure. The latter are more likely to demonstrate either an avoidance of attachment in their later, adult relationships, or anxiety about their relationships, with corresponding behaviours. Children who show signs of insecure attachment, such as avoidant or ambivalent behaviours, most often have parents who are unresponsive or inconsistent in their responses to the children. That is a generalisation.

Indeed, in a recent survey of 36 international studies, Abdul Khaleque and Ronald Rohner from the University of Connecticut concluded that children and adults everywhere—regardless of differences in race, culture, and gender—tend to respond in exactly the same way when they perceive themselves to be rejected by their caregivers and other attachment figures:

In our half-century of international research, we’ve not found any other class of experience that has as strong and consistent effect on personality and personality development as does the experience of rejection, especially by parents in childhood.

The circumstances of a child's early life are critical, therefore, to his or her future relationships and happiness. If those years are marked by insecurity and uncertainty, loss of contact with a parent, shifting caregivers or inconsistent parenting, the child is likely to suffer the impact into his or her adult years. As Professor Scott Stanley observes:

Attachment is an unalterable, important human need and reality, and how attachment systems form in individuals really matters for everything else that really matters.

Let me repeat:

… how attachment systems form in individuals really matters for everything else that really matters.

This is of very profound significance for so many children in our society.
Let me relate these general observations to adoption. As Associate Professor Michael Tarren-Sweeney of the University of Canterbury in New Zealand has observed:

The single most important intervention that can protect the development and wellbeing of children who have an ongoing need for care, is identifying them at the earliest possible age, and intervening decisively.

The strongest predictor of the presence, severity and complexity of mental health difficulties is a child's age at entry into care, with entry at younger ages being much less protective.

Once a child is in care, placement insecurity and instability negatively affects their development.

For children to have the best chance at normal development, they need to be bonded to adults who provide life-long unconditional love and stability. Adoption provides this above temporary foster care or permanent care orders that end at 18 years.

That is why this issue is so important. I congratulate my honourable friend for bringing it before the parliament. It is something which deserves renewed attention, and I hope this debate gives it.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (11:37): I think we all acknowledge that this issue is a complex issue because it involves families, it involves children and—as this motion states—it quite often involves children who feel unloved and unwanted, and children who are placed in difficult circumstances, many of whom face abuse and neglect. I thought of some of the homes and the families and the people I have met in my electorate in reading this motion and preparing my remarks today.

I remember a grandmother. I knocked on her door in North Bendigo. She had three children, and she was their primary carer. She was one of our unsung heroes: a grandparent carer. She was getting them ready for school—it was a Sunday, so they were finishing off their homework and getting ready. She said that her greatest fear was that her daughter would come back into their lives. As a mother, she said, that was really hard to say. Because of the way in which the system has been established her daughter has had a troubled life and was not really capable of caring for her children. The hardest thing for her as a mother was acknowledging that, and then acknowledging the heartbreak and the instability it causes the children when she comes in and out of their lives. Now the legal system is involved.

What I took away from that interaction was the complexity of the situation, the emotion involved in the situation, the complexity of the legal system, and—more importantly—the question that needed to be asked: what is in the best interests of those children? Any reform in this space needs to focus on the best interests of the children and the rights of the children. Too often our children are being used as pawns when we have relationship break-ups and when we have situations where children are coming in and out of care.

I also agree with the previous speaker, the member for Hotham, who highlighted that with any reform in this space of intercountry adoption we need to have strong rules in place to ensure that children do not become victims of trafficking. We need to ensure that these children's rights are also protected. I personally know children who have been adopted from overseas by local parents—loving parents. These children bring joy and happiness into their
lives—to the so many Australians who now have these stories. We need to ensure that all children who come here under these arrangements have these rights. We cannot afford to allow one or two to become victims.

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the work that the Victorian Labor government has done in this space of adoption. Only recently they have joined many other states and moved to legislate for same-sex adoption. Western Australia adopted similar rules in 2002, the ACT in 2004, New South Wales in 2010 and Tasmania in 2013. The fact that Victoria has now joined them is a good step forward for my home state. Why the change? Legal certainty for the relationships between parents and children is a necessity. It is so that the courts can consider the children in a family to be siblings regardless of the biological relationship between the children. These changes allow children automatic inheritance from their permanent caring parents. They allow parents to apply for passports for children without seeking the birth family's permission and a court order. They also remove the stigma that still existed for so many same-sex parented families in my state of Victoria. Many people spoke out in Victoria about the need for this to happen. This bill in Victoria will remove the discrimination against children and parents of same-sex families. Many of the stories that they told reminded us of why this reform is so important. The bill that the Victorian government introduced in the lower house, which then successfully passed through the upper house, changed the Adoption Act by substituting the gender-neutral word 'person' to replace the reference to a man and a woman. It was that simple to ensure that gay couples and same-sex families in Victoria had the same rights as single-parent families and heterosexual couples.

I would like to finish with a few words of one of the mothers who talked about how important this is:

Most of the time we're just driving to soccer, or forgetting ballet shoes, or trying to be the best parents we can be … It's hard to believe some people see us differently …

That is why these rules were so important to change.

Mr HASTIE (Canning) (11:44): I rise today in support of the private members' motion before the chamber. Adoption in Australia is in desperate need of reform on a nationwide basis. Only a few weeks ago I had the pleasure of participating in National Adoption Awareness Week. I would like to acknowledge in this chamber the hard work done by the founder, Deborra-lee Furness, CEO Jane Hunt and the board of Adopt Change. Their vision, their commitment to creating a better future for children in need and their support for families willing to adopt those children are inspirational. I met numerous families with wonderful stories to tell about adoption. I came away encouraged by the possibilities for adoption in this country.

Australia is a rich and prosperous nation. We enjoy a unique lifestyle and stable government. Political, social and economic opportunity abounds for all. As a nation, we have a generous migration program where we, the body politic, welcome people freely into our social, political and economic order, and they adopt Australia as their country. We practise adoption of sorts at a macro level. So it is troubling to read that Australia has one of the lowest adoption rates in the developed world. In fact, last year Australia had its lowest number of adoptions in history, with only 203 local adoptions and 114 intercountry adoptions. How do we explain this? What is at play here? It is true that demographic changes, changes in the levels of support for at-risk and vulnerable families and changes in societal attitudes
toward single women that now ensure that single mothers can care for their children are perhaps behind the drop in numbers of adoptions.

In August 2015, Adopt Change commissioned independent research to better understand Australian attitudes to adoptions. Their findings are instructive. Let me highlight a few: 89 per cent of Australians view adoption in an overwhelmingly positive light and believe that adoption gives a child a better chance in life. Australian culture is receptive to adoption. It is positive towards adoption. My own experience with adoption is illustrative.

When my wife and I applied for the adoption process through the Department for Child Protection in Western Australia just over two years ago, we found that family, friends, work colleagues—even strangers—were very supportive of our plans to adopt. Not a single person counselled us against it. The Western Australian Department for Child Protection were very helpful, but our experience with department culture, especially during the introductory seminars, was not overly encouraging. We got a lot of negative stories about the cost and the time and all the caveats that make adoption difficult. In fact 17 per cent of the people involved in the research by Adopt Change indicated that they had actively looked into the adoption process or given serious thought to adoption. However, of that 17 per cent, 87 per cent did not proceed with adoption.

There is a large disconnect between Australians attitudes in the culture and those that you encounter in the bureaucracy that administer adoption. The adoption process is framed in negative terms. The testimonies that we received during the initial seminars were largely negative. For us, it felt like only the strong survive. I do not deny the legitimacy of some of the stories that came out about adoption but certainly we should be encouraging people to adopt.

So I suggest that we need a cultural shift in the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy should be looking to prepare, equip and encourage people who are keen to adopt. As it is, it is already a very emotional time, when you feel vulnerable and uncertain about the future. I might add that there were two people in WADCP who I would like to publicly acknowledge, Linda Joye and Mandy Birch, who do a great job and who supported us through our process.

The hard reality is that there are 15,000 children in Australia who have been in and out of care homes for two years or more. They are not living with family. Almost half of those children who can be adopted move six or more times in their life in foster care. As we know, impermanence harms them; relationally and developmentally, they end up compromised as adults. This is not good at all. We need to do more to make adoption easier so that we look after the children who are in desperate need. There are kids desperate for security and stability. There are parents committed to helping. And we need to make it easier. At the moment there is a five-year wait time in Australia; in the US it is 18 months on average.

So I support this motion and I call on the federal government to push this issue at the Council of Australian Governments. We desperately need reform on a nationwide basis. I back this private motion.

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (11:48): I rise to speak in support of this private member's motion moved by the member for Wright. I have listened to the various arguments raised by preceding speakers in this debate today. From a personal point of view, my mother was adopted as a child following the war in Singapore by a couple, Titus and Marjorie Smith, who
also adopted another younger girl. They raised the two girls in a caring environment and ensured they had a good education and a fairly normal upbringing, which was the best in the circumstances.

Adopt Change organisation has been a strong advocate on the issue of increasing the adoption rate in Australia. I note the arguments raised in support; that there are over 44,000 children living in out-of-home care in Australia and there are 15,000 children in Australia who have been in out-of-home care for over two years and are not living with relatives or kin. On average, a child experiences six placements in foster care, which can be very disruptive to their development. Last year in Australia we had the lowest number of adoptions in history, with just 203 Australian and 114 intercountry adoptions.

Family breakdown and tragic circumstances can often leave children without necessary parental care. Very often, the children are traumatised and in need of care and stability in their lives. It is preferable to have children placed in more permanent secure living arrangements best replicating family life, which adoption can provide.

Adoption will reduce the need for government intervention and case management on a regular basis. There are many couples who are unable to have children and are very much genuinely wanting to adopt and care for children as an alternative to fertility treatments and surrogacy. I personally know of a number of very good foster carers in my electorate who are very dedicated and do a wonderful job caring for the children in their care, like their very own. Very often, they find it extremely difficult and heartbreaking to say goodbye when the children have to be moved on.

Institutionalised care can be very impersonal and disruptive to a child's development in terms of developing a sense of belonging, settling into a familiar routine, developing self-confidence and self-esteem. There must be high standards of screening with appropriate background checks to ensure that the adopted children are placed into loving families, where they will be cared for appropriately and not exploited or abused. I would only advocate adoption to traditionally married couples, as adopted children should have the right to a father and mother figure in their lives.

I fully support this motion calling for the federal government to present this issue to the Council of Australian Governments in order to create a national strategy that will facilitate local adoption in Australia. The system needs reform, and I would strongly advocate for the rate of adoptions within Australia to increase. I commend the motion moved by the member for Wright to the House.

Debate interrupted.

**Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**

**Mr THISTLETHWAITE** (Kingsford Smith) (11:52): by leave—On behalf of the member for Newcastle, I move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) three diseases—HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria—still account for the deaths of more than 2.7 million people each year;
(b) since 2000, increased action by national governments and international donors on prevention and detection of and treatment for these diseases has led to significant reductions in cases of and deaths from each disease;

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

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

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

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

(d) the Global Fund contributes more than US$4 billion to combat the three diseases each year, and accounts for more than 20 per cent of international funding for HIV, half of international funding for malaria and three quarters of funding for tuberculosis;

(2) recognises:

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

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

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

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

I thank the member for Newcastle for putting this particular motion on the agenda paper today. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria still kill more than 2.7 million people each year throughout the world. These are in many respects preventable diseases, and most Australians would probably believe that, particularly in respect of tuberculosis and malaria, these were diseases that were eradicated a long time ago. It is not the case, particularly in our region, throughout the world where, in places like Papua New Guinea and other Pacific Island nations, tuberculosis is a very big problem and a growing problem.

The Global Fund and other organisations that are working internationally to prevent and combat the spread of these diseases have demonstrated that a very small investment can make a very big difference. For instance, an investment of between $5 to $7 for a treated mosquito net can make all the difference in preventing malaria in regions throughout the world.

Organisations that work to pool resources and expertise in this area have made a big difference. One of those is, of course, the Global Fund. The Global Fund is a partnership that brings together finance, technical expertise, knowledge of communities who live with these diseases, innovation, and importantly scale—economies of scale—to ensure that investment is needed at a reasonable price.

The Global Fund was established in 2012 and, since that time, it has made a very big difference in the area of HIV, TB and malaria. Seventeen million lives have been saved, and they are on track to reach 22 million lives by the end of 2016. There has been a decline of one third in the number of people dying from HIV, TB and malaria since 2012 in countries where The Global Fund invests. There are 8.1 million people on antiretroviral treatment for HIV, 13.2 million people have received TB treatment and 548 million mosquito nets have been distributed through programs for malaria.
So there is the evidence that The Global Fund and the work that it does makes a big difference in preventable diseases such as HIV, TB and malaria. We all know that there is more to do. That is why the particular issue of preventable disease has been recognised through the Sustainable Development Goals process. It is Sustainable Development Goal 3.3: by 2030 the world will aim to end 'the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases'. This is the commitment the world has made. How we are going to do that is going to take a concerted effort from organisations such as The Global Fund and the partners involved, and Australia is one of those partners. I was proud that Labor, when in government, delivered the largest contribution of an Australian government to The Global Fund—$100 million in 2013. Thankfully, the coalition continued that commitment over the years 2014 to 2016. However, the replenishment period is coming up again next year. There are many who work in this area and, indeed, in the opposition, who are concerned that the government will cut back Australia's commitment to the important work of The Global Fund. We have all seen the $11.6 billion that has been cut from the overseas aid budget by this government. Today, and into the future, we call on the Australian government to make a solid commitment to The Global Fund to continue to fight HIV-AIDS, TB and malaria, particularly in our region.

As I finish, I would like to highlight some statistics about the problem, particularly of TB in our area. Papua New Guinea has the highest rate of TB infection in the Pacific, with an estimated 39,000 total cases and 25,000 new infections each year. Last year, one million Indonesians caught TB, along with 130,000 in Vietnam and 120,000 in Thailand. The World Health Organization says that TB kills 1.5 million people worldwide. That is more than AIDS. Those figures demonstrate the significance of this problem within our region. As I said, many Australians believe that we have eradicated TB, but that is not the case. Some of those infections travel across borders to Australia, so this government needs to make a solid commitment to the TB fund replenishment that is coming up next year.

Dr STONE (Murray) (11:57): I second the motion and rise to strongly support the motion. I commend the member for Newcastle for bringing it to this parliament. I recently travelled to Vietnam with The Global Fund and members of the Pacific Friends of the Global Fund in order to see firsthand the work they sponsor in the fight against HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. In 2003, Australia began its financial contributions to The Global Fund in order to help fight against these three deadly diseases, which continue to devastate the lives of so many of our near and further away neighbours in our region. In particular, in trying to end the scourge of the mosquito-borne disease malaria, Australia has assisted in the creation of the Pacific Malaria Initiative, which focuses on the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Since 2008, we have helped establish the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network. Our Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, is co-chairing the Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance, or APLMA, whose members have declared their intention to see the elimination of the malaria disease from our region by 2030. APLMA is probably one of the least known actions of Australia in the fight to rid the world of malaria. Along with the Prime Minister of Vietnam, since 2013 these two great leaders and our great countries of Australia and Vietnam have led other heads of government, representing 55 per cent of the world's population, in our endeavours to see a malaria-free Asia-Pacific in the next 15 years.
Just a short time ago, Prime Minister Turnbull wrote to the Asia-Pacific leaders commending the APLMA road map to them ahead of the 10th East Asia Summit. We expect this road map for the elimination of malaria to be endorsed by 21 heads of government soon. I commend our Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, who, like all prime ministers, is hugely busy, but who also sees the importance of this particular activity or action. Working with Vietnam, one of our closest friends in the region, we aim to see this disease eliminated. Malaria continues to kill children and adults, when, for the cost of an insecticide impregnated bed net, which can be as little as $4, lives can be saved.

When travelling with the Global Fund, we visited a small village in Vietnam close to the Cambodian border. It was surrounded by rubber plantations, the ideal breeding environment for mosquitoes. It was so concerning to be with this village family as they explained that they did have a bed net, and they quickly set it up over their bed to show us. However, the father of the family needed to take this only net and use it when he worked for days at a time as a contractor chipping the weeds in the rubber plantation. This left his wife and two children exposed to mosquitoes until his return. For the small investment of just $4 per net, we could help so many more children see a full and fulfilling life. That is what this Global Fund aims to do.

In the case of HIV, it is now very closely associated with violence against women. When the disease was first described, some 30 or 40 years ago, it was associated with men in same-sex relationships, but today the people who become HIV-AIDS positive are more likely to be women and girls. On 25 November, we were focusing on the terrible levels of domestic or intimate-partner violence in this country. We need to understand that sexual assault and rape worldwide will affect probably one in three women. One billion women have experienced physical or sexual violence, mostly from an intimate partner, and intimate-partner violence is most prevalent in PNG and other Pacific Island nations close to us.

This sexual violence can cause physical and emotional trauma and permanent health problems, but it also increases a woman’s vulnerability to HIV. The link between violence and HIV is now well established. Women’s inability to negotiate safe sex and unwanted sex is closely linked to the incidence of HIV. Unwanted sex results in higher risks of her being injured and bleeding, and easier transmission of the virus. Women who are beaten by their partners are 48 per cent more likely to be infected with HIV. Women living with HIV who are in a violent relationship are more likely to fail to continue treatment. Violence against women in itself is a human rights catastrophe we must deal with, but we must also understand the link to the HIV epidemic, how it also hampers progress in peace, security and eradicating poverty, and how it destroys women’s lives.

Finally, let me talk about TB. It is a scourge in our region. We are having more and more of these diseases becoming unable to be treated with known medications. PNG now has one of the highest incidence levels of this disease. I commend this motion. It is most important, and we must continue in our efforts to eradicate these three terrible epidemics.

Mr WATTS (Gellibrand) (12:03): It is with great pleasure that I rise to support the motion before the House today. The Global Fund is the world’s largest financier of anti-AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria programs in the world. The numbers are quite extraordinary. The Global Fund is currently helping to fund treatment for 8.1 million HIV infected people with antiretroviral therapies. It has tested and treated over 13 million people for tuberculosis, and
distributed almost 550 million insecticide treated nets to prevent the spread of malaria. Altogether, the Global Fund partnership has saved over 17 million lives. It is an organisation that contributes more than $4 billion to fight the spread of these diseases each year. The Global Fund is responsible for more than 20 per cent of total international funding for HIV, half the international funding for malaria prevention and over three-quarters of funding for tuberculosis. It relies on a mixture of both public and private funding. From 2002 to 2016, a total of 56 countries have pledged $42 billion to the fund. The United States is by far the largest contributor, pledging over $10 billion during that time, while Australia sits just outside the top 10, so far pledging just under $400 million.

In December 2013, the newly elected coalition government, to cut expenditure, looked to Australia's contribution to the Global Fund, and pledged $175 million less than what was expected. It is a significant drop for an organisation that is having such a positive impact on the fight against HIV, TB and malaria, particularly in our own region. It was a sign of things to come from the government and the foreign minister, who has presided over unprecedented cuts to Australia's foreign aid budget.

At the time, World Vision CEO Tim Costello said:

… to defeat tuberculosis, HIV and malaria, which literally saves lives, is in our interests because we know that drug resistant tuberculosis is jumping from Papua New Guinea to northern Queensland. Indeed, the traffic of people between PNG and Northern Queensland is an everyday fact of life in the region. Mr Costello went on to say:

So it's a wise investment because it saves lives of others and it helps protect Australians. Australia has played a major role in promoting and advocating for immunisations, not just in our region but throughout the world. Earlier this year I travelled to Papua New Guinea with Save the Children to see Australian aid in action. PNG has been particularly hard hit by HIV. In 2008 PNG accounted for 99 per cent of new diagnoses of HIV in the Pacific. We were truly facing an epidemic of extraordinary proportions at that time. A UN report found that the primary reasons for HIV infection were gender inequality, gender-based violence—as the previous speaker aptly highlighted—the impact of alcohol and drugs on sexual behaviour and the commercial sex trade.

An extraordinary amount of work has been done in the last decade since that time to curb the spread of HIV in PNG, and it is truly one of the success stories of Australian aid. It is something that we can all take great pride in. Approximately 85 per cent of people who need antiretroviral medication have access to it—a particularly high percentage for the region. Much of this is due to international aid, of which Australia is PNG's largest donor. Our aid has led to tangible benefits. Last year alone, Australian aid supported the distribution of more than 3.7 million condoms. We also funded HIV testing for over 78,000 people, around 40 per cent of all testing nationally. This testing is a critical part of the equation. When World AIDS Day, which we celebrate this week, was first commemorated in 1988, a diagnosis of HIV was really a death sentence. Today, a diagnosis of HIV is a diagnosis of a chronic disease. So long as it is tested and caught early, antiretrovirals can be used to prevent the onset of AIDS.

Australian aid has been pivotal in ensuring that antiretroviral medication is made available for more pregnant women who are HIV positive. Outbreaks of malaria continue to decline under the national malaria program, and implementation of the PNG, Australia and China trilateral malaria cooperation program, which is due to begin in 2016, will hopefully see
malaria continue to decline. Australia has been working hard to establish diagnosis and treatment facilities for both drug-sensitive and drug-resistant TB in the country.

Despite these clear and tangible benefits of Australian aid, this government has taken a scalpel to its budget, cutting it by $11.3 billion. On the eve of World AIDS Day, I implore the government to look at the fantastic work being done as a result of Australian aid and through partnerships with organizations like the Global Fund. Mid-next year is the Global Fund's replenishment period for the period ranging from 2017 to 2019. I urge the government and all civil society groups in Australia to look at the work that has been achieved in our region and throughout the world and to pledge funding that is relative to our wealth as a nation and our capacity to assist those in our region.

Ms CLAYDON (Newcastle) (12:08): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak on this motion today highlighting the vital work of the Global Fund and the continued attention and funding that is required to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. These three diseases still account for the deaths of nearly three million people around the world each year. While this number is staggeringly high, without the work of the Global Fund and their partners it would be much, much higher. The Global Fund's results report for 2015 details the impact their work is having in saving lives: 17 million lives have been saved because of their programs and they are on track to reach 22 million lives saved by the end of 2016. That is a staggering achievement and a tremendous victory for humanity. There has been a decline of one-third in the number of people dying from HIV, tuberculosis and malaria since 2002 in countries where the Global Fund invest, 8.1 million people are on antiretroviral treatment for HIV, 13.2 million people have received tuberculosis treatment and 548 million mosquito nets have been distributed through programs for malaria.

The Global Fund invests in 21 high-impact countries across Africa and in Asia, where the prevalence of these three diseases is particularly high. For Australians, this includes popular tourist destinations in our region: Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. The prevalence of TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria in our region affects Australia's national interests both directly, through the immediate health risks to our citizens, and indirectly, through the loss of economic opportunities. Accordingly, it is vital that Australia contributes to the fight to eradicate these ongoing epidemics.

Since 2004, Australia has contributed $515 million to the Global Fund, including a pledge of $200 million to the Global Fund's 2014-16 allocation period. This contribution has delivered significant value for money, with the Global Fund giving US$15 dollars for every US dollar Australia has committed to the eligible countries in Asia and the Pacific—a total of around US$2.9 billion.

This investment will continue to have a significant impact for those three countries, which are already benefiting greatly from the Global Fund programs. The standout statistics are: in Indonesia, we have seen a 64 per cent reduction in deaths from tuberculosis; in Thailand, a 73 per cent reduction of instances of HIV and a 67 per cent reduction in deaths from HIV as well as the 96 per cent reduction in deaths from malaria; and, in Vietnam, an 88 per cent reduction in the incidences of malaria and an 89 per cent reduction in deaths from malaria.

In June, this year, I was fortunate to witness firsthand the real difference the Global Fund's work is having on the ground as I joined a delegation to Vietnam to the observe their programs in action. A standout aspect of the trip was to visit the national lung hospital in
Hanoi, where I found a strong connection to my electorate of Newcastle. University of Newcastle graduate Professor Tran Thanh Duong is the director of Vietnam's malaria control project. Professor Duong's work in the Global Fund has led to an astounding reduction in deaths related to malaria in Vietnam, from 5,000 deaths per year to just six.

As noted in the terms of the motion, combating these diseases is in line with the sustainable development goals that have a target to end the epidemic of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria by 2030. The Global Fund on its own cannot achieve this goal. A concerted multicountry commitment with increased investment by national governments, aid agencies and multilateral agencies such as the Global Fund is required.

As I have mentioned, Australia is a significant contributor to the cause over the past decade but, in the face of some savage cuts into our overseas aid budget of late, many of us have concerns around the investment into programs for these diseases. Australia's current aid program is at its weakest point in our history with the current government's $11.3 billion cuts to overseas aid, meaning that, by 2016, Australia will spend just 22c in every $1,000 of our national income on overseas aid. That is our lowest spend ever and it is something that we cannot afford to continue. I take this opportunity to call on the Turnbull government to stop the cuts in overseas aid, support the Global Fund in their next replenishment period from 2017 and 2019, and look at increasing and investing in this important work. We cannot afford not to.

Debate adjourned.

**Illicit Drugs**

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (12:13): I move:

That this House:

1. notes that the drug 'ice' is at epidemic proportions and having a huge impact on our communities;
2. acknowledges the Government has:
   (a) identified the ferocity of the ice epidemic across Australia;
   (b) put in place the National Ice Taskforce (NIT) to begin implementing positive programs and changes to help stop the scourge of ice; and
   (c) announced $1 million in funding has been made available to Crime Stoppers to roll out a national Dob in a Dealer campaign to help combat Australia's ice scourge; and
3. notes that the NIT final report was recently delivered to the Government with identified actions on how local, state and federal governments can work with communities to take a systematic, comprehensive and coordinated approach to Australia's ice scourge.

I have spoken in this House on many occasions about the ongoing need to address the epidemic of ice in my electorate and in communities across Australia. I will fight to continue looking out for the safety and welfare of residents in my electorate and for the eradication of this insidious drug from our society. We need to support front-line professionals, including police, paramedics, healthcare and welfare officers, and families as they tackle the impact of this drug on local communities. Every day they are on the front line seeing the devastation and destruction caused by ice and picking up the pieces.

In my electorate, Brisbane Water Local Area Command and Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command are committed to stamping out ice and they have proactive crime teams undertaking countless hours of work to stop the dealers and backyard manufacturers. But
despite the hard work of the police, unfortunately we continue to see a rise in offences related to this highly addictive drug ice.

Brisbane Water LAC has reported a 100 per cent rise in the two years July 2013 to June 2015, while Tuggerah Lakes LAC has seen a rise of 36 per cent in the same period. Australians, per capita, are the highest consumers of ice in the world. This continues to place an ever-increasing strain on our communities and resources. The ice problem is so dire in some communities that it is easy to become paralysed in identifying where to begin to deal with the scourge.

Our frontline medics struggle under the pressure of dealing with the ice-induced psychosis, super-human strength and aggression of the addicts they attempt to treat. Police resources are under increasing pressure as police confront dealers, manufacturers and users, and combat the crime—such as theft, property damage, drugged driving and assault—associated with ice addiction. Our rehabilitation and community service providers struggle to meet the demands of those seeking access to rehabilitation.

The National Ice Taskforce has identified the drastic need for all levels of government to unite and work cooperatively to increase education and community support programs in order to begin to reduce uptake and demand. The task force has made a series of recommendations that present an opportunity to take control of the ice epidemic by working with communities to take a systematic, comprehensive and coordinated approach.

The taskforce has made recommendations in relation to establishing strong community research, treatment, education and prevention and recognises that, while law enforcement is absolutely important and necessary, in order to see an end to the ice epidemic we need to focus on embracing and equipping the community. It is the community that hurts and suffers the pain of the ice epidemic. The community is left to repair the havoc which is left in the wake of ice usage.

As users become addicted and disconnected from society they turn to crime. They turn on their own friends of families. Parents witness their children becoming unrecognisable, violent, desperate, losing inhibitions, and stealing and destroying in order to get their next fix. Children witness their parents' decline. They see them go from being loving, caring and nurturing protectors to being neglectful and abusive, which results in hunger and fear.

Have no doubt, ice causes unimaginable pain and fear for the families of the people who succumb to ice addiction. They face not only the decline of their loved ones in health, mind and spirit but also the endless worry of where they are. Families wonder: "Are they alive? When will they come home and what state will they be in?" They suffer a complete sense of helplessness and hopelessmess, with little knowledge of what they can do to help the ones they love. On one hand, with hearts of love, loyalty and compassion, they cling to memories of what was, but on the other hand they are afraid and frustrated and want to give up because they are tired of being robbed, assaulted and abused.

I am fighting in my electorate for families who are weighed down by the anguish of having a loved one addicted to ice. These families require care, resources and support to help them get through their fears and vulnerabilities as they attempt to navigate their way through the tempestuous territory of addiction. These families need tangible and practical support, counselling and guidance because they make significant contributions to helping users who
are attempting to break their addiction and rehabilitate. The support of a loved one can prevent a user from relapsing, keep them attending treatment and support groups, and help them reintegrate into family and social life. The families of users need support, and I remain steadfast in my commitment to making sure support mechanisms are available in Dobell for these families.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Price):** Do we have a seconder for the motion? I see that we do have a seconder, who reserves the right to speak in this debate.

**Mr STEPHEN JONES** (Throsby) (12:19): This is an important issue and it deserves to be treated seriously, but I am very disappointed at the manner in which this motion has been brought before this chamber. We are being asked to note the contents and recommendations of a report that this government has not even provided to the community or the parliament. For this reason, I will be moving an amendment. I move:

*That all words in paragraph (3) be replaced with “notes that it has been 511 days since the Government received the Review of Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Services Sector Report and calls on the Minister to immediately release this report and the report of the National Ice Taskforce.”*

I would have thought that if the member were seriously concerned about the issues in her electorate and the issues right around the country then as a part of her contribution in this debate today that report, which she asks us to endorse, would have been tabled so that it was available for us to talk in an informed manner about its contents. If it had been any other member then I would have been surprised, but noting the spectacular debut of this member into the serious debate around methamphetamine use I am not surprised. This is the member who went on national television and talked about people eating their eyeballs—a spectacular story. The only problem with it is that it was not true. We need a serious contribution to this debate, not the sort of guff that we are getting at the moment.

Let us talk about some serious issues. Let us talk about the $800 million worth of cuts to funding that this member's own government has visited upon the treatment sector and the delays in funding which mean services in her own electorate have had to cut staff.

**Dr Stone:** Madam Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, I am just interested in the process here. The member, in standing up, said he wished to move an amendment to this private member's motion. I do not believe that is in the spirit of what happens in this chamber. This is a chamber of agreed outcomes.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Price):** There is no point of order. He is entitled to move an amendment to the motion.

**Dr Stone:** Is he?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr STEPHEN JONES:** This goes to a serious issue, because for the last year members on this side of the House have been calling on the government to release the report of the review of drug treatment services, and since it was provided to the government we have been calling on members opposite to table the report of the National Ice Taskforce so that we can have a proper debate. It is important because we know that at the very time the government was talking about the problems associated with methamphetamine use, concerns that we share, we were seeing $800 million worth of cuts from the flexible funds, which are the funds
that are funding those services. We are seeing delays in funding which mean services in the member's own electorate and in mine are having to cut staff. If you are serious about dealing with this drug epidemic, as the member asked us to get serious and concerned about, then of course we would not be having the continual delay in releasing the report and we would not be seeing the services that are at the very coalface of dealing with this problem having to cut staff, and that goes to the nub of the issue.

I have actually visited the Kamira service, an excellent service in the member's own electorate which provides a unique rehabilitation service to women—not duplicated anywhere else throughout New South Wales. They have 22 beds available. They can only service 11 of those beds and, on almost a weekly basis, they are having 30 people ring up and they are having to turn them away because they do not have the funds available to them to have those additional beds open. This is a serious issue; it deserves a serious response, not stunts. If the member asks us to note the contents of a report and the recommendations of a report, the very least that she should do is to furnish parliament with a copy of that report. We do not need these sorts of stunts; we need a serious contribution to this debate furnished with the information and furnished with the results of Commissioner Ken Lay's report. We welcome some of the comments that have been made by Commissioner Lay that this is not a problem that we can arrest our way out of. Against that backdrop, we should be funding those services properly, not visiting upon them the sorts of cuts that those members opposite are supporting.

I table the amendment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do we have a seconder for the amendment to the motion?

Ms Chesters: I second the amendment.

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (12:24): I would like to thank the member for Dobell for bringing this motion to the House today. I think she has been working extremely hard in this area and I think that she certainly deserves credit, not criticism, from those opposite—which is appalling behaviour from them.

A government member: It is just dreadful.

Mrs GRIGGS: Various illegal drugs come and go over time. In the 1980s cocaine was readily available; in the 1990s and early 2000s, it was the so-called party drugs, MDMA and ketamine—

Honourable members interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Solomon, please take your seat. Can we please have order in the House. I think we would all like to hear the member for Solomon. The member for Solomon has the call.

Mrs GRIGGS: Would you like me to start again, Madam Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you may. Please, reset the clock.

Mrs GRIGGS: Thank you. As I said before, I would like to congratulate the member for Dobell for bringing this motion to the House today. I want to note the enormous amount of work she has been doing in this area and making sure that her community is well aware of the issues of ice. I know she was invited to my electorate to speak on her findings. I think we should be paying tribute to her, not criticising her for bringing this motion to the House.
In the 1980s cocaine was readily available. In the 1990s and early 2000s, it was the so-called party drugs, like MDMA and ketamine. All illegal drugs do damage to varying degrees, but I do not know when society has experienced a drug as dangerous as crystal methamphetamine—or ice, as we know it. Earlier this year NT News reported that 15- and 16-year-olds in my electorate of Solomon were becoming addicted to this terrible drug and then having their addictions exploited by adults, who would offer the children ice in exchange for sexual services and housework, including babysitting. Another report said that a local drug rehabilitation centre, Banyan House in Darwin, where the rate of patients being treated for ice addiction rose from 10 per cent of admissions in 2010 to 65 per cent of admissions in early 2015.

Drug use has always taken its toll on society, but rarely have we seen a substance that renders its users as desperate and dependent as ice does. With data showing that more than 200,000 Australians have used this vile substance over the last year, the consequences are definitely spreading. Aside from the profound effects that this addiction has on the individual, every addict causes a strong ripple effect throughout the family and the neighbourhood. Addicts turn to property crime to fund their addiction. Users in a state of drug induced psychosis are prone to violence and self-harm. In both cases, family, friends and emergency service personnel are most likely the ones to be in harm's way. This is not an issue that can be ignored. We cannot just wait for it to pass.

Decisive and aggressive action is needed, and I am proud to be part of a coalition government which is delivering just that. Federally the coalition government has mobilised. A national task force was established to examine ice supply chains and the impacts across regions and demographic groups. Appropriate responses from government were also considered, including education, treatment and law enforcement.

In my home, the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory government conducted its own investigations and at a more local level is working to pass stronger legislation to help police deal with traffickers and importers. This legislation was initially blocked from debate in the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly by Michael Gunner and the Labor Party in collaboration with Independent members. The coalition government has funded a $1 million 'Dob in a dealer' campaign designed to turn up the heat on those who would seek to profit from spreading this misery.

The coalition government is doing everything it can to stop the drug. Make no mistake: stopping it is completely our target. If we start thinking that just reducing ice use is okay, then we are setting ourselves up to fail. If we think just a couple of ice users would be okay, I ask you to name those users. Whose lives are you willing to write off or end? Whose relatives are willing to be exposed to the behaviour that ice brings to families? We must stop ice. But government alone cannot do it. Families, teachers, community leaders, employers, friends all need to be on one point. Everyone needs to be able to reach out to those at risk and help steer them in the right direction. Everyone needs to keep their eyes open to suspicious activity in their neighbourhood and—to borrow a line—dob in a dealer. The coalition government is in this fight and I call on everyone to join us. I think that the member for Dobell has done a fantastic job in her electorate, and I commend her for bringing this motion to the House. I am very disappointed in the behaviour of those opposite; she should be acknowledged for the great work, not criticised for bringing this motion to the House.
Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (12:30): In rising to speak in this debate, I do acknowledge that the member for Dobell is very active on this issue. She does speak about this issue a lot in the parliament. In fact, when we held a Standing Committee on Health hearing in my own electorate, she asked many of the Bendigo health providers, including Bendigo Community Health Services, what their response had been to ice. Knowing that it is an issue in regional Australia is why the amendment moved by this side, which calls upon the minister to immediately release the National Ice Taskforce report as well as the report into the review of drug and alcohol prevention and treatment services, should be accepted. These two reports, which this motion refers to, need to be released so that communities in regional areas can understand the findings and so we can set government policy based upon these reports. It is wrong to be debating these issues without all the facts in front of us. That is why I seconded the motion moved by the member for Crosby. We need those reports to be released if we are serious about tackling this issue.

I will take a couple of moments to share a local story which really captures why it is so critical that this government release these reports and restore the funding that has been cut to rehab and support services. Samantha stood in front of the Bendigo Magistrates Court almost in tears. The magistrate had raised the very real possibility of sending the 21-year-old to jail after she was charged with trafficking the drug ice in Bendigo. The judge told her:

You were the one who breached your family's trust. They are the ones who care about you. It is not just you that suffers. It is your family, friends and the community as a broader picture that are impacted by your actions.

The police caught her with a snap-lock bag of drugs in her house in her North Bendigo home in February, which she admitted she sold to fund her own habit. Speaking to the Bendigo Advertiser, Helen, her mother, said her daughter was like any other teenager. Growing up in Bendigo, she was your typical teenager. She worked in Bendigo in a small business whilst finishing high school. Yet when the business closed in 2013, she appeared to lose her meaning for life. Her mother said, 'I did not find she was using ice straight away, not until a few months after.' Within months, the cycle had started. She would leave the house for days and come home in a mess. After two days of sleeping at home, Samantha would disappear again. Throughout her story, her mother spoke of the heartbreak of seeing her daughter go down this spiral. She went from being 50 kilos to 40 kilos, almost losing our appetite. Her mother said, 'We would not see her for a few days and then she would come home in a sobbing mess, saying things like, "I cannot do this any more".'

Her family quickly started to ring rehab centres knowing there was not much time before they lost their daughter. She was yelling at her parents before retiring to bed for days. But Helen said that when she would ring these rehab centres, there were waiting lists, always waiting lists. Every time she asked how long the waiting list was, she would be told the only certain thing was it would take time. It would take time to get her daughter in for help. No-one would take her unless she was physically hurting yourself or hurting someone else. This was what I find heartbreaking. Because she was not physically hurting herself—although I would argue that taking drugs is hurting oneself—no-one would take her.

This is the problem that we have. Money has been taken out of these critical services that support people seeking help. Last year's budget cut almost $200 million from health flexible funds. This year's budget took almost $600 million away from health flexible funds. These
funds were going towards health services, helping young people, helping people who wanted to get their life back—the rehab services that we talk about. A further $1.2 million was initially taken from the Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grant Fund—more money is being taken from frontline services. It is not good enough. If this government were serious about ensuring that we get on top of this problem, they would support regional communities. They would support health services who are opening their beds up, who are ensuring that young people like Samantha are not left on the end of a phone line, that their parents will have access to a rehab bed if they need it. In my own area we only have four rehab beds for a community of 100,000, for the City of Greater Bendigo, which serves the Loddon Mallee region. It is time this government really got serious and funded these services properly.

Ms MARINO (Forrest—Chief Government Whip) (12:35): I commend the member for Dobell for this motion and for her extensive work in her electorate. As a member of parliament since 2007, I have rarely heard anything as dreadful as that personal attack on her by the member for Throsby. The way it was delivered really, really disappointed me, particularly on an issue as critical as ice. I apologise to you, member for Dobell, for the way that was delivered and for what happened afterwards. I apologise to you because that is the last thing I want to see in our parliament, especially on an issue such as ice. The impact of the illicit drug trade on Australian society cannot be underestimated. It causes immeasurable harm. That is why the member for Dobell has moved this motion. I do not trivialise this for one moment and I certainly would not attack someone for raising this issue.

According to the National Drug Strategy, illegal drugs cost our nation $58.2 billion annually. However, as so many of us here know only too well, it is not only in monetary terms that we need to consider and manage the impact of illicit drugs on the Australian community. Numbers, like statistics, require assumptions and are open to interpretation. But the impact of drugs on individuals, their families and their communities does not. That is the exact point the member for Dobell was making.

The destruction of families and individuals dealing with addiction is often hidden, as we know when we talk to people in our communities. The families suffer enormous trauma. It has a deep and lasting impact on the whole family and friends. There is illness and death for the addict. The spouse, the children and the parents of the addict spend endless hours waiting, worrying and wondering whether they will get through another day. I meet them all the time in my electorate as part of my ice forum. That is why this matter needs to be taken seriously. It is not about politics; this is serious.

One of the most notable things about the ice epidemic is the number of older people who are taking up the habit. They are 30 or 35 years of age, well educated and in professional careers. They are people you would assume would automatically know better and would be immune from this scourge. It has a major impact on the whole family as well as on the individual's life and professional career.

Like the member for Dobell, I have been actively engaged on this issue, particularly around methamphetamine. When you are in your community you know why, when we come here and make serious speeches on a serious issue, it needs to be taken seriously by all sides of this House. I have seen the effects on our volunteer and emergency services people—St John Ambulance and in emergency departments—and most recently I have seen the effects of ice on individuals. In my electorate, in the ice forum, we heard that some of them are too
frightened to go home and fearful for their personal safety. We heard from those suffering the financial burden and we heard from recovered addicts telling their stories and how to help others. We heard from the community professionals, including the WA police, on how best to manage the issue and how they themselves need assistance. So anything that we can do in this space, as the member for Dobell is doing, should be commended. I have set up a support group for the families most affected by the drugs. They talk to each other; they support each other. It is a simple way of trying to help each other through what is a dreadful time. You have to live it to know it, and those families know it every day.

Member for Dobell, this is a very good motion. The more we can bring focus to this issue and highlight the challenges facing families and individuals, the better. I commend you for this motion. The National Ice Taskforce members have been working hard in six areas: targeting primary prevention; improving access to early intervention, treatment and support services; supporting local communities—as we know, it affects the whole community; providing tools for front-line workers; taking law enforcement actions; and improving and consolidating research and data. Great job, Member for Dobell. I am very pleased to support your motion.

Mr FEENEY (Batman) (12:41): Labor wholeheartedly welcomes the enhanced focus of this House on tackling the epidemic of ice in Australia. The latest *Illicit drug data report* and the Australian Crime Commission's first report into the methamphetamine market paint a very grim picture of the impact that this drug is having on the Australian community. Both reports contain truly chilling statistics, and each of these statistics represent very personal stories of pain and the daily struggle of thousands of individuals and their families.

Labor notes and has welcomed the government's announcement of the National Ice Action Strategy and the establishment of a National Ice Taskforce, as well as the law enforcement initiative Dob in a Dealer. We have made it clear that Labor is committed to working with the government to help tackle the menace of ice. The National Drug Strategy, approved in February 2011, was an important step forward in preventing and treating illicit drug use. Expiring this year, there is an opportunity to make a real difference.

The threat of ice requires a strong national policy with a health based approach to complement law enforcement efforts. While those opposite have made the right noises when it comes to recognising the need for preventative and rehabilitative initiatives, so far, unfortunately, this has only been accompanied by cuts to front-line programs and services. The 2013-14 budget ripped $197 million from the flexible health funds, including an initial $7 million cut from the Substance Misuse Prevention and Service Improvement Grants Fund and a $1.2 million cut from the Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grants Fund. In this year's budget, it was announced that a further $596 million would be taken from these funds. In addition, those opposite are still refusing to confirm whether federal funding for the Non Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program will be extended beyond the financial year.

These massive cuts have created a deep sense of uncertainty within this very important sector. Services helping people overcome alcohol and illicit drug problems, including ice—services that were already struggling to cope with the increased demand—have now been put under even greater pressure. Given that the number of ice users has doubled in the past year,
we cannot risk axing or dramatically reducing the support structures that are essential to all of us in tackling the ice problem.

The latest illicit drug report concluded that ice arrests were up 18 per cent over the reporting period and seizures were up 27 per cent. But the number of users is still up and the price of ice has remained stable or has even reduced. It is clear that this is not an issue that we can arrest our way out of. The models that have worked most effectively overseas are those models which involve a close integration of justice and public health systems. Those opposite must, if they truly desire progress on this issue, rule out further cuts to these important front-line services. They must provide real support and certainty to the services that do such incredible work in the preventative, rehabilitation, harm reduction and support service sector—people upon whom we all rely, people whose expertise is the key to tackling this menace.

Law enforcement initiatives that tackle supply and crack down on organised crime will always play an essential role in tackling the scourge of illicit drugs, but they must be complemented by an emphasis on treatment, education and community support to reduce demand. The government now has the final report of the National Ice Taskforce before it. This must be released, and the government's words must now be followed by real action and real support for front-line services.

Debate interrupted.

Diabetes

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (12:45): by leave—On behalf of the member for Moreton, I move:

That this House:
(1) recognises that 14 November is World Diabetes Day;
(2) acknowledges that:
   (a) there are 1.1 million diagnosed cases of diabetes in Australia and they are rising by 100,000 a year;
   (b) Diabetes Australia estimates that:
      (i) diabetes currently costs the Australian economy around $14.6 billion per annum; and
      (ii) the cost of diabetes to the Australian economy is forecast to increase to $30 billion by 2025;
   (c) Australia needs a stronger response to the challenge of diabetes;
   (d) there is evidence that:
      (i) the onset of type 2 diabetes can be successfully prevented; and
      (ii) serious complications and hospitalisations from diabetes can be prevented; and
(3) commits to working towards reducing the impact of diabetes on the lives of Australians.

It is most unfortunate that the member for Moreton cannot be here today, but he is pursuing the cause of diabetes. He is currently attending the International Diabetes Federation forum in Vancouver. It is being held in conjunction with the Parliamentarians for Diabetes Global Network and the Parliamentary Champions for Diabetes Forum. It will host the second parliamentary champions forum in Vancouver just prior to World Diabetes Day. The forum has been running from 28 November and it concludes today. The member for Moreton is absolutely passionate about diabetes and he is one of the co-convenors here in this parliament.
World Diabetes Day was 14 November. This year the theme was 'Act today to change'. It was about highlighting the importance of diabetes, highlighting the importance of research, highlighting the difference that an individual can make in managing their own diabetes and highlighting information around the new technologies that have become available, such as the continuous glucose monitor.

This year, one of the key facts that was highlighted was the need to reduce free-sugar consumption to less than 10 per cent of a person's daily energy intake—including foods with added sugar as well as foods with naturally occurring sugar, like honey, syrup, fruit juice and fruit concentrates. The campaign also highlighted the importance of enjoying a healthy diet rich in fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, lean meat, dairy, legumes, nuts and also clean drinking water—all things that can lead to a decrease in the incidence of diabetes.

In Mr Perrett's motion, he points out the cost of diabetes to the Australian economy. It is currently costing Australia $14.6 billion per year and the projection is that it will increase to $30 billion in 2025. That places emphasis on the need to address diabetes. It places emphasis on the need to respond to the fact that there is such an increase. When we are looking at diabetes, we have to look at the cost of diabetes to our health system. The burden of disease caused by diabetes is enormous. People with diabetes are at risk of eye disease, amputations, hyperglycaemia—high levels of sugar, which cause enormous damage—and hypoglycaemia, where the person can black out and die. I once had a constituent whom in another life I was a case manager for. She was engaged to be married. They were planning the wedding. She had diabetes and her mother went around one morning and she was dead. That puts an emphasis on the importance of having that continuous glucose monitoring.

Some of the risk factors are: family history; being over the age of 55 or 45; being overweight; having high blood pressure; being of Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal descent; and being over the age of 35, if you are a Pacific Islander—there is a very high incidence rate in the Pacific Islands—and a woman who gives birth to a child over 4.5 kilograms.

Diabetes is a very real issue that we, as a parliament, need to address. I encourage each and every member of this parliament to go back to their electorates, increase the awareness of diabetes and work within the parliament to undertake more research to react to this epidemic.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Price):** Does anyone second the motion?

**Mrs MARKUS** (Macquarie) (12:50): I second the motion. I rise to speak about diabetes as recognised around the globe annually on November 14, World Diabetes Day. This day recognises a disease the UN describes as a 'major global health threat'. World Diabetes Day is celebrated, remembered and acknowledged annually on November 14, as it marks the birthday of Frederick Banting who, along with Charles Best, first conceived the idea which led to the discovery of insulin in 1921.

Last week, my good friend Dr Roza Sage, the manager of government and health system development at Diabetes NSW, was here in Parliament House meeting with relevant ministers and advisers regarding the aged and their need for care and special attention, if they suffer from diabetes. One of the major concerns with this disease, which makes it particularly menacing, is that it remains significantly hidden. Indeed up to half of all the people with diabetes globally remain undiagnosed.
There are some 1.7 million Australians with diabetes—that is 280 people a day in Australia diagnosed with this disease or one in four adults. In the electorate of Macquarie, there are more than 6,700 people with diabetes and, in New South Wales, we have 480,000 people registered as having diabetes.

Most concerning and frightening is that there are approximately 281,000 people who do not know they have diabetes type 2, which is the most common form of diabetes and accounts for approximately 85 per cent of people with this disease. It is the underlying or associated cause of one in every 10 deaths in Australia. The startling reality is that 7,750 people die from diabetes and its complications in Australia—that is more than breast, prostate and brain cancer combined.

Annually diabetes accounts for 840,000 hospitalisations, 623,000 with cardiovascular and/or kidney disease, 95,000 with vision loss, 5,000 end-stage kidney disease and, what is very disturbing is that 3,500 are required to have their lower limb amputated.

The cost to the health system is frightening: $14 billion a year nationally, with $400 million of treating diabetes in New South Wales alone. For those that were born with type 1 diabetes, their disease cannot be prevented with a healthy lifestyle. For those with type 2 diabetes or trying to prevent it we must look to a healthy lifestyle. Although diabetes type 1 cannot be prevented, it certainly can be helped by a healthy lifestyle.

The theme this year for World Diabetes Day is healthy eating as a key factor in preventing the onset of type 2 diabetes, and as an important part of the effective management of all types of diabetes to avoid complications.

For the past two years, as a government, we have been concentrating our effort on the health star rating system on processed foods, which is now well accepted by the food industry and consumers. The statistics I have read say it all: it is crucial that we as a nation have a very serious conversation about diabetes, and that is exactly what took place this year. The health minister Sussan Ley announced the nation's largest diabetes conversation to help guide our election commitment to develop a National Diabetes Strategy. Its aim is to prioritise Australia's response to diabetes, identify the best approaches to addressing the impact of diabetes in the community and position Australia as an international leader in diabetes prevention, management and research. It drew on comments from people living with type 1 and type 2 diabetes, their families and their carers.

The conversation on diabetes resulted in the Turnbull government this November announcing the new national strategy to tackle diabetes, which has an emphasis on the strategy of prevention, early diagnosis, intervention management and treatment centred on the role of primary care. As Minister Ley said:

Under this strategy people will be better informed about diabetes so they can make better decisions. In addition, research and evidence will strengthen prevention and care and, hopefully, move us that much closer to a cure for diabetes.

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (12:56): I congratulate the member for Moreton for putting this item on the agenda today. Diabetes and the incidence in Australia and the rest of the world is a massive issue, and 14 November is World Diabetes Day, aimed at raising awareness about diabetes.

FEDERATION CHAMBER
Australia and many parts of the developed and underdeveloped world are literally eating ourselves to death. When it comes to the increased intake of sugar, salt, processed foods with a lack of regular exercise in our diets, we are seeing an explosion in obesity, diabetes, cancer and other preventable diseases—and that is having a dramatic effect on our health system and our national economy.

As is outlined in the motion, diabetes is a significant preventable health problem here in Australia, with 1.1 million people diagnosed with diabetes. The numbers grow each year, with an additional 100,000 people being added to that list. The estimated cost of the affliction to the Australian economy is $14.6 billion per annum.

Unfortunately, we are not alone: the prevalence of diabetes throughout the world and, particularly within our region—most notably, in the Pacific—is high and increasing. In our area, in the Pacific Islands, it ranges from 14 per cent in the Solomon Islands to 47 per cent of the population—almost half—in American Samoa. That is outrageous.

According to the World Health Organization, in at least 10 Pacific Island countries, more than 50 per cent of the population is overweight—a risk factor for diabetes—with 51 per cent of people in Kiribati overweight, 45 per cent in the Marshall Islands, and 30 per cent in Fiji. Pacific Islanders are now 9.3 times more likely to die from diabetes than non-Pacific people, and lifestyle changes are the main cause.

The increased incidence of diabetes and obesity is not abating across the Pacific, and a drastic shift away from traditional to a more Western influenced, processed diet with the associated high levels of sugar are a fair indicator of the blame. Alarmingly, according to statistics published in the Pacific Peoples Health magazine in New Zealand, a Pacific woman is expected to die 7.1 years before her non-Pacific counterpart, while a Pacific male is expected to live 8.2 years less than a non-Pacific man.

In government, Labor invested in initiatives designed to increase quality of life in the Pacific Islands through healthy lifestyle activities. A lot of that was aimed at fostering a greater awareness of the risks of type 2 diabetes—and I note that this year’s World Diabetes Day has a particular emphasis on healthy eating as a key factor in managing type 1 diabetes and avoiding type 2 diabetes. Many of Labor’s programs in government were aimed at that particular element of preventing diabetes. Funded by AusAID and managed by the Australian Sports Commission, the Pacific Sports Partnerships involved the Australian government partnering with Australian sports organisations and their Pacific, regional and national counterparts to deliver sports-based programs that contribute to increasing levels of regular participation by Pacific Islanders in quality sport initiatives, improving health-related behaviours of Pacific Islanders which impact on non-communicable disease risk factors, focusing on increasing levels of physical activity, and improving attitudes towards the increased inclusion of people with disability in Pacific communities. By all accounts, these were successful programs. They included organisations such as the AFL, athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, football, rugby, netball, swimming, table tennis and volleyball.

In conclusion, in support of this World Diabetes Day motion: Australia needs to tackle this issue of unhealthy eating, leading to obesity and leading to preventable diseases such as diabetes. But most importantly, we also need to be aware that many of the foods which are processed in our nation and in developed countries and which are sent to developing nations have a big impact on the diets and health of people living in those communities, to the extent
that there are much greater risks for those people. More must be done to tackle diabetes at home and throughout the Pacific region in particular.

**Dr Gillespie (Lyne) (13:01):** I rise in support of this motion. I would like to compliment those members who have spoken so far—the members for Shortland, Macquarie and Kingsford-Smith—on their speeches; and I compliment the member for Moreton for putting this on the agenda.

Diabetes is a huge health problem for the nation. In fact, it represents an epidemic which is probably best called the 'diabesity' epidemic, because the diabetes is driven by obesity and by the secondary resistance to the effect of insulin that comes from it; particularly, obesity around the trunk of the body. There are 1.1 million diabetics diagnosed in Australia, but the scary thing is that there are estimates of up to 250,000 other people who are wandering around Australia oblivious to the fact that they have diabetes. The statistics mentioned by the member for Macquarie are true and quite chilling. We are all aware of the threat of cancer, but everyday cardiovascular disease and the consequences of kidney disease and peripheral vascular disease can also come about as a result of diabetes—more often than we realise.

In this motion, parts (c) and (d) are particularly relevant:

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

(d) there is evidence that:

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

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

So what should we do? Basically, we can prevent most of those 1.1 million people—and most of those undiagnosed 200,000 people—from suffering the ravages of diabetes, mainly by losing a whole lot of weight. If you get rid of the insulin resistance, you can prevent the effects of diabetes—basically, your blood sugar control in itself is fixed. To do that, you need to lose weight by consuming a lot fewer carbohydrates. There are lots of arguments like, 'don't eat carbs,' or 'just eat protein,' or 'avoid fats.' The issue is calories. We need a mixed source of protein, carbohydrates and fats, because we evolved and came down from the trees: we are omnivores. What is best is that we eat less food—we are surrounded by and we are bathed in excesses of food. We need to do more exercise. I have often called my special diet Eat Less Food; I tell patients they need to go on the ELF diet—because most people need a jazzy name, or some program. So I tell them, 'Go on the ELF diet and the DME program.' That is sometimes married with the DLG program, which is the auxiliary program Drink Less Grog. Eat less food, do more exercise, drink less grog and you will lose weight. There is no secret recipe here; it is just common sense. You will lose weight and you might get rid of your insulin resistance. Another simple, cheap remedy is to put people with documented insulin resistance on a simple, old-fashioned drug called metformin. With this and the weight loss, the need for insulin can be avoided in many of the people who end up on insulin.

It is up to us to eat healthy food. If you are eating food that you pull out of the ground or off a tree, is harvested and unprocessed or runs, jumps, swims or flies, it is generally pretty healthy. If you get it out of a shiny silver pack or a cardboard box, it has usually been processed. If a hen lays it, it is good; if an animal lays it, it is good. That is how we were designed to eat. For most of us, who eat way too much food, it is a chilling thought to eat less of it, because food is really enjoyable. We want to support our agricultural industry and
butchers and greengrocers, but we need to do that. We should also have our blood sugar checked once a year and our urine checked for glucose.

Debate interrupted.

**Iraq and Syria**

Debate resumed on the motion:

That this House calls on the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support a parliamentary debate during the current sitting on the Australian Government's strategy in response to the crisis in Syria and Iraq.

Mr BYRNE (Holt) (13:06): I rise to support the member of Sydney's motion. That motion was moved by the deputy leader and acting leader of the Labor Party on 19 October this year. Much has happened since then.

The reason why I am supporting—and so strongly supporting—the member for Sydney's motion is that I have always had the most profound belief that this House, this chamber, is where our collective voices and the voices of the people are heard. They are heard in another way collectively: through a federal election. That federal election empowers us, the 150 members of the House of Representatives and the 76 senators—less so the 76 senators and more so the 150 members of the House of Representatives—to act as their voice, to contemplate the issues of the day, to have the serious debates that need to be had in this place and in the life of the country. We are having this discussion—and I welcome the Father of the House, who is about to make a contribution to this debate. We do so—and I think it is instructive to talk about this point—in a torrent of social media: of Twitter, of Facebook, of Google, of YouTube. Many voices are being heard in different fora. Our voice in this place should be able to be heard equally. Our voice in this place should be the one that sets the tone for all of those other debates that occur, because we have been elected by the millions of Australian people to be their voice—to have the discussions about the big issues of the day.

What we are confronting overseas in Iraq and Syria at present, 16 months after ISIL declared that they were a self-appointed caliphate in Syria and Iraq, is almost the largest issue of all. I say that from personal experience because, as I have said in this chamber on a number of occasions, on 23 September 2014, ISIL motivated terrorism came to our shores and to Endeavour Hills—literally almost to my doorstep—in the attacks on two brave police officers by an ISIL inspired young person who was then killed by a police officer. Subsequent to that there has been a thwarted Anzac Day attack. I do not want to go into the details of what was proposed in that attack but, had that attack been successful, it would have had a profound impact on our national psyche. That is what these attacks are designed to do. Interestingly, I was looking at ISIL activity after that date—after 23 September—did you know, Deputy Speaker, that there were 59 ISIL-related terrorist attacks in 16 countries during and after 23 September? We are talking about an ideology that is as dangerous, in my view, as communism—and I have said this on 7.30. We are talking about a self-declared caliphate that needs to be removed and exterminated. This source—this contagion—if not dealt with by the international community cohesively, cogently and diligently; if not uprooted, eradicated and destroyed, will extend its ideology to the furthest corners of the globe. You can see the manifestation of that ideology in Yemen and in other places, in other portions of the Middle East, and in Africa. It is a force for the most dangerous transmission of a political idea since communism.
As the international community, we have an obligation to remove it, notwithstanding all of the other conturbations and connipations of other countries around ISIL and where it is based. It is our obligation as a civilised community to remove this stain from humanity. It is our obligation as an international community to take this poison away from the well of the Middle East, which is already contaminated by too many hatreds and by bitterness. It is our obligation to have a discussion in this place about this and about how we do this—in a measured, even and bipartisan way. We cannot leave it for people on social media to have that discussion for us. It is not for them to determine what course of action we should take; it is for our sovereign parliament. We are elected to have these discussions on behalf of the community. That is why I think we need to continue this discussion, and that is why I strongly support the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr RUDDOCK (Berowra) (13:11): I always enjoy the comments from my colleague—always constructive and very helpful. But in this matter, let me say: I do not think there is any shortage of debate, and I do not think there is any shortage of opportunities to deal with these issues. I was somewhat surprised when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition moved her motion. As she said, she was seeking a parliamentary debate, during the current sitting, of the Australian government strategy in response to the crisis in Syria and Iraq. It did not offer a view about where we should be going and what we should be doing, but it did say we should have a debate. Let me just assure my colleague—and I am sure he knows—there is a debate. It was initiated by the Prime Minister. It was responded to by the Leader of the Opposition. I must say, I picked up the speakers list for the House of Representatives today, and I noted that the statements on the terrorism attacks around the world—initiated by the Prime Minister; responded to by the Leader of the Opposition—are still being made, with one member of the opposition and 15 members of the government contributing.

This is an important issue. I have taken the opportunity to inform myself on these matters. As the honourable member knows, as part of a field trip from this parliament, following a visit sponsored by Save the Children Australia for me to go to Jordan, I later travelled with my colleague, the member for Fowler and Chief Opposition Whip, to Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. I came back despairing about the future, because I can see continuing conflict. I am very, very anxious to ensure that this conflict, which is contributing significantly to potential risks now reaching Australia, is dealt with with a degree of determination. But it cannot be dealt with by Australia alone. It needs the leadership of those that we call our coalition partners. It needs the leadership of many others, and I have spoken about this from time to time. We cannot go in and do what needs to be done, but we can help those who are prepared to do so. It is in that context that we are playing our part now. We are supporting with an Australian commitment the effort to contain the organisation known as Daesh. We are working to support the government of Iraq. We are working to advocate for political solutions in relation to this crisis.

As part of the global coalition we have committed 300 Australian Defence personnel to help train the regular Iraqi army to reclaim and hold territory. We are providing about 80 ADF personnel in support of the Iraqi counter-terrorism service to assist and advise in the work that they are undertaking. We are contributing to the air strikes on Daesh targets in Iraq and now extending them. To date we have had something in the order of 2,100 Iraqi personnel trained by Australians. Our Special Forces have trained and guided others. We have
contributed 480 air strike missions over Iraq and Syria, and I want to thank all of those Australians who are playing this important role.

But I just make the point that we are not going to be able to deal with this alone. We need clear political leadership and I hope we will see that forthcoming. I am sure our Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister are clearly advocating that in all of the engagements in which they are participating. There have been some positive signs, but there is a long way to go, and the dispossession of so many people in the way we have seen is a tragedy of enormous proportion. It is appropriate we debate it, but there has been no unwillingness on the part of the government to ensure that there are opportunities for that debate.

Debate interrupted.

Sitting suspended from 13:17 to 16:00

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Road Safety

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (16:00): 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 community and people either working or taking time to do social activities using our roads. The reality for too many of those drivers for too long has been the unconscionable pressure that is put upon them to do hours that are beyond what is reasonable.

For 20 years the Transport Workers Union, in partnership with its members and communities across our nation, has campaigned under the Safe Rates Campaign to call on governments to take responsibility for ensuring that we maximise the safety of our roads in our communities. As a result of that campaign, in 2012 the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal was established and it is doing exactly that job.

A month ago, the International Labour Organization recognised drivers’ rights to safe and fair remuneration and their right to form and join a trade union and to strike. In South Korea, transport workers have mobilised against antiworker legislation in that country as they fight for decent, safe working conditions in the transport supply chain. I share the views expressed by the International Trade Union Confederation and the International Transport Workers’ Federation in condemning actions taken against these workers as they simply fight for fair and safe working conditions.

McGrath Foundation

Mrs McNAMARA (Dobell) (16:02): On 9 October, Hugh Bateman, a real estate agent and auctioneer, departed his home town of Mudgee to make a trek of almost 3,000 kilometres throughout New South Wales on a pink tractor. Hugh embarked on this unusual journey to raise funds for the McGrath Foundation and breast cancer care. The McGrath breast cancer care nurses provide invaluable physical, mental and emotional support to breast cancer patients from the time of diagnosis and throughout their treatment. There is no cost to patients for the nurses’ support. However, it costs about $380,000 to fund a McGrath breast care nurse for three years. Presently the McGrath Foundation has 105 breast care nurses, who have supported 36,000 families to date. Yet more are needed.

Hugh’s enthusiasm and commitment to the cause saw him raise almost $300,000 through his Pink Tractor Trek, a tremendous achievement. On 23 October, I was privileged to attend a
fundraising gala for the arrival of Hugh on his pink tractor in my electorate of Dobell. The Central Coast community's support for the Pink Tractor Trek was outstanding, with a great turnout for the gala event at The Entrance, hosted by Bruce McLachlan, a prominent Central Coast real estate agent. I thank and commend Hugh for his wonderful contribution to the breast cancer community and I commend the generosity of those attending the gala event. Their generosity will make a real difference in people's lives through the breast care nurses.

**Young Archie 2015**

*Mrs ELLIOT (Richmond) (16:03):* I rise to speak about the Young Archie competition, which promising young local artists between the ages of 13 and 18 across my region will be encouraged to enter. The Young Archie competition is part of the Archibald Prize 2015 regional tour, and our next generations of artists have been set the task of submitting a portrait of someone who they admire or who is known to them and may play a significant role in their lives. This is a tremendous opportunity for young artists to be involved in a very prestigious prize. The competition will showcase an amazing array of young, talented artists that we are very fortunate to have on the New South Wales North Coast.

The Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre will feature the finalists from 15 January 2016 right through to 28 February 2016. The gallery director, Susi Muddiman, has said the Young Archie competition is open to those residents in the surrounding shires and includes two categories: artists aged 13 to 15, and artists aged 16 to 18. The competition will be judged based on merit and originality by local artists, Tamsin Ainslie and Robyn Sweaney, and the five finalists from each category will have the honour of being exhibited at the Tweed Regional Gallery during the Archibald Prize regional tour—a great achievement.

One winner will be chosen in each category who, along with the finalists, will receive prizes provided by the ANZ Bank, the Friends of Tweed Regional Gallery and also by the Sugarmill Studio at Murwillumbah. Best of luck to all of those entrants. We are very fortunate to have a wonderful creative community on the North Coast, and I encourage all those young people to get involved with this great competition.

**Bennelong Electorate: Royal Rehab**

*Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (16:05):* Bennelong has many organisations at the cutting edge of their fields, perhaps none more impressive than Royal Rehab in Ryde. Founded by a deaf and blind woman in the final years of the 19th century Royal Rehab has grown to be the country's leading rehabilitation hospital, catering for brain trauma and spinal injuries, as well as stroke and other complex neurological and orthopaedic conditions. Royal Rehab also offers its world-class services to practitioners nationwide through their registered training courses. The Certificate IV in Allied Health, which is both a theoretical and a practical course, includes extensive treatment carried out with a patient, forcing students to use their skills whilst also learning bedside manner and other essential interpersonal skills necessary for a successful job in this profession.

On Friday, I had the honour of being at the graduation ceremony for the latest cohort of Certificate IV in Allied Health students. It was a wonderful ceremony, also attended by the New South Wales Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner. The students I spoke to praised the quality of the course, with some already securing employment on the back of their studies at Royal Rehab. I would like to congratulate all of the students who graduated last week and
recognise the wonderful work of Royal Rehab, not just in mending the broken lives but also in the passing-on of their top-class knowledge and practices so that more people around the country can benefit from their experience.

**Brazil: Mining Disaster**

**Ms PARKE** (Fremantle) (16:06): According to BHP Billiton's code:

Health and safety, social responsibility and environmental sustainability are crucial to maintaining … our social licence to operate.

Yet it is evident that these elements were not present on 5 November, when the equivalent of 25,000 Olympic swimming pools of water and sediment from iron ore extraction came down a mountain side in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The Fundao dam, which in recent years had undergone a rapid scaling up, collapsed in what some have called an 'avoidable' catastrophe, killing 12, with 11 people still missing.

There must be accountability for this human and environmental disaster, especially in the light of BHP's past disastrous experience with the Ok Tedi Mine and the 2013 independent report produced by environmental group Instituto Pristino that warned of the dangers of the Brazilian tailings dam. The collapse of the dam, operated by Samarco, a fifty-fifty joint venture between BHP Billiton and Brazilian company, Vale S.A., has many, including the Brazilian government, calling it the country's worst environmental disaster.

While BHP has asserted that the sludge is chemically stable, the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights last week cited new evidence that suggests the residue 'contained higher levels of toxic heavy metals and other toxic chemicals', and called the response by the companies involved and the Brazilian government 'insufficient'. The avalanche of mine waste and the contamination of river water has destroyed communities and plant and animal life in its path. There must be a fully independent external investigation leading to full accountability and adequate compensation for the families and communities affected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Prentice):** Thank you, Member for Fremantle. I know it is an important issue.

**Mallee Electorate: Nutbush Dance**

**Mr BROAD** (Mallee) (16:08): Other important issues. Last Sunday, 29 November, at the Horsham City Oval, the Horsham community attempted a world record of the 'Nutbush' dance.

I tried a bit of the training myself, and I have to say that I was a little disappointed in my ability. But there was a total of 256 dancers on the day, and they were required to dance for five minutes and 15 seconds in order to get their 'Nutbush card'.

The attempt was recorded by the Guinness World Records in London, and Horsham resident Claire McKenry was the oldest participant at 90 years old. Ninety years old, and five minutes and 15 seconds of doing the 'Nutbush'—I challenge anyone in this chamber to beat her!

It was a great event. It just goes to show that, amongst a tough season, the people of the Wimmera know how to dance, to laugh, to exercise and to demonstrate community in action. It is just another example of the people of the Wimmera in Mallee putting us on the world
record map. Well done to the people of Horsham for their Guinness world record Nutbush challenge.

**Petition: Climate Change**

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (16:10): I present a petition that has been approved by the Standing Committee on Petitions.

*The petition read as follows—*

To the Honourable The Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives

This petition of the citizens of Wangaratta and surrounding district (constituents of the seat of Indi) and visitors to the district:

Draws to the attention of the House: The urgent threat of climate change

We therefore ask the House to: Recognise the threat of climate change as the major issue currently facing Australia and the world at large and, in so doing, understand that it is too important to be subject to party political bickering and point scoring. Politicians from all sides need to be working together to find the best way to move Australia speedily to a low carbon economy.

As one of the rich countries of the world and a major per capita emitter of carbon we believe Australia has a responsibility to be a leader in the move towards a low carbon world rather than waiting for the rest of the world to act first.

As responsible stewards of this earth, we must heed the URGENT recommendation of the global scientific community to take strong action to restrict global warming to 2 degrees for it to be habitable for all existing lifeforms including future generations of humans.

from 571 citizens

Petition received.

Ms McGOWAN: This petition has been prepared by the citizens in Indi. It is signed by residents and visitors in and near the Victorian rural city of Wangaratta and surrounding districts. The intention of the petition is to draw to the attention of the House the urgent threat of climate change.

Scientific evidence published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that the Earth would experience disastrous consequences if we do not immediately take action to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit temperature rises to two degrees Centigrade. The petition calls on the House to take the lead by adopting a bipartisan approach on climate change and leading the world towards a low-carbon environment. The petitioners call on the government to respect the science and build a safe climate future for our children and grandchildren and generations to come by enacting immediate and deep reductions to Australians' carbon emissions.

Thank you to Deb Goodson, Marg Brickhill, Helen van Riet and Cathy Oddie for delivering the petition to me personally, and to Rowan O'Hagan, the principal petitioner, and to the 571 concerned citizens who put their names to this petition. I would also like to congratulate the deputation from Wangaratta who marched in the march in Melbourne on Friday and did us proud. Thank you very much.

**Deakin Electorate: Deakin Student Leadership Roundtable**

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin) (16:11): I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of the secondary school leaders who took part in the 2015 Deakin Student Leadership
Roundtable series. Following on from the success of last year's series, over three sessions this year student leaders from throughout the electorate met with me and together to discuss a range of issues impacting young people in our community. It was very valuable for me to hear directly from them. Issues that we discussed included local youth employment opportunities, same-sex marriage, interschool relations and various aspects of the school curriculum.

The participants in this year's series, who I really want to thank and name individually, are as follows: Aaron Cockram, Aaron Stewart, Alfred Kouris, Andre Burborough, Angus Campbell, Arthur Wong, Ashleigh Hughes, Bianca Swaine, Bonnie Hodge, Breeanna Ryan, Chase Young, David Chandler, Esther Boih, Eunice Tang, Geoff Bromilow, Georgia Wilkins, Graziella Estrada, Hannah Frank, Ian Gaertner, Jade Bain, James Bromilow, Jenny McDonald, Jesse Baker, Jordan Galbraith, Joshua Mackwell, Kaila Booth, Lachlan McRae, Lucas Chadwick, Lucy Fist, Madelaine Patrick, Madeline Wright, Mica Facun, Molly Sheehan, Nicola Anastasiou, Noah Bennett, Olivia Low, Rachel Sheehan, Rebecca Toose, Samuel Brindley, Tim Abbott, Tristan Webb and Victoria Mangano. Thank you very much to all of those participants. They made the series very worthwhile this year.

Shortland Electorate: Justices of the Peace

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (16:13): On Saturday afternoon, I attended a luncheon to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Doyalson branch of the Federation of Justices of the Peace. We all know what a valuable role justices of the peace play in our community, and each and every day they give of their time freely to the community of which they are a part. On Saturday, it was great to be able to join with many of those who are friends of long standing—people who are involved in many aspects of the community—to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Doyalson branch.

At the Doyalson branch celebration were Lyn and Rod Axford, and the absolutely overwhelming thing about that celebration was when I learnt that Rod Axford received a certificate for appreciation for his contributions as a JP. The thing that was so overwhelming was the fact that Rod has been a JP for 40 years. I believe that is quite an achievement. I would like to say thank you very much to the Doyalson branch of the JPs and a very big thank you to Rod Axford. The community appreciates you and so do I.

Gilmore Electorate

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (16:15): On Friday the 13th, while visiting Gilmore to celebrate the development of environmental projects with local oyster and dairy industries, the Hon. Mal Brough and I attended a dynamic breakfast with a group called Business Network International Coastlink. It was a last-minute addition to a packed morning with the minister, and it was a great way to start the day.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the energy of this business group, who work together to benefit not only their own businesses but also each others' and, at the same time, are helping to grow our local economy: the vivacious president, Jason Armstrong, of Think Tank Business Services; VP Kate Campbell of Boston Capital; Bruce Jeffrey; Matthew Armitage, who owns Armitage Security; Wendy Woodward, a Nutrimetics consultant; Simon Harrison and Gaylene Staniforth, who are both from Lawrence Harrison Financial Services; Nigel Brooks from Intensity Fitness; Jared Cochrane of Raine & Horne; Mark de Jong from Interchange; Derrick Deacon from IT Basecamp; Nicole Dibben from Dibben Legal; Bruce
Jeffrey from Jaffa Marketing Services; Emma Longford from helloworld, Nowra; Ron McGuire of McGuire's Smash Repairs; Kim Nangle from Kimberlie & Co; Peter Pepperell of Pepperell & Associates; Cameron Rutledge Electrical; Ben Scales from Sunny Afternoons Pty Limited; Scott Shelmerdine from Shoalhaven Secure Locksmiths; Rita Sullivan from Knickerboxers; Neil Wallace from NR Wallace Building Inspections; Nathan Coombes from SGT Telecommunications; Michelle Stuart from Age Well Health and Nutrition; Tony Saba of Carpentry & Handyman Services; and Leesa Lowles from RAMS Home Loans. Their energy and hospitality was inspiring and appreciated and it builds our community.

**Fraser Electorate: Electorate Office**

**Dr LEIGH** (Fraser) (16:16): Politics is a team sport and in this final sitting week of 2015 I thank the team who has supported me this year. I thank my full-time staff, Lyndell Tutty, Jacob White, Thomas McMahon, Jennifer Rayner and Nick Terrell; and part-timers Gus Little, Lillian Hannock, Hayden Shaw, James Koval, Matt Jacob, Adam Triggs, Joe Walker and Michael Quincey-O'Neill. And I thank my volunteers, including Alison Humphreys, Ken Maher, Emma Bacchetto, David Winter, Waheed Jayhoon, Anthony McAdam, Helen de Landre, Sonia Loudon, Amy Haywood, Luke Martins, Justin Heatley-Hart, Tom Burgess, Matthew Morris and Eleanor Robson.

Staff and volunteers in my office do a vast array of jobs, including engaging with the most populous electorate in Australia with over 141,000 voters; arranging community events such as Welcoming the Babies, yesterday's climate march or our regular street stalls; drafting speeches and opinion articles, and answering correspondence and telephone calls; and simply reaching out to assist the people of North Canberra in the problems and challenges facing them on a daily basis. I want to thank team Leigh for all they have done to support me and Canberra this year and wish each and every one of them all the best for a safe and relaxing break.

**Macarthur Electorate: Camp Quality esCarpade**

**Mr MATHESON** (Macarthur) (16:18): I rise today to commend Macarthur's Team Kermit which raised an amazing $77,610 for Camp Quality, a wonderful organisation focused on creating a better life for children affected by cancer. esCarpade is one of Camp Quality's biggest annual national fundraisers and is described as Australia's wackiest outback motoring adventure. The adventure is a culmination of year-round fundraising by dedicated and hardworking fundraisers, who come from places as far south as Geelong, all the way up to Bundaberg. Each team is required to fund their own team car, with all proceeds going to support services and respite camps to help kids living with cancer. This year's adventure went from Narrabri to Goondiwindi, via Longreach, Roma, Emerald and many other places, covering a distance of more than 5,000 kilometres that was long, hot and very dry. This year's adventure involved 72 entrant cars, 18 official vehicles, three support vehicles and more than 230 people. Over the course of a week the travelling esCarpade teams visited 12 towns, made seven school visits and two fun stops each day. It is estimated that each town visited by the esCarpadians, as they are affectionately known, received a cash injection of $25,000—a significant contribution to the local community of these towns.

This year's esCarpade raised a whopping $1.3 million for children with cancer—a truly remarkable achievement. On behalf of the Macarthur community, I would like to congratulate Barrie Grimes, Rob Elliot, John Gannon, Tony Ross, Wayne Gannon and Team Kermit for
reaching the goal of raising more than $75,000. We are all incredibly proud of your wonderful achievement.

Scouts Victoria

Mr Bandt (Melbourne) (16:19): On Friday night, I attended my first meeting as a member of the Scouts Victoria state council. The speeches from the Scouts were inspirational. Hearing from girls who said that they used to be quiet but now they had found their voice and that instead of playing at home alone they were now out organising events and climbing trees was incredible. Hearing from boys who said they were usually picked last on their team for sports at school but were always first chosen to lead a team for orienteering when they were off scouting reminded you of the power of what this organisation could do.

Before the event started, I met Omar and Saad, from the Cleve Cole Rover Crew. Omar told me unassumingly that he came to Australia a year ago from Syria and had learnt to speak Australian English by watching political debates and speeches given in this House, including from our Facebook page. When he spoke during the evening, you could hear a pin drop as he explained how he was a scout in Syria and how, when they started distributing food parcels on a humanitarian basis, they came under attack from the Assad regime. He spoke of how he was taken in and was tortured and questioned, how he has lost contact with many of the other members of his Scout troop and how some of them have been killed. As he said to the group which was assembled there, 'Thank you for taking in 12,000 of us,' you could hear a pin drop. When he said, 'We need to have much more,' and, 'Thank you for the opportunity, Australia,' there was a standing ovation.

I want to say to you, Omar and Saad, thank you for coming to this country and thank you for helping to make it a better place.

Lyne Electorate: Australian Air Force Cadets

Dr Gillespie (Lyne) (16:21): On Saturday a week ago in my electorate, I had the pleasure of attending the Australian Air Force Cadets annual review parade in Taree, along with 100 other proud local members of the Manning Valley. The AAFC teaches valuable life skills and plays a significant role in developing character in our young people. Cadets have the opportunity to grow in leadership, self-reliance, confidence, teamwork and communication. It is very encouraging to see such a thriving group of young people in my electorate. The volunteers that run and organise the 317 Squadron are doing a fabulous job in connecting and engaging with the youth of Taree. I commend you all for your efforts.

It was an honour to be part of the day. I would like to congratulate Cadet of the Year Cadet Sergeant Samuel Snape; the Cadets Cadet recipient, Cadet Sergeant Mitchell Books; the Non-Commissioned Cadet of the Year recipient, Cadet Corporal Macaela Harris; the Leadership Award recipient, Cadet Sergeant Samuel Walker; the Effort and Consistency award recipient, Leading Cadet Joshua Walker; the Outstanding Attendance and Participation Award recipients, Cadet Stanley Tan and Cadet Galen Wiseman; and the Most Improved Cadet, Leading Cadet Daniel Souter. The Jim Welsh Memorial Flying Scholarship was awarded to Cadet Tamara Di Costanzo.

Well done to all. Congratulations to Laurie Easter and all of his staff and the cadet staff on such a successful day. Keep up the great work, guys.
Churchland, Ms Kira

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (16:23): I rise today to congratulate a Canberra cricketer who, on the weekend, smashed through another glass ceiling—go sister! Kira Churchland has become the first woman to play in the Cricket ACT first-grade competition after yesterday's Gallop Cup semifinal. Kira is a bowler who plays for Weston Creek Molonglo in my electorate, as well as for the ACT Meteors. She was given the call-up on Saturday and yesterday became the first woman in the ACT Cricket Association's 87-year history to play in the first-grade competition. Not only is Kira the first woman to play in the ACT's first-grade competition but she is the first Australian woman to play in any first-grade competition in a capital city. This is a huge achievement for Kira, and I am proud that this milestone has happened here in Canberra, our national capital.

Congratulations, Kira. I hope you enjoy many more games in Cricket ACT's first-grade competition and even teach the boys a thing or two! I am sure your performance over the weekend will inspire many other female cricketers in Canberra and, in fact, around Australia to know that they can mix it with the best and that they can get out there and play first-grade cricket. Well done and congratulations, Kira.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Prentice): Thank you, Member for Canberra, and well done, Kira.

Brisbane Electorate: Design Competition

Ms GAMBARO (Brisbane) (16:24): I rise to thank every one of the 600 local Brisbane primary school students who participated in my annual Christmas card design competition. Congratulations to the winning designers: competition winner, Savannah Potter, Ashgrove State School; competition runner-up, Sophie Ellis, Our Lady Help of Christians School Hendra; prep/year 1 category winner, Archie Marlow, Ashgrove State School; year 2 category winner, Libby Grigaliunas, Clayfield College; and year 3 category winner, Hugh Besley, Stafford State School. The quality of the designs and entries was outstanding. The emails I have been receiving from the families of the winners have been really encouraging. Madonna Potter, the mother of our winner, Savannah, wrote this:

Thank you for the exciting news regarding Savannah's success with the competition. I sat down with Savannah and asked her what significant buildings or landmarks reminded her of Brisbane. She responded with 'The Story Bridge, City Hall and the Christmas tree' and this then formed the foundation of her postcard.

Yasmin Grigaliunas, the mum of our runner-up Libby wrote this:

There was so much excitement at our house last night when we shared the wonderful news with Libby that she was the year 2 category winner. Libby is a budding artist; it is her passion, so you cannot imagine how over the moon she was when we told her she actually won. Libby spent many hours at home quietly working away on her design. It was incredible to see her so committed to it.

To everyone who entered the competition, thank you so very much. There are more than 92,000 residents who are going to have a great opportunity to see the talent showcased on these cards. Thank you to everyone who entered and I look forward to doing it all again next year.
Indi Electorate: Wodonga Gold Cup

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (16:26): I rise today to congratulate Racing Wodonga on a highly successful Gold Cup on Friday. It was a beautiful day. Over 6,130 people watched Master Reset win the $90,000-cup. Congratulations to the sponsors, Telstra Business Centre Albury Wodonga—to Barb and Bob Toal, thank you. It was particularly wonderful to welcome the Telstra managers, Andy Hitchens and Steve Tinker—thank you for coming on the day. And thank you to Myer for sponsoring the various fashions on the field. I would particularly like to acknowledge Racing Wodonga club manager, Tom O’Connor—great job; the track manager, Dustin Cundy—thank you. To all the committee, it was fantastic effort to do the work from the attention to detail to the follow-through, and thank you to the stewards and the race day officials. I also appreciated the work of the security officials on the day, Master King and all your staff. You did terrific job in keeping us safe.

But what really made the day work was the fantastic turnout and the attitude of the people of Wodonga. People came for their Christmas parties. There were family groups, trade union people, environmental groups, business groups. People came with such good humour to enjoy each other's company, to watch fine racing but most of all to showcase Wodonga racing at its very best. Well done team.

La Trobe Electorate: Fleetwood Primary School

Mr WOOD (La Trobe) (16:27): Today I rise to recognise Fleetwood Primary School in the suburb of Narre Warren in my electorate of La Trobe. Fleetwood has approximately 330 students. It runs a fantastic range of educational and recreational programs designed to engage all the students. The school motto is ‘achieving excellence together’. The community of Fleetwood Primary School is certainly living up to the motto and I congratulate it. Last week I had the great pleasure of viewing the work of the talented visual arts students. In particular, I awarded three students the La Trobe art award: Zoe in grade 2 for her owl; Keanna in grade 3/4 for her cats; and Jack in grade 6. Jack is artistic and has great imagination and talent. With the blessing of Jack and his parents, Jack's picture will now form part of my Christmas card, which will go out to a number of people throughout the electorate.

I congratulate the principal, Kerry Coffey, who is doing an amazing job at that school with all the staff and all the community volunteers who help the students at the school. Finally, I again thank all the students for getting involved in the art presentations. It was simply fantastic. It was a job well done and very inspiring.

Shortland Electorate: Merchant Mariners

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (16:28): On Saturday 5 December, the annual merchant mariners morning will be held at Norah Head. This is an occasion when the community comes together and remembers the contribution that merchant mariners made during the war. It is a great community event. At the event, the keynote speaker will be Peter Morris, the former federal member for Shortland, who has made an enormous contribution to shipping. We will have speakers from Gorokan High School. The two school captains will be speaking about the contribution that merchant mariners have made. We will also have representatives of merchant mariners. In addition, we will have the Toukley Public School involved in providing music. The Scouts will be involved, as will community groups—Brackets and Jam will be providing all of the sound equipment and making sure that
everything runs smoothly. Norah Head Search and Rescue will be coordinating dropping a wreath into the sea because one of the ships was wrecked just off the coast at Norah Head. This is a very special, very sombre event and something that really remembers merchant mariners and their contributions.

**Sport**

Mr IRONS (Swan) (16:30): This has been a great few weeks for golf in Australia. Next door, in room 2R2, we have some of the elite golfers in Australia and about 20 members of parliament. Ten days ago, legendary Australian golfer Peter Senior won the Australian Masters in Huntingdale for the third time—an amazing feat for someone in their mid-50s. Yesterday, at the Australian Open in Sydney we witnessed one of Australia's rising golf stars Matt Jones win the Emirates Australian Open, prevailing over world No. 1 Jordan Spieth and our very own Adam Scott, who finished third. Matt Jones is currently ranked 75th, but after yesterday's win he will be a lot higher up the ladder than that.

This afternoon we are honoured to have the British Open winner Ian Baker-Finch in Parliament House joining the CEOs of the PGA and Golf Australia, Brian Thorburn and Stephen Pitt, to brief us on the state of golf in Australia. This week, we see the Australian PGA Championship unfold at the RACV Royal Pines on the Gold Coast with the inaugural Greg Norman Medal dinner. Greg Norman himself will be in attendance, and will announce the winner of that prestigious award. And if anyone wants to know what it is the equivalent of, it is like winning the Allan Border Medal. This will be the Greg Norman Medal. Drawn from male and female professional golfers based on their international success, that dinner will become golf's night of nights and a highlight on the Australian golfing calendar. I wish all the nominees for that award, as well as all the players competing in the PGA Championship, the very best and I wish all success to Golf Australia and the PGA and everyone who participates in this great sport.

**Horin, Ms Adele**

Dr LEIGH (Fraser) (16:32): Adele Horin's last article centred on the topic of luck:

… I've attributed my moderate successes in life to luck—

she began—

Yes, hard work and intelligence do play a part, but luck stands out as queen of the trifecta.

Ms Horin's understanding of chance never led to fatalism or cynicism; rather it became the foundation for the gratitude she felt for all of the beautiful things that had marked her life. Her loving partner, her two sons, her parents and her upbringing; her long and eclectic career as one of Australia's leading female journalists. As a cadet journalist, Ms Horin once earned the ire of Western Australian farmers when she misreported the time of sunrise on the weather pages. She went on to earn a name for herself as a Walkley-winning social issues journalist of remarkable rigour and empathy. Adele Horin applied her prose and intellect to many issues that saw her become a voice for the voiceless: euthanasia, poverty, sexual harassment, there were few topics of poverty and disadvantage that escaped her pen. If any of us were in her position—almost 65 and struck down with lung cancer without ever having smoked a cigarette—Adele Horin's affliction could be painfully difficult to accept. Writing in her last blog post, she appears tempted to give into this idea:

I want to say it's unfair.
But she returns like a magnet to her refrain: Whatever happens, I've been so lucky.

**Bonner Electorate: Wynnum**

**Mr VASTA** (Bonner) (16:33): I am pleased to speak today on a fantastic initiative for small businesses in the Wynnum CBD area. This is an important part of my electorate. Wynnum CBD has experienced a downturn in the past, so I am thrilled to report there has been a recent resurgence for business in the area. A slew of new shops have opened up in the CBD, and it is great to see empty shopfronts come back to life over this past year. I am proud to be involved in plans to further revitalise Wynnum CBD. I recently met with CCIQ Brisbane Bayside manager, Belinda Pugh, and other board members to discuss their plans to attract more businesses to the CBD area. CCIQ Brisbane Bayside is proposing a new retail association that would work with the community, including local shop owners, to form the new shopping precincts in the CBD. It is an exciting concept, and I look forward to working with CCIQ Brisbane Bayside and other community figures to encourage and support new businesses in our area.

I am also pleased to report that the much anticipated Wynnum community centre has officially opened. The centre now houses a new Woolworths, the Wynnum library as well as a number of other community groups. Thanks go in particular to my good friend Deirdre Thompson, lord mayor's representative for the Wynnum Manly ward, for her hard work in ensuring the smooth operating and opening of this facility that will breathe even more life into the Wynnum CBD.

**Victoria: Public Housing**

**Mr BANDT** (Melbourne) (16:35): Earlier this year a woman who lives in my electorate, a constituent from Richmond, was doing the laundry in a shared laundry in her block of flats with her four-year-old. The four-year-old went to grab some sheets that had been left in the basin by another tenant. There was a syringe in the sheets, and the four-year-old grabbed the syringe. The family had to endure an agonising wait while the child was tested for HIV and other diseases. This happened in public housing. It happened in an area where the doors are being regularly kicked in by people suspected to be drug dealers because they want to conduct their activities from the halls there. This is one of the 600 constituents who have come into my office over the last few years to complain about what is happening in public housing in Victoria.

More people come to talk to me about public housing than about any other single issue. Things were bad under the Victorian Liberals. We expected that. But we expected things to get better under Labor. Instead the waiting list is now at 34,000 and people are complaining of spending 13 years on this waiting list. In some flats there is mould and children are getting asthma as a result of it. A pensioner couple have spent 13 years on the waiting list and now cannot afford their private rental anymore and are fearing homelessness. We are seeing overcrowding, with up to 11 people in two-bedroom flats. It is time to fix public housing, Labor. Enough is enough. We expected bad from the Liberals but we expect better from you.

**Capricornia Electorate: Men's Sheds**

**Ms LANDRY** (Capricornia) (16:37): To quote the words of an old John Williamson song, 'all Australian boys need a shed'. On my travels around Capricornia I have been fortunate
enough to visit many of the men's sheds in my area. This includes places like Sarina, Emu Park and the Capricorn Coast.

I am pleased to inform the House that a new men's shed will soon open at Yeppoon. The Capricorn Coast Men's Shed will hold its official opening on 11 December. The building will be opened by Eric Anderson. It is located at 150 Rockhampton Road at the Capricorn Adventist Retirement Village Community Centre. I congratulate president Trevor Gardner and all of the members. I am also thrilled to report that the Emu Park men's shed, also on the Capricorn Coast, has been able to upgrade its facilities, thanks to a grant from our federal coalition government. The shed received $5,170 to fix its kitchen and benches under the National Shed Development Program announced by the federal Minister for Health.

The Australian Men's Shed Association advocates that being a member of a men's shed leads to improved health. According to the association, becoming a member gives a man a safe and busy environment where he can find a non-judgemental atmosphere of old-fashioned mateship.

**Indi Electorate**

**Ms McGOWAN** (Indi) (16:38): I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank my staff by name: Jill Smith, manager; Karen Keegan, political adviser; Simon Crase, media and community engagement; and Kerryn Lee, PA and diary. To my electorate officers, Rod Klein, Elise Wenden, Peter Kenyon and Christine Thorpe, thank you for all you do. Thanks to Fiona Roberts for being around town and helping out, and to Sean O'Neill for all the work you do with NationBuilder, IT and Facebook. I thank the over 126 volunteers who have worked in my Canberra office these two years and the Wodonga, Wangaratta and valley visiting staff for the work you do with the phones, letters, newspapers, data entry, filing and publicity. I particularly acknowledge and thank you all for your advice, tact, diplomacy, patience, kindness, courtesy, integrity and respect. I know you do it because you believe in democracy. I know you do it because you have a vision for your community and your family and you have a vision for our electorate and our country. To all my staff and volunteers, as we get ready to have a rip-roaring barefoot bowls competition on Wednesday week, you have my appreciation and gratitude.

**South Australia: Arts Funding**

**Mr WILLIAMS** (Hindmarsh) (16:39): South Australia is well known to some as the Festival State. It is with good reason, as the arts community in my state is strong and plays an important role in the community. My own children have been introduced to the arts by Windmill Theatre productions, and I take this opportunity to congratulate Windmill, chairman Bruce Speirs and general manager Sandy Verschoor on their engagement on arts funding. I look forward to following Windmill's success with future tours as well as more productions of *Grug*.

Earlier in the year I was pleased to host an arts round table with the former Minister for the Arts, Senator George Brandis QC, and members of the arts community in South Australia. It was important to give Hindmarsh constituents who contacted me regarding arts funding an opportunity to speak with the federal arts minister. I have had conversations with the new arts minister, Mitch Fifield, who has said that the intention of the National Program for Excellence in the Arts was that it would be reshaped in the light of feedback from the Australian artistic
community. That is what has happened. The government has created the Catalyst program for $32 million over the forward estimates to the Australia Council in recognition of their important role in supporting small and medium organisations and particularly individual artists who are at the heart of the arts in South Australia. This will take the total Australia Council funding to $783 million over the four years.

I would like to thank the constituents who have spoken to me about their work and how the government can best support it, in particular actor and playwright Elena Carapetis, manager Jennifer Greer-Holmes, musician Ross McHenry, Steve Mayhew from Country Arts SA and creative director Sam Haren of Sandpit. I think it is important to have a strong dialogue, and that is what we have done with the Catalyst program.

Christmas Card Competition

Ms HALL (Shortland—Opposition Whip) (16:40): Each year, like many other members, I run a competition with schools for them to design a Christmas card. This year I had the usual excellent contributions from students throughout the electorate. All the designs are displayed in the window of my electorate office. They cover two full windows. Unfortunately, even though the standard was so fantastic, there could only be one winner. This year's winner was Mia Pennington of class 5L at Belmont Christian College. Mia's design is a bright, colourful and sparkly collage which will be featured on my Christmas card and on my Christmas calendar.

A number of other students also put in excellent artwork. We the also awarded some highly commended to the following: Imogen May in year 5 at Belmont Christian College, Lara De Mello in year 2 at Charlestown Public School, Anna Hughes in year 6 at Floraville Public School, Isabell Field in year 6 at Jewells Primary School, Madison Homan in year 3 at St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, Lake Munmorah, Kaitlyn Allen in year 5 at St Mary's Catholic School, Warners Bay and all the students from Swansea Public School. Congratulations to everyone. You presented some excellent artwork and I thank you very much.

Reid Electorate: Maronite Community

Mr LAUNDY (Reid) (16:42): In the seat of Reid I am blessed to have many wonderful communities. I go back a long way with one in particular—my local Maronite community. St Joseph's at Croydon was opened and blessed in 1978, and a year later I made my way to St Pat's at Strathfield, where I had my first contact with the Maronite community. I remember saying to a young mate there, 'Are you Catholic?' He said, 'No, I'm Maronite.' I saw his mother later in the year. I did not know what Maronite was. It was my first exposure. His mother said to me, 'Craig, you know how you're Catholic?' I said, 'Yes.' She said, 'We're more Catholic than you are.'

I tell that story a lot in the community. They laugh a lot at it. But I am always made to feel at home. It will be no exception this Friday night. A couple of weeks ago Anthony Bazooni, a mate of mine, took me to meet with Father Elie, the wonderful parish priest, who explained their plans over the next two to three years for child care and community facilities. This Friday night, Bishop Tarabay, the head of the Maronite Church in Australia and, until recently, my back-fence neighbour, will be there presiding over this amazing community as they ask it to dig deep. I know they will. My wife, Suzie, and I will be with them enjoying the
wonderful hospitality, the camaraderie, the food and, of course, that amazing Lebanese dancing. I have my hands ready to go. I have the shuffle ready to happen and we are ready to celebrate into the wee hours of the morning, as my friends say, on Lebanese time.

Petrie Electorate: Rothwell Roundabout

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (16:44): On Friday last week, I had the absolute pleasure of meeting the grade 5 students from Southern Cross Catholic College, MacKillop Campus, and their teacher, Jo Donohoe. The students had written to me with suggestions on how to best upgrade the Rothwell roundabout, a local traffic hotspot in my electorate. I want to thank the grade 5 students from class 5B for their contribution to this important discussion. They had been working on the project for more than six weeks and I was very impressed with their intelligent analysis of the issue. The class invited me to also have a good look at the models they had made with their parents and in the class. Many of them had spent many hours on it. The results were that 16 of the students in 5B said an overpass was the way to go, three said traffic lights were the way to go, three said extra lanes were the way to go, two said tunnels were the way to go—we should tunnel under the roundabout—and one said, 'Forget all that. We just need a lollipop man.'

The Rothwell roundabout, whilst it is a major responsibility of the state, I am talking to the Deputy Prime Minister about how the federal government can help. I received a whole lot of letters, which are all here, from the class. Amy Bird said tunnels were the way to go. Casey Clarke said traffic lights were not the way to go; she thought an overpass was. And Jai Dunlop said traffic lights were the best solution. It was very important. Thank you, 5B.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Prentice): In accordance with standing order 43, the time for members' statements has concluded.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Mr GILES (Scullin) (16:46): One thing is apparent since the member for Wentworth, Malcolm Turnbull, wrestled the prime ministership from his rival, the member for Warringah: the national mood has changed. That is, there is a palpable sense of relief in the communities. But this is misconceived. While it is certainly nice to hear that we are living in the most exciting time to be Australians, let us not confuse questions of style with questions of substance, and let's be very clear about this: is relief really as good as it gets? The problem is that this is apparent particularly in the communities I represent in this place. Under our new Prime Minister, there has been very little, if any, meaningful policy change. The Prime Minister's new politics simply use kinder language to pursue the same Abbott agenda; the same unfair, regressive agenda. This obscures but cannot conceal the realities of what this government is doing to people. The Australian people will see through this cynical approach to politics from a deeply cynical politician. People in Scullin already do.

What matters, of course, is not the language used but the impact of decisions on people's lives. The regressive agenda of the Turnbull government is carrying on the damage to
communities which make up the Scullin electorate. We see that in so many areas of public policy. The former Treasurer's age of entitlement attack on universal health care and Medicare continues, not only through the GP tax by stealth but through the government's rush to change the Medicare safety net while refusing to release details on the extended impact of this on chronically-ill patients. My office has received many calls from constituents deeply concerned that they will not be able to afford radiation therapy after these changes. I have assured them that Labor will do everything we can to stop these unfair cuts. Another constituent, Felicia Murnane, contacted me upset and deeply concerned that fertility treatments would become so prohibitively expensive that they will only be available for those who have big bank balances. Felicia is a music therapist and her husband works in IT. She has had one cycle of IVF which was unsuccessful, and her parents helped her with the cost of that cycle. Felicia is worried now that, if costs go up any more, she and her husband will not be able to continue with IVF. This has been, understandably, a very emotionally draining experience for her and it would have been devastating when that cycle was unsuccessful. The last thing she needs is the added stress of the prospect of dramatically increased cuts.

We also have the threat of an increased and broadened GST. This is, of course, a real threat. By refusing to give a straight answer or simply rule this out, the Prime Minister has signalled to Australians that the government plans to not only make them pay more for goods and services but to also potentially slug them with an extra 15 per cent on fresh food as well. How is that fair? Evidence shows that a broader based higher rate of GST affects the poorest the most. It will broaden the already too large inequality gap in this country.

Let me be clear on this, as I have been to the constituents of Scullin in recent weeks: Labor stands firmly against any attempt to slug ordinary people with an extra 15 per cent on fresh food and shopping. Higher consumption taxes, of course, lead to higher prices. This is not a good thing for Australians. The rhetoric of the government, when it comes to taxation reform, is empty. The calls for a sophisticated conversation about tax are simply smoke and mirrors, as we see time and time again in question time in this place, where the government refuses to set out its plans and refuses to set out the principles by which it would approach a review of taxation.

We saw again today the Treasurer refuse to engage in any meaningful conversation about the revenue problem Australia clearly has, except to look to making those who have the least pay the most. We also know that it is not just about what the government takes out; it is about what the government does to working people's wages. At the moment, despite rhetoric from government ministers in the early years of this government about the prospect of a wages explosion, we have wages growth at the lowest on record. To compound that, we have the new Prime Minister saying that the lowering of penalty rates is inevitable. It was one of the least surprising interventions of recent months when he agreed that, because we apparently have a seven-day economy, the only reason why people value their weekends is history. This old conservative refrain does not bear any scrutiny. As my colleague the member for Wills has pointed out, the people who are against penalty rates tend to be those who do not work on the weekends—those who can afford to work in what are still referred to as regular hours. Who would these changes hurt? They would hurt students who do not have the flexibility in their courses to work weekdays, families who need that extra money to pay for groceries or Christmas presents for their kids, and young people putting in extra weekend hours,
potentially to save for a first house deposit. These are, of course, also the people who would be cut most deeply by the government's GST hits. The economic effect of taking income from workers and giving it to businesses means that less money is spent and less money is circulating in the economy—and less is raised in taxes, of course.

The calling card of the Abbott government was cutting benefits to those who could least afford it. Sadly, this is the only thing that is considered. Recently the Department of Social Services told a Senate inquiry that over 130,000 single-parent families would lose out if the government's family tax benefit cuts passed the Senate. Single parents would lose up to $3,000 a year. Grandparent-carers would lose out as well, as soon as the children they care for turn 13. Parenting of course does not stop when your child becomes a teenager. The Turnbull government is keen to paint single-parent families and grandparent-carer families as system abusers, but all the while big business pays too little tax and the government is unconcerned to do anything about it. Of course, on the Labor side we recognise that the welfare system as it stands is not perfect and could be better targeted, but unfairly cutting out the most disadvantaged from access is neither an evidence-based approach to policymaking nor a sustainable one.

The current freeze on $100,000 degrees is no good for students considering their futures or for tertiary providers. Let us be clear about this: no young person or their family should have to face a $100,000 bill because they propose to study at university. Many residents of the Scullin electorate are concerned that higher education will become unaffordable for everyone but the elite. This government fails to recognise, despite its trickery over the delay, the breadth of benefits of higher education: increased workforce participation, knowledge and skills growth, economic growth and employment—to name just a few. This is, of course, something that should be open to everyone regardless of their circumstances. It is deeply unfortunate that, rather than seeing higher education as an investment in the future of Australia, this short-sighted government instead views it as simply another cost. It would rather leave 21-year-olds with $100,000 in debt before they have even joined the workforce than invest in the future of the country. I say this to the Prime Minister: you can talk about a nimble knowledge economy all you like but, unless you invest in it, it simply is not sustainable.

There have been many cuts to community services which have continued under the Prime Minister, including cuts to groups in the Scullin electorate like Whittlesea Community Connections, which provides vital services to women and children who are the victims of family violence. This is a national priority but it needs national support. We think also about the impact of child care. One in four parents who use child care in Australia will be subject to the prospect of losing their childcare benefits. We saw again today the government refuse to provide the modelling of proposed childcare reforms that would appear to be unfair and completely ignorant of the workload that having a child presents. To simply presume that stay-at-home parents should not be able to have their child cared for also disregards the advantages in socialisation that kids can receive. I think particularly of the impact of the Bubup Wilam Aboriginal childcare centre, which has been unable to receive any funding certainty, putting at risk a range of children who have suffered very significant trauma.

When we turn to one of the Prime Minister's former pet projects, climate change, we see again some of the challenges this government has failed to grapple with. If we ignore the
creative accounting that has led to the environment minister literally unbelievably claiming that Australia has already met its 2020 targets, we are left with one of the greatest failures of this Turnbull government—one that is of deep concern to the constituents of Scullin. This Prime Minister, who once said he would not lead a party that did not act on climate change, has now, funnily enough, had a change of heart. We know that independent figures from RepuTex show that emissions will rise six per cent on 2000 levels by 2020. Of course under Labor they were declining. Labor wants Australia to do its share and mitigate the worst effects of climate change. The Abbott-Turnbull policies are simply not good enough for our future.

It will come as no surprise at the conclusion of this speech the deep concern I have about a government that is unconcerned for the constituency I represent—unconcerned for them now and unconcerned for them in the future. All the cheap political language of this Prime Minister is nothing but sophistry. It is dishonest to talk about agility, open policy, making new politics and exciting times. If you look behind the scenes you will see that they are gutting services to the neediest and plotting to cut penalty rates and impose a GST that will affect all families regardless of capacity to pay.

A division having been called in the House of Representatives—

Sitting suspended from 16:56 to 17:03

Mr GILES: I will continue. Relief in the change of Prime Minister has now worn out. The government will be judged, firstly, by the impact of its policies and, secondly, by its vision for our future. On both measures it is clear that the Turnbull government, like its predecessor, has failed dismally.

Fiscal Policy

Mrs GRIGGS (Solomon) (17:04): Madam Deputy Speaker, you yourself would know, being a marginal seat holder, that we have another scare campaign in marginal seats, headed up by the unions and their Labor mates. ACTU president Ged Kearney has been out misleading hardworking, paying members of her union again. She has once again been using union funds to feed misleading information to her own union members, this time targeting a hypothetical increase to the GST, changes advocated by state governments and former Labor premiers. If Ms Kearney has the best interests of her union members in mind she would stop wasting their money on expensive scare campaigns and start joining in on the very open and very public conversation on tax reform. Some of the scaremongering includes robocalls—and I know, Madam Deputy Speaker, you and I have been robocalled many times, just like mine—and calling false debates. This lot of rubbish really does need to stop.

It is time to put the facts on the table, and the facts are pretty clear. The Turnbull government's position on penalty rates has consistently been that penalty rates are a matter for the Fair Work Commission to determine—not government. How much clearer can this message be? But somehow, Labor and their union mates are telling porky pies, scaring people that we are taking away their penalty rates. I will say it in another way: the Turnbull government has no plans to change the way penalty rates are set.

A quick history lesson for those opposite, who quite often like to rewrite history: when Bill Shorten was Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations he explicitly amended the Fair Work Act to specifically require the Fair Work Commission to review all penalty rates in
awards. As a result of Labor's review, employees in restaurants had their Sunday penalty rates cut. That was Bill Shorten and Labor. This has nothing—I mean nothing—to do with the Turnbull government. For the record: under Bill Shorten and Labor was the only time in Australian history when award penalty rates have been lowered. I will repeat that this had nothing to do with the Turnbull government. This was all about Bill Shorten and Labor.

In terms of the GST there is another scare campaign being run by Labor and the unions over recent weeks in relation to the GST and a hypothetical policy of ours to change the GST rate. Treasurer Scott Morrison has made it very clear that a growing economy is the best way to provide jobs for the future and to maintain a strong welfare safety net. As a government we want to back Australians who are growing our economy by working, saving and investing every day to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities. On this side of politics we are backing Australians through a strong national platform of economic growth and jobs. As members of the Turnbull government we are getting on with the job. We are securing new trade agreements with the world's largest and fastest-growing economies, we are rolling out a $50 billion national investment plan, we are getting spending under control to balance our budget and to reduce debt, we are putting innovation at the centre of our economic plan, we are making our financial system even stronger to deal with global shocks and uncertainty, we are working with state and territory governments to deliver better services and more choices for consumers and we are encouraging more and more Australians into the workforce by removing barriers to their participation.

There are many commentators—and, indeed, many constituents of mine—who have said that Australia needs a better tax system. I could not agree more. We do need a better tax system—one that will enable us to achieve greater economic growth. I am sure that even some of those opposite will agree that many features of our current state and federal tax system is limiting jobs growth and making it less attractive to run a business and invest in Australia. I know that many of my businesspeople believe that the current system is limiting Australia's ability to prosper.

I have had many constituents raise with me—and I am sure you have too Madam Deputy Speaker—issues with our current system, in particular the area of income tax. One of the most common complaints is how it is becoming an increasing burden on working Australians, especially in 2016 an average full-time worker will more than likely move into the second-highest tax bracket, being taxed up to 39c in the dollar. This is in contrast to 15 years ago when almost 80 per cent of taxpayers paid no more than 30c in the dollar. Commentators have noted that, as a proportion of total tax revenue, personal income tax in Australia is also the second-highest amongst OECD countries.

Business people and other interest groups are calling out for a better mix and combination of taxes at a state and federal level that removes the impediments that are holding Australians back. It is important that Australian people know that as a Liberal-Nationals government we do not default to raising taxes to fix our budget or pay for higher spending. That is what Labor does. The way to fix the budget is to control spending and grow the economy, which is what the Turnbull government is doing.

We are engaged in an open discussion on how we should achieve a better tax system. To once again dispel any myths, the Turnbull government has put forward any reform proposal policy or preferred option to changed the goods and services tax. Any suggestion about the
impact of such changes does not relate to any government policy. It does not matter how many times Labor or the unions say otherwise. We have not put a proposal forward. Labor and the unions are working on hypotheticals.

We want to have a genuine discussion about tax reform. A change to the GST will only be considered if put forward by the states and territories who are the ones who receive all the revenue from the GST. Such a proposal would also have to reduce taxes, taxes like personal income tax, and increased income support payments to ensure vulnerable Australians were not adversely impacted, as occurred when the GST was first introduced. Our discussions with the states and territories also include how they levy their own taxes that bring in around $70 billion each year, which is more than the GST. And our discussions involve how we can work together to improve the way taxpayers' money can be better spent at all levels of government rather than just spending.

The Turnbull government will continue to work with states and territories and engage with Australians on what we need as a better tax system that supports jobs and growth in our economy. To do this, we will continue to not rule things out and not rule things in, as we believe that this is the best way to get the best answer on how we can improve our tax system.

The Australian people certainly deserve a better tax system, one that backs them to work, to save and invest. The Australian people do not need the unions and Labor scaremongering and putting mistruths out into our communities. People are already worried enough; they do not need this added stress of the hypotheticals of what we are doing. What we are doing is having a very constructive, open discussion. We are involving all key stakeholders and I encourage Labor and the unions to get on board, and be mature about this. Australia certainly does deserve a better tax system, and something that backs Australian workers, so they can save and investment. Thank you.

Calwell Electorate: Muslims

Ms VAMVAKINOU (Calwell) (17:14): These are the words of one of my constituents, Dr Evangelia Axiarlis:

The Australian mainstream media portrays a skewed stereotypical and overly negative image of the Muslim community. The pervasive representation of Muslims as a monolithic, homogeneous entity is both inaccurate and harmful to our social cohesion. Australians of Muslim faith have much to contribute to the broader society and should be welcomed. Constantly referring to and identifying Muslims in terms of their religion is patronising and belittling.

Evangelia lives in Broadmeadows with her husband Ismail and their three young children. She and Ismail teach at our local Ilim College and she recently published a book on political Islam and the secular state in Turkey. Dr Axiarlis grew up in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs. She is the daughter of Greek and Greek Cypriot migrants, a dedicated teacher, who converted to Islam, and by all accounts is a typical Aussie of migrant extraction, just like me and lots of other people in this country, and indeed in this chamber.

She happens to where the hijab and is therefore identifiably Muslim. As a result, she experiences discrimination often and places much of the responsibility for this on the Australian media.

The mainstream media is, in my opinion, mostly to blame for the discrimination and racism innocent Muslims experience regularly. It is sensational, inflammatory, misleading and ultimately dangerous.
I most certainly agree with Evangelia on this issue. The most recent attacks and vilification of the Grand Mufti Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed by *The Daily Telegraph* and the continuing attacks today by government members, in *The Australian*, is an example of this reckless apportioning of blame on a community and its leadership.

Evangelia is one of the thousands of Australians of Muslim faith who live in my electorate of Calwell. They are a very diverse group of first and second generation migrant Australians, predominantly but not only from Turkey, and many are devout followers of the Islamic faith. I know them as Milli Gorus. I also know them as followers of Fethullah Gulen's Hizmet movement. Others are Alevi Turks, while others are more secular in their orientation. Within this large and diverse constituency there are many Kurds and, of course, there are large numbers of Muslims who are of Lebanese, Pakistani, Egyptian and Bosnian backgrounds, as well as many who are Alawis from Syria.

Evangelia's reference to Australian Muslims as a diverse and plural set of communities is very much reflected and affirmed in the ethnic diversity of my local Muslim constituency. Of course, I also share her concerns about the stereotyping of Australians of Muslim faith and the pressure they have been put under, largely since September 11, a catastrophic event that marked a turning point not only for my local Muslim communities but indeed for the rest of Australia and the global community. It was a time when some in my local community went from being migrants with a shared migrant experience like everybody else to becoming Muslims, defined and stereotyped as an entity whose faith was to be feared, resented and rejected as incompatible with mainstream values and expectations. Actions that are a result of inflammatory media commentary have had disturbing ramifications, especially for Muslim women who wear the hijab. Second-generation young Australians of Muslim faith also often find themselves on the receiving end of unprovoked and unwarranted abuse, recriminations and anger from some in the community each time an act of terror takes place in the name of Islam by criminals whose actions and beliefs misuse and manipulate interpretations of the teachings of the faith they profess to espouse. It frustrates me as it does my community that for the actions of a fringe group of criminal zealots the great majority of the Muslim community in Australia is systematically stigmatised.

I have previously spoken in this House about Islamophobia and the way in which some in the media and some politicians have contributed to the prejudicial perception of Australians of Muslim faith. It is fair to say that this negative betrayal of Muslims has continued in the aftermath of September 11, and I am afraid that in more recent times it is becoming more prominent and widespread. Since September 11, the world has undergone a period of transition, if not to say transformation. Change has occurred at all levels: locally, nationally, regionally and globally. The rising tension between Islam and the West is perhaps the single most important feature of this transition. Strains in the relationship between Australia's Muslim communities and the wider society are part of this change.

From an Australian Muslim perspective the nation's leaders and politicians more generally have not fully understood nor effectively handled these strains with the necessary vision, skills or sobriety. Rather, overreaction and overreaching has become the norm. The net effect has been the homogenisation, polarisation and politicisation of a community that feels constantly having to justify itself.
Muslim communities strive to be part of a harmonious multicultural society, and they are deeply troubled by the most recent noticeable change in public rhetoric and media commentary towards Muslims and Islam in general. And while I qualify the complexity of the media's influence, at face value its representation of Australia's Islamic, and especially Middle Eastern, communities is contributing to and evoking negative reactions to those communities. In particular, I note a number of prominent media commentators are inclined to allow their judgements about the Muslim communities to be coloured by assumptions about ethnic and racial dispositions and characteristics. Such inclination is often due in part to the commentators' inability or reluctance to view their subject in the appropriate context. In many instances, reporting and interpretation of local events is distorted because of a preoccupation with faraway events. Put differently, interpretations and readings of intercultural and interfaith relations within Australia are often distorted by a fixation on geostrategic manoeuvring and events of the day.

I am deeply concerned that overall our media is in danger of misleading Australia's mainstream community about Muslim attitudes, and I would like to see better informed, more balanced, responsible, less sensationalised coverage of issues and perspectives relating to Islam and Muslims. Rarely are positive stories about the Muslim communities promoted. Instead, we are constantly told by the media that Australians of Muslim faith hate the West and our way of life and do not want to integrate. As a member for an electorate with the second highest Muslim population in Australia, and the highest Muslim population in Victoria, I can say unequivocally that this sentiment does not represent the Muslim community in my electorate. They are ordinary people getting on with the daily business of living, and basically would like to be left alone. I am pleased that what I know to be true is today affirmed by a survey of 600 Muslims in Sydney commissioned by Western Sydney University, the Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia and Charles Sturt University, which found that, amongst other things, according to Professor Kevin Dunn:

Counter to what people might mistakenly believe from media coverage and a lot of debate and commentary, the vast majority of Muslims are very ordinary Australians.

We have worked very hard in this country and in our local communities over the decades, through public policies and interfaith networks, to build a strong and cohesive multicultural society.

I must acknowledge that the political leadership of Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, opposition leader, Bill Shorten, and Greens leader, Senator Richard Di Natale, are all strong proponents of Australian multiculturalism and interfaith dialogue. This multipartisan support is crucial and sets a good example for us all to follow, including the media. The Prime Minister affirmed this in his national security address, where he cited Australia's strong multicultural society as the bedrock for defence against terrorism. Australia is a great example to the rest of the world of how communities can live together while maintaining their culture, language and faith all in the context of being Australian. This is something that we have done well and this is something we need to protect.

Unfortunately, there are some members of the government—spearheaded by, of all people, the member for Kooyong and including the newly minted member for Canning, who must be looking to nail his credentials somewhere—who seem to be out of step with the wise words of the Prime Minister. The member for Kooyong's patronising attack on the Grand Mufti's
leadership is exactly the reason why we are not, to use his own words, ‘winning the battle of hearts and minds within the Muslim community’. On the contrary, these attitudes from some politicians do exactly what Dr Jamal Rifi said is the work of Hansonites, and I have no doubt that today’s contribution from the members for Kooyong and Canning and others will be music to the ears of Rise Up Australia, Reclaim Australia and other racists who will be emboldened and encouraged. It is our responsibility to unite the Australian community not to divide it, and if anyone is showing a failure of leadership in this, it is government members. Australia is considered international best practice for managing cultural diversity and in building a tolerant, inclusive, harmonious and coherent multicultural society. Australians of Muslim faith are a part of our mainstream Australian society and should not be defined by the actions of zealots.

Hughes Electorate: Infrastructure

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (17:24): This afternoon I would like to talk about what I believe is a terrible mistake my government is making, and it involves what is known as the Moorebank intermodal. I believe that, when history is recorded, this will go down as a classic example of governments picking winners but only ending up picking losers.

By way of background, we must try to work out the most efficient ways to get freight around the city of Sydney. If we look historically, Sydney port was where all of the freight came in. Today, what was down at the container terminal at Sydney port is now Barangaroo, an international tourist attraction. That was from where the freight container handling capacity of Sydney was relocated to Port Botany. The problem that Sydney has had is, as the city has grown, the demographic heart of Sydney has moved further west, so the goods that arrive from overseas in shipping containers have to be transported from Port Botany to further out west. For a lot of the land around the Port Botany area, which was traditionally used as warehousing, the cost has increased so substantially in price that it is now prohibitive for most importers of consumer goods to be located nearby the port. They have had to relocate further out in Western Sydney.

In the past, it would have been a simple matter of the container ship coming in and the containers being lifted off the back of the container, put onto the deck, then lifted up off the deck and put onto the stack. A truck would come in, the container would be taken from the stack to the back of the truck and it would go off to the warehouse. Using an intermodal is actually a form of double handling, because it puts another lift process in the distribution chain. Where the container goes from the port, instead of going on the back of a truck it goes on the back of a train. It then gets taken out to Western Sydney where it then gets lifted off that train, put onto a truck and then taken to the location of where the container needs to go. So, to start with, it is a double handling. For an intermodal concept to actually work, you need to move the container far enough by rail so that you pick up the savings in road versus rail to offset those double handling costs.

This is where Moorebank was a failed idea from the very start. Firstly, anyone looking at this situation about where an intermodal should be located and if one was actually needed—I make the point of whether if one is actually needed is still an issue that has not even been determined by the market—almost a decade ago now a proposal was made to build an intermodal hub at Enfield. This was only about 25 kilometres away from Port Botany, or 25 minutes by road. What happened was that Infrastructure New South Wales—no less an
authority than Infrastructure New South Wales—stated that Enfield would provide the test case if short-haul intermodal in Sydney would be commercially viable. The Enfield intermodal is now three years overdue from opening. The operator that was originally going to take it has pulled out. They are no longer prepared to run it because they do not think they can make it commercially viable. This should ring warning bells on the failure of what we do.

It was interesting when we had a meeting here in Parliament House with some of the people from the government bureaucracy, the Department of Infrastructure, who are promoting the Moorebank intermodal. I said to them, ‘Enfield is not being accepted by the market. Why then would Moorebank be successful if Enfield is not successful, given that Enfield has been described as the test case?’ They said that Enfield did not work because it was too close to Port Botany. This shows how they have it completely wrong. Although the distance from Port Botany to Enfield is closer than the distance from Port Botany to Moorebank as the crow flies, in logistics it is not the distance as the crow flies but the time that you take to travel. Whether by truck or by car, the time that it takes you to get from Port Botany to Enfield as compared to the time it takes you to get from Port Botany to Moorebank, is virtually the same. Anyone can do that test on Google Maps and see that it is virtually the same. Simply, there are no savings—

A division having been called in the House of Representatives—

Proceedings suspended from 17:29 to 17:34

Mr CRAIG KELLY: Going back to what I was saying before the suspension, if we are going to have an intermodal in Sydney even though the test case of Enfield has failed, where should it be? The first thing you would do is look at where the containers are actually going to from Port Botany at the moment. If you do that analysis it is very clear: the area where the most containers are being delivered from Port Botany into Western Sydney is Eastern Creek, which is one of the areas that one of the earlier studies identified as the most suitable location. But somewhere along the line Moorebank came up as a supposedly cheaper option.

I will run through what that the cheaper option is actually going to cost. We have had to relocate the School of Military Engineering. It is wonderful that we have a new School of Military Engineering, but we had an existing school which will be completely bulldozed and demolished. So what value we have added by building that new School of Military Engineering when we already had an existing one is very debatable. For that we spent close to $970 million. That was the first cost. The second cost we have is to clear and rehabilitate the land on the School of Military Engineering site. That is another $100 million cost to the government. Third, if Moorebank were ever going to be successful it would require a major upgrade of all the road networks surrounding it, especially and including an on-ramp onto the M5 and another crossing over the Georges River. This is estimated at costs of upwards of another $750 million. So by the time it is all finished this so-called cheaper option will have cost the taxpayer $2 billion in costs, yet we are getting a second-rate proposal.

Also we have three completely false concepts that this intermodal is built around. The second of these is that it will take trucks off the road. All it actually does is relocate where the trucks depart from. Instead of the trucks departing from Port Botany they will now depart from Moorebank, and Moorebank is an area of more congestion than is already around Port Botany. Moorebank being so far to the south-west of Sydney and not being centrally located will actually result in more trucks and more traffic on roads. A study was done by a company
called Transport Modelling where they looked at a typical importer of consumer goods that would distribute those goods to retail shopping centres around New South Wales. They found that if an importer moved down to Moorebank from Eastern Creek, Wetherill Park or the Chullora area it would have its trucks on the road up to 10 per cent more. So by relocating to Moorebank we are putting more trucks on the road.

The other issue of course is air pollution. The argument was that this would reduce air pollution. There is some truth in that—or partial truth. If you are moving goods by rail as compared to road, you use half as much diesel fuel. But the problem is that a train spews out 18 times more particulate matter per litre of diesel fuel burnt than a truck does. That is almost a nine times increase in particulate matter spewed out in Western Sydney. We must remember that the World Health Organization has classified particulate matter as a carcinogen. We already have levels of particulate matter in Western Sydney right on the threshold of the recommended levels of the World Health Organization, so we should be doing everything we can to reduce those levels of particulate matter in Western Sydney. Yet here we are with a proposal that will bring a ninefold increase from every single container moved via rail rather than road. This is a project that needs a serious second look.

Turnbull Government

Korea: Industrial Relations

Mr BRENDAN O’CONNOR (Gorton) (17:39): As we head into December and then towards Christmas, I want to take this time this afternoon to highlight the issues the Australian Public Service is and has been facing under the Turnbull government. Since the election of the government, we have seen them attack a wide variety of Australians including low-income Australians and they have, in many senses, trashed sectors of our economy. For example, it is clear that when the Treasurer, in December 2013, goaded Holden to leave and Holden made the decision to leave, that really had a devastating impact on the car industry and, consequentially, adverse impacts on small and medium enterprises across the automotive parts sector.

This government want to increase the cost of living for every Australian family by broadening and increasing the GST to 15 per cent. They have engaged in a relentless war against job seekers and are asking those people now to live on absolutely nothing for a whole month. Until we defeated the earlier provision, they were seeking a change that would mean that young people would be deprived of any support whatsoever for six months before they could receive any income benefit. At the same time, they were not guaranteeing earning any jobs because, as we know, there are between 50,000 and 60,000 more Australians unemployed today than was the case when this government was elected. They have sought to stitch up families by getting rid of the family tax benefit for more than one million Australians while also cutting childcare assistance to a significant number of families.

When it comes to the Australian Public Service, the government has also continued this attack on job security and indeed on job conditions. The Abbott-Turnbull government’s bargaining policy is leading to workers in the public service. You only have to look at what is happening at Border Force or Human Services to show that they are seeking to significantly cut their income. In the case of Border Force, what was put to them for them to support was an annual cut of up to $8,000. These are national security officers being asked to take a pay
cut of $8,000. Is it any wonder that the agency chose not to support that and the workforce has been resisting this imposition by this very antiworker government?

Labor acknowledges there have been some agreements struck. In one case recently, this week, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reached an agreement. However, we strongly believe that the government has an obsession with axing jobs and cutting wages and conditions, which has not lead to a more effective workforce and I do not believe it is in the public interest. What Australia needs is an effective, well-run public service. We believe in public institutions and in the Public Service. We think that under this government, government departments and agencies are being left with nowhere to turn but to cut costs through cutting real wages and working conditions.

It is true to say the economy is in a very parlous state. We have the lowest wage growth in Australia for more than a quarter of a century but that is not a sufficient alibi for the government to use to be so harsh towards its own workforce. I think it is fair to say that you judge a government by the way it treats its own workforce and, indeed, it translates to how they would like to see businesses treat workers across the entire nation. Look at the government as an employer and you get a reasonable picture as to the way they would like things to be done.

We have had industrial action being taken across the country in response to this ideological assault by the Turnbull government. The Australian Public Service workers do not take the decision to strike lightly. These workers, as I said, in some cases are facing losses of up to $8,000. They also suffer the consequences of being stood down by taking this action, so they take a real risk, but are left with very few choices. It is not like Border Force officers want passengers to battle through queues to get their flights or Human Services workers want job seekers and people struggling to make ends meet to have to wait for support and be served at Centrelink offices and the like. They are taking this last resort, industrial action, for a reason, and I would contend it is because of this government's obsession with going after the Public Service at all costs.

The irony of course of the government's claims that it is slashing jobs, pay and conditions in the public service to cut costs should not be lost on anyone though. Just this weekend it was revealed that the money the Abbott and Turnbull governments is saving from job cuts has been cancelled-out by a massive increase in the costs of high-paid consultants and contractors. By way of contrast, last year the Commonwealth departments reduced wages, they say, by $109 million thanks to the sacking of thousands of public sector workers; however, the consultancy and contract costs have increased by $205 million—almost double the savings that were allegedly made by the government. You have to wonder how much influence the consultancies and contractors have over the government's policy decisions.

I contend that the public service is more than capable of providing impartial, independent, robust advice, but not if the government continues to cut wages under the guise of cost-savings, and cut conditions to make people work longer and harder. As I said, you can tell a lot about this government by the way it treats its own workforce. It is not just me that thinks that; the former Secretary of the Treasury, Mr Ken Henry, has said the same about the resources that have been taken from the public sector. It has had a huge impact on advice and the effectiveness of governments to efficiently undertake the obligations they have to the people of Australia.
But Labor understands that successful employers know better. They understand that a business that employs good staff and has strong relationships built on trust works better. Strengthening workplace conditions does not appear to be the government’s strong point but it is a very significant issue. That is why Labor has announced that it will provide, among other things, for five days paid domestic and family violence leave in the national employment standards.

We are still awaiting a response. I pay tribute to the Prime Minister for not responding adversely to that suggestion. Indeed, he has said that he is examining that option—as has the Minister for Social Services. Less supportive was the Assistant Treasurer. Nonetheless, the Prime Minister has said that he will examine that. We would ask him to consider it because, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, one in six Australian women have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or former partner. The trauma of domestic and family violence is often compounded by workplace and financial uncertainty.

Domestic and family violence leave will benefit those who have experienced violence and businesses, through improved productivity, increased employee retention and reduced absenteeism. Consider the time required in courts, in meetings with lawyers, financial advisers, school principals and in counselling sessions for people who have experienced violence, which is required in the pursuit of safety and justice.

We want to acknowledge the very good employers who have been working proactively in this area: Telstra, National Australia Bank, Virgin Australia, Ikea and Blundstone. We would like to thank the union movement, which, on behalf of many workers, have been campaigning for this very significant issue. This can save hundreds of millions of dollars for employers and billions of dollars for our economy. So, it is not only the right thing to do; it is also an economically sound thing to do. I ask the government to seriously consider the option of supporting Labor’s position with respect to a minimum of five days paid leave for such important circumstances, which none of us would want to see any woman confront.

Finally, on a separate matter, I am advised that members of the Korean public service and transport workers union have been arrested during legitimate protests in relation to union recognition and safe and decent conditions. Labor firmly believes employees have a fundamental, democratic right to representation in the workplace, to freedom of association, to bargain collectively, to organise and to be represented by their union.

Labor also believes workplace injuries are most often preventable. Industries, employers, trade unions and workers should be supported to reduce workplace risks, hazards and injuries and to achieve the highest possible standards of workplace safety. On the advice I have received, I have concerns about the treatment of these workers in Korea. I question the arrests and I respectfully encourage the Korean authorities to further examine the basis of this decision and to take steps to release those innocent of any criminal conduct.

**Taxation**

**Mr Hutchison (Lyons) (17:49):** Today I rise to speak on behalf of the 10 whiskey distilleries that I have in my electorate of Lyons, the craft brewers and, more broadly, the producers of the highest quality wines that this country can produce in their battle to balance the books—particularly in the case of spirits—in relation to high alcohol excise imposed on them. It is an absolute impediment to seeing these businesses grow, a disincentive to small
businesses to innovate and to increase their production, and ultimately their capacity to be able to sell their product within Australia. It also has a significant impact on the tourism industry, which is so important to my state of Tasmania.

By way of historical fact, in July of 2000 wine and beverages consisting primarily of wine became subject to a wine equalisation tax to replace the difference between the current 41 per cent wholesale sales tax and the proposed GST at the time. The excise on beer and other beverages with less than 10 per cent alcohol content increased to make up for the removal of the wholesale sales tax. Australia has the highest spirits tax in the OECD group of 10. The industry needs reforming to grow. I believe the current tax system places an entirely unfair burden on consumers—particularly of distilled spirits—while other products are taxed at a far lower rate. I note the representations of DSICA, the industry body. They have put out a number of recommendations—not all of which I entirely agree with—and there are certainly a number of recommendations that I think make absolute sense. I will be working with them to try to achieve an outcome.

There are a number of anomalies within the current arrangements. Ready-to-drink—RTD—and spirit drinkers pay 13 times the tax than, for example, cask wine drinkers for every standard drink. It simply does not make sense.

In the case of wine I acknowledge and welcome the initiative of Assistant Treasurer O'Dwyer, following on from her predecessor, Frydenberg, to look at the wine equalisation tax and the rebate. I welcome the consultative process that she has undertaken. We want to see an industry that can grow exports and have a greater focus on quality. I look forward to seeing alcohol more broadly included in the government’s response to the tax white paper.

It is politically difficult—we understand that—but we do need to have alcohol taxation reform. Why? In the case of Tasmania, those who purchase distilled spirits pay $1 in excise per standard drink compared to 5c per standard drink of cask wine. In the case of Tasmania you pay 94c per standard drink on a bottle of wine over $50, whereas a bottle of wine valued at $15 is only taxed at 28c per standard drink. There is an inequity there and an inconsistency that needs addressing. Indeed, these statistics were outlined in the government’s Re:think discussion paper, published in March, under the alcohol tax chapter. By the research that they quoted, the statistics in this report have shown just how much of a mess the current system is in. The system is currently taxed on price; not on the amount of alcohol you are purchasing. The long-term impact of changing the current excise will not benefit brewers or distillers over wine producers—rather, all of the industry will be a beneficiary if we can make appropriate changes.

The second point is that Australia has the second-highest alcohol taxation in the world—second to Sweden, which has some of the highest taxation levels in the world. The current alcohol excise does not reflect what the government is fundamentally trying to achieve—that is, a regime of lower taxation and reduced bureaucratic red tape to allow business to prosper and thrive. Currently, the alcohol tax is not in keeping with the overall intent of the government in looking at ways to grow the economy and create jobs.

The level of tax is an unfair burden on craft distillers and brewers right across Australia, but particularly in my home state of Tasmania where, as I mentioned, there are 10 commercial craft whisky or spirits distillers. As an example, the breathalyser does not discriminate between different types of alcohol. Rather, it operates on how much you have drunk. Breathalysers do not suggest whether you have drunk wine, beer or spirits. The taxation
system in this country should be no different. The taxation system should not discriminate between the types of alcohol you have drunk or how much you have paid for it. The system should judge you on how much alcohol you have consumed, irrelevant of type.

If GST is levied on a price basis or on how much of the product you purchase, the alcohol excise should be levied on how much alcohol you consume. Exploring a volumetric rate of tax therefore seems rather logical. Of course there are drinkers who are at risk, but the research does not suggest that the changes that have been made or the varying taxation rates that exist have any influence over the type of products that we see. In the alcopops debate we saw that the tax just moved drinkers from one type of alcohol to another type of alcohol. The data is there for anyone that is willing to look and see. I think that we should all be focused on developing a system of taxation in this sector that is fair, that allows growth and that allows our country to compete on an export basis. The economy would benefit.

My state is doing its best but is being impeded by the current taxation regime. The current taxation system is not supporting innovation, or growth or development; rather, it is stifling those things. The 10 small distillers in my electorate take a prominent position and are doing their best to generate wealth and create jobs in their local communities, both directly and indirectly. Our brewers and distillers provide jobs, particularly in tourism, which is an increasingly important industry and sector within my state. They become symbols of their local community. Some of the icons in the whisky industry—like Bill Lark and his Sullivan's Cove business, which has produced the world's best whisky. I think of Nant at Bothwell redefining that small country town. I note the support of the minister for cities: Jamie Briggs has written opinion pieces on this issue. I think it is important we have South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and my home state getting similar support.

I want to acknowledge those whisky distillers that are blazing a trail in my home state of Tasmania and in my electorate particularly. They include Straits Brands on the Westerner; Hanger 43 in the Northern Midlands; John Calwell and his operation up at Wilmot; Redlands Estate in the Derwent Valley; Overeem; Shene, which will be an absolutely stunning place for people to visit once it is completed; Nant, as I have mentioned, at Bothwell; Peter Bignell from Belgrove at Kempton; and who could forget Bill Lark, the doyen of the Australian whisky industry? There is also McHenry Distillery at Port Arthur on the Tasman Peninsula and Nonsuch at Sorell. This is a sector that has the potential to grow, along with the craft brewers in my electorate and along with the very high-quality wine producers in the state of Tasmania. Their businesses can be supported with changes to the current taxation system.

Wakefield Electorate: Bushfires

Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (17:59): It is my great honour to represent in this place some of most beautiful and productive farming land not just in South Australia but in the country and some of the best and most productive farming families in my state. This year, of course, has brought a very bitter harvest. Fires swept across my electorate just last week and burnt to a cinder so much of that productive farming land. For so many of those communities it has been a fairly daunting and debilitating week.

Some 82,600 hectares have burnt. The fire has a 265-kilometre perimeter. Two people are deceased and 90 people have sought assistance or been hospitalised for their injuries. That fire continues to burn at this moment. Hay bales, hay sheds, fences and trees are still burning in my electorate and still pose a risk. There are still areas of concern in my electorate. Today, as
if to add insult to injury, mother nature has delivered us a dust storm. That dust storm has been produced by the fact that in many places the fires burnt so hot that the loam burnt completely away and we have been left with nothing but sand by the side of the road. Particularly through Owen and Hamley Bridge it looked like moonscape, like some dystopian nightmare that one might see in a Mad Max film.

It is very difficult to explain the change, to see this productive farming land and these proud farming communities being subject to such a terrible fire. It started at Pinery, making this little community famous for all the wrong reasons, perhaps. Mallala, the Pinkerton Plains, Wasleys, Owen, Hamley Bridge, Stockport, Roseworthy, Templers, Freeling, Daveyston, Greenock, Kapunda, Tarlee, Marrabel, Allendale North and Eudunda and all the farming communities and little places in between have been greatly affected by these fires.

Speaking as someone who has lived off and on in the area since 1985, driven around the area and travelled through it—I went to school in the area—nobody I know has ever seen a fire of this intensity, ferocity, speed or size on these plains. It has been a truly unique event.

What else has been unique has been the community's solidarity, the community coming together and having conversations, and ultimately the recovery that will occur. On the day after the fires I drove firstly to Greenock to check if my own property was still in one piece. I was very lucky—it was the opposite hills that were affected, and you can see the fire from my front yard. Of course, I know people who live on those hills. When I travelled back to my home town of Kapunda it was truly a town under siege. Many of the fields that I had worked in carting hay in my youth—not for very long, fortunately; it is too hard work for the likes of me—are now terribly burnt. Not far from there, on the Freeling to Daveyston road and on the Sturt Highway, there were terrible scenes as people tried to escape in their cars from the fire. Unfortunately the national highway had been left open—that is not a criticism of anyone; it takes time to do these things and we had a situation where people were driving on the wrong side of the road to get away from the flames and fireballs. We had people driving up the middle of the highway, and there is still the burnt-out wreckage of a Commodore ute sitting in the middle of the highway—at least, there was on the weekend. There were cars abandoned. On the Freeling to Daveyston road, there was a terrible pile-up in the worst possible place—next to some pine trees, which burnt. It was a terrible day but it might have been even worse if we had not had so many brave emergency services workers and CFS volunteers doing their best in what was an extraordinary set of circumstances.

I do not want to labour the personal stories too much but they are terribly touching. Around my electorate, people had many grim tales of close calls and communities looking after each other and saving one another. People were pulling people from cars and putting them in their own cars. People were literally jumping into CFS trucks to be saved. I want to retain some stoicism in my reflections on my own electorate because these great farming communities are being stoic and tough and largely taking this in their stride. But what I would say is there is really no defence against the weather conditions that were present on that day. Around Greenock, there were wind gusts of over 100 kilometres an hour. One wonders what you can do in the face of such ferocious weather conditions.

What we as a community can do is prepare. The South Australian government, like other state governments, goes out of its way each year to promote preparation and safety. As a community we have to try and respond to that as best we can. It is often something that gets
put off. I was a little guilty of that; I waited too long to prepare. As a community and as a nation we have to do far better. We have to use this parliament as an amplifier to say that people really do need to prepare their properties and have a bushfire plan—whether you are visiting an area or whether you are on the outer suburban fringe. This fire could have easily gone into the suburbs, as the Sampson Flat fire did.

It has been a difficult year for fires in South Australia and particularly in my electorate. We really do need national government action. The Minister for Justice was very kind to me during this whole affair and in the Sampson Flat fires as well. We as a parliament really do need to have a national week where we encourage people to prepare their properties and bushfire plans. I think we need to look very carefully at this. These fires are burning hotter and harder, with greater intensity and bigger fuel loads. At the same time, we have more and more people living in rural communities or on the outer suburban fringe where they are vulnerable to these fires. If you do not prepare, you can have panic, and that will cost lives. We really do need to look at having a national water bombing fleet and large fixed wing air tankers to fight these fires, to prevent these fires from taking off and to mitigate their effects. These are some of the practical things we could do as a national parliament to prevent the bitter harvest that I have seen in my own community. These fires, when they come to your community, greatly affect you and the people around you. My thoughts and condolences are with those families who lost someone in the fires. My thoughts are with all those who suffered injuries or who lost property, livestock or pets. To all who suffered from these terrible fires in my electorate, I wish you all the best in your recovery.

Research and Development

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (18:09): In contributing to the grievance debate, I wish to make the case for greater investment in the commercialisation of local research and development in order to ensure that our domestic economy derives the maximum benefit from Australian intellectual creativity. Too often we witness the migration of Australian inventions overseas due to a lack of opportunities to raise the necessary venture capital to bring these home-grown innovations to market. Businesses and universities must work more closely together to innovate and build the industries of the future. A more strategic approach needs to be taken to promote the commercialisation of applied research, which will link technical knowledge with business principles that will see new ideas developed, commercialised and sold.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia released a report earlier this month containing a vision statement to achieve a sixfold increase in research and development spending totalling $24 billion by the private sector in the next 20 years. Australia has remained ranked at No. 17 in the Global Innovation Index for the past two years after a period of improvement in the preceding years. Australian patent applications by local residents only make up 10 per cent of total applications. It is concerning to note that Australian residents file roughly three times more patents overseas then they file in Australia. In 2014, only 202 patent applications were filed in Western Australia. Whilst an adequate level of patent activity is difficult to specify, IP Australia reports that the number of patent applications made in Australia fell by 13 per cent in 2014.

I make special mention of a constituent of mine, Mr Kevin Fairman, who is a talented electrical engineer and inventor and who has just navigated the very costly process of
registering a patent for a high-contrast film product he developed with the potential for signage and automotive applications. Mr Fairman, through his company, Fairman Dent Pty Ltd, has experienced a number of obstacles in attracting local investment to develop and commercialise his innovative product. He wants to keep his invention in Australia but may be forced to seek overseas backers.

In international experience, there is a growing realisation across government, education institutions and businesses that universities can play central role in providing high-level skills, world-class research bases and promote a culture of inquiry and innovation. A recent report prepared by the federal government estimates that fewer than five per cent of Australian businesses currently utilise the higher education sector for expertise and knowledge. While Australia boasts a world-class university sector, relatively little of the considerable research output translates into patents or commercial success. Unfortunately, according to the Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda, Australia has been recently ranked as 81st out of the 143 countries for the efficiency with which it turns its innovation inputs to outputs. Studies have suggested that Australia has a poor record of collaboration between research and industry.

Reform options include removing specific barriers to innovation at the enterprise level and reallocating resources into more innovation focused activities throughout the economy. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, across the whole economy, just 652 Australian companies raised venture capital financing totalling $7.9 billion in 2013-14, representing less than 0.2 per cent of gross domestic product. This compares unfavourably with most OECD countries, with venture capital financing as a percentage of GDP higher in just about every OECD country outside some European states.

Consideration should be given to linking public investment undertaken at universities with private sector commercialisation. Another reform which could significantly contribute to empowering the culture of innovation is the need to reduce regulation, ease taxes and remove barriers to business start-ups. Small businesses also need to leverage the innovation generated by the university sector.

One possible initiative is the development of public-private research and commercialisation centres housed within universities, facilitating research collaboration between the universities and corporate businesses. Whilst in their early stages, these models of research allow for private sector input into decision-making and help build bridges between pure and applied research, with commercialisation outcomes that will see new ideas developed, commercialised and sold.

Edith Cowan University in my electorate has developed a very strategic approach to the functions of research, development, innovation, industry collaboration and commercialisation. The university realises that significant administrative effort is required to support and manage the business case for applied research. Too often, scientific and technical aspects of research and development are not matched by business principles required to commercialise applied research.

Under the leadership of Professor Margaret Jones, the Office of Research and Innovation provides strategic and operational support for the university's research program, and plays a crucial role in facilitating research outcomes beyond the laboratory. The Office of Research and Innovation builds ECU’s research profile by providing administrative support to
researchers and by developing and implementing research policies. Providing links to a range of external agencies, particularly research funding bodies, it is the first point of contact for staff seeking assistance in identifying funding opportunities and it provides advice on applications and submissions to funding agencies. The Office of Research and Innovation manages the administration of awarded grants, including contractual requirements and progress and final reports.

Other key functions include the development and submission of applications for external research funding, the commercialisation of intellectual property, the facilitation of collaborations, the provision of research ethics advice, the provision of industry liaison and promotion, and the facilitation of internal funding schemes. The Office of Research and Innovation is also responsible for the annual collection of research performance data for the federal government’s higher education research data collection and the Excellence in Research for Australia initiative.

In addition, the collaborative research network led by Edith Cowan University focuses on growing research excellence at the university through partnership and engagement. It aims to create world-class research capacity and outcomes through collaborative partnerships with nine universities across Australia. The collaborative research network program is part of a suite of initiatives established by the federal Government to reform higher education, teaching, learning, research and research training. The program aims to lead to a more productive and more effective university system by focusing on quality, excellence, collaboration, sustainability and end-user engagement.

In summary, businesses and universities must work closely together in order to ensure that our domestic economy derives maximum benefit from Australian intellectual creativity. A more strategic approach needs to be taken nationally to promote the commercialisation of applied research that will see new ideas developed, commercialised and sold. This will stem the flow of Australian inventions going overseas due to a lack of opportunities to bring these home grown innovations to market.

**Kingsford Smith Electorate: Urban Planning**

Mr THISTLETHWAITE (Kingsford Smith) (18:19): When I was first elected as the member for Kingsford Smith, in September 2013, one of the first things that I did was to organise a public meeting at South Sydney Junior Rugby League Football Club in Kingsford to discuss with members of the public the New South Wales government's urban activation precinct policy at the time. The New South Wales government was proposing massive developments along the Anzac Parade corridor, through Kensington and Kingsford, on to Maroubra, down to Malabar and all the way to La Perouse, with developments up to 20-storeys high, completely inconsistent with the character of current development contained in the Randwick council Local Environment Plan and with no additional infrastructure to cope with the additional number of residents and, ultimately, the number of cars that would be added to our streets as a result.

At that meeting, the community expressed its outrage and anger at what the New South Wales government was proposing. In the wake of that, the New South Wales government backed off on the Urban Activation Precinct. They put it on hold. It appears that the UAP is now back on the agenda for our community. The metropolitan plan that was published by the New South Wales government in December 2014 identified local urban renewal
opportunities yet to be identified along the Anzac Parade corridor. It appears that a number of developers have taken advantage of this window of opportunity, in the wording of the metropolitan plan, and have been out in our community trying to encourage local residents to sell their properties, ultimately for development.

As a result of that, I have been alerted to a number of over-the-top and outrageous development proposals that are inconsistent with the Randwick council's Local Environment Plan. One of those is an area known as the Kingsford Triangle, just on the roundabout at Kingsford: 395, 397 and 397A Anzac Parade. Currently, that particular area is zoned for seven to eight storeys and the development proposal that has gone in is for a building of 21 storeys. As you move further down Anzac Parade towards Kensington, again the LEP is for seven to eight storeys. In other parts, we have seen some of these proposals go way above that. Eighty-one to 103 Anzac Parade has a proposal for 20 storeys; 111 to 125 Anzac Parade has a proposal for 26 storeys. Twenty-six storeys is bigger than anything that has been built at Green Square. It is way over the top. For 139 to 151 Anzac Parade, Kensington, there is a proposal for 24 storeys. These are some of the proposals that developers are trying to force upon our community under the New South Wales Liberal government's current planning proposals. They are over the top and they are inconsistent with the Local Environment Plan for Randwick.

When these proposals first came to Randwick council, thankfully the council saw sense and rejected them, but the developers are now attempting to use a government policy, known as the Gateway Review Process, to have those developments approved by a backdoor process. The alarming thing about the Liberal government's Gateway process is that there is no local consultation. There is no notification or consultation with neighbours and residents in the local area. Some of these proposals are coming up to the joint regional planning panel, under the Liberal government's processes, in a few weeks time. The pre-Gateway proposals will now go to a joint regional planning panel. They are coming up in a couple of weeks time, as I said. On 3 December, 84 to 108 Anzac Parade goes to a joint regional planning panel. Kingsford Triangle goes to a joint regional planning panel on 7 December. The problem with these joint regional planning panels is that they are stacked in the Liberal government's favour. There are representatives from local council on them, but there are only two representatives. The state government has three representatives, so they clearly have a voting majority. If the joint regional planning panel approves of these developments to go out for public comment and they then do approve them, they will go to the Minister for Planning in New South Wales under the pre-Gateway proposal. I have no doubt that if these individual proposals are approved then you will see a green light for developers to head all of the way down Anzac Parade, through Maroubra, through Malabar and all the way out to Little Bay and La Perouse as they originally proposed under the urban activation precinct for high-rise development.

I want to point out that I am not opposed to development. Development is very important, because ultimately with a growing population we need to ensure that our kids and future generations do have properties to live in. But what is important is that local residents have a say in the way and the manner in which their local environment is developed. Under these proposals and the Liberal government's policy in New South Wales, the public get very limited opportunity to comment. At the end of the day, if a joint regional planning panel
approves it and the minister approves it, there is very little opportunity for the community to object. It is important that the development be consistent with the local area—-that it is consistent in terms of context and that it is consistent in terms of public transport and traffic congestion. I believe that the local council should have a say in the way that the area develops and the plan that is put together for development in a particular community. Under this process, the local council is bypassed and the Randwick Local Environmental Plan that has been developed by Randwick City Council is bypassed, and that is a missed opportunity for our community to have a say in the future development of our area.

There is enormous concern within our community about these proposals under the Liberal government's policy. On the weekend I was out with a petition in Kensington and Kingsford with a number of colleagues, and there was widespread support from community members in opposition to this policy proposal and what has been proposed by a number of developers in our community—not because people are opposed to development but because these particular individual developments are way over the top, particularly in the context of a lack of supporting infrastructure and congestion on local roads. There needs to be further consultation. The New South Wales government needs to heed the concerns of local residents in this area and scale back some of these development proposals and, importantly, ensure that there is consultation with local residents, that there is appropriate development in accordance with the local environment plan that has been put together by the local council and, importantly, that the local council as a representative of the community is consulted.

I said at the beginning that our community came together to oppose the UAP, as it was put forward at the time, because of a lack of infrastructure, a lack of consultation and the fact that it was way over the top for our community. If we need to do the same again in respect of this proposal, I am happy to facilitate those meetings and work with my state counterparts—the member for Maroubra, Michael Daley, and the member for Heffron, Mr Ron Hoenig—to ensure that we stop outrageous and over-the-top development in our community.

Mr HOGAN (Page) (18:28): Three swimmers from Trinity Lismore Swimming Club have performed exceptionally well at the Pacific School Games in Adelaide last week. The event is held every four years, and athletes from 12 countries between the ages of 10 and 19 converge for the games. Countries include China, India, Pakistan, Fiji and New Zealand, to name just a few. In order to qualify, the swimmers must win their individual events at state level. All three girls performed exceptionally well, finishing in the top 10 for every event that they competed in. Elsie Cooper, aged 14, broke the North Coast 200-metre breaststroke record, which has been the benchmark since 2012. Samantha McKenna, aged 17, and Karla Gilmore, also aged 17, were in the 50-metre freestyle relay team that picked up the bronze medal, with both girls swimming their leg in 28 seconds. Samantha followed up that performance with a bronze medal in the 100-metre breaststroke. The trinity club is now focusing on the Queensland state championships in two weeks time. The lead-up to the Queensland titles is the North Coast championships, which are run at Coffs Harbour this weekend, and the club will have 46 representatives competing. Congratulations to all the girls and to coach Ken Malcolm for his fantastic success with the club.
I would like to acknowledge Keith Hosking. Last Friday was Keith’s last day at the Lismore NRMA after half a century in the job. A self-confessed car nut, Keith said his job was a perfect fit because it allowed him to get paid to talk about cars. But the job was much more. It was about providing his customers from across the Northern Rivers with exemplary service for 50 years. It was also about instilling the values of hard work and customer service in his children. Keith said in a recent newspaper article marking his 50 year milestone that it was not about the amount of money he earned but about having a regular job that allowed he and his wife Lucia, who, by the way, is a well-known member of the ANZ workforce, to save and plan for their family’s future. It has paid off. His daughter Jodie is the co-founder of the international award-winning online company Shoes of Prey. In the newspaper article, Jodie paid homage to the ethics of father taught her as a child saying it was the lesson around customer service that droves everything they do at Shoes of Prey. Congratulations, Keith, good luck in your retirement and you will be missed.

Several Grafton junior girls travelled to Sydney recently to perform at the physical culture national championships. Shanae Crispin, Bree Hunter and Ellee Hunter all reached the national finals—that is, the top 18 in Australia—in their age division. Other members Maeve Dougherty, Josie Bindon, Mikayla O’Mahony and Candice Ingram reached the semi-finals, which is the top 36 in Australia in their respective age divisions. Seven-year-old Shanae has been doing physical culture since the age of three. She has achieved fantastic success in a very short time. She has placed in major competitions since starting and also placed at all zone championships she has competed in. This year was the first year she reached the finals, the top 18, at the nationals. She is also very talented, plays hockey and is a very good swimmer. Nine-year-old Bree Hunter commenced at the age of four, has also achieved great success and is very dedicated. She has also been very successful at all the qualifying competitions. Her consistent success saw her reach the finals for the second time. She is also very good at athletics at particular running events.

Ten-year-old Josie Bindon also commenced this sport at the age of three and has also always been a high achiever. She won her zone championship the last two years and placed every other year that she has competed. She won her lead-up competition this year and then went on to win the zone. This qualified her for the nationals, where she made it through to the semi-finals. She is also a very good hockey player and has many years of ballet eisteddfods under her belt. Twelve-year-old Maeve has been doing physical culture since the age of five she was. She has worked very hard to reach the stone zone level. It is the third year in a row that she has made it to the semi-finals. She is also very good at ballet and also regularly competes in the dance eisteddfods.

Fourteen-year-old Ellee Hunter commenced at the age of eight and has always been very dedicated to practice and this sport is her main interest. She placed fourth in her lead-up competition this year then went on to place second at the same competition and reached the finals, the top 18, this year. Fifteen-year-old Mikayla O’Mahony commenced at the age of three as well. She has placed almost every year at zone and has made it through to the nationals on several occasions. This year she won the qualifying competition and then went on to place third at the zone championships. This performance put her into the nationals. She is also a very talented netball player and has represented Grafton in the last three years in various regional competitions.
Lastly, 16-year-old Candice Ingram commenced the sport at the age of five. She has also been very successful at zone championships on numerous occasions. This year, she won her qualifying competition and then went on to place third at the zone championships. This allowed her to compete in the nationals where she made the semi-finals. Candice also has a strong grounding in ballet and often competes at regional eisteddfods well. Congratulations to all the girls on their outstanding success. A special thank you also goes to the Grafton Physical Culture teacher, Justine Crispin, who has done an outstanding job with all of the students. She competes herself, and during the weeks leading up to the zone and national competitions she had 59 students competing in both individual and team events. So congratulations to all involved.

Caitlin Bargwanna, who was diagnosed last year with intellectual disability, has qualified to compete in the National Para-Athletic Championships in Canberra next month. Caitlin is a 10-year-old girl who attends the Lismore Heights Public School and is competing in the 200-metre sprint and the discus at the national track and field championships. Caitlin's mother, Kerry Wanstall, says that the sport has helped Caitlin build her self-confidence and become a role model for younger children who do not believe in themselves, as well as those with a disability.

Caitlin comes from a family with three elder brothers, Stephen, Nicholas and Thomas, all of whom have autism. Due to her children's disability, Caitlin's mother, Kerry, moved the family from Mungindi in Queensland to Lismore to have better access to essential services, support groups and doctors. Without doubt, Lismore has taken Caitlin to its heart, with the Lord's Taverners in Lismore giving a $1,000 grant to Caitlin to assist with the cost of attending the national championships, a donation that Kerry told me she is very thankful for. You can see from Caitlin's story that, if you have the drive and determination to succeed, nothing can stand in your way. I would like to wish her the very best at the championships.

Perdjert, Mrs Bilimbi Agatha Tudor, Ms Jill

Mr SNOWDON (Lingiari) (18:36): Last Friday I had the honour of attending a very uplifting celebration: the 100th birthday of a resident of Wadeye on the north-west coast of the Northern Territory, Bilimbi Agatha Perdjert. Traditional dancers from the Wangga and Lirrga ceremonial groups performed, and children from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic School sang to mark the happy occasion.

This was an extraordinary event. We spend a lot of time in this place talking about the need to close the gap, and here we have a woman who has lived in a remote Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory for 100 years—remarkable. She is the oldest living resident in Wadeye and, I suspect, the oldest living resident in any Aboriginal community in the Top End. She moved from living a traditional bush life to the mission and now the modern era. She has seen a great deal over that hundred years. She was a member of the Mati Ke language group, whose country includes the outstation of Kuy, a small distance from Wadeye. She has seen many changes during her life and was heavily involved in the history of the Catholic Church in Wadeye and the district. Bilimbi's husband, Perdjert, was very involved with Father Docherty, who set up when the Catholic missionaries arrived in 1935. He was a key offsi der for Father Docherty and played an important role in early mission life. Her brother was a wallaby hunter for Father Docherty. So you can imagine the sort of life she had.
Agatha's son Boniface Perdjert was the first child to be born in the newly founded mission. Boniface himself is now a senior traditional owner in the community and a significant community leader. Boniface was the first Aboriginal person to be ordained as a deacon of the Catholic Church, in 1974. She is a very proud and wonderful woman, and I was overjoyed to be at this celebration of her wonderful life, extraordinary as it has been.

While at Wadeye I was able to witness the many great things that happen in this community, which rarely attract proper attention—certainly from the media. I saw the work of the Palngun Wurnangat Women's Committee, for example, who in conjunction with a pharmaceutical company are developing a major commercial project based on the Kakadu plum. It is really impressive stuff. I also saw the Ngapang Patha Tea House Hub and Neighbourhood Centre, built largely by local labour using building materials fabricated by the local Thamarrurr Development Corporation. I also witnessed the work of two dedicated professional teachers at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic School, Dominic and Siobhan. The lively interest of the grade 5/6 students was another uplifting experience. They had previously come to visit me here in this place. So it is really fitting that today we honour the people of Wadeye and, most particularly, the 100th birthday of Agatha Bilimbi Perdjert.

However, something not so uplifting, and actually quite sad, was the passing recently of Jill Tudor—a magnificent woman, loving partner, wife, parent and educator—who passed away on the morning of 21 November 2015. Jill was a very distinguished educator who commenced service with the Department of Education in the Northern Territory in October 1992 at the Alice Springs Language Centre. In April 1993 she moved to Bradshaw Primary School, where she taught until December 1996. She was promoted to catering for diversity curriculum adviser in the corporate office during 1997-98. She then moved to Larapinta Primary School as senior teacher, which was quickly followed by her promotion at the beginning of 2000 to assistant principal at Braitling Primary School.

In April 2004 Jill transferred as assistant principal to Alice Springs School of the Air, where she was promoted to principal in November 2005. During the second semester of 2008, Jill performed higher duties as principal of Braitling Primary School. In January 2009 she commenced in the role of principal at Bradshaw Primary School. From 2011 to 2013 she engaged Bradshaw Primary School in an intensive improvement agenda related to both attendance and teaching and learning, with significant results over the three-year period. In 2011, in her third year at the helm, the school was the winner of the Northern Territory's Smart Schools Award for excellence in student inclusion and wellbeing. In 2012, the school received a further NT Smart Schools Award for excellence in improving inclusion and wellbeing. In July-August this year, Jill acted with distinction as Director School Performance Alice Springs. In 2013, Jill was the primary principal of the year in the Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards. In the same year, she received a John Laing Professional Development Award from the Principals Australia Institute, which acknowledges principals from all states and territories who demonstrate outstanding leadership. She was proud to receive this recognition from her peers at a national level.

Sadly, in late 2013 Jill took extended leave due to illness, concluding her time at Bradshaw Primary School. In term 4 of 2014, the Schools South corporate office was privileged to utilise Jill's abundance of skills and expertise to the benefit of her colleagues across the Territory through her establishment of an innovative coaching and mentoring program for...
school leaders. However, sadly, continued ill-health caused Jill to retire from the department on 19 June 2015. On 27 November 2015 Jill was posthumously awarded the Chief Minister's prestigious Public Service Medal for her outstanding meritorious service. Always the professional, Jill had prepared an acceptance message to be read at the ceremony, in which she stated how honoured and privileged she had been to work for the Northern Territory public service and to contribute to its growth. She expressed her appreciation of being able to access high calibre professional learning. She paid tribute to her colleagues, who she described as, ‘first-class, hard-working and innovative, always ready to have a go at changing practice to improve outcomes for students, even in the face of public disquiet or adversity’.

Jill made an outstanding, very significant and unselfish contribution and influenced the lives of countless students, parents and colleagues. In everything that she did, Jill epitomised the core values of professional respect, innovation, diversity and excellence. I thank her principal mate Karen Blanchfield for providing those words, and for reminding us that Jill was such a wonderful woman. Jill came to Alice Springs with Chris, her husband, who took up a position at St Philip's. They moved into a house at that college, which became the family home. Four children were born there—James, the eldest, who had his first child, Lily, just before Jill passed; Sarah; Davey and Bec were all born and grew up there—and all of the children have followed in the footsteps of their wonderful parents and taken up work in education. Three of them are working at St Philip's; the only one who is not is Bec. The family is a very close one who grew up loving the outdoor lifestyle that Alice Springs offers. Jill was a very private person with a close group of friends.

She was very astute and was regarded for her common sense and ability to put issues into perspective. She also had a very strong sense of humour. She was a wonderful human being. Her and her husband had been building a new house at Mansfield in north-eastern Victoria and, sadly, she will not see it finished. I know it was a work which she and Chris were very heavily engaged with. To her eldest son James, partner Jess and baby Lily, Sarah, partner Nathan and baby Noah, Davey, partner Jen and baby William, and Bec and Troy, I pass on my and my family's condolences. Your mother was a wonderful human being. All who knew her, admired and respected her for who she was and the contribution she made.

Karen Blanchfield wrote: 'One of Jill's strongest leadership qualities that many of us could learn from is summed up in a quote she once presented to me'—that is, to Karen—"the quietest member of the orchestra is the conductor".' Jill led from the back. There was never any doubt that she was a wonderful and true leader.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Claydon): Order! There being no further grievances, the debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next sitting.

Federation Chamber adjourned at 18:46.
QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Department of Finance: Travel
(Question No. 1238)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Minister for Finance, in writing, on 17 August 2015:

(1) In 2014-15, what sum was spent on (a) domestic travel, and (b) international travel, for departmental staff.

(2) Of this, (a) on what dates, and to what locations, did the Minister travel, (b) how many departmental staff accompanied the Minister on this travel, and (c) for what purpose was the travel.

Mr Morrison: The Minister for Finance has supplied the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(1) In 2014-15 the sum spent on travel for departmental staff is:

(a) Domestic Travel - $1,095,636 (ex GST).

(b) International Travel - $496,153 (ex GST).

(2) (a) Details of travel are published every six months in the report *Parliamentarians’ Expenditure on Entitlements paid by the Department of Finance*. The six monthly report for 1 July to 31 December 2014 is available at: finance.gov.au/publications/parliamentarians-reporting/parliamentarians-expenditure-P35/. The report for 1 January to 30 June 2015 will be available in December 2015.

(b) One.

(c) To accompany me as Minister for Finance leading the European Australian Business Council business mission to Europe from 28 June to 3 July 2015; meetings with the OECD and Government Ministers in Paris from 4 to 7 July 2015; the Australian business mission to Berlin from 7 to 9 July 2015; and to participate in the Australia-Germany Advisory Group Meeting in Berlin on 10 July 2015.

Department of Social Services: Events and Photography
(Question No. 1334)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Social Services in writing on 17 August 2015:

In respect of departmental costs for media events and photo opportunities in 2014-15, what (a) date was each event held, (b) location was each event held at, (c) sum was spent on each event, (d) announcement and/or issue did the event relate to, and (e) was the expenditure for.

Mr Porter: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Department of Social Services expended funds for the following media events and photo opportunities in 2014-2015:

2015 Disability Ministers National Forum
(a) 16 February 2015
(b) Melbourne, Victoria
(c) $880.00 (GST inclusive)
(d) 2015 Disability Ministers National Forum
(e) Photography services
Aged Care Ministerial Event
(a) 30 June 2014
(b) Melbourne, Victoria
(c) $2,189.00 (GST inclusive)
(d) Changes to aged care from 1 July 2014
(e) Photography services

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet: Indigenous Advancement Strategy
(Question No. 1491)

Mr Conroy asked the Prime Minister in writing, on 7 September 2015:
In respect of the $2,400,000.00 tender (CN3287018) to National Rugby League Limited, (a) what is this for, (b) what are aims of this project, and (c) who will participate in this project.

Mr Turnbull: As the honourable member is aware, I was sworn in as Prime Minister on 15 September 2015. As the honourable member's question relates to matters before that date, I am advised by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet that the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(a) The funding of $2,400,000 (GST inclusive) was provided to the National Rugby League Limited (NRL) through the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

The period of the contract is 2 years and due to cease 30 June 2017.
The total funding amount of $2,400,000 is provided to deliver the following 3 projects:
• Project A—Beyond the Goalposts
• Project B—Through the Outback Competition
• Project C—School to Work (S2W)
(b) Project A – Beyond the Goalposts: the project will aim to improve attendance rates and enhance students' participation in sport and other extracurricular activities in at least 70 primary and secondary schools across NSW. A minimum of 3,600 participating students (both male and female) will be targeted.

Project B – Through the Outback Competition: the NRL supported the annual Indigenous Rugby League carnival 'the Koori Knockout' held 2-5 October 2015, to ensure it provided a positive and professional environment in which the community had the opportunity to participate. The project supported the Government's priorities of Getting Children to School, Adults in Jobs and Making Communities Safer.

Project C – The School to Work (S2W): this project will support 500 Indigenous Students in NSW and Victoria (both male and female) to complete Year 12 and successfully transition into employment and/or further education.
(c) These projects will support Indigenous school students and community members from across NSW and Victoria to improve their employment and education outcomes. The projects also promote improved Indigenous health, greater community cultural capacity and enhanced community engagement.
Attorney-General: Torres Strait communities visit  
(Question No. 1512)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister representing the Attorney-General, in writing, on 7 September 2015:

In respect of the Australian Government contingent that visited Torres Strait communities in Far North Queensland in August 2015, (a) what are the (i) names, and (ii) roles, of each person who attended with the Minister, (b) can the full itinerary of activities involving the Minister be provided, and (c) what was the total cost to the Minister's department including (i) flights, (ii) accommodation, (iii) ground transport, (iv) meals, and (v) miscellaneous expenses.

Mr Keenan: The Attorney-General has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

(a) (i) and (ii) Mr Greg Manning - A/g Deputy Secretary, Civil Justice and Legal Group,  
Mr Liam Brennan – Advisor, Attorney-General’s Office

(b) The itinerary of activities involving the Attorney-General is at Attachment A. The itinerary was managed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

(c) The department met the following costs for Mr Manning:

(i) flights - $2,436  
(ii) accommodation - $727  
(iii) ground transport - $26.40 (ferry) and $256 (taxis)  
(iv) meals - $234  
(v) miscellaneous – (incidental) $107.20

Attachment A

Proposed Itinerary - Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Visit

Senator the Hon George Brandis QC

Monday 24 August 2015

• Meeting with Indigenous Advisory Council
• Cultural Celebration and dinner at Gab Titui Cultural Centre.

Tuesday 25 August 2015

• Meeting with the Torres Strait Islands Regional Council (TSIRC) and Torres Strait Council (TSC)  
Defence multi-denominational remembrance service and community morning tea  
• Business Leaders Forum  
• Community Organisation Forum hosted by TSC and TSIRC Mayors  
• Arrival and Welcome to Northern Peninsula Area  
• Northern Peninsula Area welcome and dinner with Traditional owners, Elders and elected leaders

Wednesday 26 August 2015

• Arrive Saibai Island airport and welcome by Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) representatives: Mr Kerri Akiba (Chair) and directors  
• Meet Cr Ron Enosa, Ms Chelsea Ariba Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Member for Saibai  
• Meeting with Prescribed Body Corporate, Councillors, TSRA Member and other Saibai community leaders
Tour health clinic to meet with staff, including visiting doctor
Tour through IBIS store
Official Farewell

**Environment: Departmental Media Events**

(Question No. 1555)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 17 September 2015:

Further to his answer to question in writing No. 1341 (House *Hansard*, 14 September 2015, page 182), does his department keep records on costs incurred by it, if not, why not; if so, (a) are those costs itemised, and (b) are documents available that would identify these costs.

Mr Hunt: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Media events and photo opportunities are most often undertaken as part of broader portfolio responsibilities and outreach and costs are covered by the relevant program budgets.

These events are mostly supported by in-house services from the Department's communications and web teams, which offer preparation of media releases and social media products, web content, graphic design, photography and video services. It is therefore not possible to provide an accurate breakdown of the costs incurred for specific media events and photo opportunities.

The Department keeps records of external procurement of communications products and services. These products and services are mostly for communication activities that may include but are not specifically procured for media events and photo opportunities.

**Department of Social Services: Multicultural Access and Equity Policy**

(Question No. 1558)

Ms Rowland asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 12 October 2015:

In respect of the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy, (a) how will the Government ensure that departments and agencies undertake forward planning for access and equity, and (b) how will departments and agencies review and evaluate their access and equity achievements, and what will these achievements be measured against given that plans are no longer required.

Mr Porter: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Government has committed to refresh Multicultural Access and Equity Policy arrangements to improve the responsiveness of government programmes and services for Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse population.

The Department is leading the work across government on this issue, with a focus on appropriate engagement with multicultural communities and practical actions that target areas of government where we can deliver real improvements in access and reduce red tape.

Reporting arrangements for this work are still being finalised.

**Stolen Medical Files**

(Question No. 1562)

Ms King asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 12 October 2015:

In respect of reports of Medicare information and associated bank account details being stolen from computer systems and medical centres, (a) when did she or her office first become aware of this, (b) what action was taken by her and her department to investigate this, (c) what is the extent of this activity, including the cost to the Medicare Benefits Schedule, and (d) what steps are being taken by her
and her department and the Minister for Human Services and the Department of Human Services, to better protect this information.

Ms Ley: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
(a) and (b) As stated by Senator Marise Payne (the then Minister for Human Services) on 17 September 2015 in Parliament, the New South Wales Police alerted the Department of Human Services on 10 September 2015 that they had found a number of allegedly stolen medical files during an unrelated police operation. This matter falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Human Services, the Hon Stuart Robert MP. The Department of Human Services undertakes investigations into alleged inappropriate Medicare claiming.

(c) This matter falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Human Services, the Hon Stuart Robert MP. It relates to an ongoing police investigation and it would not be appropriate for me to comment while the investigation is ongoing.

(d) There are controls in place for online and other claiming channels to protect customer information associated with the Medicare system. This includes identification and investigation of changes in claiming patterns and non-compliant claiming. The outcome of the investigation into this matter will determine any changes to the control framework.

Shangri-La Hotel: Sydney
(Question No. 1564)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 9 November 2015:
Was any cost to his department incurred for the celebration of his 10 year anniversary as a parliamentarian at the Shangri-La Hotel in Sydney on 5 September 2015; if so, (i) what sum, and (ii) for what.

Mr Joyce: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:
No costs were incurred by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

AO3 Independent Computer Search Pty Ltd
(Question No. 1569)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 9 November 2015:
In respect of the $33,545.00 tender to AO3 Independent Computer Search Pty Ltd for 'Graphic adapters and touch mice for mobile devices' (CN3292025), (a) what was the purpose of the department's acquisition of these devices, and (b) how many units were procured.

Mr Joyce: The Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:
(a) The graphic adapters and touch mice enable the HP ElitePad G2 1000 computer tablets to be used as either a mobile computer or as a desktop computer when connected to existing monitors and keyboards via the HP tablet docking station.

(b) 200 graphic adapters and 400 touch mice were procured.

Paragon Printers Pen Rebranding
(Question No. 1580)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, in writing, on 12 October 2015:
In respect of the $11,137.50 tender to Paragon Printers pen rebranding (CN3172472), (a) is this for the Australian Border Force (ABF), (b) can he provide details of (i) the country of manufacture, (ii) the number of products ordered, (iii) the cost per item unit, and (iv) any other details about manufacture and/or cost, and (c) how will these pens enhance the operation of the ABF.

**Mr Dutton:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) No.

(b) (i) Pens were sourced through Australian owned company Paragon Australasia Group Trust Fund trading as GreenFrog, manufactured in China and brand printing done in Australia.

(ii) 15,000 units were purchased.

(iii) 67.5c excluding GST.

(iv) These pens were purchased to replenish the Department's corporate stocks.

(c) N/A.

**Department of Social Services: Conferences**

(Question No. 1641)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 12 October 2015:

Did the then Assistant Minister for Social Services host any conferences in 2014-15; if so (a) on what date(s) did each conference occur, and at what location(s), (b) what total sum was spent on each conference, and of this, what sum was spent on (i) meals and accommodation, and what are the details, (ii) travel, and what are the details, and (iii) social events, and what are the details, and (c) what outcomes were achieved at each conference.

**Mr Porter:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The then Assistant Minister for Social Services did not host any conferences in 2014-15.

**Department of Social Services: Hospitality**

(Question No. 1646)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Social Services, in writing, on 14 October 2015:

In respect of catering and hospitality by the then Assistant Minister for Social Services in 2014-15, (a) what total sum was spent, (b) for what functions was the catering and hospitality, (c) on what date(s) did each function occur, and at what location(s), and (d) for each function, what sum was spent on (i) meals, (ii) drinks, (iii) hospitality staff, and (iv) other costs.

**Mr Porter:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The then Assistant Minister for Social Services had no catering or hospitality in 2014-15.

**Department of Immigration and Border Protection: Office Fitouts**

(Question No. 1655)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, in writing, on 14 October 2015:

Further to the answer to question in writing No. 402 (House Hansard, 20 October 2014, page 11513), (a) can his department provide a description of the works undertaken at each location, and (b) what is the total cost of the refurbishment including (i) design and construction, (ii) furniture and equipment, (iii) project management, and (iv) all other, (c) how will these upgrades support the work of his department.
Mr Dutton: The answer to the honourable member's question is:

Please see Attachment A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Description (a)</th>
<th>Total cost excluding GST (b)</th>
<th>Design and construction excluding GST (i)</th>
<th>Furniture and equipment excluding GST (ii)</th>
<th>Project management excluding GST (iii)</th>
<th>Other costs excluding GST (iv)</th>
<th>How will these upgrades support the work of his department? (c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide office</td>
<td>New building interior office fit-out to accommodate the DIBP Adelaide office functions and staff</td>
<td>$10,255,416</td>
<td>$8,499,772</td>
<td>$1,182,383</td>
<td>$199,562</td>
<td>$373,699</td>
<td>This work was undertaken to set up the new SA state office for DIBP, at 70 Franklin Street, due to the lease on the previous office, 55 Currie Street, ceasing. This work ensured the continuing operations of the SA state office. The opportunity was taken with a new fit-out to improve the operational functionality of the new site. Due to the end of the lease on part floors of the Melbourne office, additional space was leased at 215 Spring Street. It was fitted out to accommodate staff to ensure functions within the vacated space were able to continue. Consolidation of the existing leased footprint at Wentworth Street to levels 1-4 with level 5 able to be relinquished saving the department on leasing costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring St Office (Melbourne)</td>
<td>New building interior office fit-out to accommodate the DIBP office functions and staff</td>
<td>$565,030</td>
<td>$214,199</td>
<td>Included in construction costs $22,101</td>
<td>$328,730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Office</td>
<td>Alterations to the existing building interior office fit-out to accommodate the DIBP Sydney (Parramatta) office functions</td>
<td>$812,596</td>
<td>$666,280</td>
<td>Included in construction costs $146,316</td>
<td>Included in constructio n costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Description (a)</td>
<td>Total cost excluding GST (b)</td>
<td>Design and construction excluding GST (i)</td>
<td>Furniture and equipment excluding GST (ii)</td>
<td>Project management excluding GST (iii)</td>
<td>Other costs excluding GST (iv)</td>
<td>How will these upgrades support the work of his department? (c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne Office</td>
<td>Consolidation of the existing leased footprint at Wentworth Street to levels 1-4 (level 5 being relinquished).</td>
<td>$2,286,278 (total cost)</td>
<td>$1,502,970</td>
<td>$180,238</td>
<td>$603,070</td>
<td></td>
<td>This work provided upgrades and improvements to support the functional requirements of core business areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra Office</td>
<td>Existing and new floors interior office fit-outs to accommodate the DIBP office functions and staff.</td>
<td>$2,168,741 (total cost)</td>
<td>$1,151,609</td>
<td>$24,612</td>
<td>$457,130</td>
<td>$535,390</td>
<td>This work provided for the reconfiguration of existing space to support the integration of DIBP and ACBPS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Office</td>
<td>Alterations to the existing building interior office fit-out to accommodate the DIBP Brisbane office functions.</td>
<td>$115,871</td>
<td>$93,403 (includes PM costs as these were included in the design fee)</td>
<td>$22,063</td>
<td>See part (i)</td>
<td>$405</td>
<td>The Citizenship counter in the Brisbane office was reconfigured to enable more clients to be processed at one time, improving client service standards by decreasing the client wait time to lodge citizenship applications. This project did not proceed past the design proposal phase. It was determined the additional office was not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Office</td>
<td>Design documentation of a proposed new (additional) SES office fit-out to accommodate</td>
<td>$5,793</td>
<td>$5,793</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some figures at b) vary from Question Number 402, as the figures were provided at a point in time and did not reflect final costs for the fit-outs and refurbishments detailed above.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection: Office Fitouts
(Question No. 1656)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, in writing, on 14 October 2015:

Further to the answer to question in writing No. 402 (House Hansard, 20 October 2014, page 11513), (a) how many staff presently work in each office, (b) how many staff in each office were made redundant between 7 September 2013 and 13 October 2015, (c) does his department anticipate that (i) more staff will be located in each office following the refurbishment; if so, how many, and (ii) staff will be relocated from any other office within his department to any of these offices following the refurbishment; if so, how many, (d) will staff from any other Commonwealth department(s) be located within any of these offices; if so (i) what department(s), (ii) in which offices, and (iii) what roles will they perform, (e) will staff from any other businesses or agencies, other than a Commonwealth department, be located within any of these offices; if so, (i) what businesses or agencies, (ii) in which offices, and (iii) what services will they provide, and (f) does his department anticipate that there will be any unused capacity in any of these offices following the refurbishment.

Mr Dutton: The answer to the honourable member’s question is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment</th>
<th>Staff presently working in office (a)</th>
<th>Redundancies between 7 September 2013–13 October 2015 (b)</th>
<th>Will more staff be located in each office following the refurbishment (c) (i)</th>
<th>Will staff be relocated from any other office within the department following the refurbishment (c) (ii)</th>
<th>Will staff from any other Commonwealth department be located here (d)</th>
<th>Will staff from any other businesses or agencies, other than a Commonwealth department, be located here (e)</th>
<th>Will there be any unused capacity following the refurbishment (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide Office</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes, staff were relocated from old 55 Currie Street office to new 70 Franklin Street office</td>
<td>Yes, see (i)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Street Office (Melbourne)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yes (126 staff)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environment: Department Amalgamation Costs
(Question No. 1684)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 15 October 2015:

Will his department provide all costs associated with (a) amalgamating the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency with the Environment portfolio in September 2013, and (b) establishing a new Office of Climate Change and Renewables Innovation within his department in September 2015.

Mr Hunt: The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) Responsibilities of the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency were transferred to the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education and the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism by Administrative Arrangement Order on 25 March 2013.

(b) The establishment in September 2015 of the Office of Climate Change and Renewables Innovation is an internal departmental restructure and it is expected that no costs will be incurred as a result.

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources: Fraud and Theft
(Question No. 1766)

Mr Conroy asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

Were there any instances of fraud or theft detected by the department from (a) internal sources, or (b) external sources, that resulted in a cost to the department in 2014-15; if so, (i) what fraud or theft took place, (ii) when did the fraud or theft take place, (iii) what was the cost to the department of this fraud or theft, and (iv) what is being done to prevent the fraud or theft occurring again.
**Mr Joyce:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) Internal sources:

The department recorded two substantiated instances of fraud during 2014-15 and no substantiated theft.

(i) Both substantiated fraud matters related to entitlement fraud.

(ii) Of the two substantiated internal fraud matters that occurred during 2014-15, one occurred multiple times between 2010 and 2014, and the other occurred multiple times between 2014 and 2015.

(iii) The value of the internal fraud losses reported in 2014-2015 was $13,894.20.

(iv) The department met all of its requirements under the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework 2014* and completed a suite of fraud and corruption risk assessment and control documentation. These include the department's *Fraud and Corruption Control Plan 2015*, *Fraud Risk Assessment 2015* and *Corruption Risk Assessment 2014-16*. These documents acknowledge the potential fraud and corruption risks impacting the department and communicate the range of prevention, detection and response mechanisms that the department has in place to manage these risks. The ongoing implementation of prevention, detection and response treatments proposed in these documents aim to prevent known instances of internal fraud or theft occurring again.

(b) External sources:

The department recorded 44 incidents of alleged fraud during 2014-15.

(i) The categories of external fraud allegations reported relate to obtaining or using information without authorisation (44 incidents).

(ii) The 44 incidents of external fraud were reported between the 2014-15 financial year.

(iii) The value of potential external fraud losses reported in 2014-15 was unable to be quantified.

The department met all of its requirements under the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework 2014* and completed a suite of fraud and corruption risk assessment and control documentation. These include the department's *Fraud and Corruption Control Plan 2015*, *Fraud Risk Assessment 2015* and *Corruption Risk Assessment 2014-16*. These documents acknowledge the potential fraud and corruption risks impacting the department and communicate the range of prevention, detection and response mechanisms that the department has in place to manage these risks. The ongoing implementation of prevention, detection and response treatments proposed in these documents aim to prevent known instances of external fraud or theft occurring again.

**Department of the Environment: Fraud and Theft**

(Question No 1769)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for the Environment, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

Were there any instances of fraud or theft detected by the department from (a) internal sources, or (b) external sources, that resulted in a cost to the department in 2014-15; if so, (i) what fraud or theft took place, (ii) when did the fraud or theft take place, (iii) what was the cost to the department of this fraud or theft, and (iv) what is being done to prevent the fraud or theft occurring again.

**Mr Hunt:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

(a) There has been one instance of internal fraud.

(i) Misuse of corporate credit card

(ii) September 2014

(iii) $1,110.38 which was recovered in full from the employee

(iv) Fraud awareness training is being implemented across the Department of the Environment.
(b) There have been no instances of external fraud or theft.

**Minister for Health: Replenishing Drinks Cabinet**

(Question No. 1872)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Health, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

What sum was spent on replenishing the Minister's drinks cabinet in 2014-15, on what date were such purchases made, and what was purchased.

**Ms Ley:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

Nil - The Department of Health does not replenish the Minister's drink cabinet.

**Department of Agriculture and Water Resources: Ministerial Staff Global Roaming**

(Question No. 1902)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

In respect of global roaming costs for Ministerial staff on information and communications technology devices since 8 September 2013, and can the Minister provide an itemised list of costs incurred, including but not limited to (a) date of use, (b) call or data type, (c) location of use, (d) length or size of the call or download, and (e) cost per call or data download.

**Mr Joyce:** The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources entered into its current contract for telecommunications services on 1 July 2014. The contract provides a fixed rate monthly plan for all global roaming services at a flat rate of $5,000 per month. Individual calls and data downloads to devices connecting via global roaming are not itemised.

It is not feasible to report on global roaming charges prior to 1 July 2014, as telecommunication services agreements were not centrally managed prior to commencement of the current telecommunications services contract. To obtain the information requested for the period 8 September 2013 to 30 June 2014 would incur significant diversion of time and resources.

**Department of Agriculture and Water Resources: Departmental and Agency Staff Global Roaming**

(Question No. 1928)

**Mr Conroy** asked the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

In respect of global roaming costs for departmental and agency staff on information and communications technology devices since 8 September 2013, and can the Minister provide an itemised list of costs incurred, including but not limited to (a) date of use, (b) call or data type, (c) location of use, (d) length or size of the call or download, and (e) cost per call or data download.

**Mr Joyce:** The answer to the honourable member's question, is as follows:

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources entered into its current contract for telecommunications services on 1 July 2014. The contract provides a fixed rate monthly plan for all global roaming services at a flat rate of $5,000 per month. Individual calls and data downloads to devices connecting via global roaming are not itemised.

It is not feasible to report on global roaming charges prior to 1 July 2014, as telecommunication services agreements were not centrally managed prior to commencement of the current
telecommunications services contract. To obtain the information requested for the period 8 September 2013 to 30 June 2014 would incur significant diversion of time and resources.

Department of Employment: Tender
(Question No. 1976)

Mr Conroy: asked the Minister representing the Minister for Employment, in writing, on 10 November 2015:

In respect of the $21,726.62 tender to Dentsu Mitchell Media Australia (CN3300200) for PACT Internet search, for what purpose is this service.

Mr Pyne: The Minister for Employment has provided the following answer to the honourable member's question:

The service was for promotional activities related to the Pay and Conditions Tool communications campaign, including search engine marketing and social media advertising.